



A STUDY ON THE ROLE OF INFORMATION, EDUCATION AND COMMUNICATION IN THE PREVENTION OF HUMAN TRAFFICKING IN MCHINJI DISTRICT, MALAWI

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ABSTRACT

The study explored the effectiveness of Information, Education, and Communication (IEC) strategies in preventing human trafficking in Mchinji District, Malawi. Using a mixed-methods approach with 99 participants, it combined surveys, interviews, and document analysis to gather comprehensive data. The sample represented diverse community members in Mchinji District, including youth, women, men, the elderly, and individuals with disabilities. The Fischer formula guided sample selection. Questionnaires and interview schedules facilitated data collection. While over half (55.5%) had heard of human trafficking, nearly half lacked a clear understanding, highlighting an awareness gap. Existing interventions, primarily disseminated through community channels, reached some were informative, but many (36.7%) perceived them ineffective, this underscores the need for broader reach, improved message clarity, and culturally relevant approaches. The study identified a strong preference for community driven strategies, including intensifies awareness campaigns in Chichewa, collaboration among stakeholder, and diverse communication channels. This emphasizes the importance of moving beyond simple information dissemination and actively engaging communities through culturally appropriate messaging partnerships. Recommendations include increase allocation of funds and resources, expanding reach, tailoring messages, building trust, addressing root causes like poverty and employing a multi-pronged approach combining awareness, victim support, and law enforcement efforts. Regula monitoring and adaptation based on feedback are crucial for ensuring interventions remain relevant and empower communities to effectively prevent human trafficking.

Keywords: *Information, Education, Communication, Human Trafficking, effectiveness.*

INTRODUCTION

Human trafficking most immediately affects 40.3 million people globally, but its consequences are far more widespread. This issue undermines global peace and security by bankrolling criminal organizations and terrorist groups. It undercuts global development by uprooting and destabilizing communities. And it weakens the global economy by functioning as a

multibillion-dollar illicit industry. Human trafficking may begin locally, but it affects the peace and prosperity of almost every country. Around the world, 1 in 184 people is a victim of human trafficking. According to the UNODC Report (2013), the most common form of human trafficking (79%) is sexual exploitation. The victims of sexual exploitation are predominantly women and girls. Surprisingly, in 30% of the countries which provided information on the gender of traffickers, women make up the largest proportion of traffickers. In some parts of the world, women trafficking women is the norm.

UN Palermo Protocol (2000) define trafficking in persons as: “The recruitment, transportation, transfer, harboring or receipt of persons, by means of threat or use of force or other forms of coercion, abduction, fraud, deception, abuse of power or position of vulnerability or giving or receiving of payments or benefits to achieve the consent of a person having control over another person, for the purpose of exploitation.” According to the definition, exploitation includes, at a minimum, “Exploitation of prostitution of others or other forms of sexual exploitation, forced labor or services, slavery or practices similar to slavery, servitude or removal of organs.” Importantly, in cases where the victim of TIP is a child; the recruitment, transportation, transfer, harboring, or receipt of such child for purposes of exploitation should be deemed trafficking even if there is no use of illicit means such as threat, force or other forms of coercion, abduction, fraud, or deception as in the case with trafficking of adults (UN, 2000).

Human trafficking is a pressing global issue that affects countless individuals, with Malawi being no exception. The country serves as both a source and transit point of human trafficking, primarily involving women and children who are subjected to labor exploitation and forced prostitution. The lack of adequate information, education, and communication strategies poses a significant challenge in preventing and combatting human trafficking in the country. Mchinji District, the heart of Malawi, is trapped in a cycle of human trafficking. Sharing borders with Mozambique and Zambia, its weak law enforcement and porous borders make it a prime target for criminals. This, coupled with poverty, limited education, and unequal treatment of women, creates a perfect storm for exploitation in Mchinji. Young people and women, especially desperate for opportunities, are easily lured by false promises of jobs in neighboring countries and within the country, only to end up trapped in trafficking networks. This grim reality demands immediate action and a thorough understanding of how to combat serious violation of human rights.

Human trafficking is a complex issue demanding a multifaceted approach to combat it. This study focuses on the role of Information, Education, and Communication (IEC) in preventing trafficking within Mchinji District, Malawi. While IEC’s effectiveness in raising awareness and promoting behavior change is recognized, its specific impact on trafficking prevention in Mchinji remains unclear.

This research aims to shed light on effectiveness of IEC strategies in Mchinji and contribute to broader anti-trafficking efforts in Malawi and similar contexts. By understanding the extent of trafficking, existing IEC interventions, their impact, and relevant social- cultural factors, the study will provide valuable insights for policymakers, practitioners, and advocates working to eradicate this grave human rights violation.

NEED OF THE STUDY

Human trafficking remains a grave and pervasive violation of human rights, with profound implications for the lives of individuals, communities, and societies at large. Mchinji District, situated in the central region of Malawi, is confronted with

the disturbing reality of human trafficking, where vulnerable individuals, often women and children, are subjected to exploitation, abuse and severe socio-economic hardships. Despite growing global awareness of this issue and various efforts to combat it, human trafficking continues to thrive within the district, demanding immediate attention and intervention. The problem lies in the lack of adequate information, education, and communication (IEC) strategies targeted at the at-risk youth and women population to prevent human trafficking. Insufficient awareness about the risks and dangers associated with trafficking, coupled with limited knowledge of their rights and available support systems, leaves young people and women vulnerable to manipulation and exploitation by traffickers (The National Plan of Action Against Trafficking in Persons. 2017-2022).

It is for this reason that Government of Malawi ratified the United Nations Convention against Transnational Organized Crime and its two protocols; the Trafficking Protocol and the Protocol, aims at preventing and combating trafficking of persons, specifically women and children and encourages Member states to develop and promulgate specific legislation and action plans to combat trafficking in persons. In response, the Government of Malawi enacted the Trafficking in Persons Act No.3 of 2015 which provided a comprehensive legislative framework for combating and preventing trafficking in persons.

Using a human rights approach. It also established an institutional framework for effective regulation and coordination of trafficking in persons and related matters, including the provision for among other things, the protection of victims of trafficking in persons, prevention of trafficking in persons, funding arrangements, care and support of victims and specific offences and penalties for offenders. The Government, therefore, continues to translate that political will into concrete and specific time-bound measures with the adoption of this 2017-2022 National Plan of Action against Trafficking in Persons and acknowledges a holistic approach to the interventions by all stakeholders to achieve its vision of creating a Malawi free of trafficking in persons (The National Plan of Action Against Trafficking in Persons. 2017-2022).

Despite efforts made by the government in combating HT, many residents of Mchinji District lack adequate awareness and understanding of human trafficking. They are often unaware of the signs, risks, and legal consequences associated with the crime. This lack of awareness contributes to the continued victimization of individuals within the district.

While some Information, Education, and Communication (IEC) initiatives exist within Mchinji District to address human trafficking, their overall effectiveness and impact remain uncertain. It is unclear whether these interventions adequately inform, engage, and empower communities to prevent and combat trafficking.

Socio –cultural factors, including traditional beliefs and practices, play a significant role in influencing vulnerability to human trafficking the district. These factors may hinder the effectiveness of IEC strategies or offer opportunities for culturally sensitive interventions. The gendered nature of human trafficking is evident, with women and children often disproportionately affected. Gender –specific vulnerabilities and challenges need to be addressed through targeted IEC efforts. Additionally, there may be gaps in the legal and policy framework related to human trafficking in Malawi, and resource constraints may limit the implementation of IEC programs aimed at prevention.

Driven by the complex and interconnected nature of human trafficking in Mchinji District, Malawi, this study delves into the critical role of Information, Education, and Communication (IEC) in prevention and mitigation efforts. It assesses the extent of trafficking, effectiveness of existing IEC initiatives, community engagement, socio-cultural dynamics, policy and resource

gaps, and gender dimensions within the district. By unraveling these dynamics, the research aims to inform evidence-based strategies and policies that effectively prevent human trafficking, safeguard vulnerable populations, and promote human rights not only in Mchinji but also in the broader Malawian context.

3. Objectives of the study

3.1 Main objective

- To assess the effectiveness of Information, Education and Communication (IEC) strategies in preventing human trafficking in Mchinji District, Malawi.

3.2 Specific objectives

- To analyze the reach and accessibility of IEC materials in Mchinji District.
- To measure the impact of IEC strategies on knowledge and awareness of human trafficking in Mchinji District.
- To evaluate the effectiveness of IEC strategies in influencing protective behaviors against human trafficking in Mchinji District.

4. Theoretical Framework

The study's variables are categorized as dependent and independent based on pre-specified selection methods. Two theoretical frameworks guide this categorization: Social Cognitive Theory (SCT) and Diffusion of innovations Theory.

Dependent variables

SCT:

- Self-efficacy: individuals' belief in their ability to avoid trafficking risks.
- Anti-trafficking attitudes and knowledge such as awareness of trafficking dangers and understanding of prevention strategies.
- Anti-trafficking behaviors such as seeking help, refusing suspicious offers, reporting concerns.

DoIT

- Diffusion patterns: How quick and widely anti-trafficking knowledge spreads within the community
- Adoption of anti-trafficking behaviors: individuals choosing to act based on the received information.
- Communication channel effectiveness by exploring which channels best reach and influence the target audience.

Independent variables

SCT

- IEC interventions: exposure to educational materials, workshops, campaigns, etc. focusing human trafficking prevention.
- Role models: individuals portrayed in IEC materials or within the community who display positive anti-trafficking behaviors.

DOIT

- Characteristics of innovators and early adopters: Age, education, social status, etc. of individuals who first embrace anti-trafficking messages.
- Opinion leaders: community members trusted for advice and information, who influence others adoption of anti-trafficking behaviors.
- Communication channels: radio, community meetings, social media, etc. are used to spread anti-trafficking messages.

5 Research Methodology

5.1 Research design and approach

A mixed- methods approach was used for assessing the effectiveness of IEC strategies in preventing human trafficking in Mchinji District, Malawi. The design was used because Quantitative data provides large-scale, generalizable insights into awareness levels, program participation, and perceived risk/ vulnerability. It helped identify correlations between IEC exposure and knowledge/ behavior changes (Creswell & Clark, 2017). On the other hand, Qualitative data offered in - depth understanding of lived experiences, cultural factors, and individual perspectives on trafficking and IEC programs. It also helped uncover nuanced reasons behind observed trends and provide context for quantitative findings (Bryman, 2016).

5.2 Population and Sample

The study targeted a diverse sample of 99 Mchinji District community members, including youth, men, women, the elderly, and individuals with disabilities. Interviews captured a range of perspectives on the issue.

To ensure comprehensive representation of Mchinji District's diverse population in our study on human trafficking awareness and experiences, the researcher employed a combined sampling approach, firstly stratifies random sampling segmented the population based on characteristics like age, gender, location, and socioeconomic status. This involved dividing the population into sub-groups(strata) and randomly selecting participants from each group, ensuring fair representation regardless of their background. To specifically include individuals with disabilities who might be underrepresented in random sampling, the researcher further utilized purposive sampling within these strata.

Secondly, for geographically dispersed the researcher implemented two-stage cluster sampling. This method involved randomly selecting villages/ communities (clusters) as the first stage, followed by randomly selecting households within those chosen clusters for the second stage.

This combined approach resulted in a diverse sample of 99 participants: 50 youths, 43 combined men and women (due to potential size limitations) 1 elderly person, and 5 individuals with disabilities. This diverse sample ensures the study captures the varied experiences and perspectives within Mchinji District, leading to more nuanced and impactful findings.

5.3 Sample size

In this research, determining the size of the sample has been very crucial, this is because the size has a direct bearing upon accuracy, time, cost and administration of survey. The sample size will be small enough to avoid unnecessary expenses and large enough at the same time to avoid intolerable sampling error. The sample size was calculated using Fisher's formula which is particularly useful when the population size is finite and known. In this case, with a known population size of Mchinji District 602,305 (According to the 2018 Population and Housing Census of Malawi Main Report, Mchinji District, Malawi covers an area of 3,356 km (1296 sq mi)

Fischer's Formula

$$n=1+N(e^2)N$$

where:

- n is the sample size,
- N is the population size,
- e is the margin of error.

Population Size (N), In this study, the population size is the total population of Mchinji, which is 602,305 according to the 2018 Population and Housing Census of Malawi Main Report.

Margin of Error (e), a margin of error of 5% corresponds to $e=0.05$.

Substituting these values into Fisher's formula

$$n=1+602,305(602,305 \cdot 0.05^2)602,305$$

the estimated sample size using Fisher's formula is approximately 601,704.

Subsampling Calculation with Adjusted Proportion

After obtaining the initial sample size, a decision was made to further investigate a specific subgroup within the sample. A subsample calculated from the initial sample ($n=601,704$) for a more focused analysis. The subsample size was determined based on an adjusted proportion ($p=0.08$).

$$n_{\text{subsample}} = n \times (0.05)^2 + (1.96)^2 \times 0.08 \times (1 - 0.08) \quad n \times (1.96)^2 \times 0.08 \times (1 - 0.08)$$

The value of n obtained from Fisher's formula.

$$n_{\text{subsample}} = 601,704 \times (0.05)^2 + (1.96)^2 \times 0.08 \times (1 - 0.08) \quad 601,704 \times (1.96)^2 \times 0.08 \times (1 - 0.08)$$

The adjusted subsample size shall therefore be approximately 123 individuals.

Sample Distribution

The distribution of the research sample, comprising 123 individuals, has been strategically allocated between two key groups, community members and enforcement officers. This distribution is in line with the research objectives, aiming to encompass perspectives from both grassroots community members and various stakeholders involved in enforcement at the district level. The groups encompassed within enforcement officers include personnel from the police, gender, labor, judiciary, immigration, and Civil Society Organizations (CSOs) operating at both district and community levels.

Assumed Proportions, to ensure a representative and comprehensive exploration, assumed proportions were employed for the distribution.

- **Community Members**, 80% of the total sample
- **Enforcement Officers**, 20% of the total sample

These proportions were chosen based on considerations of the likely distribution of community members and enforcement officers within the population.

Calculation of Distribution

1. Number of Community Members

$$\text{Community Members} = 123 \times 0.8$$

After rounding up to the nearest whole number, Community Members=99

2. Number of Enforcement Officers

$$\text{Enforcement Officers} = 123 \times 0.2$$

After rounding up to the nearest whole number, Enforcement Officers=25

5.4 Sources of Data Collection

This study adopted a mixed-methods approach, utilizing both quantitative and qualitative data. A semi -structured questionnaire assessed various demographics' awareness and knowledge of trafficking risks, participation in IEC programs,

and perceived vulnerability. Focus group discussion with youths, women, men, and community leaders then explored lived experiences, perceptions, of existing IEC programs, and relevant cultural factors influencing prevention.

For quantitative data gathered through Google Forms and SPSS software, thematic analysis revealed key themes. Frequencies, percentages, and means were then presented in graphs, charts, and tables. Rich insights were further gleaned from qualitative data analysis.

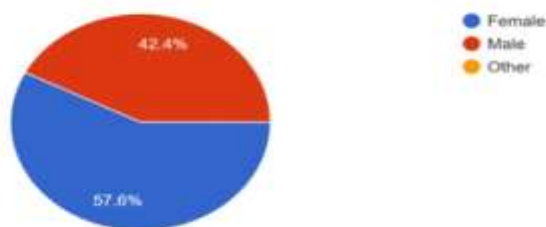
Secondary data from websites, government reports, NGO reports (including trafficking cases by Global Hope Mobilization), local media coverage, and UNODC documentaries provided broader context and analyzed trends and potential correlations with IEC program implementation and public perceptions.

6 Results

6.1 Demographic Characteristics: Understanding the Respondents

6.1.1 Gender distribution of respondents

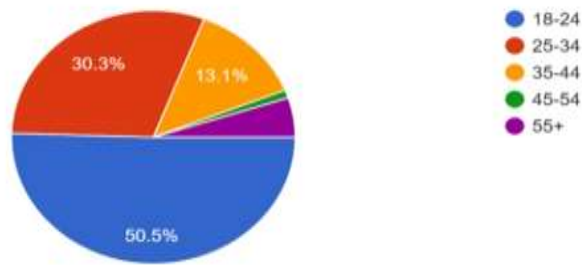
2. Gender of the individual being interviewed
99 responses



The study involved 99 participants, including 57.6% (57) females and 42.4% (42) males, as shown in the pie chart. While distribution suggests a higher female presence, attributing it solely to Mchinji District's demographics requires caution. The study sampling focused on community meetings, potentially favoring female participation. Additionally, our focus on vulnerable groups could explain this distribution. Future research employing diverse sampling methods and exploring gendered experiences through qualitative data could provide a more comprehensive understanding.

6.1.2 Age distribution of respondents

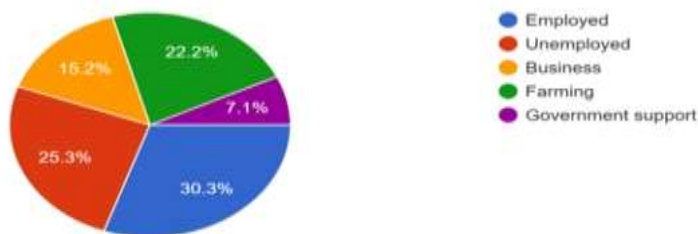
1. AGE:
99 responses



The provided age distribution shows a clear trend in age demographics for the study on IEC effectiveness in preventing human trafficking in Mchinji District, Malawi. 50 (50.5%): 18-24 years old, 30(30.3%) 25-34 years old, 13(13.1%) 35-44 years old, 1(1.1%) :45-54 years old and 5(5.1%) 55+ years old. The young adults (18-24) this age groups faces higher vulnerability to trafficking due to factors like limited life experience, economic insecurity, and lack of awareness. The group is particularly targeted by traffickers, leading to their high representation in the sample.

6.1.3 Occupation of the respondents

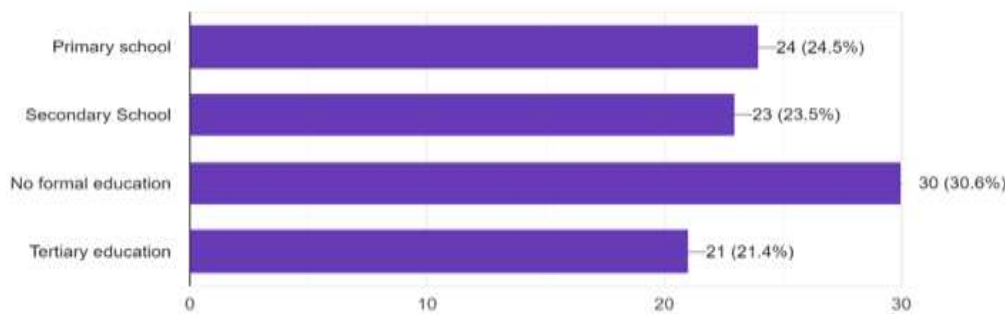
4. Occupation of the respondent
99 responses



Findings on occupation shows a clear picture of Mchinji landscape, where over (52.5%) of respondents rely on agriculture, combining those employed (including farms)” 30 (30.3%) and dedicated “farmers” 22 (22.2%). this dependence on agriculture, while crucial for local livelihoods, also presents potential vulnerabilities to human trafficking. Seasonal income fluctuations, limited access to information and education, and the allure of false promises for better work opportunities can leave this particularly susceptible. Additionally, 25 (25.3%) of respondents identified as unemployed, highlighting another segment facing vulnerability due to economic hardship. While business owners 15(15.2%) and recipients of government support 7(7.1%) represent smaller portions, their specific needs cannot be overlooked.

6.1.3 Education levels of respondents

3. Education level
98 responses

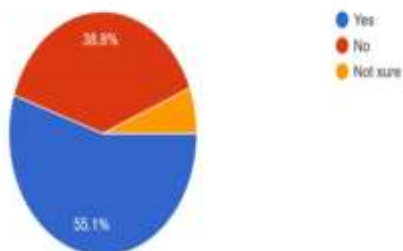


The findings showed that 30.6% of respondents had no formal education and 24.5% reached primary school, highlighting potential challenges in reaching and effectively communicating with a large portion of the community. However, 23.5% respondents having secondary school education suggests some existing foundation for receiving and understanding information through IEC campaigns. While 21.4% respondents having tertiary education indicated limited exposure to higher levels of education, potentially impacting the reach and effectiveness of complex messaging.

6.2 Awareness of human trafficking

6.2.1 Heard of term human trafficking

1. Have you heard of the term "human Trafficking"?
98 responses

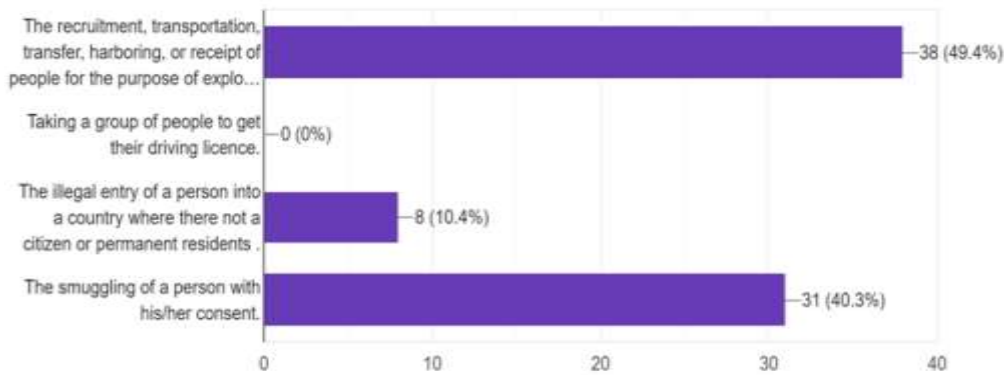


The analysis showed that many respondents 54 (55.1%) have heard of the term human trafficking. However, a significant portion 38(38.8%) have not, indicating a need for increased awareness campaigns. The presence of respondents who are unsure 6(6.1%) suggests that further education efforts are necessary to clarify the concept of human trafficking.

6.2.2 Respondents' response on definition of human trafficking

2. If yes, can you please provide a brief definition of human trafficking?

77 responses



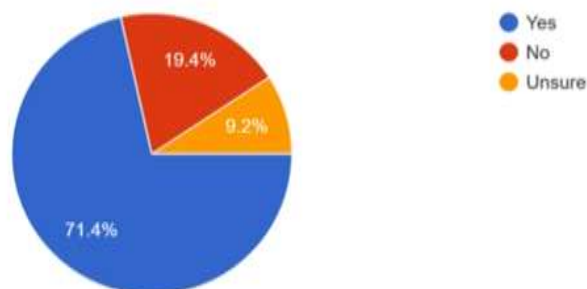
The analysis showed almost half of the respondents 38(49.4%) provided the correct definition with key elements, indicating some level of successful information dissemination through IEC campaigns or other sources. This suggests that a portion of the community possesses a relatively accurate understanding of human trafficking, potentially enabling them to identify, report, or avoid situations conducive to trafficking. However, 8(10.4%) provided a wrong answer, highlighting the need for further education and clarification on the nuances of human trafficking compared to other related issues. While 31(40.3%) mistook human trafficking for human smuggling, indicating a significant knowledge gap that requires targeted IEC interventions. This confusion can hinder effective prevention efforts as the two phenomena differ in crucial aspects like means, purpose and victim consent.

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6.2.3 Human Trafficking as a problem in Mchinji

3. Do you believe that Human Trafficking is a problem in Mchinji/ Malawi?

98 responses



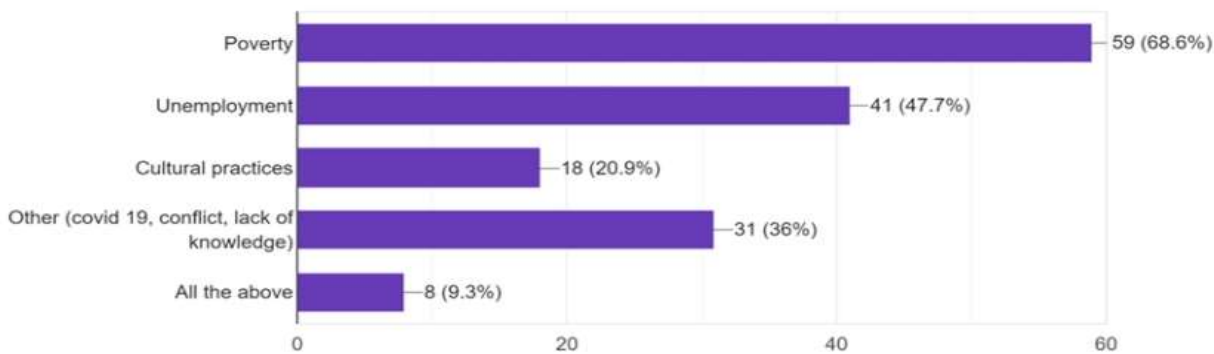
The analysis indicated that about 70 (71.4%) agreed human trafficking is a problem, indicating significant awareness and concern within the community. This creates a foundation for effective IEC interventions. 19(19.4%) denied the problem exists,

revealing a segment requiring education and awareness campaigns to challenge their misconceptions and 9 (9.2%) were unsure, highlighting the need for clarification and deeper understanding of the issue.

6.2.4 Causes of human trafficking in Mchinji, Malawi

4. If above responded as YES what do you think are the causes of human trafficking in Malawi?

86 responses

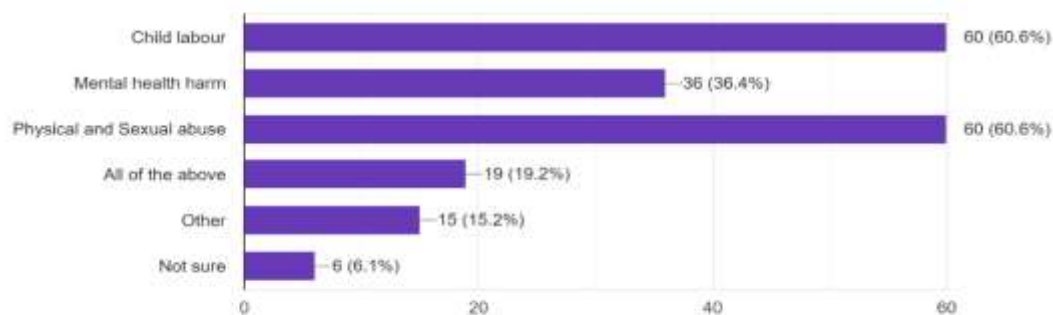


The analysis showed poverty 59 (68.6%) and unemployment 41 (47.7%) respondents recognized as major drivers, highlighting the socioeconomic vulnerabilities that make individuals susceptible to trafficker’s deceptions and exploitative offers. Cultural Practices 18 (20.9%) emerge as a significant concern, suggesting traditions or norms that might normalize certain forms of exploitation or limit opportunities, particularly for women and children. 31 (36%) respondents mention “others” like lack of knowledge, conflict, and limited awareness, underlying the complex interplay of various factors beyond just economic hardship while 8(9.3%) agree with all listed causes, indicating a nuanced understanding of the multifaceted nature of the problem.

6.2.5 The main risks associated with human trafficking

5. What are the main risks associated with human trafficking?

99 responses

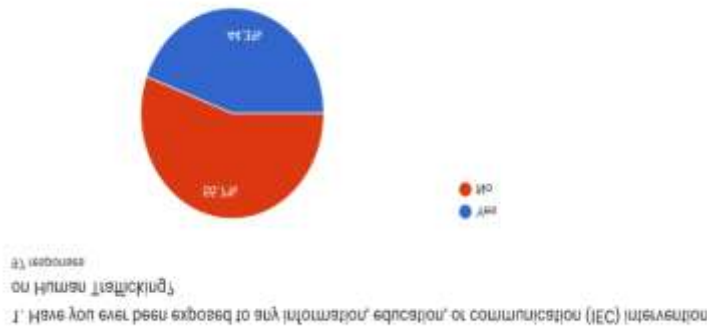


The analysis showed that 60 (60.6 %) identifies child labor, physical and sexual abuse as major risks, whereas 36 (36.4%) recognize mental health harm, which is crucial as trafficking often leads to long-lasting psychological trauma and distress. 15(15.2%) mentioned additional dangers like death, loss of education and missed opportunities, debt bondage, substance abuse, organ removal, and separation from loved one including infringement of human rights. 19(19.2%) identified all risk highlighting the widespread understanding of the exploitative and harmful nature of human trafficking. However, 6 (6.1%)

were unsure, indicating a need for further education to reach this segment and ensure comprehensive understanding of the risks involved.

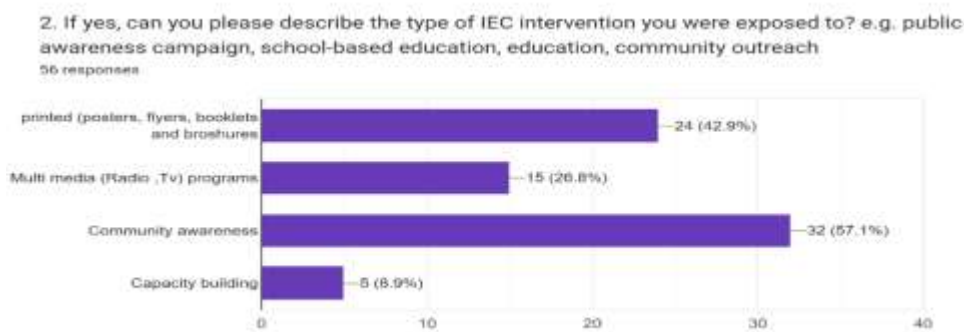
6.2 Understanding of IEC intervention

6.3.1 Exposure to any IEC intervention on human trafficking



The data analysis shows that 54 (55.7%) respondents have not been exposed to any IEC interventions on human trafficking, indicating a significant gap in awareness and education within the community. Whereas 43 (44.3%) respondents have been exposed to some form of IEC intervention, suggesting some progress in raising awareness but highlighting the need for wider reach.

6.3.2 Types of interventions exposed to on human trafficking



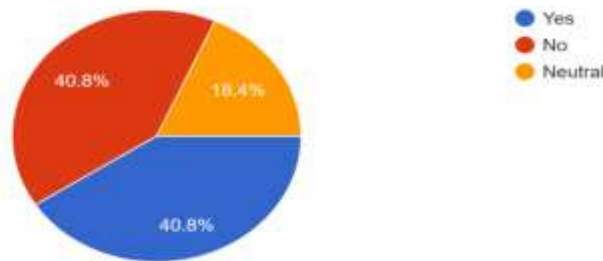
The data analysis shows that Community awareness 32 (57.1%) emerges as the most common avenue for exposure, highlighting the effectiveness of community-based approaches and leveraging trusted local channels. This suggests strong potential for further utilizing community leaders, faith-based groups, and local organizations for wider outreach. While printed materials 24 (42.9%) like posters, flyers, and brochures remain a significant source of information, showcasing their accessibility and potential for dissemination in various locations. However, it is crucial to ensure these materials cater to diverse literacy levels and cultural contexts. Multimedia 15(26.8%) like radio and TV programs play a notable role in reaching wider audiences, offering the potential for broader dissemination across the district. Collaborating with local media station like MudziWathu community radio to create engaging programs and public service announcement can be highly effective.

However, Capacity building 5 (8.9%) indicates a smaller but crucial segment receiving targeted interventions that equip individuals with knowledge and skills to combat trafficking. Expanding such training programs for community leaders, teachers, community policing members, child protection workers, boarder monitors, chiefs and church leaders and potential recruiters can empower them to act as active participants in prevention efforts.

6.3.3 Finding the IEC materials to be informative and helpful

3. Did you find the IEC intervention to be informative and helpful?

98 responses

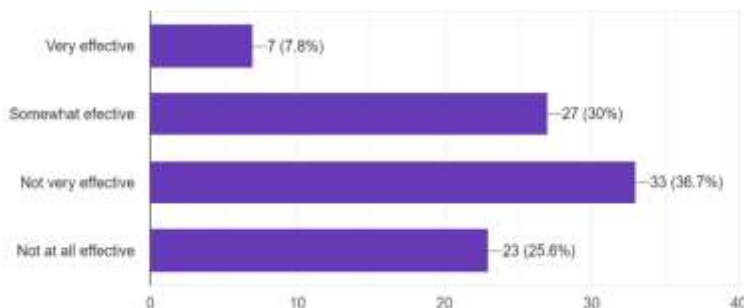


The analysis has shown mixed perceptions regarding the helpfulness of IEC interventions on human trafficking in Mchinji. 40 (40.8%) found the interventions informative and helpful, indicating that significant portion of the population is benefiting from current IEC strategies. This highlights the value of raising awareness and educating communities about human trafficking. 40 (40.8%) did not find the interventions informative or helpful, suggesting that sizeable group remains inadequately informed or unconvinced about the interventions' effectiveness. This necessitates further evaluation and improvement of IEC strategies. 18(18.4%) remained neutral, indicating a segment with neither strong positive nor negative opinions, potentially due to limited exposure of unclear understanding.

6.3.4 Effectiveness of IEC in preventing human trafficking

4. How effective do you think IEC are preventing human trafficking?

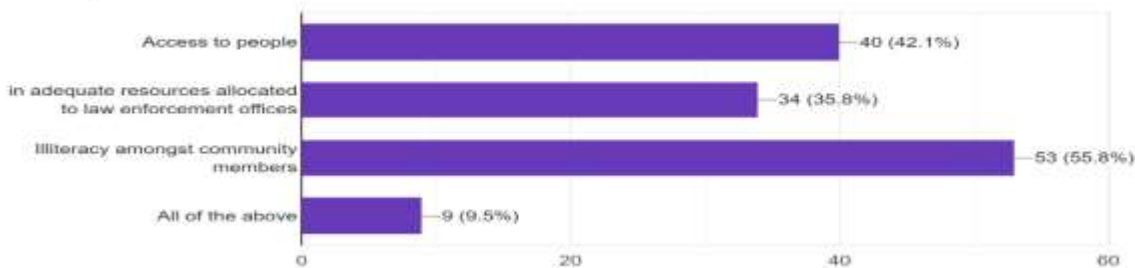
90 responses



The analysis indicated that 7 (7.8 %) found the interventions very effective, suggesting that a small portion of the community perceives them as having a significant impact on prevention. 27(30%) found them somewhat effective, indicating that some individuals see value in the interventions but believe they could be improved. 33(33.7%) found the interventions not very effective, highlighting a substantial portion of the community perceiving limited impact and 23 (25.6%) found them not at all effective, representing a concerning segment that does not see value in the current IEC strategies.

6.3.5 Challenges foreseen in implementing effective IEC interventions on human trafficking

5. What are some the challenges you see in implementing effective IEC interventions on human trafficking?
95 responses

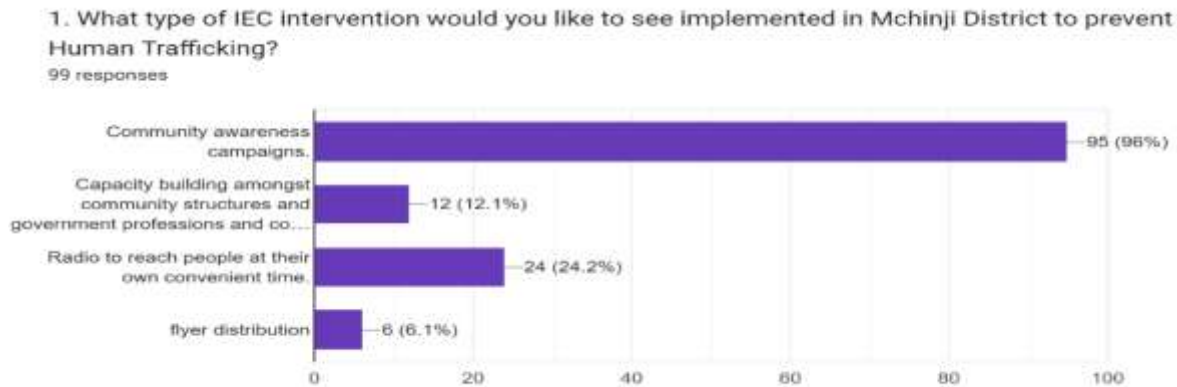


The results above show that 40 (40.1%) identified lack of access to communities and corruption as a challenge, suggesting difficulties in reaching target audience with IEC materials in the rural areas due to geographical barriers, limited communication infrastructure, no clear channels within communities, Furthermore, hesitation to report suspicious activity on this respondents indicated that victims and communities might be reluctant to report fearing exploitation or inaction due to corrupt officials. Additionally, concerns about corruption in resource allocation could suggest funds meant for IEC campaigns or anti-trafficking initiatives are misused, limiting their reach and impact. 34 (35.8%) highlighted insufficient resources allocated to IEC and law enforcement, indicating a perceived lack of financial, logistical, or human capital to support interventions. 53 (55.8%) pointed to illiteracy levels as a concern, implying that a significant portion of the population might struggle to understand written IEC materials. This necessitates exploring alternative communication methods. While 9(9.5%) agreed with all challenges.



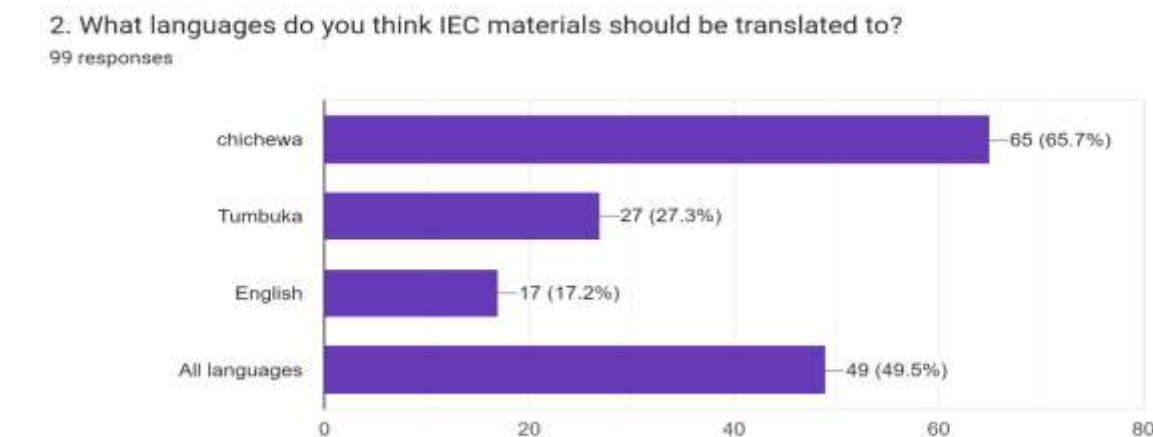
6.4 Recommendations for future IEC intervention

6.4.1 Types of IEC intervention to be implemented in Mchinji District to prevent human trafficking



The above table shows (96%) respondents preferred intensified community awareness campaigns highlighting a strong belief in the power of raising awareness amongst the general population. This suggests a perceived knowledge gap and need for widespread information dissemination. (12.1%) respondents opted for capacity building within existing community structures indicated recognition of the importance of empowering local leaders and organizations already playing a role in the community. This suggests a desire to strengthen existing resources and networks. However, 24.4% felt that radio is ideal communication tool as it demonstrates awareness of the need to reach people beyond traditional methods and cater to different preferences and accessibility levels. Radio offers wider reach and can be accessed while performing daily tasks. other respondents indicated that 6.1% preferred flyer distribution suggesting this method still holds some value, potentially for targeted audiences or areas with limited radio access and can be kept for a long time.

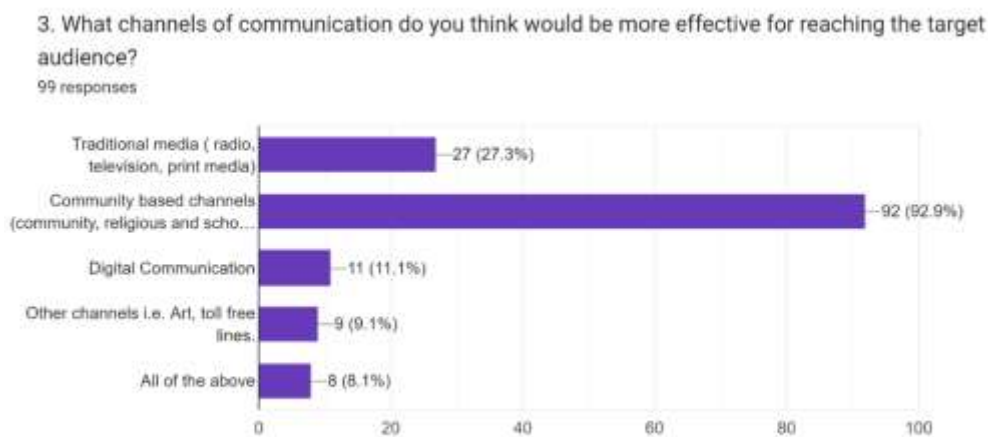
6.4.2 Preferred Languages IEC materials to translate to



Findings of this study showed that about 66.7% preferred Chichewa which indicates a strong preference for the majority language spoken in Malawi. 27% opted for Tumbuka. This highlights the need to cater to the significant minority population

speaking Tumbuka. 17.2% preferred for English. 49% preferred materials in all three languages and other languages. This suggests a recognition of the diverse linguistic landscape and a desire for inclusivity.

8.4.3 Channels of communication that would be more effective for reaching the target audience.

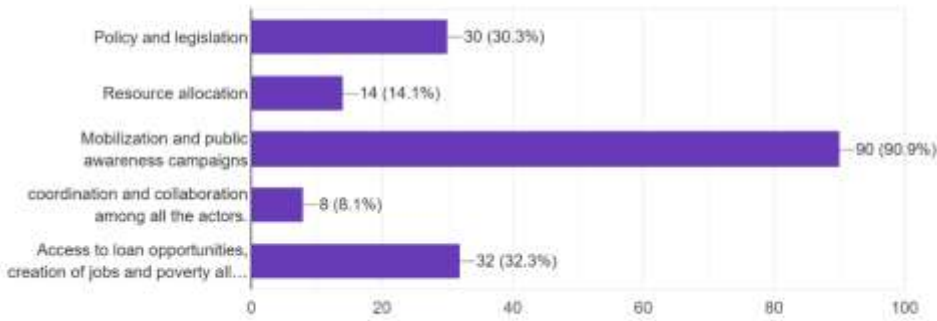


The findings indicate that 92(92.9%) showed strong preference for community - based channels favoring community - based awareness campaigns highlight the perceived importance of local engagement and trusted messengers. This suggests community leaders, traditional cultural channels and word of mouth communication might be highly effective. 27(27.3%) preferred traditional media (radio, television, print) indicating its value in reaching wider audience beyond immediate communities. This can be particularly useful for broader awareness raising and disseminating key messages. Only 11(11.1%) preferred for digital communication suggesting it might not be the most accessible or preferred channel for a significant portion of the target audience. There is need to consider digital literacy levels and infrastructure limitations. 9 (91.1%) were of toll-free lines and 8(8.1%) indicating all channels suggesting these options might be valuable for specific needs like reporting suspicious activity or seeking help.

6.4.4 Role the Government, NGOs and Community leaders in implementing effective IEC interventions in human trafficking

4. What role do you think the Government, NGO,s, and community leaders can play in implementing effective IEC interventions in human trafficking ?

99 responses



The analysis showed that 30(30.3%) indicated the need for improved policies and legislation processes with clear structures within communities. This suggests concerns about existing policies being weak or poorly implemented, and a desire for stronger frameworks to support local efforts. 14(14.1%) highlighted the need for increased resource allocation to the TIP fund for IEC implementation and material distribution. This suggests concerns about insufficient resources hindering campaign effectiveness. Overwhelming support 90 (90.9%) for community mobilization and public awareness campaigns demonstrates strong belief in their importance. This suggests communities see themselves as key participants and desire clear information to address their concerns. While 8.1 & advocated for collaboration across stakeholders reveals recognition of the need for multi-pronged approach and 32.3% were of the view that access to loans and opportunities suggests addressing root causes of vulnerability linked to poverty and lack of economic options. This highlights the need for interventions beyond pure awareness-raising.

7. Discussion of findings

7.1 Discussion

7.1.1 Demographics of study respondents

The study, focused on understanding IEC. Role in preventing human trafficking in Mchinji, involved 99 participants with higher number of females (57.6%). Age distribution reveals young adults (18-24) as the most represented, due to increased vulnerability. Occupation data shows over half (52.5) rely on agriculture, exposing them to trafficking risks due to income instability and limited information access. Additionally, 25.3% were unemployed, highlighting another vulnerable group. Education levels were diverse, 30.6% having no formal education and 21.4% having tertiary education, requiring nuanced IEC approaches to cater to different comprehension levels. These findings provide valuable insights into the demographics most susceptible to trafficking and inform the design of effective IEC strategies in Mchinji.

7.1.2 Awareness on human trafficking

The findings have shown that there is a gap of awareness of human trafficking while over (55.5%) of respondents have heard of human trafficking indicating some awareness, nearly half of the respondents couldn't provide the correct definition. This suggests further efforts are needed to solidify understanding. However, the fact that almost half could define it accurately points to some level of successful information dissemination through IEC campaigns or other sources. This highlights the potential for improvement by focusing future strategies on clarifying the definition, addressing misconceptions, and tailoring messages to specific audiences and vulnerabilities. By taking these steps, IEC efforts can contribute to more informed and empowered community, better equipped to prevent human trafficking in Mchinji District.

7.1.3 Understanding of IEC intervention

Despite community awareness being viewed as the primary channel for human trafficking information as shown in the summary, a stark reality emerges as over half of the respondents (55.7%) have not been exposed to any IEC intervention. While existing interventions reached some and were found informative by 40.8% a concerning 36.7% perceived them as ineffective. This highlights the need for broader reach and more impactful strategies. The identified challenges of illiteracy and corruption require innovative approaches that address knowledge gaps and ensure trust in information sources.

7.1.4 Recommendation for future IEC intervention

This study has revealed a strong community-driven approach desired for preventing human trafficking in Mchinji District. An overwhelming majority advocate for intensified community awareness campaigns, highlighting a belief in empowering local populations. Preference for Chichewa translations signifies the importance of culturally relevant materials. Additionally, prioritizing community-based-channels like awareness campaigns and advocating for collaboration between government, NGOs and community leaders emphasize a multi-pronged approach anchored in local trust and understanding. These findings call for IEC strategies that move beyond simple information dissemination and actively engage communities through culturally appropriate messaging, diverse communications channels, and collaborative partnerships. By prioritizing these preferences, future IEC interventions can empower Mchinji communities to effectively prevent human trafficking concerns about frameworks, resource limitations, and the need for empowering communities with information. While collaboration and addressing economic vulnerabilities were recognized, the emphasis leaned towards public awareness campaigns, suggesting a need for multifaceted interventions beyond pure information dissemination.

To create a more informed and empowered community, effectively combating human trafficking and protecting vulnerable individuals addressing human trafficking requires a multi-pronged approach that stakeholders must work together and implement anti-trafficking initiatives.

8. Recommendations and Suggestions

8.1 Government

- There is need for increase funding and resources by allocating more budget towards IEC campaigns and community outreach programs to expand intervention coverage and reach the currently unexposed population (55.7%).
- There is a need to partner with diverse stakeholders by collaborating with NGOs, community leaders, faith – based organizations, and private sector actors to leverage their networks and expertise for wider dissemination of information.
- There is a need to promote transparency and countability by addressing concerns about corruption, ensuring clear communication, ethical practices, and involvement of trusted community members in program implementation.
- There is need to develop and enforce relevant policies that protect vulnerable communities, promote responsible recruitment practices and hold traffickers accountable such as the TIP 2015 Act, Trafficking in persons sentencing guidelines, the National Plan of Action and the TIP standard operating procedures.
- There is a need to develop engaging campaigns that address specific community concerns and vulnerabilities. Utilize diverse communication channels beyond traditional methods, such as community radio, drama performances, and door -to-door outreach.
- There is a need to prioritize Chichewa translations in this IEC materials need to be translated into Chichewa and consider additional local languages depending on need and resources.
- There is need to leverage community-based channels by partnering with leaders, NGO sand community-based organizations to disseminate information through trusted networks and traditional communication channels.

8.2 NGOs and Community Organization

- There is need to utilize innovative communication channels such as employ mobile technology, community radio shows, door-to door outreach, and culturally appropriate visual aids to overcome illiteracy challenges (55.8%) and engage diverse audiences.
- There is a need to organize interactive workshops and trainings through facilitation of community dialogues, peer-to-peer learning sessions, and role-playing activities to actively engage communities, raise awareness and empower individuals to act.
- There is need to build capacity of community leaders – train and equip community leaders with knowledge, skills, and resources to become advocates against human trafficking and educate their communities effectively.
- Monitor and evaluate interventions regularly to collect feedback from communities to assess the impact, identify, areas for improvement and adapt strategies based on data and local needs.

8.3 The media

- There is need to partner with NGOs and government agencies to develop and disseminate informative and engaging public service announcements, documentaries and talk shows on human trafficking.
- There is need to raise awareness about local resources and support services by informing communities about available help for victims and potential reporting mechanisms through various media channels.

- There is need to promote investigative journalism by encouraging journalists to uncover and expose trafficking networks and hold perpetrators accountable, while ensuring ethical reporting that protects victims.

8.4 Community leaders

- Need to mobilize communities and raise awareness such as organize community meetings, public events, and awareness campaigns to educate residents about human trafficking risks and empower them to identify and report suspicious activities.
 - There is need to promote open communication and trust through encouraging dialogue within communities to address concerns, dispel, myths, and build trust information sources.
 - There is need to partner with stakeholders and collaborate with NGOs government agencies, and law enforcement to access resources, training, and support for community-based anti-trafficking initiatives.

9. Conclusion

The study has shed light on both the progress and challenges in using Information, Education and Information strategies to combat human trafficking in Mchinji District, Malawi. The key findings were Awareness gap: while over half (55.5%) have heard of human trafficking, many lack a clear understanding, highlighting the need for improved information dissemination, Limited reach: despite community awareness being the primary channel, a significant portion (55.7%) have not been exposed to any IEC intervention, necessitating broader coverage, Mixed effectiveness: existing interventions reached some and provided valuable information, but many perceived them as ineffective, calling for improvement in message clarity and cultural relevance, community-driven approach: strong preference for community-based channels, local languages, and collaboration among stakeholders underscores the importance of engaging communities directly and multi-pronged approach needed: in this findings have shown that awareness campaigns alone are insufficient. Interventions must address root causes like poverty, involve diverse stakeholders, and combine prevention, victim support and law enforcement efforts.

Moving forward, IEC strategies need to expand reach, tailor messages and improve clarity. Building trust and community engagement through interactive activities is crucial. Addressing root causes like poverty and involving diverse stakeholders in a multi-pronged approach that combines awareness, victim support and law enforcement efforts is key. Regular monitoring and adaptation based on feedback to ensure interventions remain relevant and effective. By taking these steps, IEC strategies can empower Mchinji communities to actively prevent human trafficking.

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