

# ATTITUDE TOWARDS CHILD LABOUR AMONG PARENTS IN KHANA LOCAL GOVERNMENT AREA OF RIVERS STATE

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## Abstract

*This study examined marital status and education as determinants of child labour among parents in Khana Local Government Area of Rivers State. Two null hypotheses were tested at 0.05 level of significance. The descriptive survey design was adopted in the study, the population of study comprised of all parents in Khana Local Government Area. A sample size of 250 was used for the study. Multistage sampling procedure was employed. Data was collected using the structured questionnaire which had two sections, A and B. Furthermore, the questionnaire was validated by experts for face and content validity. The reliability coefficient of 0.76 was obtained using Pearson Product Moment Correlation coefficient. SPSS version 21.0, Z-test and ANOVA were used to test the null hypotheses. The results indicated that there is a significant difference between parents' educational level and their attitude towards child labour (P. 0.000). One way ANOVA showed that there is a significant difference between parents' marital status and their attitude towards child labour (p. 0.000). It was concluded that child labour in the study area was higher due to cases of broken homes, poor educational attainment of parents. Based on the findings of the study, it was recommended that the Government through its agencies saddled with such responsibilities should enforce the extant laws on child labour thereby protecting children from the menace of the ugly consequences, among others.*

*Keywords: Child labour, Marital status, Educational status and Parents in Khana, Rivers State.*

## Introduction

The child welfare league reported that, in Lagos alone there are 100,000 boys and girls living and working on the streets, (Olujide. 2007). In northern Nigeria, children known as the Almajiris are at times employed in private farms and in commercial farms. Some of the children are even trafficked and used as farm labourers, Robinson (2004) stated that National Child Labour Survey estimated that there are 15 million children engaged in child labour in Nigeria. These children are also vulnerable to being forced to farm work and in many instances they are being deprived of access to education. Child labour is one of the greatest social ills facing Nigeria today, and Africa in general. Various researchers have paid not a little attention to the problems of child labour in their researches (Elgbeleye & Olasupo, 2011;

Mokhodion & Odusote, 2005; Togunde & Richardson, 2006; Osiruemu 2007; Togunde & Carter 2008; Olawale, 2009). The general findings of these researchers revolve around the fact that child labour is prevalent in Nigeria, and that drastic measures will be required to curb this ugly trend. Child labour exposes children to series of dangers.

Togunde and Carter (2008) examined some of the consequences of child labour on working children which include, malnourishment known to make them susceptible to diseases. musculo-skeletal disorders from heavy labour, physical and sexual abuse, educational problems due to absence from and lateness to school. Many factors have been studied and found to be responsible for child labour practices. For example, Togunde and Carter (2008) attributed the phenomenon to several factors like globalization. Several factors, such as poverty, low socio-economic status of parents, cultural and religious factors coupled with the lack of enforcement of labour restrictions and inconsistencies in the anti-child labour legislation have also been identified as reasons for the upsurge and pervasiveness of child labourers, especially in the developing countries (Elgbeye & Olasupo, 201 1; Mokhodion & Odusote, 2005).

These factors, have thus, accounted for the high child employment rate of 90.0% of world's total for Africa and Asia (Bass, 2004; Oloko, 2004: Ruovanpura & Rai. 2004). Child labour toughens children and changes their orientation towards the negative side by putting in them this feeling of neglect and rejection by the society. This study is not against the idea of children working, or parent giving their children task to perform, rather they should be made to partake in activities that will not negatively affect their health and development or interfere with their education. As such the idea of parents/guardians engaging their children below 18 years of age in more than light work such as in economic activities and in worth forms of child labour is prevalent in Khana Local Government Area of Rivers State and has attracted the researcher to look at parent's attitude towards child labour in Khana Local Government Area of Rivers State.

Quisumbrey and Maluccid (2003) investigate how the balance of bargaining power between husband and wife affect resources allocation in the household using household survey data from four developing countries. They found that in Bangladesh and South Africa, greater bargaining power of a wife significantly raises the share of education expenditure in total household expenditure. This suggests that a household's decision to spend more on education reflects the wife's preference rather than the husband's, implying that wives are more likely than their husbands to prefer investing in their children's education. Sakamoto (2006) puts it that a child is much likely to work if his father is working, but the working status of mother has no impact on the incidence of child labour. In aberrance to the above study, Ryuichi (2003) said that with regard to parent's work status, as before he found that if a father is working, children are less likely to work: on the other hand, if a mother is working, girls are more likely to work, and not boys.

Parent's educational level and their attitude towards child labour. One possible determinant of child labour is parent's educational attainment which greatly affects household's decision with respect to child labour. The categories of parental education used for this study include, those who completed primary school, secondary and tertiary schools and those with no formal education. Ahmad (2012) carried out a research in Aligorch city of Utter in India, where he assumes that poor children are obliged to work. According to him, the city

has low school participation. However, children are forced to work due to poverty. About 90% of child labours are of illiterate parent's. Osment (2014) is of the view that parents have more influence on their children's decision over school attendance. He said that parents who are educated understand the importance of sending their children to school over working.

Emerson and Souza (2002) assume parents with no education usually send their children to work to contribute to household income. Educated parents are more inclined to be knowledgeable about the importance of education for children and keep children in school by creating an environment conducive for learning. Lilliand and Willis (1994) looked at parental attitudes that are correlated with child labour status by trying to disentangle the reasons why educational attainment is correlated across-co-resident generations amongst Malaysians. They estimated that about two-thirds of the impact of parental education on children's educational attainment was through direct and indirect effect of parental schooling.

Barharn, et al (1995) developed a model where financing for education is obtained from within the family. Hence, low educational attainment lead to lower income and also lead to lower educational investments in the generation thereby increasing child labour. They said that lower parental education might affect child health and nutrition which in turn feeds back to the relative productivity of schooling and working. Emerson and Souza (2007) also observed that the elasticity of child labour supply with respect to parental education is greater for fathers than mothers. More educated parents are assumed to show greater concern for the education of their children than less educated counterparts because they recognize the future returns to education. They expected that children with educated parents are more likely to attend school and therefore less likely to work, (Emerson & Souza, 2003).

Sakamoto (2006) in India showed that fathers who have completed middle school are less likely than those who have received no formal education to send male children to work but slightly more likely to send female children to work. Also that fathers who have completed secondary school and above are less likely to send either female or male children to work. It also showed that mothers who have completed primary school and above are also less likely to send their children to work than mothers with formal education. Studies from Bangladesh. Colombia. Italy. Kenya, Sweden, Thailand and the United Kingdom have also shown that low parental education increases the potential of physical violent job towards children (Ketsela & Dedebe. 1997). Ekind (2004) reported that mothers of child labourers reported having good education, including those having secondary education. Mothers of non-working children were more likely to have high and University education. This is linked with the precious finding of the influence of mothers on child labour in the household, it confirms the likeliness that the more educated the mother of a child, the more likely the child will also be educated and the less likely he/she becomes a child labourer (Myanmar. 2015).

Marital status of parents and their attitude towards child labour. There are many ways parents can influence child labour supply aside from either complementariness or substitution patterns in child labour. The absence of a parent might either accentuate the employment options open to children or accentuate the need for children to fill in for the parents work (Edmond. 2014). Yusuff and Yelili (2007) discovered in their studies that some separated fathers of child labourers neglect their children because of their separation with the children mother.

Edmond and Shama (2006) consider an extreme example of how child time allocation can be affected by single decision-makers. In studying a population in Western Napal with a

high intrinsic risk of bondage, they argue that child labour is increased and schooling reduced in part because neither parents nor children have security over the returns to investments in children.

Physically abusing parents are more likely to be young single, poor and unemployed and to be less educated than their non-abusing counterparts in both developing and industrialized countries. Poor young single mothers are among those at greatest risk for using violence towards their child (Ahmad, 2010). In the United States, for instance, single mothers are three times more likely to report physical child abuse than mothers in two-parent families (Straus, 2009).

Myanmar (2015) said that 7% of child labourers reported that their mothers and 20% said that their father had their father had passed away which gave rise to their decision to work. Folorunsho and Sinat (2010) showed that 89 (34.2%) parents who are not married said that children must not work before being fed or given their basic needs. Also 96% of parents reported that they provided their children with basic educational and health needs and 90% believed that both parents should be involved in the care of their children (Bamgbose, 2002). Another study by Lubeigt (2007) discovered that non-working children were more likely to live in households headed by single parents.

### **Statement of the Problem**

When a child is exposed to activities such as, hawking, doing manual jobs for money and made to stay with persons not his/her exact parents. The possibilities are high for the child to experience physical, psychological and social consequences such as; accidents resulting into medical issues, Rape due to exposure to predators, kidnap, and drug abuse from friends and cronies initiations, (Onuzulike, 2017). These problems are prevalent among children in Khana local government area. Such problems end in infections, disabilities, and even death. In view of these, the researcher is poised to studying the educational and marital status of parents in the study area as determinants of child labour among parents in Khana local Government area of Rivers State, Nigeria.

### **Purpose of the Study**

The purpose of this study was to investigate marital status and education as determinants of child labour among parents in Khana Local Government Area of Rivers State.

### **Research Hypotheses**

The following null hypothesis will tested at 0.05 significant alpha to guide the study.

1. There is no significant difference between parents' educational level and their attitude towards child labour.
2. There is no significant difference between parent's marital status and their attitude towards child labour.

### **Materials and Methods**

This study adopted the descriptive survey design. Data concerning attitude of parent towards child labour was collected and subjected to statistical analysis without manipulating any variable in the study.

**Population of the Study**

Population of the study consisted of all parents in Khana Local Government Area of Rivers State.

**Sample size:** the sample size consisted of 250 parents in Khana Local Government Area of Rivers State.

**Sampling Techniques**

Multistage sampling was adopted in the study. First stratification was carried out based on 3 districts, secondly, simple random sampling was used to select 2 villages from each of the districts using balloting with replacement. Stage 3, accidental sampling was finally used to select respondents from each of the villages selected for the study.

**Instrument for Data Collection**

Data was collected using the structured questionnaire, made of section A: sociodemographic characteristics and B; dealt with attitude of parents towards child labour.

**Validity of the Instrument**

The instrument was validated by experts in Health education, psychology and public health. Copies of the instrument alongside the objectives and hypotheses were given to the experts for face and content validation. Suggestions from these experts were incorporated in designing of the final copy of the instrument.

**Reliability of the Instrument**

The reliability of the instrument was tested using the person’s product moment correlation coefficient on 20 parents in a close local government area (TAI) to that of the actual study. A reliability coefficient of 0.76 was obtained, which is high enough and was used for the study.

**Administration of the Instrument**

The instrument was administered by the researcher on the respondents directly and retrieved immediately for sorting and analysis.

**Method of Data Analysis**

Data collected were analyzed using Z-test and ANOVA via the statistical package for social sciences version 21.

**Results**

Results of the study are presented in table 1 and 2.

**Hypothesis 1.**

There is no significant difference between parents' educational level and their attitude towards child labour. To test this hypothesis, the One-sample T-test was employed as shown in the table below.

**Table 1: T-test summary of parents' educational level and their attitude towards child labour**

Group	N	Mean	SD	Df	t-cal	t-tab	Decision
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Educational level	200	2.95	1.12	189	39.31	0.000	Rejected
Attitude	180	1.17	0.38				

**\*P>0.05**

Table 1. Shows that t-calculated was 39.31 and t-tabulated is 0.000. Therefore t-calculated was (39.31) is greater than t-tabulated is (0.000) at 0.05 level of significance. The null hypothesis is there rejected. This shows that, there is no significant difference between parents' educational level and their attitude towards child labour.

**Hypothesis 2**

There is no significant influence of parents' marital status on their attitude towards child labour.

This hypothesis was tested with the One-Way Analysis of Variance (ANOVA) as shown in the table below.

**Table 3: One-Way ANOVA of influence of parents' marital status on their attitude towards child labour**

Source	Sum of squares	Mean sum of Squares	Df	F-cal	F-cal	Decision
Between groups	1.197	0.200	6	1.375	0.227	<b>Rejected</b>
Within groups	25.1 14	0.145	173			
<b>Total</b>	<b>26.311</b>		<b>179</b>			

**\*P>0.05**

Table 2. Shows that the F-calculated (1.375) at 0.05 level of significance was greater than the F-tabulated (0.227). Therefore, the null hypothesis that states that there is no significant influence of parents' marital status on their attitude towards child labour is rejected.

**Discussion of Finding**

**Parents' Educational Level and Attitude towards Child Labour**

The findings of the study revealed a significant relationship between parents' educational level and their attitude towards child labour. The study stipulates the following number of parents had positive attitude towards child labour, 66 (44.6%) had up to tertiary education, 49 (33.1%) secondary education, 23 (15.5%) had no formal education and 10 (6.8%) had primary education.

Also that 12 (37.5%) parents who had primary education. 11 (34.4%), secondary education and 4 (12.5%) parents who had tertiary education portrayed negative attitude towards child labour. The result of this study goes in line with that of Ahmad (2012) who discovered in his study that about 90% of child labour is of illiterate parents. Also, Emerson and Souza (2002) agreed that parents with no education usually send their children to work to contribute to household income. They still held to the view that educated parents are more inclined to be knowledgeable about the importance of education for children and keep

children in school, of which Osment (2014) concurred, by saying that parents who are educated understand the importance of sending their children to school over working. Conversely, studies by Sakamoto (2006) in India concluded that fathers who have completed middle school are less likely than those who have received no formal education to send female children to work.

Ekind (2004) also submitted that mothers of child labourers in Hadda reported having good education among all parents, including having secondary education. I suggest the reason for the similarities is that those educated parents are aware of the benefits associated to education and would want their children to partake of those benefits. On the other hand, it could be that those parents with negative attitude may not really be aware of the dangers associated with child labour. Poverty labour could also be a contributory factor.

Education they say, is the key, if we as a country can achieve educating all, then we wouldn't suffer some of these problems. So to this. I opine that government should also provide free education for adults and support all forms of adult education programmes, seminars and conferences that address the psychological and educational need of children.

### **Parents' Marital Status and Attitude towards Child Labour**

The result this study revealed that 5 (15.6%) single parents, 19 (59.4%) married parents, 3 (9.4%) divorce, 3 (9.4%) widowed parents 0 (0.0%) separated parents and 2 (6.3%) cohabiting parents had negative attitude towards child labour, while 12 (8.1%) single parents, 110 (74.3%) married parents, 4 (2.7%) divorce, 11 (7.4%) widowed parents, 7 (4.7%) separated parents and 4 (2.7%) cohabiting parents had positive attitude towards child labour. The result of this study is in congruence with that of Folorunsho and Sinat (2010) who revealed that 89 (34.2%) parents who are not married said that children must not work before being fed or given their basic needs. 96% of parents reported that they provided their children with basic educational and health needs and 90% believed that both parents should be involved in the care of their children (Bamgbose. 2002). Another study by Lubigt (2007) discovered that non-working children were more likely to live in household headed by single parents. Studies by Yusuf and Yelili (2007) is not in line with the above findings. They discovered that some separated fathers of child labourers neglect their children because of their separation with the children's mother. Also, Myanmar (2015) disclosed that 7% of child labourers reported that their mothers and 20% said that their fathers had passed away which gave rise to their decision.

A report of Ahmad (2010) stated that poor young single mothers are among those at greater risk for using violence toward their children. Similarly, in the United States, it was discovered that single mothers are three times more likely to report using physical child abuse than mothers in two-parent families (Straus. 2009). I think the reason backing up the similar studies is that every parent would want a bright future for their children. Aside from that, they wouldn't want to watch their children drop out of school while others still move on. On the other hand, separated, single, cohabiting and even married parents neglect their children because of the attitude displayed by the other parent. They tend to transfer aggression caused by the other parent (who may have left for another partner, denied ever impregnating them or maltreat them even while they lived together) on the children.

## Conclusion

Child labour in the study area remains a subject of discussion due to the fact that there increase in cases of broken homes aged parents, and lack of totally free basic education in the study area. These-conditions have in no small wise contributed to reducing the negative trend of child labour among respondents.

## Recommendations

1. The Government through its agencies saddled with such responsibilities should enforce the extant laws on child labour thereby protecting children from the menace of the ugly consequences.
2. Adult literacy programmes alongside emphasis on basic education should be put in place with visible action by the Education Ministry and other Non-governmental agencies.
3. The Government through the Ministry of Labour and Productivity/Employment generation, the Ministry of Finance and Economic Planning among others should design and implement programmes for the alleviation of poverty, provision of jobs and establishing a functional social welfare scheme to help the poor masses.
4. Education should be made free compulsory at the basic level with a tripartite model for sponsorship of education by the Government, Non-governmental Organization and Private Individuals.
5. Provision of Basic social amenities, such as roads, constant power supply, portable water in all nooks and crannies of the state which will in no small wise foster the development of small scale business enterprises.

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