



Determinants of Parents' Attitude Towards Child Labour Practices in Southwest, Nigeria

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Abstract

This study examined the difference in parent's attitude towards child labour practices based on their educational status, employment status, income status and location. Descriptive research design of the survey type was used in the study. The population consisted of all parents living in southwest geopolitical zone. The sample consisted of 1,649 married male and female parents selected through multi stage sampling procedure. A self-designed questionnaire tagged 'Child Labour Practices Questionnaire (CLPQ)' was used to collect data for the study. Validity of the instrument was ensured by experts in Social Studies and Test and Measurement while its reliability was determined by finding the internal consistency using Cronbach alpha that yielded a coefficient value of 0.89. Data collected were analysed using descriptive and inferential statistics. Frequency count, percentages, mean and standard deviation were used for the research question while Analysis of Variance (ANOVA) and t-test were used for the hypotheses. Finding of this study revealed that parents have negative attitude towards child labour practices. The finding also revealed that there is significant difference in parent's attitudes towards child labour practices based on their education, employment, income and location. Based on the findings, it was recommended among others that government in federal, state and local levels need to put certain economic empowerment programmes in place in order to assist poor and indigent parents.

Keywords: Determinants, Parents' attitude, Child labour practices, Parents' socio-economic status



Introduction

Children are the biological future of human race and their healthy growth and development should be of serious concern to everybody in the society. Child development is largely determined by the quality of care received by the child. This is the reason why United Nations Organisation in her 2009 Convention on Child Right ascertained that children in the care of parent, guardian, and teacher should be protected from all forms of torture or inhuman treatment, especially physical or mental abuse or neglect (Oloko, 2007).

According to the Child Right's Act 2003, passed into law in the Federal Capital Territory Abuja, a child is a person who has not attained the age of eighteen years. On the other hand, labour can be defined as human and mental efforts used in creation of goods and services. Put together, the concept of Child Labour has probably been in existence almost as long as the history of mankind and connotes all economic activities carried out by children regardless of their occupational status (Oloko, 2007). It includes both works that are permissible under the International Labour Organization's (ILO) conventions and that which is not (International Labour Organization-International Programme for the Elimination of Child Labour) (ILO-IPEC, 2002). According to United Nation Children Emergency Fund (UNICEF) (2007), Child labour is essentially understood as encompassing monetary or non-

monetary activities which are mentally or physically, morally or socially hazardous to children below 18 years.

International Labour Organisation (2003) defined child labour as any work that deprives children from their childhood, dignity and potentials, and which is also dangerous or harmful to their physical and mental development. In other words, any work that is mentally, physically, socially or morally dangerous and harmful to the children, that intrudes on their education, desist or deprived them opportunity to see four walls of the classroom forces them to quit their education prematurely or obliges them to try to combine their education with extensive and heavy work (ILO, 2012). It is important to note that children can assist their parents in their spare time (could be on holidays, after school hours, weekend days etc.). This is not considered as child labour. It becomes child labour only when it impedes on her educational, moral, psychological wellbeing and when the activity is also harmful to her health.

The dramatic increase in child labour in Nigeria can be attributed to several factors such as the rapid population growth of many less developed countries, high rate of unemployment, inflation, low wages and deplorable working conditions which have contributed to incidents of street trading and child labour as children attempt to help and support their families. Factors promoting child labour includes poverty, exploitation by parents/guardians, location, socio –



economic status of parents and children's own choices as a result of ignorance, among other things. The problem of child labour is pervasive in nature; some parents in Western societies see child labourers as people suffering from some psychological and pathological problems, while in the African Society, it is regarded as a natural procedure in child rearing process. Child labour has been considered a social problem in the African context and Nigeria in particular (Oloko, 2007).

In Nigeria, children suffer disastrous consequences of child labour. Long-time effect of this menace has effect on child's intellectual and potential, and this may deprive them opportunity to function as capable and responsible citizens. In spite of this, it seems as if the menace is still on the increase. Therefore, there is need to combat any evil that will rob any of Nigerian children off their opportunity to become responsible men and women in the society and one of this evil is child labour in whatever form.

In an oral interview conducted by the researcher in November 2018, it was observed that culture is one of the major causes of child labour though a hidden one. Culture is a way of life that is inherited and transferred from one generation to the other, though not static, it still retains some significant element over a time. People of southwest Nigeria believe that children must acquire important skills early in life, but to their own gain and to the detriment of the children, and this can lead to child labour.

Attitude is a central part of human identity. Everyday people love, hate, like, dislike, favour, oppose, agree, disagree, argue, persuade and so on. All these are evaluative responses to an object. Attitude develops and changes with time. Several factors play a vital role in influencing parents' attitude. These factors can be categorized into three distinctive groups. According to Ige and Olowolabi (2010), attitude is influenced by three components. They are cognitive (beliefs, thoughts, attributes), affective (feelings, emotions) and behavioural information (past events, experiences).

Ige and Olowolabi (2010) defined an attitude as a mental or neural state of readiness, organized through experience, exerting a directive or dynamic influence on the individual's response to all objects and situations to which it is related. In simpler definition attitude is a mind-set or a tendency to act in a particular way due to both an individual's experience and temperament. Typically, a person's attitude means his or her behaviour. Attitude is a complex combination of things we tend to call personality, beliefs, values, behaviours, and motivations.

Observation shows that the attitude of parents to child labour can be negative or positive. The positive attitude of the parents towards child labour can prevent their children from getting education. With less parental support in school work, low level of motivation and poor self-esteem children can result to child labour practice.



Negative attitude of the parents to child labour practices can be beneficial to their children in many cases as such child will not be involved in child labour practices. This can be reflected in improvement in class performance, creating interest among children to learn, and higher achievement scores in reading and writing.

For the purpose of this study, some selected variables (parents' education status, employment status, income status and location) were considered to determine if they influence parents' attitude towards child labour practices. It is observed that there are various factors that facilitate the practice of child labour. One of such is illiteracy. Okpala (2010) defined illiteracy as the inability to read and write, it is lack of formal basic education and skills, and this has been identified as one of the fundamental causes of child labour in developing countries. Illiteracy rate in Nigeria is still high as the country ranked 118th in education attainment with males disproportionately higher than females. It appears that educational status influence child labour practices as children from illiterate parents were highly involved in paid work than those from literate parents.

Level of education of parents appears to be an attribute that can determine ones perception and attitude towards child labour. Similarly, in the last three decades, global attention have been shifted to education as a means of helping one to have negative attitude towards child labour in any society.

The knowledge, qualities, skills, attitude and capacities, which could be as a result of education enables individuals to become conscious subjects of their growth and active responsible participants in a systematic process of building a new world order. More so, child labour in any particular community or country is reflected in its level of education (Nwabueze, 2009).

Under employment in Nigeria has made provision of social welfare services like education, healthcare, water supply and energy not only inadequate, but expensive, thereby promoting some parents to resort to child labour and exploitation. Some Nigerian parents and guardians seem to abuse their children through street hawking and child labour in order to support family income. Unemployment has made the provision of basic family needs like food, shelter and security inadequate and unaffordable, which makes parents resort to child labour and exploitation to supplement the family income (Nwabueze, 2009).

Income inequality of parents may give rise to the incidence of children involved in child labour. If parents income is too low, the household would not be able to survive on their wages alone. Consequently, households may be compelled to send their children to work in order to add the children wages to those of adult for the families to meet up with their basic needs. In other words, Basu (2008) asserted that, if all children are taken away from work, there will be shortage



of labour and if child labour is substituted by adult labour, there would be rise in adult wages in response to the excess demand for labour. Apparently, once there is rise in adult wages, parents will not want to send their children to work.

The researcher's observation collaborated with Ayoade (2011), who maintained that some parents are desirous of sending their children to school, but may not be able because of lack of economic power to actualize a wish for a better future of the children. Consequently, these children may work to meet the immediate and present needs of their poverty stricken families, but they are compromising not only their future, but the collective future of the nation. They will also grow up to become burden, rather than asset, to themselves, parents, community and the nation, because they will lack basic survival skills and knowledge that will benefit them and the nation. Parents' educational background and occupation are also linked with family income (Ayoade, 2010).

In Nigeria today, people seem to associate child labour practices to a variety of factors in which parents' location is inclusive. Hoyano and Keenan (2007) opined that people who migrate from rural areas to urban areas in search of better prospects are often ill prepared for urban life and therefore forced to either use their children or other children to enhance their economic situation. As a result, privileged or rich people from cities

easily convince poor parents from rural areas to hand over their children to them with various promises of better life and education. However, these children were sooner or later turned into house helps. Based on the foregoing, the study investigated the determinants of parent's attitude towards child labour practices in Southwest, Nigeria. The study specifically examined:

- i. the attitude of parents towards child labour practices in Southwest, Nigeria; and
- ii. the difference in parents' attitude towards child labour practices based on their educational status, employment status, income status and location.

Research Question

This research question was raised to guide the study:

1. What is the attitude of parents towards child labour practices in Southwest, Nigeria?

Research Hypotheses

The following null hypotheses were generated for the study:

1. There is no significant difference in parents' attitude towards child labour practices based on their educational status
2. There is no significant difference in parents' attitude towards child labour practices based on their employment status
3. There is no significant difference in parents' attitude towards child labour practices based on their income



4. There is no significant difference in parents' attitude towards child labour practices based on their location

Methodology

Descriptive research design of the survey type was used for the study. The population of the study consisted of married male and female parents living in the Southwest geopolitical zone. The initial sample consisted of 1,800 parents selected from three states in Southwest, Nigeria. The sample was selected through multi stage sampling procedure: three states were selected through simple random sampling technique; two local Government Areas were selected from each state through stratified random sampling technique; two towns were selected from each Local Government Area through stratified random sampling technique using location (rural and urban) and 50 parents were selected from each of the selected towns using purposive sampling technique. However, out of the 1800 copies of the questionnaire, the researcher was able to retrieve 1,649 copies that eventually formed the sample.

A questionnaire designed by the researcher tagged "Child Labour Practices Questionnaire (CLPQ)" was used for data collection. The instrument was divided into Section A that sought for bio-data of the respondents and Section B that consisted of 15 items on the attitude of parents towards child labour practices with responses based on four point

Likert type scale ranging from Strongly Agree (SA), Agree (A), Disagree (D) to Strongly Disagree (SD).

The instrument was subjected to thorough screening by experts in Social Studies, Guidance and Counselling as well as Tests and Measurement to determine its face and content validity. Reliability of the instrument was determined by finding the internal consistency through a pilot study carried out outside the sampled locations. Data collected were tested using Cronbach alpha that yielded a co-efficient value of 0.89. This was considered adequate for the study. Data collected were analysed using descriptive and inferential statistics. The research question was answered using frequency count, percentages, mean and standard deviation. Hypotheses 1 – 3 were tested using Analysis of Variance (ANOVA) and hypothesis 4 was tested using t-test analysis at 0.05 level of significance.



Results

Research Question 1: What is the attitude of parents towards child labour practices in Southwest, Nigeria?

Table 1: Attitude of Parents towards Child Labour Practices

S/N	Items	Agree (%)	Disagree (%)	Mean	S.D
1.	I derive some benefits by engaging my children in child labour	429 (26.02%)	1220 (73.98%)	2.20	0.87
2.	Children should assist their parents in paid work because of the present economic reality	495 (30.02%)	1154 (69.98%)	2.24	0.74
3.	Children could contribute to the income of the family	528 (32.02%)	1121 (67.98%)	2.22	0.73
4.	Children under their parental care need to be financially independent	297 (18.01%)	1352 (81.99%)	1.86	0.80
5.	Children should be allowed to fend for part of their needs	363 (22.01%)	1286 (77.99%)	2.14	0.83
6.	Children should be allowed to work so as to acquire some life skills	396 (24.01%)	1253 (75.99%)	2.24	0.59
7.	Parents should encourage their children to make money whenever they are back from school	297 (18.01%)	1352 (81.99%)	1.94	0.81
8.	Introducing children early to paid work could create future opportunities	198 (12.01%)	1451 (87.99%)	1.90	0.76
9.	It is mandatory to do household work before going to school	462 (28.02%)	1187 (71.98%)	2.36	0.69
10.	Schooling only without work will make children unresponsive to family problems	165 (10.%)	1484 (90.%)	1.60	0.72
11.	Schooling takes away valuable time from my child's life which could have otherwise been spent in earning/jobs	66 (4.%)	1583 (96.%)	1.52	0.57
12.	Most of the things children learn at work are relevant to real life than at school	231 (14.01%)	1418 (85.99%)	1.90	0.61
13.	Engaging children in paid work will make them productive and be able to adopt family occupation	264 (16.01%)	1385 (83.99%)	2.02	0.62
14.	Exempting children from work is an obstacle in the path of income in near future	165 (10%)	1484 (90%)	1.72	0.69
15.	Allowing children to work is an indispensable part of life.	165 (10%)	1484 (90%)	1.74	0.74
	Average			1.97	

Mean Cut-off: 2.5s



Table 1 shows the attitude of parents towards child labour practices. Finding from this table shows that majority of the respondents disagreed on all the items raised on parents' attitude towards child labour practices. All the mean scores of the respondents are also below the mean cut-off of 2.50. This implies that almost all the parents have negative attitude towards child labour practices.

Testing of Hypotheses

Hypothesis 1: There is no significant difference in parents' attitude towards child labour practices based on their educational status

Table 2: Parents' Attitude towards Child Labour Practices based on their Educational Status

Groups	Sum of Squares	Df	Mean Square	F	Sig.
Between Groups	36476.096	3	12158.699	394.247*	.000
Within Groups	50732.317	1645	30.840		
Total	87208.414	1648			

* P < 0.05

The result in table 2 showed that F-cal value of 394.247 is significant because the P value (0.000) < 0.05 at 0.05 level of significance. Hence, the null hypothesis is not accepted. This implies that there is significant difference in parents' attitude towards

child labour practices based on their educational status. In order to investigate the source of the differences observed, Post – hoc analysis (Scheffe) with mean difference was carried out.

Table 3: Scheffe Post – hoc test and mean for Observed difference in Parents' Attitude towards Child Labour Practices based on their Educational Status.

Groups	N	Mean	Primary	S.S.C.E	Post-Secondary	Post-Graduate
			38.43	32.64	27.01	24.10
Primary	231	38.43				
S.S.C.E	462	32.64	*			
Post - Secondary	626	27.01	*	*		
Post – Graduate	330	24.10	*	*	*	

* P < 0.05



In table 3, significant differences were found between attitude towards child labour practices of parents with primary school certificate and secondary school certificate, primary school certificate and post-secondary certificate, and primary school certificate and post-graduate certificate. Also, significant differences were found between the attitude towards child labour practices of parents with secondary school certificate and post-secondary

certificate, and secondary school certificate and post-graduate certificate. Lastly, there was significant difference between the attitude towards child labour practices of parents with post-secondary school certificate and post-graduate certificate.

It can be concluded that there is significant difference in attitude of parents towards child labour practices based on their educational status.

Hypothesis 2: There is no significant difference in parents' attitude towards child labour practices based on their employment status.

Table 4: Parents' Attitude towards Child Labour Practices based on their Employment Status

Groups	Sum of Squares	df	Mean Square	F	Sig.
Between Groups	15202.510	3	5067.503	115.769*	.000
Within Groups	72005.904	1645	43.773		
Total	87208.414	1648			

* $P < 0.05$

The result presented in table 4 showed that F-cal value of 115.769 is significant because the P value (0.000) < 0.05 at 0.05. Hence, the null hypothesis is not accepted. This implies that there is significant difference in parents' attitude towards

child labour practices based on their employment status. In order to investigate the source of the differences observed, Post – hoc analysis (Scheffe) with mean difference was carried out.



Table 5: Scheffe Post – hoc Test and Mean for Observed Difference in Parents' Attitude towards Child Labour Practices based on their Employment status.

Groups	N	Mean	Not Employed	Self Employed	Privately Employed	Government Employed
			38.60	28.67	27.92	29.27
Not Employed	165	38.60				
Self-Employed	692	28.67	*			
Privately Employed	429	27.92	*			
Government Employed	363	29.27	*		*	

* $P < 0.05$

In table 5, significant differences were found between the attitude towards child labour practices of parents who are not employed and those who are self-employed, parents who are not employed and those who are privately employed, and parents who are not employed and those who are government employed. However, there were no significant differences between the attitude towards child labour practices of parents who are self-employed and those who are

privately employed, and parents who are self-employed and those who are government employed. Lastly, there is significant difference between the attitude towards child labour practices of parents who are privately employed and those who are government employed. Nevertheless it is concluded that there is significant difference in attitude of parents towards child labour practice based on their employment status.

Hypothesis 3: There is no significant difference in parents' attitude towards child labour practices based on their income

Table 6: Parents' Attitude towards Child Labour Practices based on their Income

Groups	Sum of Squares	df	Mean Square	F	Sig.
Between Groups	2459.537	2	1229.768	23.885*	.000
Within Groups	84748.877	1646	51.488		
Total	87208.414	1648			

* $P < 0.05$



The result presented in table 6 showed that F-cal value of 23.885 is significant because the P value (0.000) < 0.05 at 0.05. Hence, the null hypothesis is not accepted. This implies that there is significant difference in parents'

attitude towards child labour practices based on their income. In order to investigate the source of the differences observed, Post – hoc analysis (Scheffe) with mean difference was carried out.

Table 7: Scheffe Post – hoc Test and mean for Observed Difference in Parents' Attitude towards Child Labour Practices based on their Income

Groups	N	Mean	Low Income	Moderate Income	High Income
			30.71	29.37	27.00
Low Income	693	30.71			
Moderate Income	725	29.37	*		
High Income	231	27.00	*	*	

* P < 0.05

In table 7, significant differences were found between the attitude towards child labour practices of parents who are low income earner and those who are moderate income earner, and low income earner and those who are high

income earner. Also, there is significant difference between the attitude of parents towards child labour practices of parents who are moderate income earner and those who are high income earner.

Hypothesis 4: There is no significant difference in parents' attitude towards child labour practices based on their location

Table 8: t-test Analysis for Parents' Attitude towards Child Labour Practices based on their Location

Variations	N	Mean	SD	Df	t _{cal}	P
Urban	825	28.32	5.44	1647	7.284*	0.00
Rural	824	30.89	8.54			

*P<0.05

Table 8 shows that the t-cal value of 7.284 is significant because the P value (0.00) < 0.05. This implies that null hypothesis is not accepted. Hence,

there is significant difference in parents' attitude towards child labour practices based on their location.



Discussion

The study showed that only few parents have positive attitude towards child labour practices while most of the parents have negative attitude towards child labour practices. This finding contradicts Adegun (2013) who concluded that parents attitude towards child labour practices was tending towards the positive side from the negative side which is perhaps due to economic crises.

The study revealed that there is significant difference in parents' attitude towards child labour practices based on their educational status. Kwankye, Nyarko and Tagoe (2007) concluded that parents with little or no formal education earn little income due to lack of employable skills, which cannot meet the family needs and hence force their children into street hawking to supplement family income. Still in support of this finding, Fayemi (2012) and Adegun (2013) concluded that parents who maintained positive views about the value of education and who hold high academic qualifications are not likely to involve their children in child labour.

It was also revealed that there is a significant difference in parents' attitude towards child labour practices based on their employment status. The result showed that most of the respondents who are gainfully employed have negative attitude towards child labour practice. Blau and Khan (2000) concluded that causes of child labour are underemployment, massive retrenchment and

unemployment. Adebayo (2012) and Nweke and Owo (2014) concluded that there is a link between parents' marginal incomes as a result of employment status.

The study further revealed that there is a significant difference in parents' attitude towards child labour practices based on their income. The result showed that, parents who are highly income earner have negative attitude towards child labour practices because they earn better salary, why parents with low income earner has positive attitudes towards child labour because they earn lesser salary. Elegbeleye and Olasupo (2011) also found that parents of low income status showed significant high tendencies toward child labour practices than their high income counterparts.

The study also revealed that there is significant difference in parents' attitude towards child labour practices based on their location. It was revealed from the study that parents from urban areas have negative attitude towards child labour practice because they were educated, whereas parents from rural areas have positive attitude towards child labour practice because they were illiterate and poor. This finding is in support of Hoyano and Keenan (2007) who concluded that parents in rural areas involved their children in child labour practice than those in urban area.

Conclusion

Sequel to the findings of this study, it was concluded that parents have



negative attitude towards child labour practices. It was also concluded that there is difference in parents' attitude towards child labour practices based on their education, employment, income as well as location.

Recommendations

The following recommendations were made based on the findings of the study:

1. Government in Federal, state and local levels need to put some economic empowerment programmes in place in order to reduce poverty and assist poor and indigent parents.
2. The act of being creative and self-reliant should be inculcated into the National Directorate of Employment programme to eliminate unemployment.
3. Training should organize for child welfare workers especially counselors and they should replicate the same to parents and children in local dialect to enlighten them about child labour.

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