

Slavery



**ASSIGN
BUSTER**

According to Omaar (2007), slavery is defined as a situation where an individual and his/her labor is held in captivity, deprived of freedom, exploited and humiliated. According to Wright (2000) slavery in Africa started during the prehistoric era up to the first quarter of the 20th century. Slavery in this region had varying characteristics. The first form of slavery was between Africans from different ethnic groups and it occurred before the 7th century. This form of slavery was based on the need to accumulate power among lordships and supply adequate labor for farms. The labor factor was quite rampant because around this time, land in Africa was communal and families were allocated land that they would be able to manage. Therefore, the manpower in any given family determined the size of the land allocated thus, necessitating the need for slavery. Slaves in this region were viewed as property and in some instances they would be integrated into their master's family.

After the 7th century, Arab peasants commercialized slavery in Africa as slaves were traded in Arab countries. Most slaves before the 7th century were women but after the involvement of Arabs in the slave trade this changed to men. Arabs were more rampant in East and West Africa. This led to the emergence of slave trading routes such as the Trans-Saharan and East African slave trades. In the 15th through to the 19th century the Europeans invaded most of the African countries and established colonies.

The Europeans used the already established slave trade routes to ferry slaves to European countries. The increasing demand for agricultural and arm labor in Europe were their driving force behind slavery trade in Africa. Further, African slaves were cheaper than American or European slaves. This

period was marked with slavery raids among slave traders and competition among states leading to war and more slaves. Slavery in Africa contributed to most African economies. To maintain slavery, the Europeans colonized states. Slavery in Africa continued through to the 19th century until it was abolished in the 20th century (Wright, 2000).

In comparison to the African continent, slavery in the United States of America featured both men and women working in the plantations. Children were also enslaved. Slaves in America were allowed to earn a minimum wage by their masters. The minimum wage was referred to as an allowance which was meant for their upkeep. However, the allowances were seasonal depending on the amount of labor required during the different planting seasons. Apart from the allowance, slaves in America were also provided with three meals per day (University of North Carolina, 1997).

In order to be able to meet some of their needs, slaves were also allocated small portions of gardens to cultivate crops that would enable them substitute their allowances. One notable characteristic of slavery in America was torture. Slaves were subject to torture and inhuman acts such as rape and being caned under very precarious conditions if they did not live up to the expectations of their masters. Slaves were also provided with supervisors who oversaw work and punished them in case of any wrong doing (University of North Carolina, 1997).

In America, peonage slavery was also very rampant. This involved a form of slavery where one was subjected to slavery or obligated to serve a master without their consent due to lack of funds to clear their debt. For instance, a

master would pay for the fine of an individual arraigned in court in exchange for their services. This type of slavery involved signing a ten year contract. Further most slaves were African Americans who had little knowledge and thus, they were often cheated into signing contracts that would enslave them for life. This type of slavery involved both men and women. However, as men worked in the plantations, women were majorly their master's mistresses. Further, the master was at liberty to sell the children of his slaves. To maintain slavery, the masters manipulated their slaves through contracts and minimum wage. Slavery in America ended in 1885 after the adoption of the 13th Amendment (Bailey, 2009).

In conclusion, slavery has continued to dominate most communities in the world in modern times. This is because slavery still remains a major supplier of cheap labor. In the modern world, many are times that slavery is practiced indirectly. For instance employers are keen to take advantage of their workers by subjecting them to extreme working conditions with minimum wage. Omaar (2007) highlights that; child slavery is still very common in Africa, Asia South America and parts of Europe. He illustrates this by highlighting that children are continually being sold to slave masters due to poverty reasons as others are tricked into sexual slavery and others end up in the hands of gangsters. With reference to my working conditions, I don't feel as though I am deprived of freedom, exploited or humiliated and thus I haven't experienced slavery.