Applying Social Marketing Formative Research to Complex Problems: The Case of Modern Day Slavery in Nigeria

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She said...

→ I was deceived and forced into prostitution
He said...

➔ I never force anybody
The truth is...
Digging Deep

**A Formative Social Marketing Approach**

- Calls to move beyond individual behaviour change
- Calls to go beyond interviews and focus groups
- Calls for more theory use
- Calls to extend Social Marketing beyond public health
- Calls for nuanced understanding of human trafficking
- Human trafficking attracting Marketing attention

(Pennington et al, 2009; Murray et al, 2015)
Research Design

**Upstream**

**Study 1**
How is the problem of human trafficking in Nigeria represented across government sponsored anti-human trafficking advertisements?

**Method:**
Critical Discourse Analysis

**Midstream**

**Study 2**
How are socio-cultural influences experienced across human trafficking endemic states in Nigeria?

**Method:**
Auto-ethnography
Key Informant Interviews

**Downstream**

**Study 3**
What is the lived experience of Nigerian persons that have been trafficked within and outside Nigeria?

**Method:**
Existential Phenomenological Interviews
The Upstream Approach

Critical Discourse Analysis (Fairclough, 1995; Raftopoulou & Hogg, 2010)

- Multidimensional understanding of ‘crafted texts’
  - 23 ads across print, radio and television
  - Transcripts of in-depth interviews with Government & NGO

- What are the dominant discourses on human trafficking in Nigeria?
  - How are they reproducing existing social inequalities?
Upstream Findings

- Moralising of human trafficking
- Deviant social identity of trafficked women
  - Discourages citizen participation in prevention efforts
  - Discourages successful reintegration – hence trafficked women might return to trafficking
- Unintended priming effect – human trafficking as an alternative source of income
- Mixed messages – deviant/ victim/social actor
- Marginalisation of other perspectives
  - Child trafficking is a much bigger problem!
- Power struggle and unreliable source
Implications for Upstream

- Need for balanced discourse on human trafficking
- Need for promotion of an alternative exchange
- Need for social marketing training for government and NGO in human trafficking prevention
- Need for relevant celebrity endorsements and Nollywood to drive message
- Need for social media strategy and management
- An example of upstream social marketing formative research using CDA
The Midstream Approach

→ Understanding the Sociocultural context of human trafficking
  - Autoethnography (Ellis et al., 2011) of Lagos and Benin
  - Key informant interviews of socialisation agents

→ Questions guided by theory of cultural hegemony (Gramsci, 1971) and push/pull factors of extant literature (UNESCO, 2006)
A return to form…
Midstream Findings

→ Class oppression
→ Corruption in the fabric of Nigerian society
→ Emerging vulnerable class
→ Traditional mindset about child labour
→ Sense of hopelessness and Idealisation of the West
→ Human trafficking endorsed as economic saviour
→ Pervasive community, media and pop culture influences
Implications for Midstream

→ Need for solution to emerging vulnerable class
  ▪ E.g. DFAT Australia Awards Africa program
→ Need for counter narrative to human trafficking
  ▪ immigrant stories need to be told to provide a balanced view of the West
  ▪ Promotion of home grown heroes
→ Need for economic development
→ Example of midstream social marketing formative research
The Downstream Approach

→ Inside the Lived Experiences of Modern Day Slaves
  - One day access to trafficked Nigerian women within a state regulated rescue shelter

→ Existential Phenomenology  (Merleau-Ponty, 1945; Thompson et al., 1989)
  - Participant driven
  - Avoids why questions
  - Opening question – tell me your story from the beginning
Downstream Findings

➔ Being empowered – human trafficking as an alternative route to economic agency
➔ Being exploited – an alternative view of human traffickers
➔ Being in bondage – involuntarily rescued victims of the state
➔ Being deceived – the human costs of unemployment

➔ Key Insights
  ▪ Human trafficking as a modern day slave revolt against a greater oppressor
  ▪ International human traffickers can be former trafficked women
  ▪ Rescue shelter as a symbol of oppression
  ▪ Change in human trafficking flows
Downstream implications

- Need sustainable economic incentive as an exchange
  - E.g. sustainable Microcredit finance platform and small business management training
- Segmentation of actors within the human trafficking system according to psychographic and behavioural data – segments can then be quantified and targeted for change e.g. education for some while economic incentive exchange for others
- Funding assistance to improve rescue shelter infrastructure
- Existential phenomenology as an example of new methods in social marketing formative research
Thank you!