

THE FACTORS RESPONSIBLE FOR GIRL-CHILD LABOUR IN MADOBI LOCAL GOVERNMENT AREA OF KANO STATE, NIGERIA.

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Abstract

The study investigated parental socio-economic status as a cause of child labour practices in Madobi local government area of Kano state, Nigeria. The study employed questionnaire to collect data from one hundred (100) mothers and twenty (20) female child labourers which constitute the study population. Simple percentage was used for the data analysis. The outcome of the study indicates that parental socio-economic status is a cause of child labour. The study has implications for policy makers both in the educational and the economic sectors. It was the conclusion of the study that the Federal Government should, as a matter of urgency, ensure that the child right law (2005) is made operational and effective in all the states of the Federation. The paper recommended that the national wealth should be redistributed such that a greater percentage is directed at taking care of the citizens welfare. It was also suggested that primary schools should be well distributed and spread within communities and they should be made accessible and well equipped.

Keywords: education, social-status, economy, child-labour

Introduction

Low socio-economic condition is a coefficient of poverty and people are said to be poor when they lack the means of satisfying their basic needs. Poverty exists because of the difference between ends and means which has a direct bearing in the quality of life of the populace. In Nigeria, as in other developing economies, poverty, is manifested in lack of material well-being among the citizenry, lack of access to health care and education, lack of income or earning, as a result of unemployment as well as lack of fund or voice in the affairs of the state, absence of infrastructure and other social amenities (Okocha, 2003). Because of the negative developmental effect of child labour and its obvious prevalence in Nigeria, Universal Basic Education (UBE) was introduced by the Nigerian government in 1999. Among the objectives of the scheme was the need to:

- promote access to education;
- reduce the incidence of school drop-outs;
- provide alternative education to drop-outs;
- ensure the acquisition of occupational skills in schools effectively; and
- nurture the child's mind towards taking on communal role.

There are other programmes initiated by the Nigerian government such as the National Programmes against Trafficking in Persons (NAPTIP) which is also aimed at curbing the trend of child labour. As recent as 2012, the United States Department of Labour (US-DOL) funded a programme in collaboration with International Labour Organization, International Programme on the Elimination of Child Labour (ILO-IPEC) to combat the trafficking of children and to eliminate child labour. Other world bodies like UNICEF are not left out in the fight against child labour. Nigeria had started the process of ratifying many of these international instruments that generally affect the rights of the child (Komolafe, 2008). The major focus of this paper is on the attitude of mothers in Madobi Local Government Area of Kano State, concerning the preference they have for giving their daughters out for child labour instead of giving them education and vocational skills. The study also gathered information on why more girls from Madobi Local Government Area are involved in hawking, house

help work and begging than girls from other Local Government Areas in Kano Metropolitan area.

The objective of the study therefore, is to identify a supporting strategy that will make the girls in the six wards chosen from Madobi Local Government Area go to school or acquire skills rather than child labouring. To achieve this, information was gathered from one hundred and twenty (120) respondents (100 mothers and 20 affected female children) through verbal interviews and the questionnaires that were read out to the respondents since most of them could neither read, nor write.

The Factors that are Responsible for Child Labour in Nigeria

Socio-economic dimension is one of the techniques used in rating people in any given society. This means that people are rated from low economic status to high economic status, based on their standard of living. This is the reason why we have the low, middle and the upper class. A Family is seen as the primary agent of socialization. It acts as the establishing factor in the class structure for it is through the family that most individuals are placed in the class structure of the family. The family background of an individual can be a motivating factor to educational attainment. There are unequal opportunities to receive education in rural areas when compared to the cities or urban areas in Nigeria. Inequality in access to education can result from the socio-economic background of families. To this end, it is important to note that parents are one of the most influential yet significantly underrated factors in their childrens education. Thus, the society should encourage more parental participation in public education. A considerable number of researches repeatedly have shown that low socio-economic status is linked to a range of indicators of child and adolescent well-being. Poverty is discovered to be contributing to child labour, educational failure, not simply because poor children are "culturally disadvantaged", but because their health and nutritional status and time are inadequate to allow for the maximum mental development and for the realisation of their educational potential. The likelihood that they would end up being at risks in terms of deficient development is a reality that could begin even before birth.

The Consequences of Child Labour on Nigerian Child

Togunde and Carter (2008) examine some of the consequences of child labour on children. These include malnourishment which makes them susceptible to diseases, muscular/skeletal disorders from heavy labour, physical and sexual abuse. According to them; poverty, globalization, population growth, socialization and violence within the family structure are the contributing factors to child labour. Togunde and Carter (2008) revealed that parents engaged their children in child labour to augment family income. Togunde and Carter submit that parents of child labourers have low income attainments and lack education as well as occupation. In that regard, the society is admonished to concern itself more, with the full range of factors contributing to educational failure. The health of the child is a very important among the factors.

Family background is widely recognized as the most significant contributor to successes in schools. Many variables in the family background have strong (direct and indirect) associations with students success in school and the young adults educational and occupational attainment. Such variables include family structure as it concerns socio-economic status, parents level of education, parental involvement in their children education and parenting style. Children from lower income earning family have less stable families, greater exposure to environmental toxins and violence, and more limited extra-familial social support networks. They are less cognitively stimulated than children with high socio-economic status; as a result of reading less and being read to less, and experience less complex communications with parents involving more limited vocabulary.

Data Presentation, Findings and Discussion

The population of the study is made up of one hundred (100) mothers in the following locations; Bagurau, Kwangwayi, Kubarachi, Chikawa, Bode, Burgwai of Madobi local government area of Kano state and twenty(20) female child labourers of the area that were found in Kano metropolitan Area. Data for the research were obtained through interpretation of the questionnaire to the respondents. Two sets of questionnaires were used. The first one hundred (100) contained items designed to obtain response from mothers, while the second was designed to obtain response from the affected

female children (20). Statistical procedure used in quantifying the data collected was simple percentage.

Description	A	N	D	% of A	% of N	% of D
Child labour is a normal and welcome practice	100	0	0	100	0	0
Child labour should be eradicated	30	0	70	30	0	70
A child that works is a pride of the family	100	0	0	100	0	0
The economic reality of today encourages child labour	100	0	0	100	0	0
Child labour improves the standard of living	100	0	0	100	0	0
Child labour is a means of training the child for future challenges.	100	0	0	100	0	0
A working child makes a responsible adult	100	0	0	100	0	0
Child labour exposes a child to abuses	15	80	5	15	80	5
Western Education is expensive and is culturally discouraged	100	0	0	100	0	0
Education is for All	0	0	100	0	0	100

Table 1: Mothers' opinion about child labour

KEYS:

A = Agree

N = No response/neutral

D = Disagree

Table 1 indicates that, parents offer their children for labour in the hope of improving their living standard. They do not believe in Education for All (EFA). Invariably they are of the opinion that education is for the selected few that could afford it.

Description	A	N	D	% of A	% of N	% of D
Working is good	0	0	20	0	0	100
Schooling is bad	0	0	20	0	0	100
Living at home is better	16	2	2	80	10	10
Living with guardians is better	0	2	18	0	10	90
Working is interesting	0	4	16	0	20	80
The proceed from work is for parents	2	14	4	10	70	20
The proceed from work is for the agents	8	6	6	40	30	30
The proceed from work is for the Child labourers	16	4	0	80	20	0
It is very comfortable at work	0	0	20	0	0	100
Are you very happy with your parents' decision	0	0	20	0	0	100

Table 2: Child labourers opinion about child labour

KEYS:

A = Agree

N = No response/neutral

D = Disagree

Table 2 indicates that, the children are compelled to leave home, not to attend school and they are unaware of the dangers they could face with this decision.

Findings and Discussions

This research work found out that the basis for child labour as it concerns the mothers, is the socio-economic situation. Their attitude towards child labour is positive, as agreed by 100% of the mothers. To them, the proceeds will improve their general economic well-being. Their attitude to the risks and dangers that their children could be exposed to either on the street while hawking or in the homes of their employers where they could be maltreated, abused physically or psychologically or even sold and taken to other places i.e. out of the country or towns far away from home are found to be secondary. 80% of mothers did not respond to the issue of abuse or risk. The parents believe that education does not bring immediate gain as such their attitude towards it is negative. The child labourers response to work was negative. They all will like to go to school and live at home with their parents rather than stay away with guardians. They are not sure who enjoys the proceeds from their labour but majority of them confirmed that, the proceeds will be used to buy all they will need for their marriage, especially kitchen equipment that is supposed to be bought traditionally by their mothers. The analysis discovered that parents give out their children in exchange for economic benefit not minding any risks attached. The ineffectiveness of education towards societal development contributes to parental negative attitudes to education. 100% disagreed totally with the notion that education is for all. The children all disagreed with work and 100% of them agreed that school is good, and 100% showed their non interest and incompatibility at working with others people. All the 100% are not happy with their parents decision on child labour.

Conclusion:

This study has provided an insight into the problems associated with parental poor educational background, low socio-economic status, negative attitude towards education, and lack of access to employment. Therefore, the study concluded that Universal Basic Education (UBE) as well as Education for All (EFA) documents need to be revisited especially as they concern the girl-child in the North-West of Nigeria, precisely in Madobi Local Government Area of Kano state. This has shown that collaborative effort by stakeholders in the Education industry needs to be followed by actions, implementation, supervision, data analyses and follow-up. For any nation to grow there is need for resourceful individuals who are knowledgeable, skilled and earn income to contribute their quota to the economy. The value of human capital asset of a nation is a function of quantity, quality as well as the operating environment. To alleviate poverty, the people have to be educated and trained.

The Federal Government should, as a matter of urgency, ensure that the child right law (2005) is made operational and effective in all states of the Federation, while attempts should be made to redistribute the national wealth such that a greater percentage is directed at taking care of citizens welfare.

Recommendations

The philosophy and objectives of education should be linked and made relevant to the National philosophy and objectives since the objectives of Education in Nigeria as well as philosophy of Education are clearly stated in the National Policy on Education (FRN, 2004:7 & 8). These are believed to be laudable goals which if objectively pursued, would produce ideal scientific and technological development of the Nation.

The Federal Government should, as a matter of urgency, ensure that the child right law (2005) is made operational and effective in all states of the Federation, while attempts should be made to

redistribute the national wealth such that a greater percentage is directed at taking care of citizens welfare. Primary schools should be well distributed and spread within communities and should be made accessible and well equipped. In addition, it is recommended that offices of the First Ladies in the states should direct their attention towards the empowerment of women especially at the local government level. This study also recommend that the Non Governmental Organisation - NGOs offices that are concerned with child labour should also be located within the communities, that way, the beneficiaries if well orientated to take charge and be in control as well as monitor the programme so as to be part of decision making process of the programme meant for them. Government should provide more primary schools and spread them within the communities, equip them with relevant materials and resources, provide amenities such as school feeding and boarding, which should be adequately funded. The contents of the curriculum should be made relevant to the customs and beliefs of the beneficiaries, so that they could embrace it with clear vision and understanding.

This study also recommends that the activities of the agents (i.e. the intermediaries between parents and employers of child labourers) should be brought to an end by stakeholders. If this cannot be completely achieved, those that must employ should be orientated on the need to educate their employees and avoid all types of abuses which could be degradable to human value. The Childs Right Act should be recognized by all and sundry and be accorded it rightful position in every society. The National Orientation Agency (NOA) should play an active role here by making sure the message is appropriately decoded and assimilated by those it is meant for. Poverty should be eradicated through orientation, implementation and follow-up on family planning and population control.

Finally, this paper recommends that the contents of the curriculum should be selected to reflect the culture, needs, demands and aspirations of the society. This will enable the learners be empowered to function effectively in their respective society.

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