

ANALYSIS ON CHILD LABOUR IN MAIDUGURI METROPOLITAN AREA OF BORNO STATE, NIGERIA

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ABSTRACT

This paper examines the composition of child labour and child labour proceeds utilization in Maiduguri, Nigeria. The study employed field survey to collect data from 100 households. The results of the main findings suggest that 54 percent of the child labour force is between the ages of 11 and 13 years. The survey also indicates that the larger percentage of the income generated in child labor are utilized within the household. The study observes that most of the children in the force child labour activity are orphans or children without parental care. The study concludes that child labor exploitation operates as a last resort for the vulnerable poor families. Therefore, for effective elimination of child labor there is a need to support the vulnerable families with safety nets and also educate the parents on the consequences of force child labor.

Keywords: Child labour, child labour proceeds, poverty

INTRODUCTION

The labor participation rates of children have been on the increase in Maiduguri in a wide range of activities due to severe economic and social problems such as unemployment, low income and generally poverty. Most households in the metropolis are increasingly finding it difficult to provide food and basic needs for themselves hence the strong need to engage the younger members of the family into active labor participation. The growth of child labor in the labor market came with it positive and negative implications for the ability of the satae to meet a variety of social and economic targets. The rising child labor rate tend to increase the low school enrolment and thus heighten the growing insecurity and rising crime rates. These seriously challenge the capacities of the state government to realize social and economic development. However, in spite the call for the ban of child labor, the child labor rate is on the increase in the Metropolis and hence little attention has been paid to address the situation. The main purpose of this paper is to examine the structure of child population involvement and the utilization of the proceeds of child labor generated in a the Metropolitan with a view to providing policy recommendations.

Maiduguri is the state capital of Borno state. It is located at the innermost part of the Northeast region of Nigeria. The city has a population of 540,016 based on 2006 census. The town is a cosmopolitan one, as it is largely inhabited by various tribes with different cultural affiliations. Borno state is one of the poverty-ridden states in the country with about 62 percent of the population live on less than a dollar per day based on the Harmonized Nigerian Living Standard Survey 2009/2010. The city faces serious security challenges and level of wellbeing deteriorated and this might have caused the increase in the child labor rate. This paper examines the composition of child labor and how the earnings from exploitative child labor are utilized. This enables us to identify the forms of child labor.

MATERIAL AND METHOD

The theory of demand as it applies to the individual's choice of good and services can be extended to the demand for children at the household levels. The microeconomic theory of fertility thus, assumes that, children are regarded both as investment and consumption goods. This means that the demand for children can be for their sake, and for the sake of what material benefit they could generate. Consequently, the demand for children at the household level can be seen to be influence by family preferences (Todaro, 1992). Schultz (1974) and Todaro (1902) argue that any form of child labor is seen as exploitation. To determine child labor exploitation in Maiduguri, the explanatory study employed field survey to collect data from 100 households from four major wards in Maiduguri. The wards considered are Gwange, Bulumkutu, Shehuri North and Umarari. Twenty households in each of the selected wards were randomly interviewed. Descriptive statistics test was used to determine the composition and structure of child labor and a t-test and One-way ANOVA was used to analyze the data.

RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

The result of the survey conducted in the selected wards, revealed the following response as contained in the following tables.

Table 1: Child Labor and Age Distribution

Age Distribution Years	Frequency	Percentage
7-10	17	17
11-13	43	43
14-15	40	40
Total	100	100

Source: Field Survey, 2014

Table1 shows that 43% of the children participating in the labour force are between the ages of eleven (11) and thirteen (13) and 40% of the child labor are between 14 and 15 years. While the children between the ages of seven (7) and ten (10) represents 17% of the child labor.

Table 2: Utilization of income generated through child labor

Utilization of income	Frequency	t-value	2-tail sig
Self-Benefit	20 (20%)	2.998	0.003
Supplement Family Income	55 (55%)	3.46	0.003
Other	15 (15%)	1.395	0.164

Source field survey 2014

Table 2 above presents the results of the utilization of income generated through child labor. The findings of the results of the utilization of the proceeds revealed that the utilization of the proceeds from child labor differs between households in the selected wards. Twenty (20) of the respondents representing 20% believed that income generated through child labour are utilized by the children themselves. The children save such income for their personal use as most of them are from poor families. While the results show that 55% of the respondents indicate that, the amount is used to supplement household income. That is the income generated through child labor are utilized by the whole family.

The results suggest that various forms of child labor exploitation exist in the Metropolitan depending on socioeconomic and demographic conditions facing the households. The field survey revealed the following forms of child labor utilization. First, one of the forms of child labor exploitation identified in the survey is that, the child works and keeps the financial gains for his use. That is, the fruit of his labor goes directly to himself without any provision to other members of the family. The child, in most cases uses the proceeds from his/her labor to prepare for his future engagements like clothing for himself during festivities and so on. This is common amongst the *Almajiris*, where a child is sent to a traditional Quranic school from other town and is left to cater for himself.

The household survey also revealed that the breadwinner's income in a household is not adequate enough to sustain the family hence the child or children is/are encouraged to engage in gainful labor activity to complement the breadwinner's income. In this case, the income earnings from the exploitative child labor are utilized for the benefit of the household members. In addition, there are situations where a family has sufficient income and other resources, but still the child are forced to work. What the child/children brings home is shared among the family or the child keeps the returns of his labor to himself. While, a situation in which children are sent to traditional Quranic schools from other towns and such children are allowed to live with the tutor, for the period of their studies with the condition that the children shall be allowed to provide for themselves. In most cases the parents provide little to them and as a result the children strive hard to sustain themselves and thereby exposed to work that harms children or keeps them from attending school.

CONCLUSION

The paper examined the composition of child population in forced labor and the forms of child labor proceeds utilization in Maiduguri Metropolitan, Borno state, Nigeria. The explanatory study employed field survey to collect data from 80 households for the analysis. The results of the main findings indicate that about 54 percent of the child labor force is made up of children between the ages of 11 and 13 years. Similarly, the larger proportion of the income generated through child labor are utilized within households, that is, are spend for the benefit of the whole family. This study provides an insight into the utilization of child labor proceeds but the study has its limitation in term of proceeds use. This study only classified utilization into three main types, which are self-benefit, supplement family income and others. The study concludes that the child labor operates as a last resort for people that suffer under the heavy burden of poverty. To reduce forced child labor in poverty-ridden communities, there is a need to provide support and advice for the vulnerable families and make educational opportunities available for the orphans or less privileged children. The study suggests that future study on child labor should investigate the socioeconomic and demographic factors influencing child-labor in Borno state.

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