



Impact of Sustainable Development Goals on Eradication of Child Labour In Rivers State

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ABSTRACT

In recent time the clamor against child labour has occupied the centre stage of global discourse. International organizations have made lots of efforts to ensure that child labour is done away with. This paper is set to investigate the impact of sustainable development goals on eradication of child labour. Two research questions and two hypotheses were used to guide the study. The study relied on both secondary and primary sources of data collection and employed poverty compulsion theory as our framework of analysis. The study adopted a descriptive survey research design to enable the researcher effectively evaluate the impact of sustainable development goals on eradication of child labour in Rivers State. It was recommended that to achieve the SDGs Target on eradication of child labour, there is the urgent need for state policies targeted at deterring parents/guardians from putting their children into child labour, and for the state government to provide child-centred services to ensure children out in the streets are in schools, among others.

Keywords: Child Labour, SDGs, policy

INTRODUCTION

Child labour is a global phenomenon of international and local concern. Though all countries of the world are contending with this issue, it is particularly prevalent and acute in the developing world and intensive in Sub-Saharan Africa, particularly, Nigeria. Child labour has been practiced for decades now, but in recent times, according to Editorial (2019), it has been one of the biggest obstacles to social development in Nigeria and has posed serious militating factor to the actualization of child right policy. These children in child labour are often maltreated. They work for prolonged hours, exposed to a variety of hazards which have the potential to seriously damage their lives. Not only is this situation a contravention of the basic child rights, it is also potentially damaging to their health physically, mentally and emotionally and the children also can hardly access school or health care. Many studies including Basu (1996), Basu and Van (2000); Doftori (2004) and Kruger 2007, substantiate on the negative role child labour has on the health and education of the children which invariably affects socio-economic development. A good number of the children are often exposed to accidental injuries as well as other kinds of injuries at work. They are also affected socially, emotionally, physically and economically which persistently harm them throughout their lifetime. Sometimes they are abused sexually, and generally left with cuts, burns, lacerations, fractures and even denied or deprived of family love and affection, food, clothes, and medical care. More often, these children are also denied schooling which should help them come out of poverty.

The global estimate of child labour is around 152 million children aged between five and fourteen. According to this report, the number of children in child labour in Africa is 72 million, placing the region

as the highest in the world. By the same estimate, it is also documented that about 25 percent of Nigeria's 80 million children under the age of fourteen are involved in child labour (ILO, 2017). The most recent report by Punch Newspaper of May 3, 2019 reveals that 43% of Nigerian children aged 5 to 10 years are involved in child labour. To a very large extent, lack of attention to child labour undermines the achievement of the sustainable development goals.

The Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) are new set of goals, targets and agenda adopted to build on and complete the unfinished business of the Millennium Development Goals. Target 7 of the SDGs commits the World community to: "Take immediate and effective measures to eradicate forced labour and modern slavery, human trafficking and secure the prohibition and elimination of the worst forms of child labour, including recruitment and use of child soldiers, and by 2025 end child labour in all forms"

Considering that there is a linkage between child labour and a number of the SDGs especially that on poverty, health and education, Francis (2016) maintain that child labour can be effectively addressed through consistent implementation of these goals, especially that on quality education. Fortunately enough, the Nigerian government makes basic education free and compulsory for all children but many children do not attend school. UNICEF (2017) observes that about fifteen million children in Nigeria, both boys and girls, are estimated to be working. This situation demands that concerted and deliberate actions be taken in pursuing the achievement of the SDGs which can translate in the elimination of child labour. Equally encouraging is the Federal Government's effort in adopting several policies and programmes aimed at improving the welfare of children. These policies are meant to improve education, health, population and social development, which if enforced, would help to reduce child labour. For instance, in 2003 Nigeria ratified ILO Convention No. 138, the Minimum Age Convention and Convention No. 182 that calls for the prohibition and elimination of the Worst Forms of Child Labour which includes the involvement of children in slavery, prostitution, pornography and drug trafficking as well as other work that may likely jeopardize the health, safety, morals and education of young persons. Nigeria also adopted the United Nations Convention on the Rights of the Child in 1991 and the African Charter on the Rights and Welfare of the Child in 2001 (Doftori 2004). These conventions have been domesticated and have laid to rest the argument that children have no clearly definable rights in Nigeria though ILO (2000) observes that some of the legislation and policies have deteriorated, and are not being imposed.

From the foregoing, it is clear that to achieve Target 8.7 by 2025, it will be necessary among other things to reduce poverty, improve education, health and implement social protection policies, while progress in reducing child labour will facilitate progress on the other SDGs. Evidently, apart from UNICEF and ILO country wide studies in Nigeria, little empirical research attempts have been carried out to evaluate the actual performance and impact of government policies and programmes on child labour eradication in Nigeria thus suggesting the need for further research. The above reasons has necessitated this research work which undertakes to study the impact of the SDGs on child labour eradication in Rivers State as well as to assess the progress so far made in the achievement of SDG Target 8.7 and hopes to make recommendation on how to achieve the goal of child labour eradication.

Statement of Problem

Child Labour constitutes violence and a contravention of the basic child rights and its continuous persistence in Nigeria pose so much threat to national economy as it has severe negative consequences for the fulfilment of children's rights in terms of their health, education and socio-economic development. Succinctly put, it is arguably the tallest of the current social challenges plaguing Nigeria in the achievement of the Sustainable Development Goals. Equally disturbing is that while child labour is reducing globally, available statistics show that the problem is increasing in Nigeria (UNICEF, 2017). To substantiate this, Adegun (2013) indicates that in 1995, the number of children between 5 and 14 that were engaged in child labour was estimated at twelve million but by 2012 the number had risen to fifteen million. UNICEF (2017) also observe that these fifteen million working children in Nigeria, equally split between boys and girls, do not attend school at all, while one million others are forced to drop out due to poverty or because of parents demand that they contribute to the family income; with additional eight

million others who manage, at least partly, to stay in school and work in their spare time to pay school fees and due to high demands at work, these children often skip classes, and as a matter of fact, missing out on education makes it impossible to break the cycle of poverty and exploitation which prevent children from having a better life and a safer future. Furthermore, Doftori (2004) suggests that child labour affects children's health due to malnourishment, lack of rest and leisure besides affecting their general psychological disposition. These children suffer malnourishment, musculoskeletal disorders from heavy loads, physical and sexual abuse.

Notwithstanding that Nigeria has ratified and domesticated many of the international instruments that generally affect the rights of the child, child labour in Nigeria is still significantly large enough to warrant serious concerns. Many of the children are exposed to long hours of work in dangerous and unhealthy environments, carrying too much responsibility for their age, while many others are still involved in the worst forms of child labour which involves work in quarry, granite and mining extraction, international sexual exploitation and armed conflict. Quite worrisome is the fact that working in these hazardous conditions with little food, small pay, no education and no medical care establishes a cycle of child rights violations and of poverty (ILO, 2019). Through the Sustainable Development Goal Target 8.7 to eliminate all forms of child labour by 2025, the global community is committed to end child labour in this 21st century. Guy Ryder, ILO Director-General documents, "The message that we must act now to stop child labour once and for all has been affirmed by the Sustainable Development Goals. Acting together, it is within our means to make the future of work a future without child labour" (ILO 2017). Clearly, child labour is one of the main obstacles to achieving SDGs 1, 3 and 4 because involvement in child labour generally affects children's health and hinders their ability to attend and perform in school; thereby automatically perpetrating the cycle of illiteracy and poverty. No wonder, Nobel Peace Laureate Kailash Satyarthi laments, "We will not end child labour until every child is in school, and we will not succeed in ensuring every child is in school until we eradicate child labour." Probably, this explains why in the fight against child labour, school attendance rates are used as a proxy indicator to determine its existence. Hence, this study examined the impact of Sustainable Development Goals on the eradication of child labour in Rivers State.

Objectives of the Study

The purpose of this study is to investigate the impact of sustainable development goals on eradication of child labour in Rivers State. Specifically, the study sought to:

1. Determine the impact of SDGs' poverty reduction target on eradication of child labour in Rivers State.
2. Examine the impact of SDGs' educational promotion on eradication of child labour in Rivers State.

Research Questions

Based on the objectives of the study, the following research questions were formulated to guide the study

1. What is the impact of SDGs' poverty reduction target on eradication of child labour in Rivers State?
2. What is the impact of SDGs' educational promotion on eradication of child labour in Rivers State?

Research Hypotheses

The following research hypotheses were formulated and tested at 0.05 level of significant

1. There is no significant difference in the mean score of child labourers and policy makers on impact of SDGs' poverty reduction target on eradication of child labour in Rivers State.
2. There is no significant difference in the mean score of child labourers and policy makers on impact of SDGs' educational promotion on eradication of child labour in Rivers State.

Significance of the Study

The findings of this study are significant in many aspects:

1. It would form basis for further research; Scholars and academicians will be able to understand better how detrimental child labour is to the children and the society at large. Hence would contribute to the existing literature on child labour eradication with specific reference to Rivers State.

2. It would be useful to Rivers State Government for developing a plan/template that would facilitate enforcement of child labour policies in the State and thus would contribute positively to the eradication of child labour in Rivers State.
3. To policy makers, it would provide information on the most effective means of tackling child labour and achieve sustainable development.

LITERATURE REVIEW

Theoretical Framework

Poverty Compulsion Theory

Poverty compulsion theorists see child labour as compelled by the constraints of poverty. Basu (1996), Basu and Van (2000); Gatti (2000) view child labour as a rational response to compulsions of household poverty. For instance, the decision to put children to work instead of schooling is driven by the need to improve family income vis-a-vis family welfare and well-being (Okpukpara and Odurukwe, 2006; Hartmann and Boyce, 1983 and Irfan, 1989). Poverty Compulsion Theory assumes that poverty is the major cause of child labour and that wherever there is widespread poverty, according to Dasugupta (1993) and Saavala (1997), child labour becomes rampant. Bardy (1987) assert that parents and guardians push their children to labour market early so that the family can improve their income and as well increase their survival chances. Thus, Jenks and Prout (1998) and Alanen (1990), confirm that the decision to participate in child labour is that of the household decision makers (parents and guardians) and not that of the child labourer.

The theory assumes that the relationship between poverty and child labour is a two way traffic; that is child labour breeds poverty and poverty also reinforces child labour (Brown et al, 2001 and Alaraudanjoki, 2003). The theory further assumes that child labour has intergenerational impact (Swinnerton, 2000) which means that child labour causes poverty and sustains it across generations. It further stresses that child labour lowers any nation's productivity and consequently affects her socio-economic development (Bhalotra and Heady, 2001; Dofitori, 2004). The theory views child labour as destructive to children's intellectual and physical development thereby also hampering human capital development.

Interestingly, this theory has several policy implications. For instance, proponents of this theory believe that to effectively combat child labour, its fundamental determinant – poverty must first be addressed if not child labourers will always go back to work since their survival depends on income earned from such work. Hence the theory advocates for a dynamic and comprehensive policy that can address poverty, accelerate genuine economic growth and promote social justice.

The theory advocates for a broad alliance of all stakeholders; parents and guardians in finding lasting solutions to the problem of child labour since the decision to participate in child labour is not that of child labourer alone. Lastly, the theory advocates for the use of education – formal and non-formal options in fighting child labour since the theory assumes that there is a relationship between education and child labour.

History and Policies of Child Labour

Child Labor has been practiced since ancient times in the history of mankind and has existed in various forms and in various parts of the world. In more recent history, child labor as a topic gained scientific attention with the emergence of the industrial revolution during which time children were forced to work in dangerous conditions for well up to 12hours in a day. Okafor (2010) opines that prior to this time, many of the children worked around family farms, tending crops or preparing food. But during the industrial revolution, children worked in industries and their conditions of work were very dangerous and often deadly and the industry preferred children to work because children could access smaller spaces that adults could not and also receive fewer wages.

In 1802, researches conducted in U.K in recognition of the adverse effects of child labour resulted in Acts for child labour. For instance, in 1833 and 1844, the first and second legislations were made to ban child labour. The legislations articulate that children should not work or be involved in any labour which

interfered with school. Subsequently in 1839, Prussia came up as the first country to pass the laws restricting child labour in factories and setting the number of hours a child could work. In the same year, Britain enacted its Factory Act which restricted child labour. Later in 1841, France enacted its own child labour law and by 1890, almost the entirety of Europe had child labour law in place (Okafor 2010).

Despite these laws, Basu et al (1999) observes that by 1860, 50% of children in England between the ages of 5 and 15 were said to be working. However, from 1919 the world community systematically began to address the issue of child labor through the International Labor Organization (ILO) and legally binding standards and international conventions were adopted to eliminate it. Specifically, in 1973, ILO took the first instance by setting the minimum age for work and also enacted the ILO Worst Forms of child labour in 1999. As a result, child labour was almost completely reduced from the developed world but continues to rise in developing countries. Perhaps, at the instance of the SDG Target 8.7 to end child labour in all forms by 2025, it is believed that there will be progress that will bring about the achievement of this goal though at present, it is evident that there is a steady decline that indicates a progress that is too slow.

CONCEPTUALIZATION

Concept of Child Labour

Different attempts have been made to define child labour. To have a clear definition of it necessitates having an understanding of the meaning of a child and this can best be done by taking the age criteria and the children rights into consideration. Before the year 2003, various enactments in Nigeria provided different age limits for the term 'child'. For instance, The Children and Young Persons Act defined a child as a person under the age of 14. But the Labour Acts, the Criminal and Penal Codes Act imply that a child is a person under the age of 12. However, the Convention on the Rights of the Child (CRC) contains the universally accepted definition of a child (UNICEF 1997). Article 1 of the Convention defines a child as "Every human being below the age of 18 years unless under the law applicable maturity is attained earlier." The consensus as it appears is that anyone that is yet to attain the age of 18 is universally considered to be a child.

Following the CRC's definition of a child, the National Policy on Child Labour in Nigeria defines child labour as the engagement of children below 18 years of age in any work that is essentially exploitative and injurious to the physical, social, cognitive and moral development of the child. The International Labour Organization (2012) also has defined child labour as work that deprives children of their childhood, their potential and dignity, and which is harmful to physical and mental development. ILO (2012), supported by the World Bank, UNICEF, UNESCO, UNDP and other world bodies opine that not all work engaged by children can be classified as child labour. Children's participation in work that do not affect their health and personal development or interfere with their schooling such as, running errands for their parents, assisting in family business cannot be regarded as child labour. Reasons being that some activities contribute to children's development, the welfare of their families and provide them with skills and experiences which will prepare them to be productive members of society during their adult life. Hence children's engagements in those activities are said to be beneficial to the holistic development of the child by way of socialization because there are skills and capabilities that a child must possess to function effectively in both the micro and macro society (ILO, 2012). So attempts have been made to distinguish between child work and child labour. To Nwokoro (2011), child work is used when describing the activities that children undertake, that characterize their upbringing process while child labour he describes as the engagement of children in work for the purpose of sustaining self and or supporting the sustenance of the family at the detriment of their proper growth, development and education.

CONCEPT OF THE SUSTAINABLE DEVELOPMENT GOALS (SDGs)

The Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) officially known as "Transforming our Worlds" is a set of seventeen aspirational "Global Goals with 169 targets and agenda, adopted to build on and complete the unfinished business of the Millennium Development Goals. Also known as Agenda 2030, it includes a specific target to end all forms of violence against children (16.2). Across several other targets of the

SDGs is mainstreamed neglect, abuse and exploitation of children. The Target 8.7 of the SDGs specifically commits the international community to: “Take immediate and effective measures to eradicate forced labour and modern slavery and human trafficking and secure the prohibition and elimination of the worst forms of child labour, including recruitment and use of child soldiers, and by 2025 end child labour in all forms” By this target, the world community has for the very first time, according to ILO (2017), acknowledged on the international development agenda, the right of all children to live free from fear and violence.

FORMS OF CHILD LABOUR

The phenomenon of child Labor plays itself out in various forms. They include but not limited to the following in Rivers State:

Street hawking and trading

Hawking or street trading evidently seems to be the most popular form of child labor in Nigeria and other Sub-Saharan countries. Ekpenyong and Sibiri (2011) estimated that 20 per cent of children between the ages of 5 and 18 are involved in street trading in Nigeria and this is certainly the case in Rivers State and Port Harcourt the State capital in particular. They observe that more often, kids are seen jumping like acrobats in the middle of traffic to sell wares, jewelries, newspapers, wears and a wide range of cheap articles and edibles such as sachet water, plantain chips, popcorn, peanuts, cashew nuts, gala, bread, biscuits, fruits, vegetables. Others are found in the streets and along the roads especially at damaged portions of the roads or at police check points where motorists and other road-users are constrained to slow down. Most of the hawkers do so from morning till evening and sometimes accidents are inevitable. Moreover, most vulnerable of these hawkers are young girls who sometimes are lured to the houses of men on the pretext of patronizing their goods, This act in most cases lead to sexual assault and consequently unwanted pregnancy and sexually transmitted diseases capable of ruining the child’s future.

Child begging

Begging is a nuisance as well as a worrisome subject of concern as it has become one of the numerous forms of child labour with its negative psychological, social and health consequences. Child beggars are categorized under those who lead blind parents or relatives; those who beg entirely on their own and those who act as fronts for their parents, especially mothers who are usually hidden from public view but supervise them from a close distance. Apart from facing the risk of accidents, child beggars also suffer the severe psycho-social consequences of being exposed to constant abuse and aggression from the general public.

The Child Rights Act prohibits the use of children for begging (IPEC/ITCILO, 2010). But in Nigeria, it is common to see school aged children roam the streets, motor parks, filling stations, traffic jams, and market stalls begging for alms. In the past, begging was only common in the north where it was practiced for the obvious reason that giving of alms is widely regarded as a religious obligation. But these days, it is a common practice in all parts of Nigeria where it’s been reported of women who use their children to beg in order to attract sympathy. Some others have been reported of hiring other women’s children to beg for alms (Webbink, Smits, and Eelke, 2010). Punch (2019) also report that over 150 parents who used their children for begging and 50 child beggars were arrested in Anambra State by the police. Some of the beggars who faked to be “blind, dumb, deaf and lame, were seen with their eyes wide open, they were also seen talking and even running when they sighted the police coming to arrest them.

Domestic house helps or servants

Child Labour exists also in the form of house-helps or domestic servants. In most cases, wealthy or well to do families from the cities easily convince poor rural parents to hand in their children to them with various promises of better life and education for their children. However, these children are sooner than later turned into slaves who attend to all sorts of household chores. The domestic servant is usually the first to get up very early in the morning and the last to sleep at night Okafor (2010) observes.

In other instances, some of the children are taken to business centers or workshops to serve for a number of years (usually between 5-7 years), with the promise to assist them establish their own personal business outfits at the end of their service period. But often, the children are exploited as they are merely used and

dumped on the basis of one accusation or the other. This has led to the frustration of many youths who lack the adequate machinery to seek any form of redress or social safety nets to fall back on.

Child prostitution

Child prostitution refers to the engagement of children, male or female under the age of 18 years in sex and sex related activities for monetary compensation or any other consideration. The demand for cheap commercial sex workers makes the sex industry a popular destination for many child labourers especially the female ones, eventually giving rise to pornography and child prostitution which constitute worst forms of child labour as categorized by ILO Convention 182 (ILO 2000). The problem of child prostitution is a frightening reality with its result often being tragic as these children more often get infected with sexually transmitted diseases and HIV/AIDS; single parenthood due to untimely pregnancies which eventually leads to dropping out of school; illiteracy and poverty. Child prostitution also is associated with children going into crime and drugs (ILO, 2000).

Impact of SDGs' poverty reduction target on eradication of child labour

The Sustainable Development Goals define total development priorities between 2015 and 2030. (SDG, 2017) and The SDG 1 particularly aims at eliminating extreme poverty. Poverty as The United Nations (2001) defined it, is a human condition characterized by sustained or chronic deprivation of the resources, capabilities, choices, security and power necessary for the enjoyment of an adequate standard of living and other civil, cultural, economic, political and social rights; further characterized as Joseph (2018) opines, by vulnerability and exposure to risks, low life expectancy, low purchasing power, insufficient access to social and economic services such as income, health, nutrition, education and others. He also observed that people suffer from a lot of deprivations which is one of the reasons why children are found engaging in child labour.

In line with the SDGs 1, Francis (2016) suggests that private sectors can help to achieve this target by driving inclusive economic growth, creating decent jobs, increasing access to essential services and developing innovative products that meet social needs of the young children. Francis (2016) adds that United Nations Guiding Principles on Business and Human Rights provide a blueprint for how to identify, prevent, mitigate and account for impacts on human and child rights across business operations for the sole purpose of putting an end to child labour.

Edmonds and Pavnick (2019) reveals that the sustainable development goal on poverty eradication initiated the government interest into increasing household income and raising living standards that will bring about significant decline in child labor trends while sustainable development goals in general encourage sustained economic growth by achieving higher levels of productivity through technological innovation. He also adds that sustainable development goals initiate policies that encourage entrepreneurship and job creation as effective measures to eradicate forced labour, slavery and human trafficking. Further, the sustainable development goals provide access to affordable vocational training, and eliminate gender and wealth disparities with the aim of achieving innovative ideas for self-reliance.

Joseph (2018) suggests that to achieve the poverty reduction target of sustainable development goals, government should provide jobs to parents or bear the expense of a child till certain age.

Impact of SDGs educational promotion on eradication of child labour

Another goal of the SDG entails the achievement of education for all young children for the purpose of eliminating child labour. Kruger (2007) opined that child labour deprives children of their rights to go to school, exposes them to violence and health challenges as well as reinforces intergenerational cycles of poverty. The reason is simple. He explains that practically poor people face inadequate basic needs such as food, clothing, health facilities and shelter and as a result of lack of education as in most cases, they earn little and as such are not able to take care of all the educational needs of their children and so push them to work to increase household income. Indeed several studies and international organizations such as ILO, UNICEF, UNESCO and World Bank, have affirmed to this and also insist that education is one of the main alternatives to reduce and abolish child labour (Abramsky & Watts, 2011). Francis (2018) also

attests that studies have shown that providing free and good quality education to all children around the world helps to reduce child labour.

To this end, Joseph (2018) observes that there is a significant increase in the rate of children enrolling into schools to acquire basic education across countries as a result of the target 4 of the SDG and World Bank (2018) puts the number of enrolment rate in developing countries at 91% in 2015, while the world number of out of school children has also dropped by almost half. Nigeria no doubt has also experienced significant progress in expanding access to schools. As part of this progress, the governor Wike administration in 2017 implemented free primary and secondary schooling for the Rivers State children. The target is to ensure that boys and girls complete free compulsory education. Additionally, Francis (2016) asserts that the SDGs also provide equal access to free vocational training, eliminate gender and wealth disparities among citizenry, while Selwa (2018), explains that child empowerment program on free meals and uniforms for every school child is another scheme that is born out of SDGs target to ensure that every child leaves the street for school in order to reduce the rate of poor parents using their children to make ends meet. Ellsberg, Arango and Gennari (2015) opine that it is abundantly evident that access to free, quality public education is also a relevant factor for economic growth as it helps meet the market's demand for skilled workers, which in turn influences the quality of employment for elimination of child labour.

METHODOLOGY

The study adopted a descriptive survey research design to enable the researcher effectively evaluate the impact of sustainable development goals on eradication of child labour in Rivers State. The target population was all child labourers in Rivers State. A random sampling technique was adopted to select thirty two (32) child labourers each from Elele, Port Harcourt and Ahoada respectively, while twelve (12) policy makers were all sampled from Port Harcourt City. Therefore the sample size for this study was 120 respondents (12 policy makers and 108 child labourers) from Rivers State. The instrument for data collection was a self-structured questionnaire designed in a 4-point rating of agreement. Interview was scheduled for those children who could not respond to the questionnaire item properly. The reliability of instrument was tested using the Cronbach alpha and yielded a reliability coefficient (r) of 0.82. Data was analyzed using mean and standard deviation with a criterion mean of 2.50 and above which was the value limit for agreement, while any item with a mean score below 2.50 was disagreed. Z-test was used to test the null hypotheses at significance level of 0.05.

FINDINGS AND DISCUSSION

Research Question 1: *What is the impact of SDGs' poverty reduction target on eradication of child labour in Rivers State?*

Table 1: Mean response of policy makers and child labourers on impact of SDGs' poverty reduction target on eradication of child labour

S/N	Statement	Policy makers (12)			Child labourers (108)		
		X	SD	Remark	X	SD	Remark
1.	Creates decent jobs for parents	3.10	0.63	Agreed	3.11	0.95	Agreed
2.	Increases access to essential services	3.00	0.62	Agreed	3.34	0.56	Agreed
3.	Initiates support for inclusive and sustainable business practices	3.09	0.87	Agreed	3.23	0.54	Agreed
4.	Enhance increase in household income	3.10	0.64	Agreed	3.21	1.11	Agreed
5.	Improves children's entrepreneurship skills	3.12	0.54	Agreed	3.11	0.78	Agreed
6.	Develops innovative products to meet social needs of the child	3.14	0.65	Agreed	3.19	0.86	Agreed
7.	Enables government to raise the standard of living	3.22	0.76	Agreed	3.12	1.02	Agreed
8.	Establishes vocational training for children on agricultural products	3.21	0.51	Agreed	3.18	0.83	Agreed
9.	Initiates child empowerment program	2.94	1.06	Agreed	3.23	0.54	Agreed
	Grand Mean	3.10	0.69	Agreed	3.19	0.80	Agreed

Source: Field Work, 2019

Result in Table 1 shows the mean response of policy makers and child labourers on impact of SDGs' poverty reduction target on eradication of child labour in Rivers State. The study revealed that SDGs' poverty reduction target creates decent jobs for parents (3.10 & 3.11), increases access to essential services (3.00 & 3.34), initiates support for inclusive and sustainable business practices (3.09 & 3.23), enhance increase in household income (3.10 & 3.21), improves children's entrepreneurship skills (3.12 & 3.11) and develops innovative products to meet social needs of the child (3.14 & 3.19). These findings are in corroboration with Francis (2016) who asserts that private sectors helps achieve the SDGs1 target by driving inclusive economic growth, creating decent jobs, increasing access to essential services and developing innovative programs to meet social needs of the young children. Also the result revealed that SDGs' poverty reduction target enables government to raise the standard of living (3.22 & 3.12), establishes vocational training for children on agricultural products (3.21 & 3.18) and initiates child empowerment program (3.23 & 2.94). The finding is in agreement with Edmonds et al. (2014) who opined that the sustainable development goal on poverty eradication initiated the government interest into increasing household income and rising living standard that will bring about significant decline in child labor trends.

Research Question 2 *What is the impact of SDGs' educational promotion on eradication of child labour in Rivers State?*

Table 2: Mean response of policy makers and child labourers on impact of SDGs' educational promotion on eradication of child labour

S/N	Statement	Policy makers (12)			Child labourers (108)		
		X	SD	Remark	X	SD	Remark
1.	Enhances free education for all young children	3.11	0.95	Agreed	3.01	0.75	Agreed
2.	Provides child empowerment program	3.34	0.56	Agreed	3.14	0.66	Agreed
3.	Promotes of scholarship schemes for out of school children	3.23	0.54	Agreed	3.21	0.57	Agreed
4.	Creates awareness on educational right of the child	3.21	1.11	Agreed	3.11	1.00	Agreed
5.	Provides free meals and uniforms for every child	3.11	0.78	Agreed	3.09	0.84	Agreed
6.	Provides free vocational training	3.19	0.86	Agreed	3.05	0.96	Agreed
7.	Eliminates gender inequality	3.15	0.72	Agreed	3.03	1.01	Agreed
	Grand Mean	3.19	0.78	Agreed	3.09	0.82	Agreed

Source: Field Work, 2019

Result in Table 2 shows the mean response of policy makers and child labourers on impact of SDGs' educational promotion on eradication of child labour in Rivers State. The study revealed that SDGs' educational promotion enhances free education for all young children (3.11 & 3.01), provides child empowerment program (3.34 & 3.14), promotes of scholarship schemes for out of school children (3.23 & 3.21), creates awareness on educational right of the child (3.21 & 3.11) and provides free meals and uniforms for every child (3.11 & 3.09). These findings agree with Murat (2017) who stated that providing digital education technologies for the child improves fundamental skills such for problem solving and global awareness. The finding also agrees with Francis (2016) who mentioned that providing free and good quality education to all children around the world helps to reduce child labour. Also, the finding is in line with Selwa (2018) who opined that child empowerment scheme of the SDGs ensures every child leaves the street for the school. The result also revealed that SDGs' educational promotion provides free vocational training (3.19 & 3.05) and Eliminates gender inequality (3.15 & 3.03). These findings are in line with Selwa (2018) who posited that SDGs provide equal access to free vocational training, and eliminating gender and wealth disparities among citizenry.

Hypotheses testing

Hypothesis 1: There is no significant difference in the mean score of child labourers and policy makers on impact of SDGs’ poverty reduction target on eradication of child labour in Rivers State.

Table 3: Z-test Analysis of child labourers and policy makers on impact of SDGs’ poverty reduction target on eradication of child labour in Rivers State

Respondents	N	\bar{X}	SD	Df	Z-cal	Z-crit	A	Decision
Child Labourers	140	3.19	0.51	118	0.82	1.96	0.05	Null hypothesis Accepted
Policy makers	80	3.10	0.50					

Data on table 3 summarizes the mean and standard deviation scores of child labourers and policy makers on extent impact of SDGs’ poverty reduction target on eradication of child labour in Rivers State. The calculated Z-value stood at 0.82 while the Z-critical value was 1.96 at a degree of freedom of 118 at 0.05 level of significance. The calculated Z-value of 0.82 was less than the Z-critical value of 1.96. Hence, the null hypothesis which stated that there is no significant difference in the mean score of child labourers and policy makers on impact of SDGs’ poverty reduction target on eradication of child labour in Rivers State was upheld.

Hypothesis 2: There is no significant difference in the mean score of child labourers and policy makers on impact of SDGs’ educational promotion on eradication of child labour in Rivers State.

Table 4: Z-test Analysis of child labourers and policy makers on impact of SDGs’ educational promotion on eradication of child labour in Rivers State

Respondents	N	\bar{X}	SD	Df	Z-cal	Z-crit	A	Decision
Child Labourers	140	3.09	0.82	118	0.79	1.96	0.05	Null hypothesis Accepted
Policy makers	80	3.19	0.78					

Data on table 4 summarizes mean and standard deviation scores of child labourers and SDGs staff on impact of SDGs’ educational promotion on eradication of child labour in Rivers State. The calculated Z-value stood at 0.79 while the Z-critical value was 1.96 at 118 degree of freedom. The calculated Z-value of 0.79 was less than the Z-critical value of 1.96. Therefore, the null hypothesis which stated that there is no significant difference in the mean score of child labourers and policy makers on impact of SDGs’ educational promotion on eradication of child labour in Rivers State was upheld.

Based on the findings, the study deduced that child labour is an important global issue that is associated with poverty, poor educational opportunity and violence risks. These factors also raise the risks of being trapped in child labour. Despite the reason why children work, child labour is an anomaly which should be eliminated if children are to be groomed socially, physically, morally, and intellectually. SDGs’ target on poverty reduction has an immense contribution in creating decent jobs for parents, initiating support for inclusive and sustainable business practices, enhancing household income and improving children’s entrepreneurship skills. SDGs’ educational promotion provides free vocational training, promotes scholarship schemes for out of school children and creates awareness on educational right of the child

RECOMMENDATIONS

The findings and conclusions drawn from this study, guides us to make the following recommendations in order to reduce child labour in Rivers State.

1. To achieve the SDGs Target on eradication of child labour, there is the urgent need for state policies targeted at deterring parents/guardians from putting their children into child labour.

2. Child rights agencies should increase public awareness programs to areas where street hawking and other forms of child labour are rapid.
3. Since findings revealed how children's education is affected, invariably perpetrating generational poverty, the education of every child should be seriously secured. For no reason should any child in Rivers State be deprived of full-time school attendance for work, whether in the family or outside the home.
4. Government should ensure adequate provision of good employment opportunity to boost parents' income. This will help reduce poverty hence, put child labour at its minimal level.

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