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Analysis of the Implementation of Child Rights Law in Nigeria (Pp. 129-138)

Udoh, Akpan Oko - Department of Educational Foundations, Guidance and Counselling, University of Uyo, Uyo, Akwa Ibom State, Nigeria
E-mail: akpanokoudoh@yahoo.com

Edem, Eno - Department of Curriculum Studies, Educational Management and Planning, University of Uyo, Uyo, Akwa Ibom State, Nigeria

Abstract

The aim of the study was to analyse the implementation of Child Rights Law in Nigeria so far. To accomplish this: three research questions and three hypotheses were formulated to guide the investigation. Descriptive survey research was employed carrying out the study. Stratified random sampling technique was used to select 1811 respondents comprising 546 Civil Servants, 291 Industrialists and 344 Traders. Data analysed using descriptive statistics and analysis of variance were collected through a questionnaire entitled-implementation of Child Rights Law questionnaire (ICRLQ). The findings indicated that 68.75% of Child Rights Law had been implemented. The implications of these findings were discussed.

Background of the Study

The welfare of a child is of world concerned. As far back as 20th November, 1959, The United Nation Convention of the Rights of the Child was adopted by the General Assemble UNICEF, (1989). Since then, several conventions on the Rights of a Child had been held. Currently, over 191 countries including Nigeria have endorsed the United Nations Convention on the Rights of the Child. Consequent upon this endorsement by Nigeria, States' assemble had passed the bill on the Rights of a Child into law.

In Nigeria, a child is considered as an individual below the age of 18. This is in consonance with the article 1 of the Convention on the Rights of the Child 1989. Enwin (2005) defined the Nigeria child as somebody under the age of 18 whose parents or father are by birth a Nigerian.

The Rights of a Child which are of immense concern to Nigeria include the right of survival, life, education, health, shelter, food and clothing, free access to parents, against child labour, circumcision, early marriage, witchcraft and cruelty. However; this list is not exhaustive. It is the believe of the government that if these Rights are well implemented; it will lead to the complete development of a Nigeria child.

UNICEF, (2003) observed that the actual problem on Child Right is lack of enforcement and implementation of the existing Child's Right Law. According to them, a crucial factor in this direction is lack of political will, sincerity, commitment, transparency and cultural practice on the part of the government and the society. Consequently, Etuk (2006) opined that girl-child still face female Genital Mutilation. Umemoto (2008) observed that early marriages were still notice in Nigeria. Ebirim (2006) reported that between 2003 and 2007, there was a large scale trafficking of girls to Europe.

Since 1989, Nigeria had been fully involved in protection of children against harmful practices. A concrete step in this direction is the passage of Child Rights bill into law. Despite this, key sectors in the country, Civil Servant, Industrialist and Traders were still feeling that the Child Right Law had not been implemented properly since children were still seen hawking and early marriage were noticed occasionally hence depriving them of Basic Education. This position is in contrast to that of Government Agents that maintained that Child Rights Law was well implemented. The researcher therefore wished to investigate how Civil Servants, Industrialists and Traders assessed the implementation of the Child Rights Law in Nigeria.

Research Questions

The underlisted research questions were formulated:-

1. How do Civil Servants, Industrialists and Traders differ in their assessment of the implementation of Child Rights Law in Nigeria?
2. How do male and female Civil Servants, Industrialists and Traders differ in their assessment of the implementation of Child Rights Law in Nigeria?

3. How do Civil Servants, Industrialists, Traders residing in Urban and Rural Area differ in their assessment of the implementation of Child Right Law in Nigeria?

Hypotheses

The underlisted hypotheses were raised:-

1. Civil Servants, Industrialists and Traders do not differ significantly in their assessment of the implementation of Child Rights Law in Nigeria.
2. Male and female Civil Servants, Industrialists and Traders do not differ significantly in their assessment of the implementation of Child Right Law in Nigeria.
3. Civil Servants, Industrialists and Traders residing in Urban and Rural Area do not differ significantly in their assessment of the implementation of Child Right Law in Nigeria.

Research Method

The study was carried out in Akwa Ibom State of Nigeria. The state is known to be in the forefront in fighting ill- treatment of children.

Descriptive survey research design was used in carrying out the study. Stratified random sampling techniques was utilized in selecting 1811 respondents for the study comprising 546 Civil Servants, 291 Industrialists and 344 Traders. Instrument entitled "Implementation of Child Rights Law Questionnaire" (ICRLQ)" was used for data collection. The instrument was validated by three experts in measurement and evaluation in the Faculty of Education, University of Uyo. Uyo, Nigeria. Their independent report of the validation informed the amendment of three items.

The Instrument focused on Right to Life and be allowed to survive, and develop, entitled to a home, family, nationality, free to belong to any Association or assembly according to the law, right of expression, protection from interfering with ones privacy or honour, adequate rest, Compulsory Basic Education, and equal opportunity for Higher Education, protection from indecent and inhuman treatment like sexual exploitation, drug abuse, child labour, torture, maltreatment, neglect and suffering from discrimination.

The instrument had 37 items with strongly agreed (SA), Agreed (A), Disagreed (DS) strongly disagreed (SDA) options.

Cronbach Alpha reliability coefficient was determined using 50 Civil Servant, 22 industrialists and 25 Traders. The reliability coefficient of the instrument was .822 and summary data shown in Table 1.

The questionnaire was administered to 1811 respondents. comprising 546 Civil Servant, 293 industrialists, and 342 Traders. Data were analysed using Mean (X), Standard Deviation (SD), Analysis of variance. The item mean (\bar{x}). was obtained by dividing the mean by the number of items 37. It shows the position of agreement in the four- point scale (SA, A, D, and SD)

Results

In presenting the results, the research questions were answered before testing the hypotheses.

Research Question One

How do civil servant, industrialists and traders differ in their assessment of the implementation of Child Rights Law in Nigeria?

Mean and Standard Deviation were used in answering this question and summary data shown in Table 2

The result showed that Civil Servants' assessment of the implementation of Child Right Law was higher than the other two groups. The item means (\bar{x}) showed that they were agreeing to the items in the question since we scored SA, A, D, and SD, 4, 3, 2 and 1 respectively for positive items and reversed for negative items.

Research Question Two

How do female Civil Servants, Industrialists and Traders differ in their assessment of the implementation of Child Rights Law in Nigeria?

Mean and standard deviation were used in answering the research question and summary data shown in Table 3.

The results showed that the three groups had varying mean. The mean of female Civil Servants was highest while the least was that of male Traders. Female Civil Servants agreed more on the implantation of Child Rights Law.

Research Question Three

How do civil servants, Industrialists Traders residing in Urban and Rural area differ in their assessment of the implementation of Child Right Law in Nigeria?

Mean and standard deviation were used in answering the research question and summary data shown in Table 4.

Data in Table 4 showed that urban Civil Servants agreed to most of the items, while rural Industrialists agreed least. Generally, the varying means indicated that respondents varied on their assessment of implementation of Child Rights Law in Nigeria.

Hypothesis one: Civil Servants, Industrialists and Traders do not differ significantly in their assessment of the implementation of Child Rights Law in Nigeria.

Analysis of variance was used in testing the hypothesis and summary data shown in Table 5.

Since the computed F (13.41) was greater than the critical F (3.00) at df of 2,1178 and at .05 level of significant, the null hypothesis was rejected. Consequently, Civil Servants, Industrialists and Traders differed significantly in their assessment of the implementation of Child Rights Law in Nigeria.

HYPOTHESIS TWO

Male and female Civil Servants, Industrialists and Trader do not differ significantly in their assessment of the implementation of Child Right Law in Nigeria.

Analysis of variance was used in testing this hypothesis and summary data shown in Table 6

Since the computed F (15.65) was greater than the critical F (2.22) dt of 5,1175 and .05 level of significant, the null hypothesis was rejected. Therefore, male and female Civil Servants, Industrialists and Traders differed significantly in their assessment of the implement of Child Rights Law in Nigeria.

Hypothesis Three

Civil servants, Industrialists and Traders residing in Urban and Rural areas do not differ significantly in their assessment of Child Rights Law in Nigeria.

Forum analysis of variance was utilized in testing the hypothesis and summary data shown in Table 7.

Since the obtained F (15.82) was greater than the critical F (2.22) at df of 5 and 1175 and at .05 level of significant, the null hypothesis was rejected, Therefore, urban and rural Civil Servants, differ significantly in their assessment of the implementation of Child Rights law in Nigeria.

Discussion

For optimum comprehension of the discussion, further information on the result of the analysis became crucial. The results of the analyzed showed that except Civil Servants, Industrialists and Trader were just crossing the point of agreement (2.5) on a 4 –point scale (strongly agreed, agreed, disagreed and strongly disagreed) since most of them had item mean (\bar{x}) of about 2.6. Infact, the grant mean of all the item means, was 2.75. This indicated that even though the Civil Servants, Industrialists and Traders differed in their assessment of implementation of child rights law, all of them agreed that the implementation of child right law was slightly above average (68.75%) i.e.

$$\frac{\text{Grant item mean } X}{4 \text{ point scale}} \times \frac{100}{1} = \frac{2.75}{4} \times \frac{100}{1} = 68.75\%$$

Therefore, Child Rights were still inflicted upon.

These results were in agreement with several findings/observations. For instance, Etuk (2006) opined that girl-child still faces the problem of female genital mutilation that affect the physical, emotional and mental health of the girl-child hence inflicting upon the Child Rights to good health. Umemoto (2008) found out that marriage of children and adolescents below the age of 18 was still in practice. Many girls and smaller number of boys got marriage without any chance of exercising their choice. Some girls and boys were forced into marriage at a very early age while others were too young to make an informed decision about marriage: thus violating the Child Rights to free and full consent to marriage, which is recognized in the 1948 Universal Declaration of Human Right. In fact for both girls and boys, early marriage has profound physical, intellectual psychological and emotional impacts; hence cutting off educational opportunity and chances of personal growth. Therefore, Child Rights Law to life, personal liberty, freedom of expression, good health, discrimination and education have been violated.

Ugo, Ankwe and mustaph (2004) study indicated that street hawking by children was still in practice and these children suffered from behavioral problems like social adjustments, emotional problems, sleepiness, laziness and untidiness, restlessness conduct problems and feeling of hopelessness. Etuk (2007) also affirmed that school children were exploited in hawking. These stop them from choosing the Right to free and compulsory Basic Education and equal opportunity for higher education based on individual ability. From the forgoing discussion, it is clear that the implementation of Child Right Law is far from optimum.

Recommendations

The underlisted recommendations were made based on the findings of the study.

1. The provision of the laws that protect children from abuse should be strictly enforced. Due to rural nature of most part of the country. Government agents, like the police, might not cover the entire country hence we wish to suggest the formation of community task force to liaise with the police and enforce the law.
2. There must be stiffer penalties for parents and guardians that break the child Right Law.

Conclusion

The Child Rights Law if well implemented could lead to wholesome development of a Nigeria child. Such a Child would avoid himself or herself all the opportunities created by Government for one to leave a meaningful life.

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TABLE 1: Summary Data for Cronbach Alpha Reliability Coefficient

S/N	ITEMS	X	SD	r
1.	Right to life	14.341	5.662.	.808
2.	Entitled to name, family and Nationality.	15.021	6.110	.831
3.	Free to Associate	5.538	5.001	.811
4.	Free to express opinion	6.031	4.68	.805
5.	Protection from interfering with privacy	9.443	4.98	.822
6.	Entitlement to adequate rest, recreation	6.568	5.021	8.12
7.	Entitlement to compulsory Basic Education	7.342	3.62	.763
8.	Entitlement to good health	9.367	4.221	.832
9.	Protection from indecent and inhuman treatment	15.622	5.821	.841
10.	Protection from discrimination	36.434	7.586	.821

N= 97

r = .822.

Table 2: Mean and Standard Deviation on Implementation of Child Right Law.

S/N	GROUP	n	\bar{X}	\bar{x}	SD	Rank
1.	Civil Servants	546	112.41	3.50	8.72	1
2.	Industrialists	293	99.24	2.68	7.83	2
3.	Traders	324	96.82	2.62	9.46	3

N = 1181

TABLE 3: Mean and Standard Deviation on Implementation of Child Right Law by Male and Female Respondents

S/N	GROUP	GENDER	n	\bar{X}	\bar{x}	SD	Rank
1.	Civil Servants	Male	251	101.45	2.74	7.67	2
		Female	295	111.36	3.01	8.89	1
2.	Industrialists	Male	163	98.45	2.66	7.99	5
		Female	130	99.35	2.68	9.26	3
3.	Traders	Male	181	97.36	2.63	10.43	6
		Female	161	98.68	2.67	11.22	4
N		= 1181					

Table 4: Mean and Standard Deviation on the Implementation of Child Right Law by Urban and Rural Respondents.

S/N	GROUP	Location	n	\bar{X}	\bar{x}	SD	Rank	Item
1.	Civil Servants	Urban	386	113.21	3.06	8.122	1	
		Rural	160	99.86	2.70	7.68	4	
2.	Industrialists	Urban	178	101.72	2.75	9.63	2	
		Rural	115	97.94	2.65	8.53	6	
3.	Teachers	Urban	169	98.45	2.67	7.95	5	
		Rural	173	100.62	2.72	8.34	3	
N		= 1181						

Table 5: Analysis of variance for the assessment of Civil Servants, Industrialists and Traders on implementation of Child Right Law in Nigeria

SOURCE OF VARIANCE	SS	df	MS	F
Between groups	759.06	2	379.53	13.41*
Within groups	3333.74	1178	28.29	
Total	34089.80	1180		

N = 1181

*Significant $p < .05$

Table 6: Analysis of variance for the assessment of male and female Civil Servants, Industrialists and Traders on the implementation of Child Rights Law in Nigeria

SOURCE OF VARIANCE	SS	df	MS	F
Between groups	22277.84	5	455.57	15.65
Within groups	34188.4	7	1175	29.10
Total	36466.31		1180	
<hr/>				
N	= 1181	*Significant 12.05		

Table 7: Analysis of variance for the assessment of urban and rural Civil Servants Industrialists and Traders on the implementation of Child Rights Law in Nigeria

Source of Variance	SS	df	MS	F
Between groups	2358.69	5	471.74	15.82*
Within groups	35052.78	1175	29.84	
Total	37411.47	1180		
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N = 1181	* Significant p<.05			