Stemming The Wheels Of Child Labour For The Economic Gains Of The Parents In Nigeria: Investigating The Role of The Law

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ABSTRACT
One of the fundamental global problems facing developing countries today is the fact that the incidences of children who work outside the family to earn a living or to support their families are increasing. In Nigeria, most especially in the urban areas, children between the age of eight years and fifteen are seen working. The situation of most Nigerian children remains critical due to the socio-economic, cultural, and educational backgrounds of their parents. Children are compelled by circumstances beyond their control to contribute to family income. In the long run, working children are disadvantaged in several ways because of their involvement in all sorts of hazardous works which affect their health and developmental process. This work critically examined economic and socio-political factors that encourage child exploitation in Nigeria. A comprehensive study of international and domestic legal instruments against child labour was also explored. This paper advocates that the eradication of poverty and the provision of free and compulsory primary and secondary education would contribute to the reduction of child labour in Nigeria and Africa at large.

Keywords: Child labour, Children, Economic gains, Parents.

INTRODUCTION
The term child labour “refers to the engagement of children in any work that takes away all or most of their rights as children, i.e. right to attend regular school, uninterrupted mental and physical development”.¹ According to UNICEF, “Child labour is work that is likely to interfere with a child’s education and development; labour that exceeds a minimum number of hours, labour that is hazardous; and/or labour performed by a child who is underage according to state legislation. A child is considered a person under the age of 18 years”.² ILO signifies some activities as the worst form of labour. It defines, “The worst forms of child labour include trafficking, armed conflict, slavery, debt bondage, sexual exploitation and hazardous work”.³ Globally, over 200 million children are involved in child labour, and

over 20 million children are subjected to forced and labour. These children are thus removed from formal education, play, and other chances for healthy social and personal development. Worldwide, children can be found working in various industries like agriculture, construction, fishing, mining, small-scale businesses, the informal sector, and manufacturing for export and domestic sales as well as in homes for child care of family members, assisting in cleaning and cooking, and so forth. Child labour has most likely been in existence almost as long as the history of mankind and connotes all economic activities carried out by children regardless of their occupational status. Till date, Hundreds of thousands of children are used as free labour by their own families and often asked to take on hazardous tasks like working on farmland with machetes or lifting 100-pound bags of beans. For many, school is not a possibility. The problem of child labour has persisted in many countries because of the complex combination of social, cultural and economic factors involved. Parents play a critical role in child labour as it provides much needed extra income for the family. More than half of these children, are exposed to the worst forms of child labour such as work in hazardous environments, slavery or other forms of forced labour, and illicit activities such as drug trafficking and prostitution. Child labour constitutes an interesting example of what happens when civil society is deeply divided economically, socially, culturally and educationally. Child labour has negative effect on the education, health, psychology, and orientation of a child. This menace also increases crime rates in any country.

Internationally, the fundamental conventions of the International Labour Organization (ILO)—to which ratifying member countries are then automatically bound to monitoring and enforcing independently—include Convention 138 of 1973 and Convention 182 of 1999. The relevant articles of Convention 138, entered into force June 19, 1976, are “Minimum Age for Admission to Employment,” and relevant articles of Convention 182, entered into force November 19, 2000, are “Prohibition and Immediate Action for the Elimination of the Worst Forms of Child Labour”. These two ILO Conventions were founded on worker and child under age 18) human rights plus moral, and social concerns. Both ILO Conventions also relate to the United Nations Convention on the Rights of the Child, specifically its Article 32. Unfortunately, poverty is the domineering cause of child labour in Nigeria and unless poverty is eradicated to the barest level, both the domestic and international legal instruments, the menace of child

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8Brian, O, (2016),Bitter Sweets, Fortune.com


12ILO Minimum Age Convention, C138,(1973), Articles 1–3.

13ILO Convention 182 of 1999, Articles 2, 3, and 7.


15Same is applicable with every other less developed country.
labour for the economic benefits of parents persists worldwide, especially in lower income, less developed countries, of which Nigeria is one. The legal framework on child labour in Nigeria consists of the Constitution, the Child Rights Act, the Criminal Code, The Penal Code and the International Instruments of which Nigeria is a signatory. Thus in Nigeria, over 4 million children are engaged in economic or labour activities, working extensive hours (average of 12 hours, daily) in poor and detrimental conditions and they get a token fee less than 1/3 of legislated minimum wage.\textsuperscript{16} Over the years, the use of children for labour outside the home has continued to change in appearance and nature in Nigeria.\textsuperscript{17} In view of this, the main objective of this work is to scrutinize the Implementation of the laws on child labour in Nigeria and the successfulness. This research will be beneficial to parents since it will expose the dangers of child labour, while the National Assembly can adopt the recommendations here and amend the laws on child labour where necessary in Nigeria.

**Minimum Age of Admission to Employment**

The majority of countries have fixed a general minimum age for work. This minimum is usually set at 14, 15 or 16 years of age. Many countries have also defined hazardous work and banned children from this work, including those children who are above the minimum working age and below the age of 18. These definitions, contained in national legislation, must be followed by an enterprise for it to remain within the law. The definitions vary from country to country although they are often based on or include elements of the two ILO Conventions on child labour, the Minimum Age Convention (C. 138)\textsuperscript{18} and the Worst Forms of Child Labour Convention (C. 182),\textsuperscript{19} as well as the UN Convention on the Rights of the Child. A country that has ratified these Conventions commits itself to complying with their provisions. A country is free, however, to adopt laws that are more protective than these Conventions and to also use the flexibilities contained in the Conventions to suit its particular circumstances.

**ECONOMIC BENEFITS OF CHILD LABOUR TO PARENTS**

Child labour activities that are economically beneficial to parents occur in different forms ranging from trafficking, commercial sexual exploitation, domestic labour and illicit activities. Other forms include apprentices, babysitting, street hawking, waste pickers, company labourers, barrow pushers and commercial drivers/ conductors/ touts, water vendors, farm workers, house maids, gardeners, cleaners, and other artisans. Children engage in these child labour activities to support their parents and boost the financial strength of their various families. Some of these activates are;

**Street hawking**

Parents send out their children to hawk commodities not minding the risks (kidnapping, rape, ritualist’s abduction, and accidents) involved. Hawking by and large entails carrying wares, food or goods of whatever description for sale in the streets or public places. Some normally hawked items include fruits of every variety, sachets water, vegetables, honey, groundnut, foot wears and other materials.\textsuperscript{20} This form of child labour is very frequent in developing nations where the incomes are low and have proved insufficient to cater for a whole family. These conditions, can force a child to hawk along the busy streets and high ways in order to complement the family income. Crosson, argued that there is link between parents with insignificant incomes and the essential to push children into street hawing so as to supplement family income.\textsuperscript{21} In such situations, poverty breeds poverty. A poor family has a high


\textsuperscript{18} ILO Minimum Age Convention (C. 138)

\textsuperscript{19} ILO Worst Forms of Child Labour Convention (C. 182).


\textsuperscript{21} Crosson, C, ‘Understanding child abuse and neglect’ (Boston: Ma Pearson Education, 2008)
probability of staying poor since low family incomes carry with them high risks of illness, limitations on mobility, and limited access to education.

**Child begging**

On July 22, 2016, Nigeria woke up to the news of two women who were arrested in Lagos for using babies that were rented from their mothers to beg for alms. Evidently, this is the zenith point of wickedness any parent can show on her own baby and this act is condemned in its entirety in this work. Child begging has harmful psychological, social and health consequences. The three classes of child beggars are - those who guide blind parents or relatives, those who beg entirely on their own and those who act as fronts for their parents, particularly mothers, who are generally hidden from public view but oversee them from a close distance. These children are the most susceptible because they are from families of the poorest of the poor. In all three categories, they run massive risks of running or darts between cars in heavy traffic, putting them in dangers of accidents.

**Bus Conductors**

In many metropolitan areas so many boys have taken up the role of bus conducting, they stay in buses for lengthy hours in a day, exposed to traffic accidents and loud noise. In the recent times, bus conducting has developed into a general feature of child labour in urban Nigeria. Study of motor garages in Lagos, showed the growing use of children as bus conductors. These children, who are typically of tender age, were recruited into these activities with or without the permission of their parents, to make income, either for their families or for themselves. In some cases, these children may join bus conducting with education or may be out of school completely.

**Domestic Servants**

Many children especially girls are domestic servants in various homes while their parents collect their salaries or “a middleman” who has his own cut from the salary collects on behalf of the parents. Unfortunately, most of these girls end up being abused sexually, physically and psychologically. This is the commonest form of child labour that can be imposed on a girl child in Nigeria. Domestic work is defined as work carried out in or for a household; and a domestic worker is anybody engaged in domestic work within a house hold. Largely, most child workers in Nigeria are in domestic service. In actuality, domestic work is not always acknowledged as a form of economic activity, and so it turn out to be, an invisible form of work socially, economically and statistically. That is why according to Okafor, such labourers have been called ‘the world most forgotten children’. Consequently, there is extensive unwillingness on the part of institutions to address the issue with specific policies and laws.

**THE LEGAL FRAMEWORK**

It is imperative to note that the legal framework on child labour in Nigeria comprises the International Instruments and the domestic laws. Both sets of laws will be examined in this research and appropriate recommendations made where there are lacunas.

**Domestic Laws**

The domestic legal framework on child labour in Nigeria is discussed below;

**The Labour Act**

The law prevailing on the rights of a child in labour matters in Nigeria is the Labour Act. Section 59 (b) of the Act provides that “no young person shall be employed in any work which is injurious to his health or which is dangerous or immoral.” The Act further provides that “no child under the Age of 16 years

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26 Ibid.
27 S. 59 (b) of the Labour Act
shall be employed in circumstances in which it is not reasonably possible for him to return each day to the place of residence of his parents or guardians." The section forbids a child less than 16 years from working underground or on machines. It further forbids young persons from working for a longer period than four hours in one day. It places additional restrictions on the employment of a child or young person on a ship or any vessel and it prohibits absolutely, the night employment of young persons. From the above, one can see that the Labour Act does not prohibit Child Labour, rather it only places restrictions on where, when and how Child’s Labour may be employed.

The Criminal Code

Under the criminal code which is applicable to the southern part of Nigeria makes provisions against child labour in Sections 300-302 which becomes imperative for our consideration. Section 300 in particular states inter-alia: “It is the duty of every person having charge of another who is unable, by reason of age, to withdraw such charge and who is unable to provide himself with the necessities of life, whether the charge is undertaken under a contractor or is imposed by law which arises by reason of any act, whether lawful or unlawful, of the person who has such charge to provide for the other person the necessaries of life, and he is held to have caused any consequences which result to the life or health of the other person by reason of any omission to perform that duty.” This section, like sections 301 and 302 of the criminal code criminalizes the exclusion or failure to offer necessities of life to a child and imposes liability for any outcome which may arise from such error or failure. Section 301 provides that every person who as head of family, has charge of a child under the age of 14 years, being a member of his household, to provide the necessaries of life for such a child and is held to have caused the penalty which result to that child whether or not the child is helpless. These sections are intended to guarantee that a young child in the charge of another is appropriately cared for, unfortunately, in many homes in Nigeria; reverse is the case since it is the children that are labored e.g hawking, working on farms and industries, for the upkeep of the homes. This evil and menace of child labour has so much penetrated the Nigerian society that some parents wait on their under-aged children to provide them with the necessaries of life even if these children steal.

The Penal code

Section 238 of the Penal code criminalizes cruelty to children. It states that “any person having the charge or care of a child under the age of 15 years or being in a position of authority over him, who willfully ill-treats such a child in a way as to cause injury to the child’s health is guilty of an offence punishable with imprisonment of up to two years or with fine or both”. Section 275 of the penal code punishes breeding of a girl under the age of 18 for immoral reasons. Likewise, section 278 of the same penal code punishes the buying and selling of any person under the age of 18 years for immoral purposes. Furthermore, section 284 of the penal code punishes any person who has sexual intercourse with a girl less than 14 years with or without her consent.

The Nigeria 1999 Constitution

The 1999 Constitution of the Federal republic of Nigeria provides constitutional protection against slavery and forced labour or compulsory labour, sexual exploitation and deprivation of personal liberty of
Nigerians. The 1999 constitution of the Federal Republic of Nigeria does not particularly differentiate between the applicability of its provisions relating to children and adults. But it enumerates under its chapter IV certain rights tagged Fundamental Human Rights which are unchallengeable rights of all the citizens of the country, children and young person’s inclusive. These are rights to personal liberty, human dignity and freedom from slavery and torture, freedoms of thought, opinion, conscience and religion, expression, association and peaceful assembly, movement, fair hearing in both civil and criminal cases, freedom from discrimination on ground of sex, race or ethnicity, religion, political persuasion and so on. The rights enumerated above are acknowledged and confirmed by both the African Charter on Human and People’s Rights and the United Nations Bill of Rights on Civil Rights and Liberties.

Section 17 provides that:
“(1) the state social order is founded on ideals of freedom, equity and justice.
(2) In furtherance of the social order – the sanctity of the human person shall be recognized and human dignity shall be maintained and enhanced.
(3) The state shall direct its policy towards ensuring that –
(f) Children, young persons and the aged are protected against any exploitation whatsoever and against moral and material neglect.”

Section 34 states that:
“Every individual is entitled to respect for the dignity of his person and accordingly:
(a) No person shall be subjected to torture or to inhuman treatment or to degrading treatments.
(b) No person shall be held in slavery; and
(c) No person shall be required to perform forced or compulsory labour.”

The right of a child labourer is infringed under Section 46 of the 1999 Constitution, which states as follows: “Any person who alleges that his or her fundamental human rights has been or is being or likely to be contravened in any State in relation to him may apply to a High Court in that State for redress.”

Also, the Third amendment of the Constitution provides, that “…the National Industrial Court shall have and exercise jurisdiction to the exclusion of any other court in civil cases and matters connected with or related to child labour, child abuse, human trafficking or any matter connected therewith or related thereto.”

The Child’s Right Act
Several rights of Nigerian child are listed under the Child’s Right Act, 2003 but those that are directly related to this work are:

1. Right to Dignity: section 11 of the Act provides that “every child is entitled to respect for the dignity of his person and accordingly, no child shall, among other things, be held in slavery or servitude.” Every child has the right to parental care and protection, and no child shall be separated from his parents against the wish of the child.

2. Right to Education: section 15 states that “every child has the right to free, compulsory and universal Basic Education at least up to Junior Secondary Education.”

3. Protection against Child Labour: Section 26 of the Act States that “no child shall be subjected to any forced or exploitative labour or employed to work in any capacity except work of domestic character.”

4. Protection against Buying, Selling, Begging and Prostitution: Section 38 of the act outlaws buying, selling, hiring or dealing in a child. A child must not be used for the purpose of begging

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38S. 17 Constitution of the Federal Republic of Nigeria 1999
42S. 11 of the Child’s Right Act
43Ibid, S. 11
44Ibid, S. 15
45Ibid, S. 26

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for alms, hawking of foods, guiding beggars, prostitution, domestic or sexual labour or any unlawful or immoral purpose or slavery or trafficking or debt bondage.\(^{46}\)

5. Protection against Sexual Abuses: section 29 provides that “no person shall have sexual intercourse with a child. Such offence is rape and is liable on conviction to imprisonment for life.”\(^{47}\)

The legal frameworks scrutinized, clearly show that, children must be sheltered and taken care of by all means by the parents and by the government of every nation. They are set of people that are helpless and consequently, must be helped by all available means.

**International Instruments**

The various International Instruments on child labour which Nigeria has ratified will be discussed below;


According to the Convention on the Right of the Child \(^{48}\) (CRC) to which Nigeria is a party, a child is defined as “every human being below the age of eighteen years unless under the law applicable to the child, majority is attained earlier.”\(^{49}\) The CRC also provided that

1. States Parties shall use their best efforts to ensure recognition of the principle that both parents have common responsibilities for the upbringing and development of the child. Parents or, as the case may be, legal guardians, have the primary responsibility for the upbringing and development of the child. The best interests of the child will be their basic concern.

2. For the purpose of guaranteeing and promoting the rights set forth in the present Convention, States Parties shall render appropriate assistance to parents and legal guardians in the performance of their child-rearing responsibilities and shall ensure the development of institutions, facilities and services for the care of children.

3. States Parties shall take all appropriate measures to ensure that children of working parents have the right to benefit from child-care services and facilities for which they are eligible.”\(^{50}\)

At this juncture, the question to be asked is what are the child-care services and facilities the Nigerian government has in place for a child? It is very unfortunate to state that even education at the primary level is not free in Nigeria. No money is paid to the parents for the upkeep of every child as it is permissible in advanced and well planned economies. Parents struggle to provide basic education, clothe, shelter and feed their children in Nigeria. This is why some parents engage their children in different kinds of labour to the extent of withdrawing them from school so as to support and boost their economic status.

The CRC further provides that “States Parties shall take legislative, administrative, social and educational measures to ensure the implementation of the present article. To this end, and having regard to the relevant provisions of other international instruments, States Parties shall in particular:

(a) Provide for a minimum age or minimum ages for admission to employment;

(b) Provide for appropriate regulation of the hours and conditions of employment;

(c) Provide for appropriate penalties or other sanctions to ensure the effective enforcement of the present article.”\(^{51}\)

On the issue of minimum age for admission to employment in Nigeria, it is 18 years. But the provisions in some laws suggests otherwise. For instance, in the Criminal Code, it varies because the family head only has the duty to provide the necessaries of life only for a child under the age of 14 years,\(^{52}\) and a master or mistress who has contracted to provide necessary food, clothing or shelter for any apprentice or servant is only duty bound to do same if he is under the age of 16 years, and he or she is held to have caused any

\(^{46}\)Ibid, S. 38

\(^{47}\)Ibid, S. 29

\(^{48}\)Hereinafter referred to as CRC in this work.


\(^{50}\)Ibid, Art. 18


\(^{52}\)Criminal Code, S. 301.
consequences which result to the life or health of the servant by any reason or omission to perform that duty.\footnote{53} This provision of the law suggests that the master will not be responsible to be bound by the contract if the apprentice is between 16 and 18 years of age or that a family head is not duty bound to cater for a child who is above 14 years. The inconsistencies on the age of maturity in the provisions of the laws should be corrected and amended by appropriate authorities.

The drive of these rights is to guarantee that every child born into the world is accorded in his or her childhood and youth, the fullest opportunities for self-realization, by being permitted opportunities and facilities which guarantee healthy and regular development in all spheres of human life. 1. States Parties recognize the right of the child to be protected from economic exploitation and from performing any work that is likely to be hazardous or to interfere with the child's education, or to be harmful to the child's health or physical, mental, spiritual, moral or social development.

**The Minimum Age Convention (c138)**

This is a convention of the International Labour Organisation Convention concerning Minimum Age for Admission to Employment.\footnote{54} On October 2\textsuperscript{nd}, 2002, Nigeria ratified the ILO Minimum Age Convention and made 15 years the minimum age for admission of employment.

The ILO Minimum Age Convention requests each Member that has ratified it to pursue a national policy designed to ensure the effective abolition of child labour and to raise progressively the minimum age for admission to employment or work to a level consistent with the fullest physical and mental development of young persons.\footnote{55} Each Member which ratifies the Convention shall specify, ‘‘in a declaration appended to its ratification, a minimum age for admission to employment or work within its territory and on means of transport registered in its territory; subject to Articles 4 to 8 of this Convention, no one under that age shall be admitted to employment or work in any occupation.’’\footnote{56} Any member which has ratified the Convention ‘‘may subsequently notify the Director-General of the International Labour Office, by further declarations, that it specifies a minimum age higher than that previously specified.’’\footnote{57} Furthermore, ‘‘the minimum age specified in pursuance of paragraph 1 of this Article shall not be less than the age of completion of compulsory schooling and, in any case, shall not be less than 15 years.’’\footnote{58} Notwithstanding the provisions of paragraph 3 of the Article, ‘‘a Member whose economy and educational facilities are insufficiently developed may, after consultation with the organisations of employers and workers concerned, where such exist, initially specify a minimum age of 14 years.’’\footnote{59} In view of this, each member which has specified a minimum age of 14 years in pursuance of the provisions of the preceding paragraph shall include in its reports on the application of the Convention submitted under article 22 of the Constitution of the International Labour Organisation a statement

(a) that its reason for doing so subsists; or

(b) that it renounces its right to avail itself of the provisions in question as from a stated date.

The Article takes cognisance of some hazardous or strenuous jobs which any child below 18 years may not be able to handle and provided that ‘‘the minimum age for admission to any type of employment or work which by its nature or the circumstances in which it is carried out is likely to jeopardise the health, safety or morals of young persons shall not be less than 18 years.’’\footnote{60} The national laws, regulations or any competent authority, after consultation with the organisations of employers and workers concerned, where such exist will determine the types of employment or work to which paragraph 1 of this Article applies.\footnote{61} Furthermore, ‘‘notwithstanding the provisions of paragraph 1 of this Article, national laws or

\footnotetext{53}{Ibid, S. 302.}
\footnotetext{54}{Entered into force on June 19, 1976.}
\footnotetext{55}{ILO Minimum Age Convention, C138,(1973), Article 1. ILO Convention 182 of 1999, Articles 2, 3, and 7.}
\footnotetext{56}{Ibid, Art. 2 (1)}
\footnotetext{57}{Ibid, Art. 2 (2)}
\footnotetext{58}{Ibid, Art. 2 (3)}
\footnotetext{59}{Ibid, Art. 2 (4)}
\footnotetext{60}{ILO Minimum Age Convention, C138, (1973), Art. 3(1)}
\footnotetext{61}{Ibid, Art. 3(2)}
regulations or the competent authority may, after consultation with the organisations of employers and workers concerned, where such exist, authorise employment or work as from the age of 16 years on condition that the health, safety and morals of the young persons concerned are fully protected and that the young persons have received adequate specific instruction or vocational training in the relevant branch of activity. 

The provisions of this Convention shows that the ILO takes cognisance of the relationship of this international Instrument with the relevant domestic laws of each ratifying member so as to ensure an efficient implementation.

Worst Forms of Child Labour Convention, 1999 (No. 182).
This is an International Labour Organization Convention concerning the Prohibition and Immediate Action for the Elimination of the Worst Forms of Child Labour. Nigeria ratified this Convention on October 2, 2002.

The minimum age under this Convention is everybody below 18 years. The Convention provides the following as the worst forms of child labour:

(a) all forms of slavery or practices similar to slavery, such as the sale and trafficking of children, debt bondage and servitude and forced or compulsory labour, including forced or compulsory recruitment of children for use in armed conflict;
(b) the use, procuring or offering of a child for prostitution, for the production of pornography or for pornographic performances;
(c) the use, procuring or offering of a child for illicit activities, in particular for the production and trafficking of drugs as defined in the relevant international treaties;
(d) work which, by its nature or the circumstances in which it is carried out, is likely to harm the health, safety or morals of children.

Furthermore, each Member shall take all necessary measures to ensure the effective implementation and enforcement of the provisions giving effect to this Convention including the provision and application of penal sanctions or, as appropriate, other sanctions. ILO encouraged each Member to take into account "the importance of education in eliminating child labour, take effective and time-bound measures to:

(a) prevent the engagement of children in the worst forms of child labour;
(b) provide the necessary and appropriate direct assistance for the removal of children from the worst forms of child labour and for their rehabilitation and social integration;
(c) ensure access to free basic education, and, wherever possible and appropriate, vocational training, for all children removed from the worst forms of child labour;
(d) identify and reach out to children at special risk; and
(e) take account of the special situation of girls.

The competent authority responsible for the implementation of the provisions giving effect to this Convention shall be designated by each member country. The provision of this Convention is commendable by preventing the engagement of children in the worst forms of child labour and taking account of the special situation of a girl-child.

RECOMMENDATION
Based on the foregoing, the following recommendations are proffered:

There is the need to enact law that will totally prohibit work of children in all sectors of activity and in all types of enterprise or employment especially in those economic activities such as hawking on highways/traffic which endangers the child’s life. This also helps to regulate the number of children who
endanger their lives by selling on the highways that are in most instances prone to accidents of various sorts.

Legal agreement should be reached between the child’s parents and child’s employers especially before employing the female children who are particularly vulnerable to various forms of exploitation and abuse. This lone action will help to check the number of children especially the females who are raped or sexually molested almost in daily basis within and outside the state sometimes by their employers.

The ILO major conventions on child labour are now among the most widely ratified. It is therefore recommended that all the countries that have ratified Convention 182 on the Worst Forms of Child Labour should also ratify the Minimum Age Convention 138. Apart from ratification, countries should establish a compulsory education age that is consistent with the minimum employment age, so that it will be illegal for children to be out of school and legal for them to work. Cutting across all of these concerns is the poor coordination evident in many countries between ministries of labour, education, social welfare and child protection, coupled with derisory efforts at enforcement. Successful prosecutions against employers are rare especially in Nigeria where there are dearth of cases in this regard. The police force and other law enforcement agencies should be empowered to arrest and prosecute both the child’s parents/guardians and employers of the children labourers who are found working under unacceptable or unhealthy environment.

Government should channel resources to people-oriented programmes such as poverty eradication, small and medium –scale loans scheme, subsidy on petroleum and agricultural products, as well as free, qualitative but compulsory education at all levels. There should also be adequate measures to rehabilitate these children when they are caught. Inspection of school and pupils by teachers should be effective to know is in school or not. Adequate follow up measures should be in place to check excess truancy. There is the need to promote awareness in the community with regards to the right of child, especially the right to basic education and protection from economic exploitation. Grassroots organizations which will involve in activities that will curtail and eliminate child labour, as well as establish units that will coordinate and promote networking among organizations should be encouraged.

Parents should be encouraged to withdraw their children from carrying out those activities that are detrimental to their health and educational attainment. This will be achieved through the implement social service scheme for the unemployed and support parents for loss of income once the child is withdrawn from work. Child parent’s education can be enhanced through the introduction of adult learning education centers, this will help to equip the parents with the knowledge on the dangers of child labour as well as increase their opportunity of getting gainfully employed. There is also the need to support and encourage the media professionals who may contribute to social mobilization by providing information of the highest quality, reliability and ethical standard covering all aspects of child labour. This will help the parents to make better choice in choosing between allowing their child to either work or go to school.

CONCLUSION

Despite the express provisions of both the domestic and international legal framework on child labour in Nigeria, the menace persists. Poverty is a major hindrance to the eradication of child labour, but there is no other slant on child labour than it is condemnation in all societies. Somehow, it is still in existence one way or the other all over the world. From the current research which is an investigation on the roles of the different paradigm of laws on child labour in Nigeria, it is obvious that the laws on child labour alone cannot eradicate this menace that has destroyed the lives of millions of children globally, particularly Nigeria. But proper awareness and implementation is needed on these laws. Evidently, there is the need for parents to know that child labour may in a short run be economically beneficial to parents, but on the long run, its impact is dreaded. This is because in most cases the child labourers totally miss out or under-accumulate the basic human capital (education) essential to improve
their future productivity and earning capacity due to low school attendance and poor health status resulting from their involvement in various economic activities. It is imperative that both government and non-governmental organizations be set up to decisively assess, design and monitor programmes that will help to empower parents financially in order to make informed choice of sending their children to school rather than to work. Since majority of child labourers were from poor family.