NEXUS BETWEEN HOUSEHOLD INCOME AND CHILD LABOR IN NORTHEASTERN NIGERIA

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ABSTRACT: *This study examines the nexus between household income and child labor in Northeastern Nigeria using Logit Regression method as methodology. The study uses a multistage sampling technique to obtain data from 9 selected Local Government Areas in Adamawa, Bauchi, and Yobe States. The data was sourced by administering questionnaires to 810 children through their household heads in 3 wards of each Local Government Area. The results of the study show that household income significantly determines child labor in Northeastern Nigeria. The coefficient of household income was found to be -1.612 which indicates that household income negatively impacts child labor. Therefore, the study recommends that the government provide policies that will enhance the level of household income in the region.*

KEYWORDS: Child labor, Household income, Household education, Logit regression Model, Household education.

Jel Classification: E24

INTRODUCTION

The International Labor Organization (ILO) (2017) estimates that 218 million children worldwide are affected by child labor. According to the most recent estimate of child labor, there are around 102 million children worldwide who work as youngsters (64 million females and 88 million boys) or nearly one in ten of all children. Due to their active involvement in subsistence agriculture, rural households are primarily responsible for the continuation of child labor, which negatively impacts their participation in educational activities and leads to subpar performance (ILO, 2018). According to the United Nation (2020), there are 72.1 million child laborers in Africa, including 31.5 million who work in dangerous conditions. In sub-Saharan Africa, where more than 40% of all children aged 5 to 14 work for survival, the issue of child labor is severe. This translates to almost 48 million kids. As a result, millions of child laborers from sub-Saharan Africa run the risk of developing several work-related health issues in the near term and jeopardizing their educational future in the long run (Ashagrie, 1998).

In Nigeria, child labor refers to the work of young people under the age of 18 in a way that limits or inhibits their access to early childhood development and education (Musa, Magaji, & Tsauni, 2023). Every state in the nation suffers from widespread child labor (Magaji, 2005). Because they are used as forced labor without safety precautions, children frequently work long hours for little compensation, are exposed to pesticides, and utilize chemical fertilizers. In addition, a growing number of street youngsters participate in begging and work as porters and scavengers (Magaji & Musa, 2015).

In Nigeria, over 89% of children attend school in the southern areas, compared to 74% in the northern regions, when regional factors are taken into account (Okolo, 2017). This demonstrates that in comparison to children in the South, more children in the North are educationally disadvantaged. In addition, 97% of the sampled children in the Southern region attended school, whereas only 63% of the sampled children in the Northern region did. Children from the Southern region had the highest participation in school. Additionally, North-Eastern Nigeria has a dearth of educational infrastructure (Musa, Magaji, & Tsauni, 2022). In addition to being more prevalent in the North than in the South, child labor-related activities are also more prevalent in the North among school-aged children (National Bureau of Statistics, 2010). The cause of this might be a result of regional differences in poverty, which force kids to work to increase their family's money. Compared to other parts of Nigeria, the Northeast has a higher prevalence of children engaging in economic activity and a lower percentage of children attending school (Okpukpara, Paul, Fedelis & Chukwuone, 2016). Child labor has the potential to hinder the growth of human capital and can lead to the transmission of child labor across generations (Magaji, 2005). This suggests that research into the relationship between household income and child labor in North-Eastern Nigeria is necessary.

The question of interest for this research is: what is the link between household income and child labor in North Eastern Nigeria? This constitutes our research question of interest. The primary objective of this study is to look into the nexus between household income and child labor in North-Eastern Nigeria.

LITERATURE REVIEW AND THEORETICAL FRAMEWORK

Conceptual Review

Concept of Child Labor: According to Suda (2001), the term "child labor" refers to when children are engaged in any type of work that is dangerous and harmful to their health or hinders their education. For Moyi (2011), child labor refers to low wages, long hours, and physical and sexual abuse. Bhat (2010) asserts that the definition of child labor is not simple because it includes three difficult concepts to define, which are "child", "work" and "labor". He claims that the term "childhood" can be defined by age but in some societies, people cease to be a child at different ages.

The International Labor Organization (ILO, 2017) defines child labor as any work or task a child below the age of 18 years undertakes with a view of being rewarded in cash or kind or for any other reason at all, and which deprives him of good health, good education, and normal development. It is child labor because the children who do the labor are below the appropriate legal minimum working age (18 years) based on the International Labor Organization (ILO) minimum age convention of 1973 Number 138 (1). Suda (2001) and Edmond and Watson (2008) see child labor as work done by children on economic basis; it is hazardous coupled with high exploitation tendencies. Several studies viewed child labor as the dangerous nature of jobs undertaken by children, which causes damage to their health. Child labor entails any work that retards a child's physical and mental development, (ILO, 2012). According to the International Labor Organization (ILO) (2012), child labor affects 215 million minors worldwide. Moyi (2011) sees child labor as a means of exploitation as it is characterized by low wages and long hours of physical work. These kinds of labor tend to be exploitative as it is not offered maturely. But Aqil (2012) opines that not all work can harm or be considered exploitative as it depends on the particular work setting and the number of hours allocated as well as the working environment. This can, therefore, be absorbed by age as seen in many societies where people ceased to be children at different ages (Bhat, 2011). However, child labor is considered a good task in Africa and Asia as children do have the ability to learn skills. To this end, Kielland and Tovo (2006) view child labor from a social perspective as the integration of children into different roles in society, as it guides them to their potential roles as they mature. Some studies view it from an income perspective, as it normally generates a current income (Cigno & Rosaati, 2005; Phoumin, 2008). But Udry (2006) considers child labor to be a sacrifice of future income in exchange for current additional income earned during critical times by families. This income aspect normally distorts the child's ability in school prematurely; others decide to combine school with excessively long hours of heavy work (Ruchi, 2012).

Concept of Household Income: According to Organization for Economic Co-operation and Development (OECD) (2022), the household disposable income is the sum of household final consumption expenditure and savings (minus the change in net equity of households in pension funds). It also corresponds to the sum of wages and salaries, mixed income, net property income, net current transfers, and social benefits other than social transfers in kind, fewer taxes on income and wealth, and social security contributions paid by employees, the self-employed, and the unemployed. The indicator for the household sector includes the disposable income of non-profit institutions serving households (NPISH). The price deflator used to obtain real values is consistent with that used to deflate the final consumption expenditure of households and NPISH. The term household income generally refers to the combined gross income of all

members of a household above a specified age. Household income includes every member of a family who lives under the same roof, including spouses and their dependents. The incomes of everyone count even if they are not all used to support the household. Household income also includes anyone living in that home even if they are not related. Household income is an important risk measure used by lenders for underwriting loans and is a useful economic indicator of an area's standard of living.

Theoretical Issues: Poverty Hypothesis Theory

The Poverty Hypothesis Theory explains child labor as an unavoidable effect of poverty (Amin, 1994; Khathar, Malik & Malik, 1998; Verlet, 1994), and argues that in most less-developed countries where there are low levels of technological development, low wages, rising rates of unemployment, and declining household income, the labor participation of children who can contribute to the household income is essential for alleviating economic stress and meeting the consumption requirements of the household. In such a scenario, child labor is an essential part of household survival strategies, such that during periods of economic recession, when parents are laid off, most children may be compelled to join the labor force to eke out a living for the family. Studies from less-developed regions of Asia, Latin America, and Africa have provided support for the poverty hypothesis by finding a strong correlation between economic stress and the occurrence of child labor.

Empirical Review

Shehu, Kangiwa and Umar (2015) examine the effect of household poverty on child labor in Nigeria. The study used nationally representative household-level data from Nigeria to empirically examine the effect of poverty on the likelihood of poor households engaging their children in labor activities. A univariate probit model was used for the analysis and the result shows that per-adult consumption expenditure as a proxy for household welfare has a significant negative effect on the child-labor decision of the households. The estimated result also suggests that the character of the child, parent, household, and community significantly affects household child-labor decision. However, this study does not capture the impact of household income on child labor.

But, Enebe et al. (2021) examine the prevalence and predictors of child labor among junior public secondary school students in Enugu, Nigeria. The study used the descriptive cross-sectional study of 332 junior secondary students attending public schools in the Enugu metropolis, Nigeria. A multistage sampling technique was used to select the six secondary schools and the students that participated in the study. The questionnaire contained information on the socio-demographic variables, the kind of work done by the respondents, and the number of working hours spent weekly. UNICEF's standard indicator for child labor was used to estimate the prevalence of child labor. Logistic regression was used to identify socioeconomic predictors of child labor. The findings show that the prevalence of overall child labor was 71.7%, while for domestic and economic child-labor prevalence was 52.1 and 34.0%, respectively. This study also has not captured the impact of household income on child labor.

Oli and Nweke (2021) examine the determinants and prevalent forms of child labor practices in Awka South Local Government Area, Anambra State, and South-East, Nigeria. The target population consisted of only adults who were 18 years and above. The study adopted a mixed methods research design. A sample size of 200 was statistically generated using the Taro

Yamane formula. The study used a multistage sampling procedure which involved simple random sampling and purposive sampling techniques in selecting respondents. The major instruments of data collection used were the questionnaire schedule which is a quantitative method and the in-depth interview guide which is a qualitative method. Quantitative data collected from the field study were processed with the use of Statistical Package for the Social Sciences (SPSS) software. The findings of the study show that determinants of child-labor practices include poverty, the educational level of parents, family size, cultural beliefs, and living in a slum area. Also, the results of the study showed that prevalent forms of child-labor practices in Awka South Local Government Area include hawking, street begging, and domestic work, farming, and working in factories. This study, however, does not cover a large area and therefore, the sample size used was small. More so, the study was not conducted in Northeastern Nigeria.

However, Musa, Magaji and Tsauni (2022) examine the determinant of child labor in Northeastern Nigeria using tobic model as methodology. The findings of the result reveal that among the socioeconomic determinant of child labor were child age, child education, lack of basic infrastructures, household education, household income, and poverty and child relationship with the household but their study did not specifically show the rate at which household income affects child labor in the region.

Therefore, there is a need for research on the relationship between household income and child labor that covers areas affected by child labor such as Northeastern Nigeria. This forms the basis for this research.
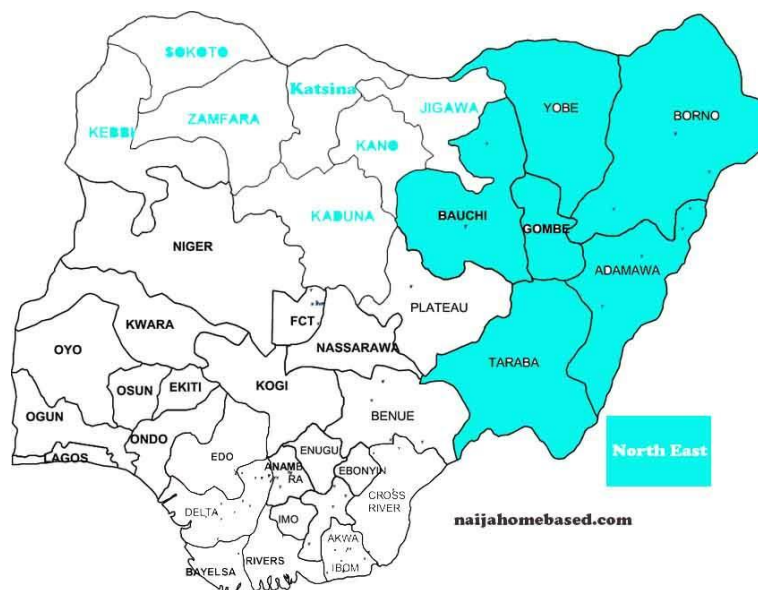
RESEARCH METHODOLOGY

Study Area

The northeastern part of the country, both geographically and politically, is represented by the North East, one of Nigeria's six geological zones. It consists of Adamawa, Bauchi, Borno, Gombe, Taraba, and Yobe, six states in total.

Below is the map of Northeastern Nigeria

Source: Google Maps (2016)

Map of Nigeria with Shaded Portion Northeastern Nigeria

With roughly a third of Nigeria's total land, the North East is the country's largest geopolitical region. The Sahelian savanna, which is semi-desert, and the West Sudanian savanna, which is tropical, make up the majority of the zone's ecoregions.

The two most populated cities in the North East are Maiduguri and Bauchi, which are also Nigeria's fifteenth and seventeenth most populous cities, respectively. Based on the predicted population for 2016, other significant northeastern cities are Bauchi, Yola, Mubi, Gombe, Jimeta, Potiskum, Jalingo Gashua, and Bama (in order by population).

Two hundred seventy-two, three hundred and ninety-five square kilometres (272,395 km2) of territory make up North-Eastern Nigeria. Its population is nineteen million, nine hundred and eighty-three thousand and seventy-five (19,983,875), according to the Population Census of 2006.

According to the 2006 census, Borno has a population of two million, three hundred sixty-three thousand and forty (2,363, 040), Taraba has a population of two million, two hundred ninety-four thousand (2,200,000), and Adamawa has a population of four million, one hundred seventy-seven thousand, eight hundred and twenty (4,177,828).

Population and Sample

Thirty household heads in each ward were sampled based on the questionnaires that were given to 810 children through their household heads which forms the population of this study. Multiple stages of sampling were used in the investigation. In total, there are 270 household heads in each state and 810 in the three states that are covered.

Nine local government areas in the Northeastern Nigerian states of Adamawa, Bauchi, and Yobe were used to collect information on the socioeconomic factors that influence child labor. This is due to both the high prevalence rate of child labor and the potential predisposing variables in each state. Three local government areas (all urban regions) in each state are where data is gathered. Out of the three senatorial districts, one local government area was chosen for each senatorial district. Thirty households were counted as the distance between each household and the next as part of the sampling criteria.

From Adamawa State's South Senatorial District, North Senatorial District, and Central Senatorial District, respectively, the Numan Local Government Area, Mubi, and Yola were selected. Giade, Misau, and Bauchi Local Government Areas were chosen from Bauchi South Senatorial Districts, Bauchi Central and Bauchi North Senatorial Districts respectively. Finally, in Yobe State, the Damaturu Local Government Area, Potiskum Local Government Area, and Gashua Local Government Area were chosen from the Zone A Senatorial District, Zone B Senatorial District, and Zone C Senatorial District, respectively. Ninety questionnaires were distributed and collected in each local government region. Three wards with a total of thirty houses were determined for each local government district.

Model Specification

The econometric methodology is used as an analytical tool for examining the nexus between household income and child labor. The logistic regression model is used to determine the nexus between household income and child labor. To estimate the logistic regression model (MLM), we have selected working hours and dependent variables and the child's age, gender, education, household education, household daily income, and household skill as independent variables.

This study adopts the model (Abdallah, 2020), as he used in his study. The logistic regression model specifies the coefficient of the model or parameters of the dependent variable (child labor).

Logistic regression uses a maximum likelihood estimation technique to estimate the model parameters. In other words, ML finds the best values for,

$$n = \beta 0 + \beta 1 x 1 + \cdots + \beta k x k$$

Observed values of say, are the n independent random observations corresponding to the random variables (Y1, Y2, ..., Yn). Since Y_i is a Bernoulli random variable with functional form and hence, the likelihood function is given by:

$$(\beta) = \prod pi \, yi \, (1 - pi) \, 1 - yi$$

The estimation of parameters requires the maximization of the likelihood function or equivalently the maximization of the natural logarithm of the likelihood function.

PRESENTATION OF DATA AND ANALYSIS

Table 1 Demographic Analysis

			Freq.	Percent
1	**child age**	8-10 years	120	14.81
		10-12 years	523	64.57
		12-14 years	167	20.62
		Total	**810**	**100**
2	child gender	Male	619	76.42
		Female	191	23.58
		Total	**810**	**100**
3	child education	Primary Education	64	7.90
		Completed Primary Education	701	86.54
		Secondary Education	45	5.56
		Total	**810**	**100**
4	Household educational level	None	682	84.20
		Primary Certificate	44	5.43
		Secondary Certificate	84	10.37
		Total	**810**	**100**
5	HouseHold Daily Income	Below N 700 per day	482	59.51
		N 700 per day	322	39.75
		Above N 700 per day	6	0.74
		Total	**810**	**100**
6	Child working hours	0-3 Hours	31	3.83
		3-5 Hours	32	3.95
		5-Above Hours	747	92.22
		Total	**810**	**100**
7	Household type of Job	Skilled	801	98.89
		Unskilled	9	1.11
		Total	**810**	**100**

Source: *field survey, 2023*

Table 1 above shows the demographic analysis of the respondents. From the table, the age distribution of the respondents shows that 120 (14.81%) of the children are between the ages 8-10 years, while 523 (64.57%) of the children are between the ages of 10-12 years as 167 (20.62%) of the children are between the ages of 12-14 years. Also, 619 (76.42%) of the children are male and 191 (23.58%) of the respondents are female. The child education distribution shows that 64 (7.90%) have attained primary education as 701 (86.54%) of the children have completed primary education. Also, 45 (5.56%) of the children have attained secondary education. When it comes to household educational level, 682 (84.20%) of the respondents have no educational qualification as 44 (5.43%) of the respondents have attained primary certificate, while 84 (10.37%) of the respondents have attained secondary certificate educational qualification. Likewise, 482 (59.51%) of the household earn below N 700 per day 322 (39.75%) earn approximately N 700 per day, and 6 (0.74%) households earn above N 700 per day. The child working hours show that 31 (3.83%) of the children work between 0-3 hours, 32 (3.95%) of the children work between 3-5 hours, and 747 (92.22%) of the children work 5 hours, and above. The type of skills of the household shows that 801 (98.89%) are skilled workers and 9 (1.11%) of the households are unskilled workers.

Table 2: Summary Statistics

	Min	max	Mean	Std. Dev.	se(Mean)	variance	skewness	kurtosis
childhoods	1	3	2.884	.423	.015	.179	-3.717	15.783
Childage	1	3	2.058	.593	.021	.351	-.016	2.825
childgender	1	2	1.236	.425	.015	.18	1.245	2.549
childLedu	1	3	1.977	.366	.013	.134	-.286	7.394
Hhed	1	3	1.262	.633	.022	.401	2.175	6.024
hhDailyIncome	1	3	1.412	.507	.018	.257	.526	1.689
hhTypejob	1	2	1.011	.105	.004	.011	9.328	88.011

Sources: Authors estimated using STATA version 17, 2023

Table 2 above shows the summary statistics of the variables used for the study. The results show that the minimum range is 1 and the maximum range is 3 across variables. The results also show that child working hours have the highest mean with 2.884 followed by child age with the mean value of 2.058 respectively. The least mean value household type of job is 1.011. In terms of skewness, childhoursw, Childage, and childLedu are negatively skewed as the rest of the variables are positively skewed.

Table 3: Pairwise Correlations

Variables	(1)	(2)	(3)	(4)	(5)	(6)	(7)
(1) childhoursw	1.000						
(2) childage	0.106*	1.000					
	(0.003)						
(3) childgender	0.152*	0.397*	1.000				
	(0.000)	(0.000)					
(4) childLedu	0.014	-0.147*	0.036*	1.000			
	(0.684)	(0.000)	(0.312)				
(5) hhed	0.113*	-0.041*	-0.230*	-0.064*	1.000		
	(0.001)	(0.250)	(0.000)	(0.068)			
(6) hhDailyIncome	-0.266*	-0.154*	-0.217*	-0.061*	-0.313*	1.000	
	(0.000)	(0.000)	(0.000)	(0.083)	(0.000)		
(7) hhTypejob	-0.221*	-0.130*	-0.059*	-0.025*	-0.044*	0.007	1.000
	(0.000)	(0.000)	(0.094)	(0.471)	(0.213)	(0.849)	

*** $p<0.01$, ** $p<0.05$, * $p<0.1$

Sources: Authors estimated using STATA version 17, 2023

Table 3 above shows the correlation matrix of the variables used for the study. The results show child age (childage), child gender (childgender), child education (childLedu), and household education (hhed) are positively correlated to child working hours (childhoursw). Meanwhile, household daily income (hhDailyIncome) and household working skills (hhTypejob) are negatively correlated with child working hours (childhoursw). All the variables have a significant relationship with child working hours (childhoursw).

Table 4: Ordered Logistic Regression

childhoursw	Coef.	St.Err.	t-value	p-value	[95% Conf	Interval]	Sig
childage	.205	.322	0.64	.525	-.426	.835	
childgender	16.007	.216	74.19	0	15.585	16.43	***
childLedu	.14	.381	0.37	.714	-.606	.886	
hhed	13.694	.427	32.10	0	12.858	14.53	***
hhDailyIncome	-1.612	.316	-5.11	0	-2.231	-.993	***
hhTypejob	-2.796	.915	-3.06	.002	-4.59	-1.003	***
Constant	21.856	2.817	.b	.b	16.334	27.377	
Constant	22.721	2.805	.b	.b	17.223	28.22	

Mean dependent var	2.884	SD dependent var	0.423
Pseudo r-squared	0.217	Number of obs	810
Chi-square	7687.992	Prob > chi2	0.000
Akaike crit. (AIC)	431.312	Bayesian crit. (BIC)	468.888

*** p<.01, ** p<.05, * p<.1*

Table 4 shows the ordered logit regression model to determine the household factors that affect child labor. The model presents child working hours (childhoursw) the dependent variable as child age (childage), child gender (childgender), child education (childLedu), household education (hhed), household daily income (hhDailyIncome), and household working skills (hhTypejob) as independent variables.

From the model, the model chi-square is 7687.992 with a probability value of 0.000 at 5%. This is highly significant and tells us that independent variables have a significant effect on the child's working hours. The McFadden R^2 also known as pseudo R^2 is given as 0.217.

From the results, child gender (childgender), household education (hhed), household daily income (hhDailyIncome), and household working skills (hhTypejob) have a significant influence on child working hours (childhoursw) at a 5% level of significance.

From the table, child gender (childgender) is positive; this implies that the gender of the child is more likely to determine how long the child works/is involved in child labor. This means more males are involved in child labor than females.

The result further shows that household education (hhed) is positive and significant. This implies that the more the households are educated, there is more likely that the child will spend more time working. This does not conform to the apriori expectation. Perhaps this is because more households have only Qur'anic education without formal education.

In addition, the coefficient of household daily income (hhDailyIncome) is negative and significant. This conforms to the apriori expectation as the more the income of the household increases the less likely that the child's working hours will decrease or the less the child will

be involved in child labor. Likewise, the results show that the coefficient of household working skills (hhTypejob) is negative and statistically significant. This implies that the more skilled are the household the less likely the child will be involved in child labor or spend more hours working as the case may be. This conforms to the apriori expectations.

In the nutshell, child age (childage) and child education (childLedu) are not significant determinants of child labor, but their positive coefficient implies that they may likely be involved in child labor if age and education improve which doesn't conform to the apriori expectation. Meanwhile, the results show that child gender (childgender), household education (hhed), household daily income (hhDailyIncome), and household working skills (hhTypejob) are the major determinants of child labor.

CONCLUSION AND RECOMMENDATIONS

Based on the findings of this study, it is concluded that household income determines child labor significantly. In addition, the coefficient of the household income is found to be negative and significant which conforms with apriori expectation as higher household income reduces the level of child labor and lower household income increases the level of child labor. Based on this, it is recommended that the government at all levels (federal, state, and local) should provide and also implement policies and economic programmes that will enhance household heads daily income in Northeastern Nigeria.

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