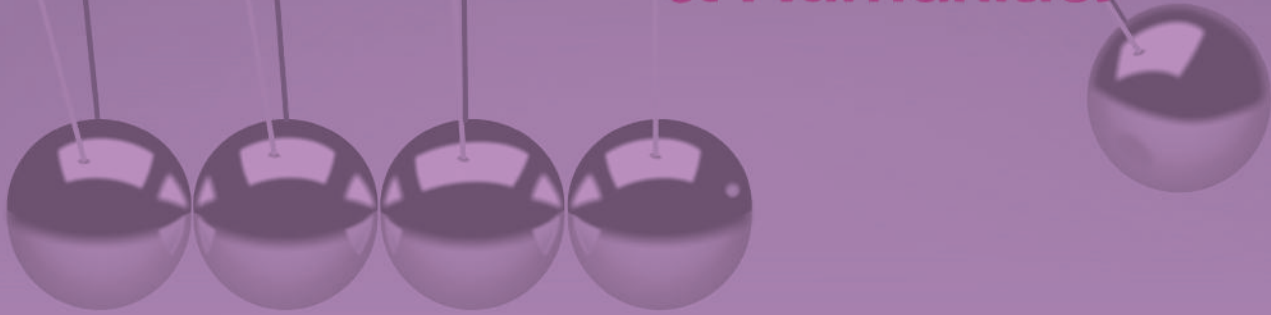




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Parenting and Child Welfare in Nigeria

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Abstract

In this era of moral decadence, armed robbery, kidnapping, teenage pregnancy, drug abuse, school dropouts, Almajiri vs Boko Haram recruitments, money rituals, cybercrime, house breaking, criminal gangs to mention but a few are prevalent. This is an indication of aberration by the parents having difficulties which jeopardizes the health and well-being of their children. This paper examined the factors constraining the effectiveness of parenting and child welfare which are to be found in the large societal matrix of the child's welfare system. The system supposed to provide substitutes for family functions, provide services to improve family functioning and ensure that the children are protected. The paper made use of in-debt interview survey to examine these factors as well as secondary sources of data from the existing literature, books and journal articles. It was revealed among others, that participation in school work, child-parent relationship and household characteristics are contributory factors. Also, poverty has a very weak response to child welfare. The paper recommended that incidence of street children is a response to poverty. Parental interest, child labour etc. are all responses to the socio-economic environments. Also regular survey on child labour and street children to monitor the trends with policies aiming at improving child welfare in Nigeria with respect to child-parent and household relationship as well as characteristics in their policy formulations.

Keyword: Child Welfare, Socio-economic, Child neglect, Nigerian society, Parenting, Nigerian society.

Introduction

According to Brooks, Holditch-Davis and Landerman (2012), parenting is the process of promoting and supporting the physical, emotional, social and intellectual development of a child from infancy to adulthood. Parenting refers to the intricacies of raising a child and not exclusively for a biological relationship. The most common caretaker in parenting is the father or mother, or both, biological parent(s) of the child in question, although a surrogate may be an older sibling, a step-parent, a grandparent, a legal guardian, aunt, uncle or other family member, or a family friend (Bernstein, 2008). Government and society may also have a role in child-rearing, in many cases, orphaned or abandoned children received parental care from non-parent or non-blood relations. Others may be adopted, raised in foster care, or placed in an orphanage. Parenting skills vary and a parent or surrogate with good parenting skills may be referred to as a good parent (Johri, 2014).

Parenting styles vary by historical time period, race/ethnicity, social class and other social features (Witt, 2017). Additionally, research support that parental history both in terms of attachments of varying quality as well as parental psychopathology, particularly in the wake of adverse experiences, can strongly influence parental sensitivity and child outcomes (Schechter & Willheim, 2009; Grienberger, Kelly, & Slade, 2005; Lieberman, Padron, Van Horn, & Harris, 2005).

On the other hand, welfare, according to Birch (2017) is well-being, happiness, health and prosperity. Thus, evaluating a child's best interests involves welfare appraisal in the widest sense, taking into account, where appropriate, a wide range of ethical, social, moral, religious, cultural, emotional and welfare conditions. Therefore, a child's welfare is to be judged today by the standards of reasonable men and women in 2018 not by the standards of their parents having regard to the ever changing nature of our world, changes in our understanding of the natural world, technological changes, changes in social standards and perhaps most important of all, changes in social attitudes.

Over the past decade, Nigeria's economic growth has averaged about 7.4% annually (African Economic Outlook Report on Nigeria, 2012), but this growth has not cut down poverty and deprivation suffered by the people. However, children account for a large percentage of the income-poor and the society deprived worldwide. Over half of the world's children in developing countries (56%), just over one billion children, are suffering from one or more forms of severe deprivation of basic human need (Shimelis, 2011). Every second, a child in developing countries is deprived of even the minimum opportunities in life. Despite Nigeria's increased economic growth in recent years, many children still struggle on the margins of survival.

Conversely, people are deprived if they lack the types of diet, clothing, housing, household facilities, and environmental, educational, working and social conditions, activities and facilities which are customary (Townsend, 1987). Deprivation therefore, refers to peoples' unmet need whereas, poverty refers to the lack of resources required to meet those needs. Children are particularly vulnerable to deprivation of their specific needs. They cannot be regarded as full economic agents exercising consumer sovereignty. They are not able to secure their own resources until a certain age and they are not sovereign in making consumption decision (White, Leavy & Masters, 2003). Moreover, for the fulfillment of their basic needs, they have to rely more than adults on the production of goods and services by public authorities (especially in areas of health and nutrition). (Gordon, Nandy, Pantazis, Penberton & Townsend, 2003; Minujin, 2005; Notten & de Neubourg, 2011).

Children in Nigeria often face many problems such as poor health, lack of access to quality education, food and social insecurity, and lack of care. Gordon et. al. (2003) reported that 52.6% of the total children in the country in the year 2000 were deprived of the basic human needs. Each year in Nigeria according to him, nearly one million children die before their fifth birthday. One quarter of these children, 241,000, die in the first month of the life as newborn. In spite of the effort to reduce infant mortality, Nigeria still maintains a high ranking of under-five mortality rate in the world (UN Children Fund, 2011).

Statement of the Problem

Children are precious assets and sources of joy not only to their parents and immediate families but to the entire society. As the future hope and leaders of tomorrow, they have rights that need to be protected. Children have to be cared for and nurtured to develop their potentials so that they can contribute to the development of the society. The saying that, “the child is the father of the man”, is true if and only, if the right of the child is adequately protected in the society (Azalahu & Agba, 2010).

The overwhelming rate of moral decadence and neglect for traditional norms is likely to be an offshoot of myriads of criminal activities in the society. Parenting processes are failing, the children tend to grow wild. This research was therefore, informed as a result of the inability of parents to maintain their divine assigned responsibilities of socializing their children into patriotic and law-abiding citizens. The consequences of these failures on the part of the parents manifest itself on the prevalence negative behaviours of the children in our society today. This calls for urgent and immediate attention to re-direct the world view of these children.

This therefore, makes it pertinent for the following problems to be investigated in this paper (i) what does parenting means (ii) who is a child and what are his/her rights in the society? (iii) To what extent have these rights been abused and/or protected in the Nigeria society? (iv) What are the implications/challenges of these abuses, and (v) protection of these rights on the overall development of the child and the society?

Literature Review

Certainly, everyone is a child of some person but not everyone can rightly be regarded as a child. According to Anya and Akagbue (1995), “ in some ethnic groups, a boy remains a child until initiated into an age-grade society or old enough to contribute physically and financially to community development”. Invariably, with regards to Section 2 of the children

and young persons law of Lagos State (1973) which provides for the welfare of the young and treatment of young offenders, a child is a person under the age of 14 years while a young person is one who has attained the age of 12 years but is under the age of 18 years. The Nigerian Labour Act (1974) considers a child as a person below 15 years of age while the National Child Welfare Policy (1989) defines a child as anybody who is twelve years of age and below. This uncertainty trailing the definition of a child under the Nigeria law was finally laid to rest by Section 274 of the Childs Rights Act (2003) which defines a child as a person who has not attained the age of 18 years. It must be noted that this is in line with the Convention on the Rights of the Child (CRC) and the African Charter on the rights and welfare of the child both to which Nigeria is a signatory.

The right of the child in the society

Rights are interest or benefit recognized by law. Gray (1916) conceives rights as essentially powers. According to Hart (1993), rights are protected choices. Thus, the concept of rights implies a relationship between two or more person. Man can only have a right after he has entered the society and by implication entered into relations with other man. It is therefore, man's existence within society that accords him the status of a human being, which ultimately entitles him to some rights as a consequence of his humanity. Thus, if every person who is human is entitled to some rights, then children are also entitled to human being rights by virtue of the fact that they are human beings. Under S(307) of the Nigerian Criminal Code. (1990), a person is considered to be a human being from the moment he becomes independent of his mother's womb, whether the umbilical cord has been severed or not at birth.

Over the centuries, these rights of the child have been violated. Children of tender age are employed in industries, recruitment into army during wars, trafficked in commercial sex industry and a good number have died due to malnutrition. These violations and abuses have necessitated the formulation of the Convention on the Right of the Child (CRC) in 1989, the African Charter on the right and welfare of the child in 1990 and the Child's Right Act 2003.

An overview of child protection policies in Nigeria

The National Health Insurance and National Pension Scheme are the two major social protection schemes in Nigeria (Umukoro, 2013). It is very disheartening to know that Nigeria does not have any ministry that deals with the affairs of children directly and this makes the protection of the rights of children difficult. Although, Nigeria has implemented the

Convention on the Rights of the Child (CRC), however, only 21 states have fully implemented it.

The social protection policy in Nigeria is influenced by the World Bank advice for social protection floors. In 2007, Nigeria launched “In care of the people” called COPE (Umukoro, 2003). The COPE is a form of conditional cash transfers in which eligibility is based on having a child or children who attend schools. The eligibility criteria involves that the children in schools must come from a female-headed home, elderly parent and household in which the presence of poverty can easily be detected.

As part of her commitment in meeting the goals of MDG, Universal Basic Education (UBE) programme has been established in Nigeria with free primary education which is compulsory for all children to increase literacy level in the country. Also, in 2010, Almajiri model secondary school was established in the North to reduce the number of street-children. To reach MDG targets, Nigeria established its own version of MDG called National Economic Empowerment and Development Strategies (NEEDS) in 2004. Also, the Directorate for International Development (DFID) donated a lot of money for poverty reduction in Africa.

In 2001, National Poverty Eradication Program (NPEP) was introduced in Nigeria (Umukoro, 2013). This is to eradicate absolute poverty. However, it was unable to achieve its aim owing to its bad implementation as those who are really poor do not get the benefits. Because of the MDG, NEPAD, SAP, SEEDs, LEEDs were established by Federal, State and Local governments respectively.

Challenges of child protection interventions

The coverage of most social protection programmes in Nigeria is very low (Umukoro, 2013). It is not only low but also fails to reach the targeted people. This is because the process is fraught with corruption and favouritism. Often, the people who benefit from the policy in Nigeria are not the people who really need them. This is because some elite were usually given the opportunity to do so; thereby, giving favours to their kinsmen.

Nino-Zarazua, Barrientos, Hickey, and Hulme, (2012) identified two major challenges affecting social protection provision in Sub-Saharan Africa, which is financial sustainability and institutional capacity. By financial sustainability, they mean that when a particular programme has been started, there might not be the ability of national government to extend it beyond the level at which they start. Also, by institutional capacity, they are referring to the problem with the institution in place for ensuring the social protection gets to the citizens.

There is no established institution like an established department or ministry in Sub-Saharan African to monitor the effective allocation of social protection programmes. They often rely on local elites which tend to create divisions and power relations (Mansuri & Rao, 2004).

Causes and Extent of Child Abuse in Nigeria as a Consequence of Poverty and Disorder in the Society.

In this Section, the paper explores the causes and extent of child abuse in Nigeria as a consequence of poverty and disorder in the society in relation to:

- Poverty
- Disorder
- Parenting/Family Management
- Environment/neighbourhood

i. Poverty and Child Welfare

Poverty is a global problem which is found in both developed and developing countries. It is more pervasive in developing countries than in developed countries. Owing to the preponderance of poverty in the Global South most especially in sub-Saharan Africa, assistance has been offered by international organizations like the World Bank, United Nations (UN) and its agencies among others. All these failed because they supplant instead of complementing local efforts and initiatives and are imposed policies (Adesina, 2011).

In order to explain the global nature of poverty or global child poverty, we use Nigeria as a reference point. Nigeria is the most populous country with black people in the world, and also with a large number of people living in poverty (Oluseyi, 2009; Umukoro, 2013). Nigeria is rich resource-wise, but poor in human capacity development. An estimated 71.5 percent of Nigerians currently live below poverty level, compared with 27.2% in 1980, 42.7 percent, and 54.4 percent in 2004 (NBS, 2010). This shows that poverty is increasing at an alarming rate in Nigeria (Oshewolo, 2011). This poverty level does not only affect adults but also children. Children are indeed more affected as it denies them access to their rights as stated in the convention of the rights of the child 1989 (Mulinge, 2010)

Nigeria according to Umukoro (2013), children are prone to a wide range of economic and social problems like child trafficking, abuse, labour, being used for rituals, etc. this goes alongside income poverty (Hanger-Zanker & Holmes, 2012). In fact, children represent the group in which poverty is found to be the highest in Africa (Lansdown, 2005); Devereux, S., Webb, D., & Handa, S. (2011). The poverty experienced by children is no doubt a reflection

of the poverty experienced by their parents. This poverty is often passed down from parents to their children (Basu & Van, 1998). In the words of Gabel (2012), “children are one of the most vulnerable groups in almost any population because of their physical and emotional dependence on adults and social status”.

Owing to the preponderance of poverty in Nigeria especially in the Northern part of Nigeria, children have been forced to engage in street begging and hawking. In the southern part of Nigeria, some children work as bus conductors, hawking, house boy/girl etc. in order to survive. United Nations Children’s Emergency Fund (UNICEF) reported that approximately 24 percent (12 million) of all children in Nigeria under the age of 15 are working in 1994 (UNICEF/FOS, 1995) (Bassy, Baghebo & Out, 2012).

TABLE 1: POVERTY IN NIGERIA, 1985 – 2010

Year	Poverty Incidence	Estimated Population	Population in Poverty	Non-Poor (%)	Moderately Poor (%)	Extreme Poverty (%)
1985	46.3	75.0	34.7	53.7	34.2	12.1
1992	42.7	91.5	39.2	57.3	28.9	13.9
1996	65.6	102.3	67.1	34.4	36.3	29.3
2004	54.4	126.3	68.7	43.3	32.4	22.0
2010	69.0	163.0	112.47	31.0	30.3	38.7

Source: National Bureau of Statistics (NBS), Nigeria’s Poverty Profile, 2010.

The above table shows the rate at which poverty has been increasing in Nigeria from 1985 to 2010 with an increasing population. There are some factors responsible for this in which the Structural Adjustment Programme (SAP) was the main factor attributed to this (Okeshola, 2009). The above table thus shows how poverty increased from 46.3% in 1985 to 69% in 2010. The reduction of poverty from 65.6% in 1996 to 54.4% in 2004 could be due to the National Economic Empowerment and Development Strategy (NEEDS) established to attain the goal of Millennium Development Goals (MDGs) now framed into SDG in which poverty reduction is its goal number one.

- ii. **The concept “Disorder”:** According to Wilson and Kelling (1982) Disorder is “an accumulation of minor violations” whereas Sennet (2009) posit disorder “as perceived neighbourhood decay”. They believed that disorder leads to weakened social control which in turn, provides ideal conditions for crime to thrive. Gault and Silver (2008) concluded that disorder influence crime by affecting collective efficacy within the neighbourhood. It weakens a community’s ability to properly cultivate and nurture social ties, social capital and social control. The erosion of social ties, social capital in the

neighbourhood leads to as postulated by Gault and Sylver (2008), the worsening of crime in these neighbourhoods, clearly suggesting that disorder exerts an indirect influence on crime.

- iii. Family Management and Child Behaviour:** According to Baumrind (1991) successful child adjustment has been linked to both the quality and quantity of parenting provided. Just as good parenting can foster healthy child development; ineffective parenting is connected to the onset of conduct problems early in life and later during adolescence. Parents and style of parenting are of particular importance during the early years. Petit and Bates (1989) illustrates how crucial parenting is during infancy, especially warm and affectionate parenting as a means of preventing later conduct problems. From an early age, supportive parenting lays the groundwork for successful socialization through supervision and monitoring.

On the contrary, poor parental supervision, monitoring and lack of parent-child involvement exacerbated problem behaviour and delinquency. However, monitoring strategies in addition to disciplining practices is central to effective child rearing. Parent-child relationship is a fluid and reciprocal, parents must adjust to the developing personalities of their children while restricting or providing activities that may promote or hinder a healthy development. Disciplining practices, for example, can serve as a preventive practice to curb and correct inappropriate behaviours but, harsh and inconsistent parental discipline can also translate into negative behaviours that do not bode well for the child in future. Patterson, Thomas and Karen, (2000) posit that poor discipline coupled with inefficient monitoring were key factors in the development of anti-social behaviour and delinquency. Invariably, family attachment, closeness and strong parenting skills often predict positive child outcomes (Grogom-Kaylor, 2005; Henry, Tolan, & Gorman-Smith, 2001).

iv. Environment (Neighbourhood) and Child Development

Family circumstances and neighbourhood setting are fundamental elements to the successful socialization of children and teens (Furstenverg, Thomas, Jacquelynn, Glen, & Arnold, (1999). Parents are essentially the brokers between the community and their children. The literature exploring neighbourhood, family and child outcomes (Burton & Jarrett, 2000) posit that, “family level measures serve to either mediate or moderate the effect of neighborhood on child development, despite the fact that investigators fail to consider that community factors typically operate indirectly through family and peer relationships. One way in which neighbourhood conditions can indirectly affect children is through the negative effect these conditions exerts on parents”. For instance, Conger Ge, Elder, Lorenz and

Simons(1994) maintained that low neighbourhood socio-economic status causes distress in parents leading to increased depression and hostility towards their children, often expressed as harsh disciplining practices. Such hostility from parents worsen child problem behaviour, leading to aggression and delinquency. Thus, the economic pressures felt by parents increased their depression which in turn, decreased supportive parenting, consequentially resulting in poor child socialization.

Child Protection Theory

Child Protection Theory according to World Vision International (WIV) (2011, 2014) reflects the supportive contributions of many individuals from across the globe that work to strengthen the prevention and response to abuse, neglect, exploitation and other forms of violence affecting children. Child protection refers to the mechanisms put in place to prevent children from abuse. Such actions are geared toward preventing children from oppression, molestation and to ensure that they live good, normal and healthy life. As put in the words of Blank, Devereux, and Handa (2011) “child protection involves a range of activities that prevent and respond to violence, exploitation, and abuse. .

Social Protection addresses vulnerability at different stage of the life cycle, it can also address specific aspects of children vulnerability (Hanger-Zanker & Holmes, 2012). Child protection is an important concern in Nigeria today owing to the preponderance of children in all sorts of ‘hard jobs’. Poverty is a very bad thing as it could make people do anything to survive. Poverty, therefore, exposes the poor people to exploitative situation. According to International Labour Organisation (ILO) “Social protection is associated with a range of public institutions, norms and programmes aimed at protecting workers and their households from contingencies threatening basic living standards’ (Barrientos, 2011). This ILO description of social protection incorporates child protection. The three main grouping of social protection in terms of social insurance, social assistance, and labour market regulation, are therefore related to child protection. There is no general agreement as to the definition of poverty. Its definition is based on what we think poverty itself is and is therefore subjective (Lister, 2004). The kind of social protection mechanism put in place is dependent on the way we define or see poverty (Gabel, 2012). Therefore, social protection has to be child sensitive in order to protect children (Blank et al., 2011)

Method

The study design adopted in this research was a cross-sectional qualitative research survey. This is because the research design can cover a wide spectrum of the society which study such phenomena like people's perception on parenting and child welfare and so forth (Obikeze, 1990). The method is appropriate when seeking to understand people's awareness and opinion.

The research consulted extensively and made use of primary and secondary sources of data from the existing literature including books and journal articles as well as in-dept interview discussion. Snowball sampling method was used to recruit participants. Semi-structured interviews were used as a means of data collection (Robinson, 2013). The relevance of discussing parenting and child welfare in Nigeria and the implication of child abuse and neglect with respect to national and child development appears to have encouraged the participants to consent to the in-dept interview.

The areas covered in the study were Nsukka LGA and Enugu South LGA totaling two clusters in all. The procedure used for recruitment of the in-depth interviewee involved to a large extent, simple random sampling plan. The systematic sampling methods were used to select the clusters and the respondents for in-depth interview. Simple percentage (%) was used to analyze the data collected with the formula $(\frac{x}{N} \times \frac{100}{1})$.

Analysis of in-depth interview

The in- depth interview was conducted with carefully developed interview guides. The interview contained questions on some of the issues raised in the statement of the problem. This was meant to provide in- depth knowledge with regards to parenting and child welfare in Nigeria.

For the qualitative data, a total of two clusters (Nsukka LGA & Enugu South LGA) were selected for the conduct of the interview with thirty-five {35} and fifteen (15) persons comprising males and females respectively in the two clusters to maintain the sampling procedure adopted. In each cluster, interview were held with those selected participants on the time and date they chose to be convenient for them with all thirty-five males and fifteen females of about 35 years old and above giving a total of 50 respondents in all. Group A of the interviewee covered Nsukka Local Government Area Nsukka; while Group B covered Enugu South Local Government Area of Enugu state. We have five questions A-E as contained in the Statement of the Problem for use in the in-depth interview.

In answering question A which says “in your opinion, what does parenting mean to you” 35(70%) out of the fifty members interviewed were of the opinion that:

there is no manual for parenting. This is something you realized when you bring your little one home. There is no single “right” way to parenting. How you parent depends on how “you” were raised, how you see others parenting and even, to some extent, your cultural background. In corroborating their views, they argued that some people were raised under.

- **Authoritative Method:** You set clear and consistent rules and boundaries, have reasonable expectation for your children, listen to inputs from your children, and are generous with positive feedbacks.
- **Authoritarian Method:** Set strict rules and expect their children to follow them, punish (sometimes severely), do not encourage open communication and have high expectations and expect that their children will meet them.
- **Attachment Method:** Mommie dearest, child-centric form of parenting, have a lot of physical contact, you hold, carry etc. respond to the child’s need without hesitation, soothe and comfort...
- **Permissive Method:** Do not set strict limits or boundaries, do not always attempt to control their children, have few, if any, rules, allow their children to make many of their own decisions.
- **Uninvolved/neglectful Method:** The parent feel indifferent towards the child, possibly due to situations outside of the parents control e.g. single parent, poverty etc, do not take care of the child’s physical and emotional needs beyond the basics, can act dismissively, lack responsiveness, are emotionally or physically absent from child’s life, may be physically abusive.

Similarly, 15 (30%) were of the opinion that:

As our child is unique in ways that we know best, so our parenting will be unique. Our children will have the healthiest outcome if we walk the thin line between being nurturing but not too controlling.

Furthermore, on answering question (B) which states “who is a child”, 40(80%) of the respondents were of the opinion that:

A child is a person who has not attained the age of eighteen (18) years. In parenting process, the child is the most affected with reference to child welfare. This is because, the child is frail, innocent, defenceless and often, cannot help themselves in terms of social life, such as economics, religious, socialization etc. the child totally depends on his/her parent for everything that makes human. However, the definition of child is relative as many cultures or nations have different age brackets as a child. Hence, paltry number 10(20%) of the respondents believed that a child is a person between the age of 7 – 12 years, although, they have the same views on the features of a child like the former group.

In addition, the respondents were asked about “the right of a child in the society” In answer, 30(60%) of the interviewee, believed that the main rights of a child are embedded in:

Good parenting based on the advantages conferred on the child by fundamental human rights backed by the law. Benefits recognized by the law, right to school, social welfare, emotional built up, have a home, loved and be cared for by the parents, peace of mind, development protection and proper socialization in the societal norms and cultures, healthy living. While, 20(40%) of the interviewee, maintained that “the rights of a child in the society, states the child’s place within a particular family, belonging to a specific religious, ethnic and cultural community and one that offers a more individualized approach, recognizing the distinctiveness of interests even within the family. The child’s family is the natural and proper environment for the child’s upbringing, with their own values and beliefs.

Similarly, in answering question (C) “to what extent have these rights been abused and protected in Nigeria societies”. However, 25(50%) believed that

The child’s rights have been seriously abused. The abuse is innumerable considering the poverty levels of Nigerian citizens. Parents are unable to provide the needful for the child with reference to sending the children to school, social amenities, their efforts to make contributions to the family up-keep that makes them hawk in the street, engage in child labour, lack of government support as to prompt payment of workers salaries, pension payment, indifference of the ruling class as to the plight of the people etc.

Invariably, 15(30%) believed that the prevailing

“so-called” child abuse has been part of our African culture. They maintained that generation before now, do all those things which were done as part of training and socialization. These exercises will help them keep their own home when they grow. Too much pampering makes them lazy and to live above their level thereby making them greedy and would want to involve in different types of crime.

Finally, 10(20%) interviewee were of the opinion that:

The palliative measures provided by the government to cushion the effect of poverty that results to child abuse, do not reach the targeted people. The process is fraught with corruption and favouritism. The people who benefit from such relief do not need them, because those close at the corridor of power were giving the opportunity to do so, thereby giving favours to their kinsmen. By implication the indifference exhibited by those in authority, to a large extent, indirectly increases the vulnerability of the child. The authority lacks commitment to cry for child abuse since the children of the poor in our society are the most

vulnerable. The children of the rich go to the best school, get overseas education, better taken care of and do not involve in street hawking etc. However, talking about how these rights have been protected in Nigeria society; 30(60%) respondents maintained that:

Child's protection are embedded in specific religious, ethnic, economic, cultural parlance and in one that offer a more individualized (personalities psychological) recognized and distinctiveness of the child's interests even within the family. The family is the natural and proper environment for the child's upbringing. Considering the social value in ensuring that within limits, parents should be free to bring up their children in a way that is consistent with their own values and beliefs. Not only do childrearing practices vary, but some groups (e.g. the urban poor) are subject to more coercive forms of intervention than others. This is in relation to the competing values of parents' right to raise their children according to their own values, on the one hand, and the child's right to be protected on the other.

Similarly, the remaining 20(40%) posit that various authorities in the society tend to protect the child's right in different ways like:

The Convention on the Rights of the Child (CRC) which has been implemented by many states in Nigeria. In 2007, Nigeria launched "in care of the people" called COPE which in turn benefits children from female-headed home, elderly parent and household in which the presence of poverty can easily be detected. The Universal Basic Education (UBE), the Almajiri Model Secondary Schools established in the North to reduce number of children in the street, UNICEF programme etc. are other means through which the child's rights are protected, they concluded. This protection involved the philosophies, policies, standards, guidelines and procedures to protect children both from intentional and unintentional harm. The definition reflects the duty of organizations and the people in them –toward children in their care. It shows the legal grounds upon which social workers and police can intervene to identify children, who have been harmed or are likely to be harmed, and to intervene to protect children from future harm.

A cursory glance at question (D) bordering on "the implication/challenges of these abuses" on the child welfare and society at large, 45 (90%) posit that:

Child abuse cause a lot of problems for the child ranging from "adolescent pregnancy, substance abuse, mental health problem, education/employment deficits, emotional problem, anti-social behavior such as crime, gangsterism, cultism, street children, the almajiris, insurgency/terrorism, etc. Some of them involve themselves in child labour, street hawking, prostitution for them to make a living. The consequences of child abuse is innumerable and they are as a result of

A	On what "Parenting means to the respondents"	35(70%) were of the opinion that there is no manual for parenting. Parenting depends on how one was raised or how they see others parenting or by cultural background. They referred to some parents as using different methods like Authoritative, Authoritarian, Attachment, Permissive and Uninvolved methods of parenting. 15(30%) believed that as our child is unique, so shall our parenting be unique.
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ignorance on the part of the parents. The issue of house-girls with their mistress cannot be over-emphasized.

To buttress the above views on the implication/challenges of these abuses, 5(10%) of the participants blamed the whole gamut on the poverty level and ignorance of the parents. This is because no parent would not like his child to be a president, minister, doctor, lawyer and so on. There should be awareness enlightenment and improvement on the socio-economic status if the situation should be ameliorated.

Finally, discussing question (E) which anchors on "the protection of these rights on the overall development of the child and the society", 35(70%) of the participants unanimously maintained that:

Protecting the child's rights will automatically produce law-abiding, patriotic and progressive children whose ultimate interests will be to develop their potentials and make their own input in the development of the society. Invariably, peace and progress will reign paramount in the society. This is because good families make good nation.

In the same vein 15(30%) of the participants were of the opinion that:

Good parenting will give the child balanced psychological, emotional, socio-religious and physical equilibrium. The child will perform well in his/her academic activities and the joy of parenthood will manifest. Infact, if the rights of the children were properly protected via adequate supply of the needful, the society will be a "heaven on earth". On the contrary, this will be an utopian belief, hence, Emile Durkheim in one of his literature said that "crime is functional in the society- that is, crime is necessary in the society.

B(i)	On “who is a child”	40(80%) believed that a child is a person who has not attained the age of 18, while 10(20%) said that a child is a person between the age of 7- 12, and so on.
(ii)	On “ the rights of the child”	30(60%) agreed that the main rights of the child is good parenting based on the advantages conferred on the child on his fundamental human rights backed by the law. E.g.: Rights to school, social welfare, emotional build-up; while, 20(40%) maintained that the rights of a child is within a specific religious, ethnic and cultural community that offers individualized/ distinctiveness of interest within the family.
C(i)	On “The extent to which these rights have been abused and protected in Nigeria”	25(50%) were of the opinion that the child’s rights have been seriously abused, considering the poverty levels of Nigerian citizens that denies the child necessities of life, while, 15(30%) believes that the “so called” child abuse has been part of our African culture that gives them the necessary training and socialization. In addition,10(20%) said that the palliative measure provided to cushion the effect of poverty do not reach the targeted people
(ii)	Similarly, on “ how these rights have been protected”	30(60%) of the respondents said that child protection are embedded in specific religions, ethnic, economic or cultural parlance. Invariably, 20(40%) said that various authorities give these protection backed by laws e.g. CRC, UBE, UNICEF.
D	On “the implication/ challenges of these abuses on the child welfare”	45(90%) posit that child abuses are the consequence of adolescent pregnancy, substance abuse, mental health problems, emotional problems, anti-social behaviors, etc; while 5(10%) blamed the whole gamut on poverty level and the ignorance of the parents.
E	On the “protection of these rights for the overall development of the child”	35(70%) argued that protecting the child’s right will produce law-abiding, patriotic and progressive children who could develop their potentials; while, 15(30%) opined that it will give the child balanced psychological, emotional, socio-religious and physical equilibrium.

Conclusion

Child welfare is closely linked to the activities of government, community, organizations, and parents to protect them. Thus, fulfilling their rights and values at early stages of childhood would certainly transform them to achieve their full potentials and to participate actively in the society. The results reconfirmed the need for integrated approaches to address the multiple facets of children’s welfare for their survival. A holistic approach through social engineering programmes should be use to solve their problems. Identifying the children suffering from single and multiply abuse can help to target the intervention especially, where household poverty is the highest.

Recommendation

The Child's Right Implementation Committee set up across the nation should ensure that these rights are implemented, while, those states who are in the process of enacting the child's right laws should do so without delay. Government must ensure the establishment of the Family Court, Child Minding; Daycare Centres and allied homes must be established and provided for, under the Act. Government should enlighten the public about the right of children. Government and NGOs should campaign against harmful cultural practices and abuses perpetrated against children. A good parent strives to make decisions in the best interest of the child and doesn't have to be perfect. We should keep this in mind when we set our expectations and serve as a role model for them.

Good parenting helps foster empathy, honesty, self-reliance, self-control, kindness, co-operation, and cheerfulness. It promotes intellectual curiosity, motivation and encourages a desire to achieve. It protects children from developing anxiety, depression, eating disorders, anti-social behaviours, alcohol and drug abuse. If your rules vary from day to day in an unpredictable fashion or if you enforce them only intermittently, your child's misbehaviour is your fault. Your disciplinary process must be consistent and identify your non-negotiable rules. The more parents scold or reprimand, the more the bad behaviour gets repeated.

Give your child positive experiences. They will have the ability to experience, positive experiences themselves and offer them to others. They will also form the memories of you, of which your child carries for life. For discipline, it seems hard to remain positive, but it is possible to practice positive discipline and avoid punitive measures. Teach him/her the moral of what is right and wrong. Finally, monitoring, supervision, preventive interventions, and treatment services – solving problems which have already occurred should be the primary responsibility of the parents.

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