COMMUNICATION CHALLENGES EXPERIENCED IN THE PROCESS OF ADVOCATING AGAINST CHILD TRAFFICKING IN KENYAN PRIMARY SCHOOLS: THE CASE OF MATHARE CONSTITUENCY

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Abstract

In Sub-Saharan Africa, child trafficking is one of the leading criminal activities after drug trafficking. In Kenya, many cases of child trafficking especially for the purpose of sexual exploitation and domestic servitude are reported each year thus the need to publicly advocate against it and implement relevant laws that will address it accordingly. Guided by the Elaboration Likelihood Model (ELM), which theorises that motivation and ability are the key tenets of persuasion communication that ultimately plays a huge role in addressing common communication challenges, this study sought to find out the communication challenges usually encountered by individuals and organisations while advocating against this vice amongst primary school children. This is after preliminary studies indicated that as much advocacy indeed plays a huge role in addressing child trafficking in Kenya, this success is not without its challenges. A purposive sample of 16 facilitators was selected as per Yamane's formula and the convergent parallel mixed methods design was used for data analysis. The study established that 93.7% of the facilitator respondents agreed to the fact that they indeed face a number of challenges as they attempt to advocate against child trafficking in primary schools of Mathare constituency. Furthermore, 75% of these respondents identified time constraint as the main challenge they face followed by lack of support from the school administration at 62.5%. Thus, the study concluded that it is very possible to have an advocacy programme that will end up being effective but faced by a number of communication challenges at the same time. However, this does not imply that such an initiative should be frowned upon and undermined because how these challenges are mitigated is what eventually provides solutions that will help in filling in the identified gaps.

Keywords: *communication, advocacy, advocacy communication, communication challenges, facilitators*

Introduction

Child trafficking, which is a form of human trafficking, is defined as the recruitment, transportation, transfer, harbouring and receipt of children for the purposes of forced labour, slavery and sexual exploitation (U.S. Department State, 2016). Globally, the fight against child trafficking has taken shape due to an increased level of awareness on the need to counter the vice. Estimates from intergovernmental organisations, non-governmental organisations and governments show that globally, by the year 2012, about 4-27 million individuals were being enslaved and 50% of these victims were children (Alvarez & Alessi, 2012).

In sub-Saharan Africa, about 200,000 children are susceptible to trafficking every year and they are mostly trafficked for the purposes of early marriage, prostitution, forced and domestic labour (Mbakogu, 2012). As reported by UNICEF (2003), in West and Central Africa where trafficking is more prevalent, more than 70% of the countries in these regions have identified it as a problem, compared to one third (30 percent) of the countries found in the East and Southern Africa region.

The National Crime Research Centre (2015) highlights Kenya as a source, transit and destination of human trafficking with unemployment, poverty and ignorance cited as the main aspects contributing to it. As stated by U.S. Department of State (2016), in Kenya, children that have been trafficked are mostly subjected to forced labour in the domestic service sector, street vending, cattle herding and begging. They are exploited also sexually through child prostitution and sex tourism at the coastal region of Kenya. However, the National Crime Research Centre (2015) estimates an 80% level of awareness intervention strategies that have been put in place across the country in order to fight the vice, thus implying that something is being done to at least address this problem. Despite the multiple initiatives meant to curb the crime however, the practice of trafficking children is not only growing but continues to be misunderstood not only by government bodies but also the general public hence the need for advocacy through various communication methods (National Crime Research Centre, 2015). The researcher's interest in this topic came about after attending a workshop conducted by UNODC on trafficking of vulnerable groups.

As noted by the National Crime Research Centre (2015), some of the reasons why individuals (children or adults) in Kenya end up being victims of trafficking is because of low income, high poverty levels, illiteracy and unemployment. The most common methods traffickers use to lure their victims as further noted by National Crime Research Centre (2015) include deception (enticements and false promises), media (an enticing offer is posted on a social media platform for example) and referrals by relatives. Advocacy communication therefore becomes important as an intervention in such scenarios since it enlightens those likely to be victims.

In accordance to a report by the U.S Department of State's (2016), children are the most vulnerable group with regards to cases of trafficking having an estimated number of 1.2 million of them being trafficked across the globe each year. Kenya has been listed as one of Sub-Saharan Africa's countries that has child trafficking as one of its leading criminal activities. While there is no specific government statistics available on child trafficking in Kenya, Mwangi's (2017) account notes that more than 20,000 children especially girls are trafficked annually in Kenya.

The vice is perpetuated by the fact that children are a source of cheap labour and cannot fight for their rights effectively without the help of an upper power (UNICEF, 2003). High levels of poverty, large numbers of orphaned children and cultural practices are some of the reasons why law enforcement efforts are weakened. Thus, the crime of child trafficking goes on yet different Civil Society Organisations (CSOs) have put in place various advocacy initiatives with an objective of addressing it.

Notably, such humanitarian organisations make use of different communication methods depending on the target audience but hardly any empirical data focusing on advocacy against child trafficking is officially available. UNODC (2009) thus observes the need for research and data collection that will enable identification of the forms of trafficking, developing effective anti-trafficking strategies, assisting victims of trafficking as well as prosecuting traffickers.

Literature Review and Theoretical Underpinnings

Communication is basically the process of different parties involved in the process trying to create understanding among themselves. It involves action given the fact that it is a process of exchanging ideas, messages or information from one individual (the speaker) to another (receiver) through signals or words (language) that are comprehensible between these two parties. Typically, this process usually faces a number of challenges that can be summed up to the concept of noise. Noise is the most common barrier to effective communication and usually, it is categorized into different entities such as: semantic noise, physical noise and emotional noise (Pearson, J.C., Melson, P.E., Titworth, S. and Harter, L., 2013).

Thus, Petty and Cacioppo (1986) when trying to explain the Elaboration Likelihood Model (ELM) argues that for any message meant to persuade an audience with the aim of changing behaviour and attitude, motivation to want to internalise that message and the ability to cognitively understand that message are two very key tenets for this to occur. In order to mitigate communication challenges faced during any advocating process, the source of a message needs to put in mind that he or she has to one, come up with messages that will be easily understood by the audience, which means that the formulation of these messages should complement ability to comprehend it and this can only be possible if the message delivered is not difficult to be understood. Second, the audience has to be motivated enough to want to listen to the message its carrier has. Motivation can easily be achieved by ensuring that the communication channels employed are interesting enough to persuade one's audience to accept that message (Petty and Cacioppo, 1986).

As Dainton and Zelley (2005) argue, repetition boosts the persuasive effect of strong arguments while interruptions weaken their effectiveness. This is why it is very essential that the source of a message acknowledges that during any advocating process, communication challenges are bound to occur and therefore it is in the best interest of the effectiveness of that message to ensure that these challenges are addressed and eventually mitigated so that efficacy of the message is not diluted or lost.

Communication

World Health Organisation (2010) defines communication as the way information and messages are passed from one person to another and means through which relationships and communities are built and maintained. Three keys for effective communication as identified by WHO (2010) include:

1. **Means**. How the message is sent. This may occur through spoken or written words, sign language and even assistive communication devices. This is attributed to by the fact that every individual require access to the means of communication that best suits their needs.
2. **Reason**. Why communication is taking place. As WHO (2010) suggests, it may be for the purpose of expressing thoughts, feelings, asking directions, telling a joke among others. Different people may be communicating for different purposes depending on their needs and wants.
3. **Opportunity**, because people need constant opportunities in order to communicate with others since limited opportunities can affect learning and development of communication skills among other skills (WHO, 2010).

Communication specialists believe that poor communication is the foundation to many problems while effective communication is the one solution to most of these problems. Communication is a process of using messages so as to generate meaning. An activity in which one participates in a communication context include interpersonal communication, small group communication, mass communication, computer mediated and public communication among others (Pearson, et.al., 2013).

Persuasion in Communication

Pearson et.al. (2013) state that persuasive presentation and performance is a message tactically designed so as to prompt change in the audience. It involves stating clearly what you want to accomplish and informing the audience what you want them to learn. Speakers in persuasive contexts should analyse the audience to determine when and how they should reveal their immediate purpose. One approach in persuasion is face to face persuasive efforts that are believed to be more effective than public service campaigns such as using the television. This is because someone's message in person is a powerful persuader compared to a mediated message.

The objective of persuasion can also be effectively achieved if the audience is a voluntary one. Other approaches in persuasion include use of argumentative strategies such as proposition of a fact, policy and value as well as use of evidence and proof. Persuasion can also be achieved through visualisation such as persuasive imagery because it has been established that use of words is not as powerful as the emphasis that is brought about by something visual (Pearson, et al., 2013).

With regards to this study, this argument presented by Pearson et al (2013), clearly outlines why a persuasive approach to relay an important message is quite critical. The fact that facilitators from organisations advocating against child trafficking use face-to-face method when passing across their messages, says a lot about how the children at the end of advocacy sessions are usually able to understand that information passed to them. They are able to connect with the carrier of the message and even open up about so many issues for instance, the cases they know about, solutions they think can come in handy in assisting children that are victims of child trafficking among others.

Communication Strategies for Advocating Initiatives

For the message you want to pass across to be able to reach the target audience, communication must take place. Communication is a very common human activity which every single person can recognise but very few are able to define satisfactorily. As Sayers (2006) argues, communication often fails due to language differences; where people are not able to understand one another and cultural differences where the more diverse and difference the audience is, the more likely someone will misunderstand or misinterpret your message. There are also personal differences where a difference in life experiences and opinions may curtail effective communication. Lastly, there is lost information where, when vital information is lost or goes missing, effective communication is threatened.

An important factor to note is that creating awareness and sensitising people about an issue does not automatically lead to behaviour change. The main aim of awareness and advocating a given issue is to let people know more about a given phenomenon and thus the behaviour change may take a while to take shape. A typical awareness raising campaign will communicate either one central message or a suite of closely related subsidiary messages. According to Sears (2018), the central or the main message of a given campaign is communicated to a selected target audience using different techniques, tools and methodologies. At this point, the process of communication will take place within a strictly defined period.

The four key components of an effective advocating campaign according to Sayers (2006) includes the message, which is basically the main information you want to pass across, the audience who are the beneficiaries of the particular message, the strategy, which refers to the method you will use to pass this message and finally the timing, which focuses on the particular time and season you will choose for the awareness campaign.

The communication strategies and techniques that are handy in advocacy work and raising public awareness as additionally presented by Sears (2018), include personal communication with the community members through public meetings, workshops and informal social events. Other strategies include training programmes and structured education in schools, colleges and universities, enhanced information literacy skills within institutional libraries, adult learning centres, travelling exhibitions and displays, printed materials for example brochures, billboards, pamphlets, posters, resource books among others. Other materials include visual and audio-visual resources (CDs, DVDs, pre-recorded cassettes, websites, weblogs among others), print media like articles in newspapers and magazines, mass media interviews and news items on radio and TV and also celebrity spokespeople. Some of these strategies came to the fore during the investigation of the objectives of this study.

Advocacy Communication

Advocacy communication is seen as a societal responsibility. Feshbach and Feshbach (1978) argue that fighting for the rights of a child should not be seen as an invasion of privacy even at the family level. In relation to this study on child advocacy, he argues that communication should be encouraged through information and educational programs as well as community involvement. This, the authors suggest, will create an environment where even in matters of child rearing practices, the parents as well as the community are able to dialogue in an open and freer atmosphere. While these views were focusing on child advocacy with regard to discipline in the late 1970s, the views provide some insight into the need to see educational programs as a platform that can contribute to child protection against trafficking and advocacy.

Furthermore, as pointed out by Christian (2014), for any advocacy campaign planning to take shape, its very key element is communication since at its very essence, operative advocacy is persuasive communication. Consequently, a good communication plan is the heart of any effective advocacy campaign where concrete exploration backed up by research will make the process of plan development much easier thus leading to a more successful enactment. Additionally, developing a communication plan will start by stakeholders of the advocacy initiative listing and determining which people are most critical to reach in order to determine which arguments are going to be most convincing (Christian, 2014).

While assessing which audience will be targeted by the advocacy campaign, it is important to identify the audience's knowledge of the campaign's target issue. This analysis helps in identifying the most relevant and accurate channels that will ensure the intended message reaches the identified target audience. For instance, the advocacy communication methods used and message packaging done for children as an audience, will not be the same as that one packaged specifically for an adult audience (Christian, 2014).

Advocacy Communication Methods

After it is clear which audiences need to hear the identified and formulated messages, Christian (2014) notes that the next step would be to figure out how best the target audience can be reached. Christian (2014) further notes that there are various factors that should be put into consideration when deciding and considering channels and methods relevant for an identified advocacy campaign.

The first one is reach which refers to the audience the advocacy communication method identified is targeting. The second is frequency. That is, how often are audiences exposed to these identified advocacy communication methods. There is also the aspect of cost which involves budgeting and knowing in detail how much it would cost to utilize the methods.

Feasibility is also another factor to consider. This involves asking the question whether or not it is reasonable to expect that the identified advocacy communication methods could be utilized effectively and whether there could be risks incurred while doing so. Effectiveness is another one. That is, bearing in mind how much effect on knowledge, attitude or behaviour the identified methods could produce. There is rapid response also. That is, identifying methods that would make room for sending urgent messages in order to counter negative opinions or statements. Lastly is repetition. Consistent messages that are sent through different and a variety of channels and usage of varying advocacy communication methods, are most likely to reach the identified target audiences.

The study benefited from these insights as it helped in the understanding of what facilitators put into consideration as they come up with advocating messages and advocacy communication methods that would contribute to advocating against child trafficking.

Arguments on Advocacy Communication and Advocacy Communication Methods

Advocacy communication focuses rigidly on influencing specific audiences and using specific messages in order to deliver changes both in policy and practice (Coulby, 2010). As Coulby (2010) further argues, advocacy communication requires clear objectives, knowledge of the target audience, language that is appropriate for these audiences and content that is short, precise and to the point. Moreover, these elements for effective communication should be supported by an advocacy communication strategy that includes a section on how different pieces of communication work will be monitored and evaluated.

Additionally, advocacy communication is where through different communication strategies and tactics, non-profit organisations that use advocacy as their main strategy to address their core mandate, issue campaigns in order to advance their mission (Breitrose, 2012). As further elaborated by Ciszek (2018), advocacy campaigns usually become a space that can enable audiences to consume, engage and interact with other audience members.

Throughout any community-based rehabilitation (CBR) guidelines, advocacy has been mentioned as a suggested activity. As argued by a report by World Health Organisation (WHO) (2010), advocacy can be undertaken differently by different people. For instance, self-help groups or people living with disability organisations might advocate as a group with the aim of influencing decision makers and create change in order to ensure inclusive policies and programmes that will cater for such individuals (WHO, 2010).

As WHO's report (2010) further argues, successful advocacy relies heavily on significant messages that are being communicated and heard. However, many people belonging to the minority group experience obstacles to communication and often, their voices are not heard. They have few chances to influence or sway decisions on issues, policies and services that directly affect them. Thus, advocacy and effective communication become an important part of the empowered process for people in minority groups given the fact that advocacy programmes give such individuals a chance to voice out their issues and a platform that is ready to listen and act (WHO, 2010).

Advocacy communication methods have been used in some studies. Arguing that Lesbian, Gay, Bisexual, Transgender and Queer (LGBTQ) youths are one of the 'at risk' groups, Ciszek (2017), conducted a study that used advocacy communication methods to determine how CSOs use social media to communicate with target publics and how their campaigns foster a platform through which information is sought and shared so that it is used for interpretation by members of LGBTQ. In this study, the use of social media is mainly for awareness creation.

Under a report by Coherence in Information for Agricultural Research and Development (CIARD) (2014), in order to undertake advocacy activities, one can use various advocacy methods that will help communicate the target message to the target audience. It is important seeing that the approaches used to deliver advocacy can be as crucial as the actual message and should therefore be supportive, reassuring and appropriate (CIARD, 2014). Some of the options that can be used to communicate one's messages since they allow the user to showcase different delivery mechanisms in advocacy include the use of presentations, documents, images, videos, trainings among others.

Presentations are excellent resources that can be used in undertaking advocacy. As argued by CIARD (2014), they are a reliable source as they provide texts, tell the whole story and appeal to people due to the details involved. Presentations can be very suitable in presenting messages that have accompanying evidence or confirmation such as statistical data.

Another useful approach is the use of documents. They are useful as supporting material where they can either be published articles, specific proposals or even promotional leaflets (CIARD, 2014). Moreover,

they offer an opportunity for relevant and significant facts and arguments to be delivered. With documents as a tool, target audiences like senior managers, are able to respond better especially with the presentation of advocacy cases, supporting evidence and even proposals.

Secondly, images of all varieties, be it photographs or graphics can convey messages and facts that easily influence people. However, since images are best used in specific circumstances aimed at particular target groups to whom the images best appeal, one should think carefully about which images to use, when and for whom (CIARD, 2014). The best audiences for whom one can use images are the types of audiences in face-to-face presentations. At such a platform, images can be projected and the context explained easily (CIARD, 2014).

Although different types of images will appeal to different target groups, images can be undoubtedly convincing to any given type of audience but works best on people who may not have time to read through content thoroughly (CIARD, 2014). As CIARD (2014) further argues, it is however good to note that photographs may work well with any given audience but images like scientific graphs may require technical and practical understanding in order to be interpreted properly.

Videos can be essential advocacy tools whether made by oneself or by others (CIARD, 2014). They can be made accessible online through video sharing channels and other online platforms for people to access. For the purpose of effective advocacy, videos as suggested by CIARD (2014) should be short.

Social media platforms are mainly used to fit communication into a collaborating dialogue and usually offer varying channels so as to reach a wide variety of target groups. As argued by CIARD (2014), depending on the message, specific target groups can be directly or indirectly reached by social media tools that one chooses to use. Also reliant on the type of social media tools used, various messages can be delivered. For instance, if using blogs, longer and extensive messages can be developed and delivered while in a platform like Facebook, shorter messages and links to other resources can be shared (CIARD, 2014).

Demonstrations and training provide opportunities for primary experiences with tools and methods that offer people with an understanding of what can be done in order to scale up or even enhance the bar (CIARD, 2014). They also provide opportunities that allow one to have direct experience in using particular tools. As CIARD (2014) further argue, this type of advocacy communication delivery tool can work best with technicians and scientists who undertake deeds to open access to their research results and conclusions and use the tools in their work. Additionally, demonstrations can be used with senior management personnel in order to reinforce various advocacy cases by ensuring that the methods in action coming to play dissipate any myths concerning the target message.

Role of Advocacy Communication

Advocacy communication as described by Coulby (2010) entails using specific messages for a specific audience in order to bring about change both at a personal and policy level. This is because as Christie, A., Nott, T., Capezzuoli, S., Smith, J., Wedden, P.V & Jaenicke, H. (2014) argue, change rarely happens on its own. Advocacy communication is very fundamental in the area of awareness raising about a particular need, building the will of the public and setting priorities aimed at improving policies in order to force social change outcome from actions taken across different stakeholders (Christie et.al., 2014).

Advocacy communication works best when evidence and analysis are combined since there is engagement of messages and laying of strategies that can influence those delivering the change (Christie et. al., 2014). As further argued by Christie et.al. (2014), advocacy communication methods can really assist in awareness raising among policy makers and the general public on the importance of a given issue as they clearly communicate the problem using stories as an evidence-based avenue of addressing the forwarded

problem. The policy solutions brought forward can go a long mile in convincing decision makers as well as the influencers of the decision on the need to take action.

Advocacy communication methods like social mobilization engages a wider range of actors so that they can be involved in driving change through awareness creation and creating a platform for better services and accountability (Christie et.al., 2014). As further discussed in a report presented by Quinn and Young (2012), every country in the world is at a different stage in developing and implementing different advocacy communication methods and strategies that offer varying ideas and lessons for social mobilisation, advocacy and communication throughout every social change movement.

In other countries, emphasis has been on developing coherent strategies for social mobilisation, advocacy and communication as well as educating a broader set of stakeholders about different development gaps identified in a society (Quinn & Young, 2012). For instance, in the area of nutrition, Uganda has developed such an advocacy communication strategy involving various stakeholder groups and which is about to be launched. In Bangladesh, a joint strategy has been developed and different advocacy communication methods like TV talk shows, TV advertisements, e-toolkits, presentations and trainings have been put in place in order to address the problem of malnutrition.

Advocacy communication therefore goes an extra mile in ensuring that the addressing of crucial societal gaps identified in different areas is made possible through the many varying advocacy communication methods used. These methods should however have one major goal, which is to have an influence on the advocacy communication messages meant to bring about behaviour and attitude change on the target audience (Quinn & Young, 2012).

Impact of Advocacy Communication Methods

Advocacy communication methods are very crucial in determining whether or not the advocacy communication messages put across will achieve the goal of changing behaviour and attitude of the target audience mobilized (Christie et al., 2014). Thus, an active board decisively involved in setting up the sequence of action is highly critical to institutions or organisations' effectiveness in their adoption of advocacy messages (Green & Griesinger, 2006). What this means is that effectiveness is extremely dependent on representational capacity where concerns and views of different stakeholders can be effectively elicited then articulated effectively so as to be heard by the policymakers (Zhang & Guo, 2020). Effective advocacy communication methods play an important role in building and upholding long term relationships directly linked to several behavioural outcomes that are desirable (Gillespie, Mae & Rock, 2009).

Influential advocacy communication as argued by Zhang and Guo (2020) has also enabled individuals involved in advocacy programmes to be more conversant with the facts being addressed thus able to understand the subject matter quite well which in the long run ensures an impactful content delivery. This ensures that the intended message reaches the target audience in a simplified manner. This is because as pointed out by Citizens' Committee for Children (CCC) (2020), government officials and the general public do not have time for long minded conversations or documents and simplification of content can only be achieved when deliverer of the message understands what he or she is talking about.

Communication Challenges Encountered During Advocacy Processes

Continuous learning for Individuals, Management and Business (CLIMB) (2017), describes communication challenges during any advocacy processes as unavoidable. These are challenges that any individual involved in advocacy initiatives cannot escape but that does not mean he or she should surrender.

A true advocate should find a way to navigate and work around these challenges in order to ensure that at the end of the day, the mandate of the advocacy programme is realised (CLIMB, 2017).

The three major communication barriers encountered during advocacy processes as presented by CLIMB (2017) include one, reacting instead of responding. When emotions take over in the process of communication, things tend to get worse. For instance, receiving news that gets you worked up and extremely angry may cause you to react negatively and lose focus on why you are advocating against a particular issue in the first place (CLIMB, 2017). This is because other stakeholders and policy makers can come up with decisions that does not sit well with you and instead of reacting emotionally about it, addressing the issue rationally would be the wise thing to do.

Treating your audience the same way is another challenge in advocacy processes. This is a mistake most communicators make and as backed up by CLIMB (2017), while everyone needs to be treated fairly, not everyone need to be treated the same. This is because every person is unique in their own way and therefore working with a mix of personalities and communication styles require special attention. If you put in some effort as the communicator, you are able to pick up on small cues that can really assist you in being able to communicate with them on a deeper level (CLIMB, 2017). In advocating processes for instance, some of the issues being addressed are quite sensitive and thus listening to the people affected by these issues become very important because you need to understand quite well their views and why they need help. This way, you are even able to come up with solutions that are relevant.

There is also the challenge of advocacy communicators assuming that their message is understood. CLIMB (2017) explains that sometimes a message can easily get lost in translation if one is not very clear in their communication. It is therefore never safe to assume that every participant in your audience is understanding what you are talking about. Thus, as further pointed out by CLIMB (2017), adaptation of methods that would simplify language and meaning would be the best way to go.

Methodology

Data for this study was collected in Mathare constituency of Nairobi County. Mathare is one of the largest informal settlements in Nairobi county and it is divided into 6 administrative units referred to as wards. A purposive sample of 16 facilitators and 240 teachers out of a total target population of 17 and 597 respectively were selected for the study using Yamane's (1967) formula. This target population was necessary because facilitators from different CSOs are usually the ones going to different schools in Mathare constituency with the aim of creating awareness against child trafficking. They are specific individuals identified and trained by the organisations that address child trafficking in order to create awareness and public advocacy on matters of child trafficking thus having an expertise in that area. They were therefore, the best in informing this study in regards to the communication challenges they usually encounter while advocating against this vice. Additionally, teachers were necessary in the giving out of information as they are the individuals that spend several hours with children while in school. This means that, they are able to observe any change of behaviour or attitude after every advocacy campaign castigating child trafficking, thus able to tell whether indeed there's efficacy of the advocacy communication methods employed.

Additionally, the study used convergent parallel mixed methods approach, which basically required the researcher to collect both the qualitative and quantitative data, analyse them independently, then compare the results in order to find out if they favour or disfavour one another.

The researcher used questionnaires to collect data. This was administered to the respondents through the help of a research assistant who was familiar with the procedures involved in order to access Non-Governmental Organisations (NGOs) and another research assistant who knows Mathare quite well as this

is an area that is not so welcoming to outsiders. The data analysis procedure was guided by the objective of the study, where the data collected was coded and analysed both qualitatively and quantitatively. On the other hand, Statistical Package for Social Sciences (SPSS) was used to analyse the quantitative data while thematic analysis technique helped in informing analysis of qualitative data. Thematic technique provides crucial skills for navigating qualitative analysis (Braun and Clarke, 2006).

Results and Discussions

The findings of this study and the discussion of these results are discussed in this section. The main focus being, finding out the communication challenges that are usually encountered by facilitators in the process of advocating against child trafficking in primary schools found in Mathare constituency.

Facilitator's Ability to Communicate with Children

It was necessary to find out whether the facilitators are usually able to communicate with children in the different primary schools found in Mathare constituency in order to establish whether the communication methods they use while advocating are effective, and establish the challenges they face in this process. This finding was found from the teachers' perspective who act as observers whenever facilitators visit their schools to do advocacy programmes.

As per the finding in figure 4.1 below, 99% of the respondents agreed that facilitators were able to communicate with the children and only 1% was not sure. This finding implies that advocacy communication to children in addressing child trafficking was effective.
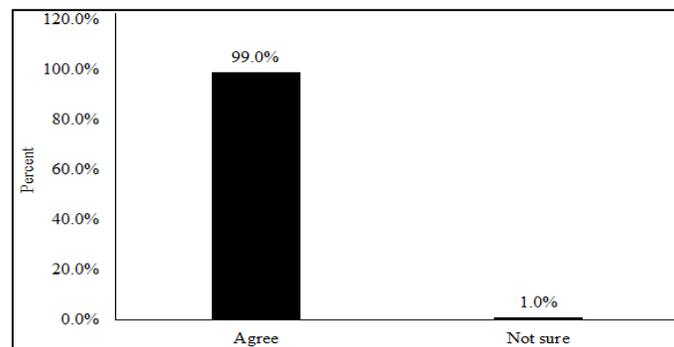

Figure 4.1: Facilitators Ability to Communicate with the Children

Ability of the Children to Understand Communication Messages

The teachers were asked whether the children have the ability to understand the message on child trafficking. This was necessary in order to find out whether indeed the receiver of the advocacy messages, in this case, primary school children, have the capacity and ability to actually understand the communication messages delivered to them. After every advocacy campaign, are they able to understand this message?

Figure 4.2 below shows that 98.5% of the respondents agreed, and 1.5% of the respondents were not sure. These results suggest that according to the evaluation made by teachers, since they are the persons who spend most of their time with these children, the children were able to make sense of advocacy communication messages. This potentially enhanced the effectiveness of the methods and tools used to advocate against child trafficking in the study area.

Concerning how respondents were able to tell that the children have understood the message of child trafficking whenever explained to them, five themes were recurrent. These were: the children's increased ability to voice their rights; detect and report cases of child trafficking; engage in discussions on the subject of child trafficking; being more inquisitive about child trafficking so as to have a depth of understanding; take precautions to protect themselves against becoming victims. This is evident in the following verbatim samples;

"Asking questions for clarification with regards to the topic, avoiding contact with strangers and reporting cases they have heard or come across" (Respondent 30).

"Lively discussion relating to the topic they have after every training, precautions they start taking after the trainings towards protecting themselves from perpetrators who mean them harm, reporting cases they come across either at home or school and asking questions in relation to the topic so as to have a better understanding of the phenomenon" (Respondent 34).

"They are able to know the difference between a trafficker and a victim of CT thus offer the needed help if they ever come across one" (Respondent 64).

"They do not accept gifts and offers from strangers e.g., car lifts, they do not walk alone especially late hours in the evening e.g., when going back home after school, and they openly present funny behaviours they do not understand with people they know or don't know to parents and teachers for clarification" (Respondent 71).

"They repeat what they have heard and saw during different trainings, they start taking more precautions meant to ensure their safety, you find them discussing some of the topics covered among their peers and they ask questions where they need clarification and were a bit hesitant to ask during training" (Respondent 122).
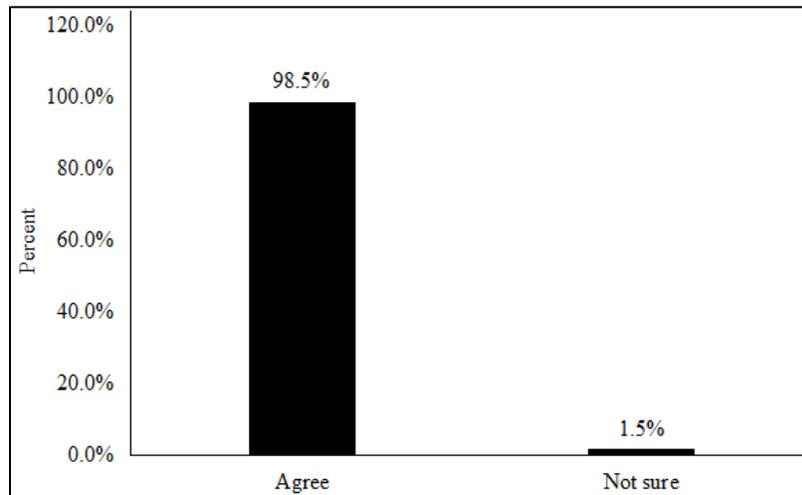

Figure 4.2: Children's Ability to Understand Messages on Child Trafficking

Communication Challenges faced by Facilitators in the Process of Advocating against Child Trafficking

This objective was to explain communication challenges faced by facilitators in the process of advocating against child trafficking among the children in primary schools in Mathare constituency, Nairobi, Kenya. This section presents the views of respondents in relation to child trafficking and the fight against it.

Challenges of Advocacy against Child Trafficking

The opinion of facilitators was sought concerning whether they faced communication challenges in the process of advocating against child trafficking in schools in the study area. Figure 4.3 below presents the distribution of opinions.

The finding in Figure 4.3 below shows that 93.7% of the respondents agreed that there were challenges facilitators advocating against child trafficking faced in the study area while 6.3% of the respondents disagreed. This finding implies that despite the successes realised, where communication can actually be effective, the process of advocacy communication against child trafficking was not without its challenges.
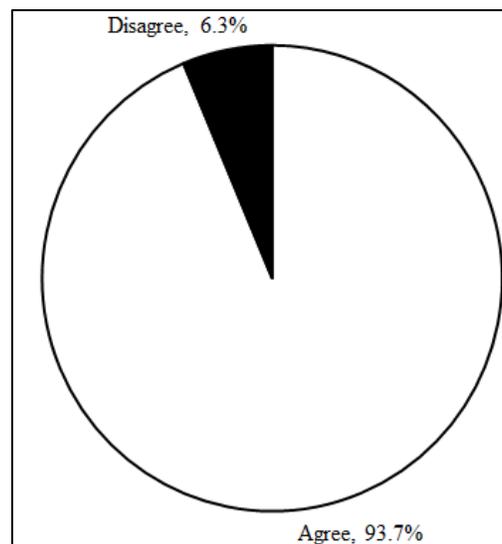

Figure 4.3: Advocacy Communication challenges against Child Trafficking Faced by Facilitators

Most Common Challenges of Advocacy Communication against Child Trafficking

Facilitators were asked to identify the most common challenge they encountered when conducting a training on child trafficking. Figure 4.4 ranks the challenges identified from the most frequently mentioned to the least mentioned.

Figure 4.4 far below shows that there were three most common challenges. The findings indicate that time constraint was the greatest challenge encountered by facilitators when conducting training on child trafficking, with 75% of the respondents mentioning it. From the verbatim comments, it can be inferred that the trainings were conducted within schools that have their own programmes and potentially finds it hard to accommodate any other programmes into their daily learning schedules. This can be deduced from the following verbatim examples;

"Some schools have a tight schedule thus limit time allocated for the training to take place" (Respondent 1).

"Given limited time to conduct the training. To most people child trafficking is not a really a big deal and so they feel that even giving you permission to access the children in their school is just but a favour" (Respondent 6).

"Sometimes the school insists that the 2 hours are not possible and therefore time ends up being limited. Not enough to cover the whole intended content" (Respondent 11).

"Sometimes the time allocated for the training is not enough to cover the intended content" (respondent 15).

As per Figure 4.4, lack of support from school administration was the second most common challenge faced in the use of advocacy communication in the combat against child trafficking, as identified by 62.5% of the respondents. As can be seen from the verbatim examples below, advocacy communication against child trafficking faced resistance from school administrators potentially because of the perception that organisers were strangers and because of time constraints.

"Getting permission from the school administration is sometimes difficult. They do not believe child trafficking is a problem hence do not find it necessary for the advocacy activities to take place" (Respondent 3).

"Lack of cooperation from teachers and school administration. Sometimes the school does not want to give us permission to conduct advocacy activities saying they are busy or are not sure if they want to welcome strangers in their school" (Respondent 7).

"Lack of cooperation from schools. Some schools are a bit hesitant to give permission for the trainings to be conducted" (Respondent 10).

"Permission- some schools never give permission for awareness workshops to be conducted in their school" (Respondent 13).

Figure 4.4 also shows that 50% of the facilitators cited short attention span of the children as a barrier to advocacy training against child trafficking. The following were some of the comments;

"Attention span of children is very minimal. Trying to make them focus on the training can be tedious sometime" (Respondent 2).

"Sometimes ensuring the children have settled so that they can listen to the training can be quite a challenge especially in cases where the teacher has stepped out" (Respondent 8).

"Attention span for children is usually very little thus sometimes it becomes a challenge to have all of them settle and be attentive" (Respondent 11).

"Getting children to settle and be attentive for the whole session can be very difficult sometimes thus the need of incorporating teaching aids that will help break the monotony" (Respondent 16).

As per the results in Figure 4.4, security threats were also a relatively common challenge as mentioned by 37.5% of the respondents. Respondents expressed that the subject of child trafficking was sensitive and was met with hostility by some perpetrators of the vice. This was implied in the following verbatim comments;

> *"Threats- The topic is too sensitive and advocating against it is interfering with someone's booming business" (Respondent 4).*

> *"Hostility from environment and community members" (Respondent 7).*

> *"Law enforcers who are also perpetrators to child trafficking. They give threats, do not follow up on cases and frustrate efforts to combat trafficking" (Respondent 12).*

> *"Threats given the issue is sensitive" (Respondent 14).*

Figure 4.4 further shows that some 25% of the facilitators cited lack of resources as a challenge facing advocacy communication against child trafficking while 18.8% of the facilitators experienced language barrier and illiteracy. The most prominent resource highlighted by the respondents as lacking was a projector to facilitate teaching using motion pictures as implied in the following sample verbatim comments;

> *"Lack of resources that will make the training possible e.g., projectors to show video clips" (Respondent 5).*

> *"Limited resources that can make effective teaching impossible to achieve" (Respondent 9).*

> *"In some schools there are no resources necessarily needed in making it possible to show video clips" (Respondent 14).*

> *"Illiteracy- some schools have children who are a bit behind in the learning process. Thus, communicating to them the intended information becomes a bit of a challenge" (Respondent 13).*
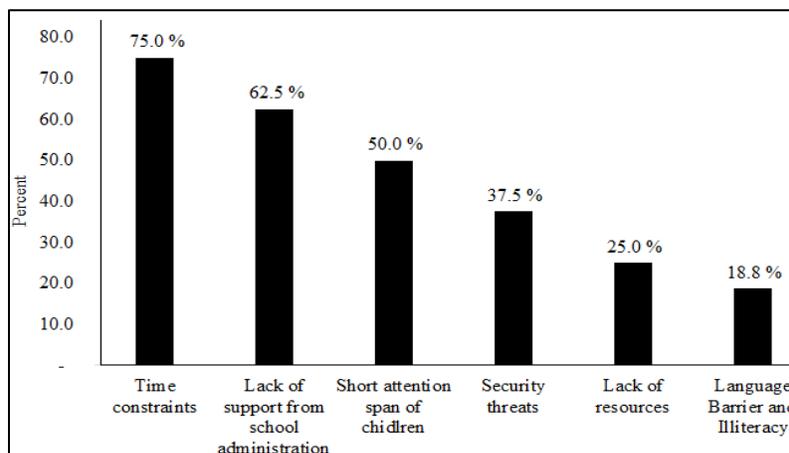

Figure 4.4: Challenges of Advocacy Communication Against Child Trafficking

Conclusion

The findings showed that 93.7% of the respondents agreed that there were challenges that facilitators advocating against child trafficking faced in the study area. Time constraint was the greatest challenge encountered by facilitators when conducting training on child trafficking, with 75% of the respondents mentioning it. Lack of support from school administration was the second most common challenge faced in the use of advocacy communication in the war against child trafficking. The study also established that 50% of the facilitators cited short attention span of the children as a barrier to advocacy training against child trafficking.

These challenges could be explained by the fact that the advocacy training sessions were being facilitated in schools that have their own programmes running and thus, could only allow minimal interruptions. The implication of this limitation on the allocation of time, is that facilitators have to condense their advocacy communication to fit the time slot availed by the school administration, thereby leaving out some aspects of advocacy communication that may be important to realize the desired results in terms of curbing the menace of child trafficking in the study area.

The study also found that lack of support from some school administrators was another striking challenge as identified by majority (62.5%) of the respondents, mainly attributable to the identification of facilitators as strangers. This raises the question of strategy in rapport creation that should ideally precede any requests to conduct advocacy training within the school's premises. It also points to the importance of wider consultation and earning the goodwill of allied government institutions prior to any attempts to secure permission from the school administrators since they are also under authority of the state. This underscores Feshbach and Feshbach's (1978) perspective that community involvement in advocacy communication planning and execution is fundamental to winning the countering of child trafficking.

Further results revealed that half (50%) of the respondents lamented the short attention span of the children being a barrier to advocacy training against child trafficking, while the other half were not of the same view. A possible reason for this may be that the language used may be technical for the children to comprehend, given their low level of understanding. This is consistent with Petty and Cacioppo's (1986) Elaboration Likelihood Model, which is a theory of persuasion that takes cognizance of the ideas and content of the message being portrayed where the recipient of the message must have both the motivation and ability to think about the message. In line with this theory, it may be that such children have a hard time comprehending the advocacy communication message. This may be explained by the fact that facilitators of advocacy communication programs were not necessarily trained teachers with the skills needed to keep the children engaged and attentive throughout the training. The other half (50%), who did not share the same view mostly felt that it is not that the children have a short attention span but rather, most of them are usually mischievous and do not follow the instructions given.

The study also established that a significant proportion of respondents identified security threat to facilitators as another common challenge according to 37.5% of the respondents. This may be explained by the highly sensitive nature of the subject, thus earning hostile reception especially by perpetrators who benefit from the vice. This is in line with a research undertaken by UNICEF (2003) which observed that in sub-Saharan Africa, child trafficking is one of the most profitable criminal activities. Given the finding that showed that poverty was the main underlying factor causing the high prevalence of child trafficking in the study area according to 58.5% of the respondents, child trafficking may be perceived by the perpetrators as their source of living and any advocacy against the practice may be met with hostility because it threatens their source of livelihood. This agrees with the observation by Hapa Kenya (2017) that child abuse is widely accepted by society, characterised by underage children given out by their families to work for their relatives in exchange for school fees.

Thus, despite the success of advocacy communication in the countering of child trafficking, where it was found out that communication is effective, facilitators were confronted with a multiplicity of challenges. The leading challenge that they faced was time constraint, mainly since advocacy communication was carried out in schools that have their own programs to run. Lack of cooperation from some school administrators was also a significant challenge to advocacy communication, potentially leading to either delay of program implementation or even cancellation of plans. In addition, short attention span of the children also manifested as a challenge to the efficacy of the advocacy communication program against child trafficking. In spite of the observed challenges, the role of advocacy communication in countering child trafficking, cannot be underrated. Additionally, the finding showed that, it is possible to have an advocacy initiative that is very effective but at the same time faced with several communication challenges. This however does not mean that such an initiative should be undermined because how these challenges are addressed is what provides solutions and filling in of the identified gaps.

Acknowledgement

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