CONTRIBUTING FACTORS OF CHILD LABOUR IN NIGERIA AND IMPLICATIONS ON SDG 8: EVIDENCE FROM 2016 MULTIPLE INDICATORS CLUSTER SURVEY

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ABSTRACT: *Child labor is considered harmful to the general development of the child but is still common in the developing countries of the world. The study aimed at determining the demographic and socio-economic factors contributing to child labor in Nigeria. Secondary data extracted from the 2016 MICS were used. The sample was two stages sampling frame, with a nationally representative sample of 33,901 households from 2,239 enumeration areas. 61,109 questionnaires were administered to children age 5–17 years using three age-specific thresholds. Tabulations, involving frequencies and percentages were used to analyze the data at univariate level, while logistic regression analysis was employed to determine the contributing factors of child labor. The results showed that child labor was still high in the country and the poorest households had more children involved in child labor. The emerging factors of child labor were child's age, sex, place of residence, school attendance, mother's education, wealth index quintile and geo-political zone. To achieve SDG8, it was recommended that enforcement of compulsory school attendance and completion, skill acquisition, empowering parents and education of parents against child labor should be vigorously pursued by the government at all levels in the country.*

KEYWORDS: Contributing Factors, Child Labour, Sustainable Development Goals, Nigeria

INTRODUCTION

Children are considered as future leaders and therefore need to be protected against activities that would destroy their childhood potentials. One of such activities is child labour which has been identified as harmful to the general development of the child. International Labour Office (2002), described child labour as all forms of work carried out by children under the age laid down in the standards. Also, International Labour Organization and the Federal Office of Statistics of Nigeria (2001) see child labour as involving both paid and unpaid work in any sector which is harmful to child's development, including depriving him or her the opportunity to attend school. International Labour Organization (2002) observed that child slavery, debt bondage, prostitution, pornography, forced recruitment of children for use in armed conflict, use of children in drug trafficking and other illicit activities carried out by

boys and girls under 18 years of age are in existence worldwide, but more common in the developing nations. International Labour Organization and Understanding Children's Work (2010) pointed out that, globally, the agricultural sector has the largest proportion of children in labour, while the service sector contains the second largest proportion of child labour.

Article 32 of the Convention on the Rights of the Child has been domesticated by many countries, including Nigeria, which is aimed at protecting the children against child labour. It states that:

> "State parties recognize the right of the child to be protected from economic exploitation and from performing any work that is likely to be hazardous, or to interfere with the child's education or to be harmful to the child's health or physical, mental, spiritual, moral or social development."

Alliance and International Labour Office (2017) reported estimated 152 million children that were in labour, of which 73 million were involved in worse or hazardous work. The report further estimated regional variations of child labour with Africa recording the highest proportion of 19.6%, while 5.3% was recorded by America; Arab states (2.9%), Asia and the pacific (7.4%), and Europe and central Asia (4.1%) (Kristine, 2017).

Children in Nigeria still engage in all forms of child labour which include quarrying granite, illegal mining, armed conflict, working as bus conductors, child begging and child prostitution which are very common in the urban centers (Bureau of International labor Affairs, 2018). In 2007, 28.9% children were involved in child labour of any kind in Nigeria which was not even among the regions. For instance, child labour in North Central was 39.1%, North East (26.0%), North West (26.7%), South East (25.7%), South South (38.0%) and South West (23.4%) (National Bureau of Statistics and United Nations Children's Fund, 2008). Child labour witnessed a rise in 2011, with 47.1% children involved, indicating that 18.2% additional children were involved in labour after 2007 survey. Child labour by region also rose to 47.7% in North Central, North East (44.8%), North West (47.5%), South East (55.7%), South South (48.2%) and South West (42.3%) (National Bureau of Statistics, 2011). Based on the 2016 Nigeria Multiple Indicator Cluster Survey's report, the country had 50.8% children involved in child labour of any kind, indicating an increase of 3.7% over that of 2011 (National Bureau of Statistics and United Nations Children's Fund, 2017).

However, in swift response to curb this, the Nigerian government ratified some international conventions on child labour. According to Bureau of International Labour Affairs (2018), conventions on child labour ratified included Convention 138 of 1973 (minimum age of child labour), Convention 182 of 1999 (worst forms of child labour), Convention 29 of 1930 (forced labor) and UN Child Rights Convention on sale of children, child prostitution and child pornography. The constitution of the country, which is supreme to other laws, made provisions to protect children from exploitative works. For instance, section 34 (1) provides that: No person shall be held in slavery or servitude; also, no one shall be required to perform forced or compulsory labour. Similarly, there are other laws and regulations on child labour that have been domesticated in the country. Among them included minimum age for work (section 28 and 29 of Child's Right Act), minimum age for hazardous work (section 28, 29 and 277 of Child's Rights Act), prohibition of forced labor (section 28 and 30 of Child's Rights Act), prohibition of child trafficking (section 30 of Child's Rights Act) prohibition of

commercial sexual exploitation of children (section 30 of 32 of Child's Rights Act) and minimum age for military recruitment (section 34 of Child's Rights Act).

Apart from the legal framework, social programs have been initiated to address child labor in the country. Among them is the Decent Work Country Program II (2015-2018) aimed to combat worst labor, Safe School Initiative of 2018 to improve access to education in northeastern Nigeria and World Bank-funded Programs such as National Social Safety Nets Projects (2016-2022) and Better Education Service Delivery for All (2017-2022) among others.

Various factors have been identified as causes of child labour. Johansson (2009) generally classified causes of child labor into three forms. Firstly, child labour is believed to be caused by family contribution which involves children working with the consent and encouragement of their families? The second cause is child's self-actualization which involves a child being in labor not because the family is poor nor for financial benefit, but to satisfy self-ego. Johansson further identified household poverty as the third cause of child labour. This is when a child is in labor for wages because of the poor status of the household. International Labour Organization and United Nations Children's Fund (2020) maintained that child labor is caused by a combination of many factors, such as poverty, social norms condoning it, lack of decent jobs and migration.

Empirical evidences have been documented on the factors that determine child labor in Nigeria and other parts of the world. Children from poorly educated homes, large family and those living with unrelated guardians were found to be more likely to be involved in child labour in Nigeria (Fetuga et. al, 2005). Similarly, Chang (2006) in Indonesia found mother's years of Schooling to be a determining factor of child labour. Okpukpara and Odurukwe (2006) have studies child labor determinants and found that child, parent, household and community variables significantly affect child labor in Nigeria. In Northeastern Nigeria, it was found that age, sex, poverty status of households were factors that determine child labor (Amao et al., 2010). In Ile-Ife, Nigeria, a relationship between parental socioeconomic status and child labour was established (Elgbeleye and Olasupo, 2011). Huebler (2008) found children from poor households and households without formally educated household head likely to be involved in child labour. However, Webbink et al. (2013) did not find cultural characteristics to be related to child labour among 18 countries studied. Also, analyzing Child Labor Among Rural Household in Oyo State, Idowu et al., (2013) found that gender of the household head, educational level, number of female child and household income determine child labor reduction.

Although, previous studies on child labour have been conducted in the country, but to the researchers' best knowledge, studies on factors of child labor in Nigeria using recent nationally representative data are few. Therefore, there still need to investigate the demographic and socio-economic factors contributing to child labor using the latest Nigeria's 2016 Multiple Indicator Cluster Survey data. The results would be useful in the formulation of policies by the government and interest partners to reduce child labor and increase the country's chances of achieving SDG 8.

Theoretical Framework

Fig 1 is a framework used as a guide to the analysis of this study. Children's involvement in labor is seen to be driven by child attributes, household attributes and community attributes. Child attributes which may influence child's entrance into labor in the society involve age, gender and birth order, among others. Older children for instance may be able to earn more market wages and be more involved in child labor than the younger ones. Also, employers of labour may be more interested in older children's employment. In some societies, admission of more males than females in child labor may be common and vice versa, which also depends on the nature of available labour in the society.

Child Attributes

- Age
- Sex
- Birth order
- Health status
- Number of children in family

CHILD LABOR

Household Attributes

- Poverty status of the household
- Social norms and values
- Parents level of education
- House division of labour etc

Community Attributes

- Availability of schools
- Quality of schools
- Job opportunities after education
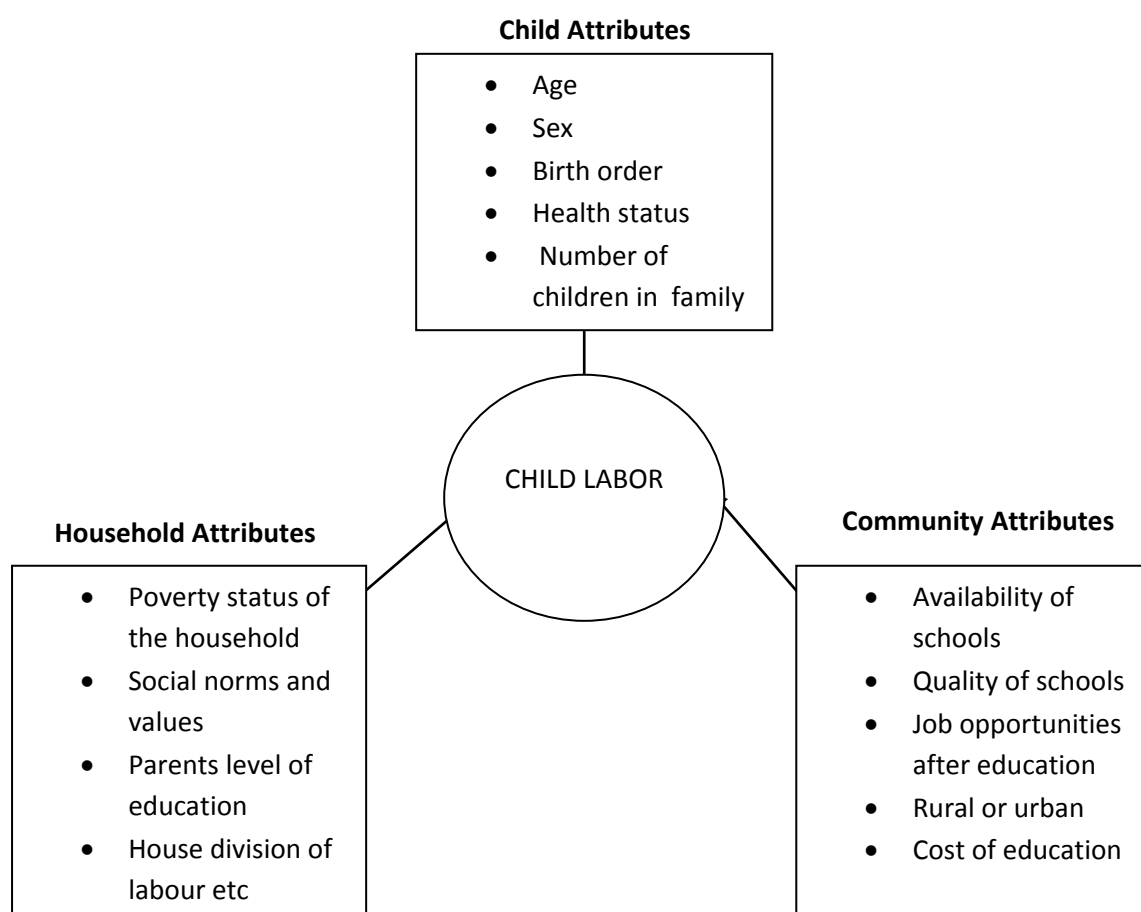- Rural or urban
- Cost of education

Fig 1: A Framework Illustrating the Factors that may contribute to Child Labor

Source: Adapted and modified from Edmonds (2003)

In the case of household attributes, how the household value education, division of work between market and household work, social norms and values and poverty status of the household among others may influence child's entrance to the labor market. For instance, if the household's background is poor, children may like to go into labor to sustain themselves and the family. Community attributes could also be drivers of child labor. Factors such as availability of schools, quality of the educational institutions and opportunities open to educated laborers among others. For instance, if a child and the parents are convinced that acquiring education first will open more opportunities, education may be the first priority and seeking paid labor would be delayed until completion of school.

Research Area and Design

Nigeria which is the study area is located between latitude 10º North and longititude 8º Cameroon to the east and south east, Benin to the west and Gulf of Guinea to the south. The country has a total land area of 923,768 sq km, with a projected population of 198 million in 2018 (National Population Commission, 2018). The study used secondary data that was extracted from the latest 2016 Multiple Indicators Cluster Survey (MICS) of Nigeria. 2016 MICS is the fifth in the series of MICS conducted in the country. It was carried out by Nigeria Bureau of Statistics (NBS) in collaboration with National Primary Health Care Development Agency (NPHCDA) and National Agency for the Control of Aids (NACA). Generally, the sample was a stratified one involving two stages sampling frame with a nationally representative sample of 33,901 households from 2,239 enumeration Areas (AEs). Specifically, 61,109 questionnaires were administered to children aged 5-17 years in the selected households to gather information on child labor. In collecting data, three age-specific thresholds for a number of hours a child can perform economic activity that can be classified as child labor were used, which are: [a] age (5-11 years): 1 hour or more [b] age (12-14 years): 14 hours or more [c] age (15-17 years): 43 hours or more.

Data Analysis

In the analysis of data, SPSS 23 environment was used.Tabulation, involving frequencies and percentages were used to analyze the demographic and socio-economic characteristics of children aged 5-17 years and prevalence of child labor in the country. To determine the contributing factors of child labor, logistic regression was employed and p- value <0.05 was used as significant.

Ethical Considerations

Permission to use 2016 MICS data was sought from the Ethics Committee of the Opinion Research Corporation of the Macro International Inc. Calverton, M.D, USA.

RESULTS

Demographic and Socio-economic Characteristics of the Respondents

The results of the background characteristics of the respondents are shown in table 1.

The mean age of the children was 10 years, with the age group 15 – 14 years having the highest respondents of 61.3% and age group 15 – 17 years with the least respondents of 16.7%. The male children were 50.9% and 49.1% females, with a ratio of 1.03:1.

Table 1: Distribution of Demographic and Socio-economic Characteristics of the Children, 5 – 17 years

Variable category	Characteristics	Frequency	percentage
Age	5-11	37,469	61.3
	12-14	13,328	21.8
	15-17	10,312	16.9
	Total	**61109**	**100.0**
Sex	Male	31093	50.9
	Female	30016	49.1
	Total	**61109**	**100.0**
Ethnicity of house head			
	Hausa	32901	53.8
	Igbo	5104	8.4
	Yoruba	6092	10.0
	Others	17012	27.8
	Total	**61109**	**100.0**
Residence			
	Urban	19735	32.3
	Rural	41374	67.7
	Total	**61109**	**100.0**
School attendance			
	Yes	45503	74.5
	No	15606	25.5
	Total	**61109**	**100.0**
Mother's education			
	None	17371	28.4
	Non-formal	11007	18.0
	Primary	8420	13.8
	Secondary	9411	15.4
	Higher	1519	2.5
	Can't be determined	13381	21.9
	Total	**61109**	**100.0**

Wealth index quintile

Poorest	13491	22.1
Second	12663	20.7
Middle	12399	20.3
Fourth	12032	19.7
Richest	10519	17.2
Total	**61109**	**100.0**

Geo-political zone

North central	10355	17.0
North East	13956	12.2
NorthWest	22022	36.0
SouthEast	3616	6.0
SouthSouth	5075	8.3
SouthWest	6445	10.5
Total	**61109**	**100.0**

Source: Authors' computation from MICS, 2016

In respect of the ethnicity of the house head, children from Hausa background were higher (53.8%), followed by other ethnic groups with 27.8%. Yoruba and Igbo children were 10% and 8.4% respectively. Children from urban area (32.3%) were less than that of rural (67.7%). The children not attending school were 25.5%, with 74.5% schooling. This result indicates that majority of the children combined labor with schooling. In respect of mother's education, 28.4% have no education, while 18% had non - formal education. Mothers with primary and secondary education were 13.8% and 15.4% respectively. Mothers with higher education were 2.5%, with 21.9% of the respondents that could not determine their educational status. In this result, it has shown that majority of the children's mothers have no education. The children in the poorest group of wealth index quintile were 22.1% with 20.7% in the second wealth index group. The children that were in the middle and fourth groups of wealth index were 20.3% and 19.7% respectively, with 17.2% in the richest group. For the geo-political zones, 36% and 22.2% children were from Northwest and Northeast respectively. There were 17% and 10.5% children from the North central and south west respectively. The respondents from South south were 8.3%, with 6% from South East region of the country.

Child Labor and Demographic, Socio-economic Factors in Nigeria

Table 2 presents results of the distribution of child labor based on the demographic and socio-economic variables of the children (5 – 17 years). It shows that out of 61,109 children, 31,043 (50.8%) of them were involved in labor during the period the survey was conducted. The highest child labor of 66.5% was found among the children from the poorest households, while the lowest (26.4%) was from the richest households. The results further show that children from age group 15 – 17 were more involved in child labor with 53.3%, while the age group 5 – 11 recorded the least (49.9%). Male children were more involved in child labor with 54.3%, while 47.2% female children were in child labor.

Table 2: Distribution of Child Labour by Demographic and Socioeconomic Characteristics of the children, 5-17 years in Nigeria.

		Child labour				
		Involve		**Not involve**		
Variable category	Characteristics Freq.	percent	Freq.	Percent	Total (%)
Child labor					
National	31043	50.08	30066	49.2	61109(100)
Age					
5-11	18697	49.9	18772	50.1	37469(100)
12-14	6851	51.4	6477	48.6	13328(100)
15-17	5495	53.3	4817	46.7	10312(100)
Sex					
Male	16883	54.3	14214	45.7	31097(100)
Female	14160	47.2	15852	52.8	30012(100)
Ethnicity of house head					
Hausa	17306	52.6	15595	47.4	32901(100)
Igbo	2133	41.8	2971	58.2	5104(100)
Yoruba	2345	38.5	3747	61.8	6092(100)
Others	9259	54.4	7753	45.4	17012(100)
Residence					
Urban	6591	33.4	13144	66.6	19735(100)
Rural	24452	59.1	16922	40.9	41374(100)
School attendance					
Yes	22160	48.7	23343	51.3	45503(100)
No	8883	56.9	6726	43.1	15606(100)
Mother's education					
None	10368	59.7	7003	40.3	17371(100)
Non-formal	6609	60.0	4398	40.0	11007(100)
Primary	5402	64.2	3018	35.8	8420(100)
Secondary	3461	36.8	5950	63.2	9411(100)
Higher	551	36.3	968	63.7	1519(100)
Not known	4652	58.2	5598	41.8	13381(100)
Wealth index quintile					
Poorest	8972	66.5	4519	33.5	13491(100)
Second	7965	62.9	4698	37.1	12663(100)
Middle	6534	52.7	5865	47.3	12399(100)
Fourth	4791	39.8	7246	60.2	12037(100)
Richest	2781	26.4	7738	73.6	10519(100)

Geo-political zone

North Central	5882	56.8	4473	43.2	10355(100)
North East	6417	47.2	7179	52.8	13596(100)
North West	12134	55.1	9888	44.9	22022(100)
South East	1685	46.6	1931	53.4	3616(100)
South South	2472	48.7	2603	51.3	5075(100)
South West	2449	38.0	3996	62.0	6445(100)

Source: Authors' computation from MICS, 2016

Children from other ethnic groups and Hausa ethnic background in child labour were 54.6% and 52.6% respectively. Children from Yoruba ethnic group in child labor were the least with 38.5%, while 41.8% from Igbo ethnic background were in child labor. The rural children in child labor were 59.1%, with 33.4% urban children involved. In respect of school attendance, 56.9% of the children in child labor were not attending school, while 48.7% children were attending school. The highest child labor (60%) was recorded among mothers with non-formal education; the least (36.3%) was from mothers with the highest education. Similar to mother's education, child labour reduces when the poverty level of the household declines. The poorest wealth index quintile group recorded the highest child labor of 66.5%, with the richest group recording the least (26.6%). In respect of the geo-political zones, North central zone recorded the highest child labor of 56.8%, followed by Northwest with 55.1%. The least child labor was found in the Southwest with 38%, while South South and South East recorded 48.7% and 46.6% respectively.

Contributing Factors of Child Labour in Nigeria

Table 3 presents the logistic regression analysis of the contributing factors of child labour in Nigeria. The results showed that age was significantly associated with child labour. Children aged 12-14 (OR 0.03, p-value 0.008) and 15-17(OR 0.026, P-value 0.00) were 3% and 6% respectively more likely to be involved in child labor compared to 5-11 age group. Similarly, sex of the children was found to be significant. Male children (OR .190, P- value .004) were 19% more likely to be in child labour, relative to their female counterparts. Ethnicity of the house head was not associated with child labor.

The results also revealed that children in the rural area (OR 0.107, P-value 0.038) were 10% more likely to be in child labor, relative to their counterparts in the urban area. School attendance was a contributing factor to child labor in this study.

Table 3: Logistic Regression Analysis of the Contributing Factors of Child Labour in Nigeria

Variable	SE	P-Value	OR	Lower	95% CI Upper
Age					
5-11	RC				
12-14	0.052	0.008*	0.03	0.09	0.11
15-17	0.077	0.00*	0.026	0.015	0.017
Sex					
Female	RC				
Male	0.050	.004*	.190	.172	.209
Ethnicity of House head					
Hausa	RC				
Igbo	0.039	0.932	1.003	0.930	1.082
Yoruba	0.086	0.064	0.128	0.108	0.152
Others	0.048	0.656	1.395	1.211	1.608
Residence					
Urban	RC				
Rural	0.054	0.038*	0.107	0.096	0.119
School attendance					
Yes	RC				
No	0.072	0.032*	0.036	0.033	0.067
Mother's education					
None	RC				
Non-formal	0.056	0.108	13.678	12.268	15.25
Primary	0.056	0.073	2.703	2.382	3.067
Secondary	0.096	0.000*	1.828	150.547	219.61
Higher	0.254	0.039*	1.999	13.929	37.645
Not known	0.083	0.068	3.516	30.189	41.781
Wealth index quintile					
Poorest		RC			
Second	0.047	0.041*	0.604	0.733	0.882
Fourth	0.058	0.101	0.256	0.228	0.268
Richest	0.062	0.037*	0.478	0.778	0.992
Geo-political zone					
North Central	RC				
North East	0.08	0.000*	0.048	0.041	0.056
North West	0.076	0.094	0.625	0.538	0.725
South East	0.489	0.038*	0.02	0.022	0.121
South South	0.12	0.981	3.113	2.46	3.94
South West	0.091	0.032*	0.034	0.026	0.037

Significant at <0.05   OR- Odd ratio   SE- Standard error

Source: Authors' computation from MICS, 2016

The result shows that children that do not attend school (OR 0.036, p-value 0.032) were 3% more likely to be involved in child labor, relative to those that attend school. In respect of mother's education, children from mothers with secondary education (OR 1.828, P-value 0.000) and higher education (OR 1.999, p-value 0.039) were 1.8 and 1.9 times respectively less likely to be involved in child labour, compared to those without education. Wealth index quintile of the household was significantly related to child labor, with Children from second middle (OR 0.604, P-value 0.041) and richest households (OR 0.478, p-value 0.037) were 60% and 48% respectively less likely to be in child labor, compared with children from poorest group. In respect of the geo-political zone, children from South East (OR 0.02, P-value 0.038), South West (OR 0.034, p-value 0.032) and North East (OR 0.048, P-value 0.000) were 2%, 3%, 5% respectively less likely to be in child labor, relative to their North central counterparts.

DISCUSSION

The main purpose of this study was to determine the demographic and socio-economic factors contributing to child labor in Nigeria. Various literatures have reported that child's age is an important factor in children's entrance to labour market. In this study, age has also been found to be a contributing factor to child labour. The result indicates that as the child gets older, his or her chances of being involved in child labour increases. Previous studies such as Okpukara and Odurukwe (2008) and Amao *et al*. (2010) similarly found older children more involved in child labour in Nigeria and North Eastern Nigeria respectively. Older children can easily be admitted into hazardous jobs because the employers feel they can perform the task better than children of younger age. Child's sex was also found to be a contributing factor to child labor in the country. The results indicate that more boys are likely to be in child labor. Supporting this finding, Chang (2006) and Amao *et al*. (2010) found fewer girls to be in child labor in Indonesia and Northeastern Nigeria respectively. In rural household of Oyo state, Idowu (2003) also reported less child labour where female children population increases. In support of this finding, Kristine (2017) have also reported 23 million more boys than girls in child labour and 17 million more boys than girls in hazardous work in the world. The willingness of boys to accept hazardous jobs, which girls may decline to do, may be responsible for more boys in child labour. Ethnicity was not a contributing factor to child labour in this study. However, child's place of residence was found to be significantly related to child labour. In a similar finding, Webbik *et al*. (2013) found children in rural areas more involved in labour in 18 developing countries studied. This may be due to the fact that rural areas house more unskilled jobs which are readily available for the children to engage themselves. As expected, children that are not schooling were found to be more involved in child labour. Siddhanta *et al* (2003) also found school drop-outs to be more involved in child labour in West Bengal, India. The reason being that children not schooling could easily pertake any job that comes their way. Mother's educational attainment was significantly related to child's labour. Siddhanta *et al* (2003) and Fetuga *et al*. (2005) also found children from parents of poor educational background more likely to be engaged in child labour in West Bengal, India and Nigeria respectively. Similar findings were reported by Chang (2006), Alao *et al*. 2013 and Homaie Rad *et al*. (2015) where poorly educated parents' children were more engaged in child labour in Indonesia, Nigeria and Iran respectively. Education is an important instrument that creates awareness on the need to keep children away from child labour. Therefore, contrary to the expectation of uneducated parents, literate

ones may encourage their children to attend school and acquire the needed skills before going into labour market.

This study has demonstrated that children from poor financial background are more likely to be engaged in child labour. Previous studies that agree with this finding included Canagarajah and Nielsen (1999) that found children from poor families more likely to be engaged in child labour in Africa. In rural Northeastern Nigeria and Southeast Nigeria, children from poor households were found to be more involved in child labour (Amao *et al*. 2010 and Nwokoro, 2011). Also, Webbink *et al*. (2013) and Alao *et al* (2013) found children in 18 developing countries and Nigeria from households with low income more likely to be engaged in child labour. Nigeria is a country with majority of her population being poor. For instance, 62.8% of Nigerians where reported to be living below the national poverty line in 2010 (National Bureau of statistics, 2017). Because of the high level of poverty, most children may be encouraged by their parents to prematurely go into child labour to support the family. Also, children from poor homes that are interested in schooling may not afford the cost which may force them to shield the idea of schooling and resort to child labour.

The geo-political zone of the child was significantly associated with child labour. Children from Northern part of the country were more likely to be engaged in labour. In support of this finding, Okukpara and Odurukpe (2006) found children's participation in labour in Northwest and Northeast likely to be more when compared with children from Southeast of the country. The explanation may be that in the Southern part of the country, school enrolment rate among the children is reportedly high when compared with the Northern region; resulting to majority of the children in the North to be out of school. In addition, there are more opportunities for decent jobs for the youths in the southern region of the country.

CONCLUSION

Despite the efforts of the government at all levels through the domestication and implementation of legal instruments and social programs to curb child labor in Nigeria, the results have shown that the rate of child labor in the country is still high, with the highest child labor recorded among children of poorest households and lowest among richest households. From the logistic regression analysis, the emerging contributing factors of child labour are child's age, sex, residence, school attendance, mother's education, wealth index quintile and geo-political zone, while ethnicity was not significantly associated with child labor in Nigeria.

Policy Implications

One of the targets of the Sustainable Development goal 8 (SDG 8) is to eliminate child labor before 2030. For Nigeria to be on the track of achieving that, the following are recommended for policy formulation and implementation of the existing ones. The study found that more children below the minimum age allowed by law to be laborers were involved in child labor. Compulsory school attendance up to the required completion level should be encouraged through enforcement of the existing relevant compulsory basic education laws domesticated at state and national levels. This study also revealed gender variation in child labor participation, with males more likely to be involved. Equal access to school enrolment for male and female children should be intensified. Also, male and female children that drop out

of school should be encouraged to acquire skills to earn them better employment in future. There is also need for government and interest partners to embark on advocacy program aimed at discouraging aged long tradition of using male children by the family members to carry out difficult jobs in the farms and homes as empirical evidence has shown that majority of child labor employers are within the family unit (Kristine, 2017).

To bridge the existing gap between urban and rural child labor as revealed in this study, school attendance and skill acquisition should be encouraged by the government through establishment of more schools and skill acquisition centers in the disadvantaged rural areas. Parents that have no access to formal education should be enlightened on the need to discourage their children from going into childhood labor through awareness campaigns by relevant government agencies such as National Orientation Agency, Ministry of Labour and productivity among others. Child labor in the country could also be reduced by improving the financial status of households through empowerment programs such as credit schemes and prompt payment of pensions; to enable parents and guardians sponsor children's schooling and training on skill acquisition needed by them to be fully employed in future. This study has revealed that more children laborers are likely to be found in Northern region of the country. Therefore, to address the imbalance, there is need for government at all levels to step up actions to reduce child labor in the region through massive compulsory school enrolment, empowering parents and guardians, skills acquisition programs, massive awareness campaigns aimed at discouraging child labour and creation of decent jobs for the children in the region.

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