

# Women Farmers Organisations' Perceived Effect of Child Labour Activities in Oyo West Local Government Area of Oyo State, Nigeria

Oyeyinka, R. A.<sup>1\*</sup>, Ayansina, S.O.<sup>2</sup>, Adekunmi, A.O.<sup>3</sup>, Arowolo, O.O.<sup>4</sup>

1&2 Department of Agricultural Administration, Federal University of Agriculture, Abeokuta, Ogun State, Nigeria.

3 Ekiti State University, Ado-Ekiti, Department of Agricultural Economics and Extension Services.

4 Federal University of Agriculture, Abeokuta. Department of Agricultural Extension and Rural Development.

\* E – mail Corresponding Author, [akinoye2009@gmail.com](mailto:akinoye2009@gmail.com)

## Abstract

Child labour is prevalent worldwide, occurring both in developing and developed countries. It is estimated that about 352 million children are engaged in some form of economic activity in the world. Estimates of the number of children at full work in developing countries were put at 120 million and those combining working and schooling at 250 million. In extreme forms or cases, child labour involves children being enslaved, separated from their families, exposed to serious hazards and illnesses and left to fend for themselves on the streets of large cities at a very early age. The study examined the perceived effect of child labour by women farmers organisation in Oyo West Local Government area of Oyo State, Nigeria. Simple random technique was used to select one hundred and twenty (120) respondents from the three major communities in the study area. The result of the study revealed a significant relationship between income and the factors associated with child labour activities among the respondents ( $r = 0.54$ ). Since it has been observed that the respondents had a low income capability, the study recommends that there is need for government to intensify efforts in finding solutions to the issue of poverty eradication of child labour activities.

**Keywords:** Child Labour, Agriculture, Perceived effect of activities.

## 1. Introduction

Child labour is prevalent worldwide, occurring both in developing and developed countries of the world, Scalon et al (2002). International Labour Organization (ILO, 2002) report estimated that about 352 million children were engaged in some form of economic activities, putting the number of children fully working in developing countries, at 120 million and those combining working with schooling at 250 million. In extreme cases it involve children being enslaved, separated from their families, exposed to serious hazardous conditions, such as working in mines, working with chemicals, working with dangerous machines, and pesticides in agricultural farms. Most often they are exposed to illness and are often left to fend for themselves on the street of large cities at very tender and early ages.

A large chunk of the child labour occurred in developing countries, with 60% of them engaged in agriculture. Others include domestic service, factory production and back street workshops. The forms of child labour relates to those children caught up in criminal activities such as prostitution, military enrolment, slavery such as bonded labour, or trafficking which involved the removal of a child from his/her home with deception of payment for a wide range of exploitative purposes. Child labour is a work that deprives children of their potentials, dignity at childhood and it is harmful to their physical and mental development (IPEC, 2005). Child labour depends on the child's age, the type of work performed, the conditions under which it is performed and the objectives pursued by the employer(s) and it vary in different countries. According to Harsch, 2001, Africa has the biggest incidence of child labour in the world and the poorest region with the low schooling enrolment and attendance. Fifteen (15) million children under the age of 14 years are working, mostly to help pay their school fees and to support their parents for daily up – keep as reported by FBS in 2003. ILO (2002) further corroborated, that over 8 million of the working children attending schools are forced to work for the payment of their schools fees and text books from the money they earn from such work or labour. Also United Nations Children Emergency Funds' (UNICEF), report of 2006 on child labour in Nigeria, revealed that about 15 million children under the age of 14 years were working across the country and many of them were exposed to long hours of work in dangerous and unhealthy environments. About 6 million working children in Nigeria, split between boys and girls who do not attend school at all, while over one million children were forced to drop out due to poverty and because their parents demand them to contribute to family income. Due to high demand at work these children often skip classes which make it impossible for them to break the cycle of poverty and prevent them from having a better standard of living.

Agriculture in development countries relied heavily on child labour. On a global scale, children work more in the rural areas than the urban centre, thus the activities most working children performed were in the fields and on farms, including caring for animals and livestock. Some of these children work with their families and live at home. Others go out to work for employers, such as rural land owners, on a daily basis and others work for employers far from their families, sometimes under arrangement that are neither legal nor beneficial to the child. There are lots of children farmers in Oyo State that are engaged in vegetable production and other agricultural activities that are harmful to their health (Lawal, 2007). Children are recruited for house-helpers from the rural areas to the urban centres. It has been observed that many of the children so recruited have experienced work accidents and injuries. Girls most especially are often exposed to sexual harassment such as rape. The resultant effect of which mostly lead to early pregnancy, abortion and even sometimes death.

Women in the rural areas play significant role in the agricultural labour force. For instance, they are responsible for 60% of Nigerian farm labour and produce 70% of domestic food supply in Nigeria (Beestein, 1992). Despite these crucial roles of women, they are more involved in child labour activities. The increased rate of unemployment and number of families with many children living under the poverty line, the high cost of inflation, reduced income of the populace and the rather symbolic child allowance are the main causes of child labour (Alexanderus, 2002). Children working in the informal sector have no job security, receive no payment if they are injured or become ill, they cannot seek protection when they are maltreated by their employers. In some communities, the family has influence on the emotion and the type of living a child take to, most children start work with their families before going out to work for others. This has cultural values and implication on the expected roles of the child in the society. Agriculture initiates children to work earlier than other kinds of economic activities, and it often does so within the protective environment of their family. According to Hilowitz *et al.* (2004), poverty has effect on child labour, in the sense that the poorest household may be caught up in what may be called survival trap as employment options deteriorate; forcing them to offer their children for labour in order to meet their needs. This is even found taking place among the peasant farmers in the rural areas in Nigeria today. Quite a number of reasons which could be adduced for child labour, include difficult family situation, misfortune like death of the bread weaner in a family, death of both parents leaving the child with no skills and yet debts to support a number of children left behind. A number of studies have established that difficult family situations have pushed children into labour market. For example, in a study of street children in three Turkish cities, 20 of the 65 families interviewed were found to be seriously ill and had no health insurance or social security. The existence of health problems along with poverty created a sense of hopelessness among these families, which resulted in economically, socially and psychologically insecure environments for the children. The low level of education and skills of the parents also has negative effect on the children and their future. If the parents received little education the implication of this is that their children will have limited family education and to low aspirations to obtain it. Thus learning and schooling may not be highly valued or prized by the individuals in these families and the poor communities. .

It is not just the level of household income that matters for child labour, but also its fluctuation as well. Over the course of a year or several years, a household may have an adequate income overall, and still have short but critical period of distress. This is similar to the situation of the experienced small scale agriculture, where a farmers' income depends on a simple crop which may be subjected to climate change, pests disturbance, changing prices etc. Other unforeseeable events such as accidents, diseases may strike, a wage earner may lose his job, or a storm may damage the house and assets etc, and all these put pressure on the peasant farmers. The consequences of such temporary household emergency or distress may be permanent, because researches have shown that children who leave school to work full-time when put under such sudden pressure often failed to return. In fact, evidences derived from several countries have shown that economic shocks are a significant contribution to high increase in child labour.

The problem of child labour continues to pose a challenge to Nigeria as a nation and the government has taken various pro-active measures to tackle this problem. According to IDCR (2010) the magnitude and extent of the problem which is essentially socio-economic and inextricably linked to poverty and illiteracy. It requires concerted efforts from all sections of the society to make a dent in the problem. Nigeria government took the right steps by passing a bill on child rights acts to combat the trafficking of children and some state governments have also ratified this law. However, forced and hazardous child labour activities in the area of agricultural farm work, quarry work and child trafficking remain a pressing issue, because of governments' lack of a policy framework to combat the worst forms of child labour activities and contradiction in the legal frame work of the country (NPECL, 2005).

The contribution of rural women to Agricultural development through the supply of agricultural labour force and household food security cannot be over emphasized. Weiturer (1991) and Adebo *et al.* (2007) also asserted that

the acceptance of social class separation perpetuates child labour. In polygamous families in Nigeria, the first child of each lineage is usually sent to school while the remaining children join the parents in carrying out agricultural activities.

Specifically this study intend to,

1. determine the personal characteristics of the respondents
2. identifies in the factors associated with child labour activities in the study area.
3. ascertain the benefits derived by respondents from child labour activities.
4. determine the perceive effect of child labour on the victims.

## 2. Hypotheses of the study

Based on the objective of the study, the following hypotheses were tested.

$H_{01}$ : There is no significant relationship between the personal characteristics of the respondents and the factors associated with child labour activities.

$H_{02}$ . There is no significance relationship between the benefit derived by respondents and factors associated with child labour activities.

## 3. Research Methodology

The study was conducted in Oyo West Local Government Areas of Oyo State, Nigeria. It lies at the southwestern zone of the state, which is roughly enclosed at latitude  $5^{\circ}$  and  $9^{\circ}$  North of the equator, and bounded by longitude  $3^{\circ}$   $5'$  East. It has a population of 75,035 according to the census figure of 2006 and it covers a land mass of about 803 square kilometers. Prominent villages within the local government are Fashola, Shoku, Gudugbu, Ojongbodu, Iya-ibeji, Anwon, etc. Ecologically, the local government lies in the guinea savannah, and the major occupation of the people is farming with cultivation of crops like maize, cassava, yams, and palm tree, citrus. etc.

The target population for this study was the rural women farmers' organisations in Oyo West Local Government. Purposive sampling technique was used in selecting the three villages of Ojongbodu, Fashola, and Shoku, because of the prevalence of child labour practices there. Simple random sampling technique was used to select forty (40) respondents from each village making a total of 120 respondents. Data were analysed with the use of frequency counts, percentages, chi-square and PPMC.

## 4. Results and Discussion

### 4.1 Personal characteristics of respondents.

Table 1 shows that the age of the respondents range between 20 and 50 years. Thirty – five percent (35%) of the respondents are between 31-40 years old, while 27.5 % fall within the age range of 41-50 years. The implication of this finding is that majority of the youths used for child labour are still vibrant and in dire need of money. This might be responsible for their participation in child labour activities.

Majority of the respondents (69.2%) were married at tender age and have started to actively take up responsibilities as mothers. This is supported by the findings of Okunlola and Fashina (2003), who posited that marital status are presumed to go with level of maturity.

Table 1 also revealed that 60% of the respondents have no formal education, 35.8% had primary education, while 4.2% had secondary education. The implication of this finding is that, majority of the respondents were illiterate. Majority of the respondents (45%) were Muslims, 33.3% were Christians, while 21.7% were traditional worshippers.

Table 1, further shows that 36.7 % of the respondents have household size of 1-5, 53.3% have household of 6-10, while only a few (10% ) have household size of more than 10. The implication of this finding is that, the respondents have fairly large household size, and this might have influenced their involvement in child labour activities.

The result from Table 1, indicates that, 60.8% of the respondents earned less than ₦5000, 26.7% earned between ₦5000 - ₦10,000, while 12.5% earned above ₦10,000. The implication of this finding is that, the respondents earned less than one dollar per day thus indicating that more than 50% of Nigerians live below poverty line.

Table 1 shows that, 52.5 % of the respondents come from polygamous family structure, while 47.5% belong to the monogamous family. The implication of this finding is that, polygamy encourages child labour activities.

Majority of the respondents (50%) engaged in farming, 35.8% in trading, 7.5% in fishing, while the remaining but very few 6.7% of them are artisans.

#### 4.2 Factors Affecting Child Labour Activities.

Table 2 shows that majority of the respondents 84.2% were of the opinion that, extreme poverty was the cause of their involvement in child labour activities. 43.3% attributed it to high cost of schooling while 36.7% said they could not find schools for their wards in the community or nearby hence the children had to be made to engage in all forms of child labour.. Others (28.2%) indicated death of spouse and inadequate teaching facilities (34.2%) as the bane for their involvement in the act. The implication of this finding is that poverty plays a major role in child labour activities.

#### 4.3 Benefits derived from child labour activities.

Table 3 revealed that,90.8% of the respondents said what they derived from child labour activities was used in support ing their family, 79.2% benefited in terms of increase in income, while 72.5% were able to use it to improve the education of their children.

#### 4.4 Work activities engaged in by child labour.

Table 4 shows the work related activities engaged in by the children as indicated by the respondents. Majority of the victims (85%) were involved in agricultural work, 77.7% were domestic servants,71.7% were sales girls and 77.5% were pure water sellers or vendors. A few of the respondents (20.8%) were involved in factory work and 33.3% were involved in street begging. The finding of this study is in line with the assertion of International Labour Organization (2002), which says that child labour cuts across all sector of the economy.

#### 4.5 Perceived Effect of Child Labour

Table 5 shows that majority (85% ) of the children were seriously affected by HIV aids and other sexually transmitted diseases. Physical injuries and body mutilation (69.2%), childhood deprivation (70%) were also found to be serious effects of child labour activities in the study areas. Whereas teenage pregnancy (45%) and malnutrition (25%) were found to be less affected by child labour activities in the areas. The implication of this finding is that a great deal of hazards, health risks and accident are associated with child labour activities.

#### 4.6 Testing of Hypotheses:

Ho<sub>1</sub> There is no significant relationship between personal characteristics of respondents and factors associated with child labour activities.

Table 6 shows that, Age ( $\chi^2 = 39.25$ ),marital status ( $\chi^2 = 26.00$ ), educational level ( $\chi^2 = 56.45$ ), number of children ( $\chi^2 = 34.40$ ) and income ( $\chi^2 = 44.45$ ), were found to be significant at 0.05 level of significance. However, religion ( $\chi^2 = 49.80$ ) was found not to be significant at 0.05 level of significance. Therefore it

can be inferred that there is a significant relationship between the personal characteristics of respondents and factors associated with child labour activities. This finding agrees with Narayana (2007), who posited that illiteracy of parents have led to increase in dropout rate, as children assistance are sought in a variety of household and agricultural activities.

Ho<sub>2</sub> There is no significant relationship between the benefits derived by respondents and their involvement in child labour activities.

From Table 7, the correlation value of the identified benefits, which are (i) increase income ( $r = 0.54$ ), (ii) improved education ( $r = 0.24$ ), support for the family ( $r = 0.54$ ) and the factors associated with child labour activities were significant at 0.05 level of significance. The implication of this finding is that income, education and support for the family were some of the determinants of involvement of the respondents in child labour activities.

## 5. Conclusion and Recommendations

The majority of the respondents that were engaged in child labour activities were youths, who were in their active sexual and child bearing age. Most of them were illiterate with an average of six household members. Their occupations were mostly farming with a few artisans. Majority of them were polygamist, with a monthly income of less than five thousand naira (< ₦5,000) per month, which is less than one dollar per day. Most of the factors affecting child labour activities were extreme poverty and high cost of schooling. Majority of the activities engaged in by child labour were agricultural work, domestic servant and sales girls. Perceived effect of

child labour activities was seriously in the area of on physical injuries, body mutilation, HIV/AIDS and other sexually transmitted diseases.

Based on the findings of the study, the following recommendations were suggested.

- 1) Free and compulsory qualitative education should be provided for children at least up to secondary school level to stem out the flow of children into the labour market.
- 2) The executive arms of government, legislators, ministries and relevant agencies, are critical actors in the fight against child labour. They are to ensure that the child right act laws and decisions or resolutions made at international conventions are implemented at the national, state and local government levels.
- 3) Since the problems of child labour affect many families and people, the communities should be mobilized to work towards its elimination. They should educate parents and children to understand child rights and encourage them to exercise their right to education and to a childhood free from exploitation.
- 4) Trade unions like Nigeria Labour Congress have influence on work related issues, including child labour. Child labour is a violation of human rights and national legislation, which affect adult workers. They should impress it on the employers to stop recruiting children for menial, manual jobs and instead should provide more job for adults.

## References

Alexanderus, J. (2003): Roman Working and Street Children in Bucharest. Pp. 70 – 78.

Balogun, O. (2012): Factors Associated with Child Labour Activities Among Rural Women in Igboora, Oyo State, Nigeria. Unpublished Post-graduate Diploma Dissertation, in Department of Agricultural Extension and Rural Development, Federal University of Agriculture, Abeokuta, Nigeria.

Beestein, A. (1992): Female Roles in Agriculture Modernization: An India Case Study Working Paper, Michigan State University, USA

Child right - Handbook (2010): Indian Development Gateway. [www.india.gov.in](http://www.india.gov.in) /as/edurightlabour. Retrieved Assessed Date 4th March, 2012.

Federal Bureau of Statistics (2003): Statistical Data Report on Child Labour. FBS, 2003

Harsh, J. (2001): Forced Child Labour and Cocoa Production in West Africa.

Hilowitz, C., Joost, K., Peter, D. and Michaelle de Knock (2004): Child Labour a Textbook for University Students.

IFAD (2007): Rural Poverty in Nigeria. Rural Poverty. [Portal.org/English/regions/Africa/nga/index](http://Portal.org/English/regions/Africa/nga/index)

ILO (2002): A Future without Child Labour. Global Report under the follow up to 110 Declaration on Fundamental Principles and Right of Work.

IPEC (2002): Data and Research on Human Trafficking. A Global Survey.

Mc Cain, D. (2003): Faith Based Perspective on HIV/AIDS. Reproductive Health and HIV/AIDS Prevention Projects. Manual for Peer Educators. United Nations Children Emergency Fund (UNICEF.)

Narayana, V. (2009): Child Labour in Rural Kamataka.

NPC (2006): National population Commission Census, Provisional Figure, NPC, Abuja, Nigeria.

NPELC (2005): Action Plan for the Elimination of the Worst form of Child Labour.

Scalon, T., Rriori, V., Lamaro, M. and Lyuch, M. (2002) Formats and Edition of Child Labour.

UNICEF (2006): Child Protection from Violence Exploitation and Abuse Child labour File / A, UNICEF. Reports.

Weiturer, J. (1991): The Child and late State in Indian. Princeton New Jersey, princeton university press.

**Table 1: Personal characteristics of respondents (n=120)**

* Age	Frequencies	Percentages
20 – 30	26	21.7
31 – 40	42	35.0
41 – 50	33	27.5
Above 50	19	15.9
<b>* Marital Status</b>		
Married	83	69.2
Single	20	16.7
Divorce / Separated	07	14.2
<b>* Educational Attainment</b>		
No Formal Education	72	60.0
Primary Education	43	35.8
Secondary Education	05	04.2
Others	NIL	NIL
<b>* Religion</b>		
Christianity	40	33.3
Islam	54	45.0
Traditional	26	21.7
<b>* Household Size</b>		
1 – 5	44	36.7
6 – 10	64	53.3
> 10	12	10.0
<b>* Income (₹)</b>		
< 5,000	73	60.8
5,000 – 10,000	32	26.7
> 10,000	15	12.5
<b>* Family Structure</b>		
Polygamy	63	52.5
Monogamy	57	47.5
<b>* Primary Occupation</b>		
Trading	43	35.8
Farming	60	50.0
Fishing	09	7.5
Artisanship	08	6.7

Source: - Field survey, 2012.

**Table 2: Factors Affecting Child Labour Activities (n = 120)**

Knowledge Items	Yes		No	
	Freq.	%	Freq.	%
Extreme Poverty	101	84.2	19	15.8
School inaccessibility	44	36.7	76	63.3
High cost of schooling	52	43.3	68	56.7
Illness of spouse	46	34.2	74	61.8
Death of spouse	34	28.2	86	71.7
Inadequate teaching facilities	44	34.2	79	65.8

Source: Field survey, 2012.

\* Multiple responses

**Table 3: Benefits derived from child labour activities (n = 120)**

Variables	Yes		No	
	Freq.	%	Freq.	%
Improved Education	87	72.5	33	27.5
Increase Income	95	79.2	25	20.8
Support for the Family	109	90.8	11	9.2

Source: Field survey, 2012

**Table 4: Work related activities engaged in by child labour (n = 120)**

Variables	Yes		No	
	Freq.	%	Freq.	%
Domestic servants	86	71.7	34	28.3
Errand boys / girls	41	34.2	79	65.8
Sale girls/boys	86	71.7	34	28.3
Car wash	41	34.2	79	65.8
Factory workers	25	20.8	95	79.2
Street begging	40	33.3	80	66.7
Agricultural works	102	85.0	18	25.0
Food vendor	41	34.2	79	65.8
Pure water sales	93	77.5	27	22.5

Source: Field survey, 2012

\* Multiple responses

**Table 5: Perceived effect of child labour, n = 120**

Variables	Not Serious		Less Serious		Serious	
	Freq.	%	Freq.	%	Freq.	%
Physical injuries and body mutilation	-	0.0	37	30.8	83	69.2
Long term health problem	30	25.0	32	26.7	58	48.3
Deprived education	25	20.8	29	24.2	66	55.0
Malnutrition	21	17.5	30	25.0	69	57.5
Teenage Pregnancy	04	3.3	54	45.0	62	51.7
HIV/AIDS and other sexually transmitted diseases	0	0.0	18	15.0	102	85.0
Childhood deprivation	16	13.3	20	16.7	84	70.0

Sources: - Field survey, 2012.

**Table 6: Relationship between personal characteristics of respondents and factors associated with child labour**

Variables	X <sup>2</sup>	df.	P. Value	Decision
Age	39.25	4	0.01	S
Marital status	26.00	3	0.00	S
Educational level	56.45	2	0.01	S
Religion	49.80	2	0.44	NS
No of children	34.40	2	0.01	S
Income	44.45	2	0.00	S

Source: Field survey, 2012

NS = Not significant at 0.05 level

S = Significant at 0.05 level

**Table 7: Correlation of the benefits derived in child labour and the factors associated with it, activities.**

Variables	r - value	P - value	Decision
Increased income	0.54	0.01	S
Improved education	0.24	0.01	S
Support for the family	0.52	0.01	S

Source: Field Survey.2012.

S =Significant at 0.05 level.



This academic article was published by The International Institute for Science, Technology and Education (IISTE). The IISTE is a pioneer in the Open Access Publishing service based in the U.S. and Europe. The aim of the institute is Accelerating Global Knowledge Sharing.

More information about the publisher can be found in the IISTE's homepage:

<http://www.iiste.org>

## CALL FOR JOURNAL PAPERS

The IISTE is currently hosting more than 30 peer-reviewed academic journals and collaborating with academic institutions around the world. There's no deadline for submission. **Prospective authors of IISTE journals can find the submission instruction on the following page:** <http://www.iiste.org/journals/> The IISTE editorial team promises to review and publish all the qualified submissions in a **fast** manner. All the journals articles are available online to the readers all over the world without financial, legal, or technical barriers other than those inseparable from gaining access to the internet itself. Printed version of the journals is also available upon request of readers and authors.

## MORE RESOURCES

Book publication information: <http://www.iiste.org/book/>

Recent conferences: <http://www.iiste.org/conference/>

## IISTE Knowledge Sharing Partners

EBSCO, Index Copernicus, Ulrich's Periodicals Directory, JournalTOCS, PKP Open Archives Harvester, Bielefeld Academic Search Engine, Elektronische Zeitschriftenbibliothek EZB, Open J-Gate, OCLC WorldCat, Universe Digital Library, NewJour, Google Scholar

