

Child Labour in the Context of Globalisation in Nigeria

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ABSTRACT

The paper argues that the incidence of child labour in Nigeria has been heightened by globalisation, particularly the economic rationalism underlying it. Child labour is now a feature of urban dwelling in Nigeria where the sight of youngsters and children engaged in various forms of labour is quite common. Globalisation in this context is seen as that process of intense and in-depth international interaction, especially in economic matters, among nations of the world, including Nigeria. Thus, globalisation, manifested initially in the guise of the adjustment programme in Nigeria in the mid 1980s has since then grown to include the so-called post adjustment policies of privatization, deregulation, minimal state role or liberalization. The paper argues that child labour during globalisation in Nigeria has taken a new dimension in that the children engaged now are in it to augment the family income, and their population is quite enormous. Therefore, child labour is seen in the paper as the product of the coincidence between economic hardship or poverty and the survival of the family. To this end, policies aimed at eradicating or reducing child labour must also aim at improving the economic status of urban households. Therefore, the pursuit of an extreme economical and rational globalisation can hinder efforts at curbing child labour. The panacea may be for government to adopt a globalisation regime that allows big roles for the state in social provisioning.

1. Introduction

Cursory observation would reveal that child labour has increased in Nigeria since the late 1980s. To this end, the increase may be related to the changing socio-economic structure of the country. It is in this light that this paper seeks to relate the massive increase in the incidence of child labour in Nigeria to the submergence of the country in the globalisation process since the mid 1980s. Globalisation should be seen as an encompassing process with implications for different sections of social life (see Anugwom, 2001). Therefore, globalisation may have significantly affected the child labour scenario in Nigeria.

Nigeria is reported as having about 12 million child workers, which is one of the highest in the world (see Siddiqi and Patrinos, 2001). Moreover, the ILO (1996) estimates that 250 million children are involved in child labour. This figure shows a problem of major proportion and which is concentrated principally in the developing nations of the world. A concern with child labour stems largely out of the stark realisation that in spite of the numerous national attention given to the issue, it seems to elude a meaningful solution. In fact, rather than abate, child labour has persisted. Child labour has also attracted international attention and concern. Hence, there have been many declarations on the global arena on how to stem the rising tide of child labour. Among these declarations and conventions are the ILO conventions on the Elimination of Child Labour, the ILO Declaration on Fundamental Principles and Rights at Work, the UNICEF Declaration on the Rights of Children and of course the current ILO International Programme for the Elimination of Child Labour (a joint initiative between the ILO and individual countries). In spite of these concerns, child labour has continued almost unabated, showing that a more reliable approach may be identifying the roots of the problem in the socio-economic structure of the society concerned and tackling it from there. It is in this sense that I exploit the link between child labour and economic globalisation in Nigeria.

2. Conceptual and Theoretical Issues

a. Globalisation

Globalisation is undoubtedly a recurrent phenomenon in contemporary development discourse. Globalisation has thus come to be characterised as the development force of the new era. Globalisation, in spite of the contentious nature of the concept, implies socio-political and economic processes of change and interaction among various nations in the world (see Mittleman, 1995; Griffin and Khan, 1992). However, the nature of globalisation has invariably meant the almost unidirectional flow of influences from the developed to the developing regions of the world. This has often been captured in the notion of "unequal globalisation". Be that as it may, globalisation denotes the fact that the various nations of the world are coming together in a way that makes little of physical boundaries or barriers. In this sense, globalisation is hinged on a deconstruction of spatial reality, which has been made possible by the tremendous array of new technologies.

Globalisation, therefore, implies the increasing scope of interactions and the intensity of these interactions between diverse nations of the world. Adopting the framework of Held (1990), globalisation connotes extensiveness of networks of relations and connections as well as the increasing intensity of flows and levels of enmeshment within the networks between nations. Globalisation in this light is an encompassing phenomenon with impacts ranging from the socio-political to the economic. It generates a particular development orthodoxy that seeks to enthrone some form of uniformity among nations of the world. However, as has been rightly posited, the economic impact of the process has been more profound in the developing world (see Hirst and Thompson, 1996; Comaroff and Comaroff, 2000). This idea is often captured in the view of globalisation representing the second coming of capitalism or the internationalization of global capitalism. It is this economic manifestation of globalisation that is my concern in this paper.

b. The Child Labour Syndrome

The distinction between work or child work and child labour is often very crucial in understanding the phenomenon of child labour. Along this line of thought, child work is considered either neutral or good for children while child labour is bad (see, Boyden, *et al.*, 1998; Anker, 1995; Myers, 1999 etc.). The difference between these two categories is especially important in African countries where some form of work orientation for children within the ambit of the family is considered an important part of the process of socialization. Therefore, beyond the idea of one form of child labour being worse than another, this manner of thinking situates child labour within the socio-cultural context of the society concerned, and avoids the temptation of even classifying the use of children in household chores as child labour even when the children merely help out their parents.

All the same, it is important to realise equally that as the ILO has demonstrated, some forms of child labour are worse than others. In this case, ILO Convention 182 (ILO, 1999a; 1999b) on worst forms of child labour identifies child slavery, debt bondage, forced labour trafficking, child prostitution, pornography and hazardous work as the worst forms of child labour, demanding urgent efforts to eliminate them.

All the same, the definition of child labour should be seen as mired in some cultural questions. This is especially the situation in the African context where the utilization of the child in family farms and domestic chores are accepted as part and parcel of the socialization process. However, the context of labour should be very fundamental in denoting it as child labour. In the same token, the economic rationale behind the activity should be seen as important. Therefore in purely cultural or traditional settings, children were exposed to labour that was not injurious to their psycho-mental health and social development under the auspices of the family. This sort of labour involvement was not readily tied to any significant economic considerations, rather the family saw it as a process of exposing the child gradually to the demands of work and instilling the dignity of labour in him. Thus, as

Collins (1983) posits, work can help a child in terms of socialization, in building self-esteem and for training.

These considerations have been eroded by both the contemporary urban environment and the economic rationale behind the current involvement of children in labour. Equally significant is the fact that a lot of children involved in labour nowadays are those under the care of guardians or foster parents in urban areas. This introduces the element of economic exploitation of children. Actually, it has been shown that the pressure of guardians is a big factor in the involvement of children in labour (see Chuta, 1998).

All the above points indicate that child labour, even though apparent, is a bit problematic to define. This is in line with Amin's (1994) contention that child labour is a complicated term to be generally defined. In spite of the cultural context and the complex nature of the phenomenon, it is largely defined from a legal point of view. In this case, the law of society sets a limit to the age of those to be involved in work or paid labour. In the case of Nigeria, the minimum age for involvement in labour is 12, while 18 is the minimum age for involvement in dangerous or risky work (see Siddiqi and Patrinos, 2001).

Amin (1994) has drawn a broad distinction between two forms of child labour. These, according to him, are rural child labour and urban child labour. In the rural areas, child labour takes the form of involvement in agricultural activities and such other activities as house cleaning, cooking, child minding, fetching water and fire wood, etc., while in urban environment, domestic chores, street labour and apprenticeship are the dominant forms of involvement. However, my concern in this paper is with urban child labour. Undoubtedly, the urban environment provides the conditions for the generation of child labour. Moreover, the exploitation of children in the labour sector is more of a condition of the urban environment than the rural environment. Hence, child labour is predominantly an urban phenomenon.

Child labour should be conceived as the economic exploitation of children below the legally prescribed age in the labour sector for the

benefit of a significant other. In this sense, child labour is the involvement of children in paid labour (including income generating activities and apprenticeship) or other activities that creates economic benefit especially for others beside the children so engaged. However, what constitutes child labour is mediated by the cultural reality of the society concerned. But far from being a cultural reality or accepted way of life in African societies, child labour, as currently obtains, contradicts the intrinsic value Africans place on children. Thus, child labour, like other forms of child abuse, is purely an aberration of the way of life of Africans. This fact has been captured by Ike and Twumasi - Ankrah (1999:110) thus:

the same child whose arrival is often celebrated with passion eventually becomes an object of abuse and neglect, exploitation, war and poverty, in the very hands of the same culture that gave birth to it.

This calls attention to the fact that child labour represents an abnormality that demands social action. Child labour appears to be related to change in the socio-economic structure of society. Hence, societies with fragile socio-economic base and in the process of development transition generally experience more incidence of child labour than the developed regions of the world.

c. Towards a Theoretical Explanation of Child Labour

Various attempts have been made by scholars to proffer explanations for the occurrence of child labour. While some of these explanations are couched in terms of theories, a majority of these are simply viewpoints seeking to offer reliable explanations of the phenomenon. Among these viewpoints are the functionalist approach, the neo-classical economic model, the political economy perspective, the psychological model, the socio-psychological theory, the socio-cultural perspective etc.

From my point of view, the combination of the political economy and socio-cultural perspectives offer the most logical explanation of the incidence of child labour in Nigeria. The political economy viewpoint can be gleaned in the seminal works of Karl Marx and Braverman. In the basic political economy frame of reference, child labour can be meaningfully explained principally in terms of the relationship between ownership and control of capital as well as the powers and perks of power that emanate from them. Therefore, child labour shows the cruelty or meanness of capitalism and its self-contradiction since the *laissez-faire* and free entry principles that are ideally sign posts of capitalism are nullified in the case of child labour. No wonder Braverman argues that child labour aids capitalist accumulation in situations of low technology and helps augment incomes of the poor, even though marginally, thereby stultifying or dulling their willingness to resist exploitation.

Similar to the political economy approach, the socio-cultural orientation emphasizes social structures, norms, values, culture and institutional patterns and interactions in the explanation of child abuse and child labour (see Gil, 1975; Gelles, 1973). It sees child labour as the product of the social system. This viewpoint focuses on the socio-cultural property of the state or characteristics of the socio-cultural patterns and their effects on the adequate socio-psychological development of the child. Essentially, it sees child labour as the outcome of the failure of the society to provide for or cater for its marginal members.

3. The Socio-Economic Context of Child Labour in Nigeria

As I mentioned in the preceding section, crucial in considering the socio-economic force behind child labour is a distinction between work and labour. In this regard, there is a difference between the socially accepted gradual exposure of a child to work and the exploitation or gross undermining of the development prospects of the child in the labour process. In other words, work can be a form of learning and self-expression as well as impetus for growth, but becomes dangerous when it turns into labour or becomes a demanding drudgery

characterized by repetition, physical exertion, and with adverse impacts on the physical and mental welfare of the child. This is in line with the view of the ILO (1988) that child labour is that which interferes with the education of the child and adversely affects the health of the child concerned.

One factor that has perpetuated child labour is low economic cost. Thus, children can be hired at little or no cost at all. Moreover, the children work without contracts or any form of security and most times must ensure what is considered appropriate returns to guardians or employers. All things considered, child labour is cheap and readily available. Again, the inability of some parents to guarantee some reasonable future for their children makes them willing to let such children get involved in labour.

Be that as it may, children in purely traditional Nigerian societies were exposed to work within the confines of the family and in the process, of the child internalising the norms and values of his social group. Work in this situation was devoid of harmful affects and exploitation. It was part of the process of learning through imitation. As Okpara (1986) posits, children in the sub-culture of the Igbo of South-Eastern Nigeria are trained early to rehearse adult roles through involvement in their parents' social and economic activities which provides them opportunities to act out behaviour required in mature statuses - mainly adult statuses. He goes further to argue that the idea of an obnoxious child labour is a product of contemporary times and is related to the utilization of children in paid labour. Apparently, the point remains that child labour seen, in terms of contemporary reality, is the exploitation of the child for the economic benefits of others.

The greatest number of working children is to be found in the hawking and goods peddling businesses in the major townships in Nigeria. These child hawkers move from house to house and street to street, touting their wares or they are engaged in what might be called road traffic hawking. In such big towns as Lagos, Ibadan, Benin, Kano, Kaduna, Port-Harcourt, Onitsha, etc., these children take daily risks selling various wares to occupants of moving vehicles. These children

whether sent to the trade by their parents or guardians/employers are gradually cut off from the social ties of family life. This is because they spend abnormally long hours on the roads or streets. Most of them get home very tired and late in the night. In some cases, some of them stay up all through the night hawking. In fact, a night journey by bus through such popular routes as Lagos to Onitsha or Lagos to Kano will reveal that a lot of these children stay awake all day and night hawking their wares and mostly in very unhealthy social and physical environments.

Also child labour in Nigeria is visibly high in labour activities with a small economic return and in those activities that require considerable degree of itinerancy. Therefore, child labour is usually a phenomenon in the informal sector in Nigeria where children are used to cut costs and improve the profit margin of the average entrepreneur. In addition, child labour is widespread in the hawking business. As a matter of fact, hawking by children remains one of the surest indicators of the level of child labour in any African society. In the case of Nigeria, child-hawkers are highly visible. Basically, the economic consideration behind the use of children in labour is underlined by the fact that child labour invariably lowers cost on personnel. In a way also, it contributes to unemployment and lower wages for the adult working population of a society (see ILO, 1988; Goode, 1992).

4. Globalisation, Development and Child Labour

The impact of globalisation on child labour has been through the impact it has had on the economic status of families. In this sense, economic globalisation has created the objective condition for the proliferation of child labour in Nigeria. Economic globalisation implies the widening and intensification of international linkages and interactions in the areas of trade, finance, economic policies and investments across the globe (World Bank, 1996). Thus, economic globalisation, especially in the case of the developing countries, has led to the orthodoxy of particular forms of economic organizations and policies, which are seen as superior to others and having the needed

impetus to engender economic growth. It is important to point out that economic globalisation was given a boost in Africa by the elusiveness of development in many countries in the region. Therefore, economic globalisation manifested in the adjustment programmes of the 1980s and contemporary emphasis on private sector driven economy (privatization) and reduced public sector spending or what is often called the post adjustment economic measures, has been seen as invaluable to economic growth in Africa. The international financial institutions and the very unpopular World Trade Organization have promoted this orthodoxy.

But far from providing a reliable panacea for the ailing African economies, these measures have further worsened the economies and created enormous hardship for the population. Hence, after more than two decades of tinkering with these largely externally driven economic initiatives, Nigeria is still to crawl out of economic doldrums. It is in this regard that some writers have questioned the efficacy of these measures in African economies. In this case, Ghai (1992), Amin (1987), Arighi (1982) etc., have argued, mainly from a radical perspective, that economic globalisation further worsens class and national inequalities as well as mirrors the contradiction between labour and capital. To them, economic globalisation is nothing short of a ploy at widening the hegemonic scope of capitalism. It is on this note that one sees globalisation as having adverse implications for general inequality and poverty in the developing world (see also, Watkins, 1997).

According to Siddiqi and Patrinos (2001), Africa and Asia account for over 90 percent of total child employment in the world. This, unsurprisingly, coincides with the fact that these two regions have the highest number of developing countries and poverty-ridden populations and a poverty that has grown tremendously in the last two decades. As has been observed, child labour is an index of poverty - neediness or general deprivations (see, Okpara, 1986). In this sense, child labour may be expected to increase as the general deprivation of the population expands.

Therefore, the era of globalisation, which has wrought unsavoury socio-economic conditions on most families in Nigeria, can be seen as increasing the incidence of child labour. The most dominant form of economic globalisation in Nigeria, the structural Adjustment Programme (SAP) has been felt more by urban households, especially income-earners, than other sections of the population (see Anugwom and Anugwom, 2000). As a matter of fact, the adjustment programme is seen as responsible for introducing urban poverty with a new dimension in Nigeria i.e. urban food poverty (see Adesina, 1994).

The above would serve as useful points in contradicting the tendency of relating child labour to socio-cultural, religious or geographical factors (see, ILO, 1979). The only cogent fact in this regard is that child labour is related to the level of development in a society. In fact, all over the world, the incidence of child labour is linked to the level of development. It is therefore unsurprising that Africa and Asia have the highest incidence of child labour (see, Table 1 below) and are incidentally amongst the poorest and least developed regions in the world today.

Table 1: Distribution of Economically Active Children¹ (Percentage of World Total)

Region	1980	1985	1990
Africa	17.0	18.0	21.3
Americas	4.7	5.6	n.a
Asia	77.8	75.9	72.3
Europe	0.3	0.2	0.1
Oceania	0.2	0.2	0.2

Source: ILO, 1993.

Siddiqi and Patrinos (2001) have raised points that affect the efforts to abolish or ameliorate child labour. These include the non-existence of

¹ under 15 years

international agreements defining child labour and the country differences in minimum age work restrictions. However, these observations lose sight of the fact that child labour can be clearly perceived and that the ILO has done quite a lot in enumerating what constitutes child labour as well as what constitutes hazardous and harmful child labour. As I have posited, the core problem remains basically with the economic structure/condition of the society that creates the conditions for child labour. This argument is especially relevant in view of the fact that child labour can be related to poverty and the sharpening of general economic distinctions in so many societies since the last two decades. This period coincides with the advent of globalisation, which can be viewed as creating an economic rationality in government social provisioning postures, thus exposing more families to poverty of a larger dimension.

Child labour impacts on development, particularly as it distorts the labour process. Children work the longest hours and are the worst paid of all labourers (see, Bequelle and Boyden, 1988). Hence, children are used exploitatively in the labour arena and by this process create wealth or profit for those employing or using them. Child labour raises concerns for a number of reasons which range from the conditions of the children involved and the implications of this type of labour on other issues in the economy like adult employment and wage levels and thus general development.

5. Globalisation and Child Labour in Nigeria: Survival is the Name of the Game

So many reasons have been adduced for the involvement of children in paid employment or labour. The most common of these reasons is poverty. In addition, such other factors as the social environment of the family, greed, poor educational achievement, parental socio-economic status (which is related to poverty), etc., are equally mentioned. In spite of this, poverty or lack of money has been pinpointed as the crucial variable in the explanation of child labour in Nigeria (see, Chuta, 1998; Okpara, 1986).

Therefore, the main cause of child labour in Nigeria can be seen as poverty. In this regard, parents generally let their children go, mainly because of one or a combination of two reasons. In the first case, the parents, owing to poverty, may find it difficult to provide for the child. Apart from the provision of food, the parents may lack the financial might to provide education, health care and other basic requirements for the growing child. In fact, a recent study in Nigeria shows that over 70% of children involved in different labour activities in the urban centres are from poor or low class families (see, Chuta, 1998). In this situation, the children often work together with either parent, who also utilise money earned in the maintenance of the family.

However, such children are utilised mainly in street hawking where they peddle such commodities as groundnuts, oranges, vegetables, agricultural products etc. The incidence of this second category of poverty driven child labour has grown tremendously in the last decade in Nigeria. This is precisely as a result of the economic crisis consequent upon economic globalisation, which manifested dominantly in the form of the adjustment programme initiated in mid 1986 as well as current emphasis on economic liberalization and free market.

Moreover, child labour is more prevalent in the informal sector, which in Nigeria, is a highly unmonitored and an all-comers sector. Also, in this sector children are largely visible in buying and selling (hawking), artisan vocations (used largely as apprentices but subjected to hazardous work), transportation (as touts and conductors) and street/market vending. Actually, one can see the prevalence of child labour in these activities that are outside the direct control/monitoring of government and its agencies, as the logical outcome of the failure of legislation in most segments of the private sector.

The heightened economic rationality underlying the globalisation enterprise has undermined the social fabric of the Nigerian society. In this sense, social values and choices are basically dictated by economic factors. As I have argued elsewhere, globalisation has undermined the cherished Nigerian social values and made money the measure of all things (see, Anugwom, 2001b). Economic globalisation has led to a heightened economic sense and the commodification of

almost all spheres of life. Thus, globalisation, in the guise of externally driven macro-economic measures, has further worsened the economic position of Nigerian families. It was exactly this scenario that a former Nigeria labour congress (NLC) President, Paschal Bafyau captured when he argued that the adjustment programme, rather than being a palliative measure, has worsened hardship and poverty has become even more widespread (see Newswatch, 1992). Also, tied in with the SAP and even being implemented currently are the so-called post-adjustment measures such as the privatisation programmes in Nigeria.

Privatization has impacted on the poverty of Nigerian families in principally two ways. In the first place, it has led to massive dismissals or retrenchment in the firms concerned, thus jeopardising the ability of a lot of families to take care of them. Apart from this, the emphasis on privatization has, in the second place, led to a declining involvement of the government in Nigeria in social provisioning. In this sense, social provisioning has been privatised both in the spirit of privatization and in a bid to lessen government's public sector spending. Therefore, the families are confronted with increasing cost of social services or the non-availability of social amenities. This, is in spite of the fact that privatization in Nigeria has raised more questions than it has provided a panacea to the economic malaise plaguing the country (see, Okolie, 2000; Anugwom 2001c).

Be that as it may, privatization has increased the economic burden of families and has, in this sense, negatively impacted on family poverty. Anugwom and Anugwom (2000) have linked the increasing poverty in urban areas in Nigeria to the SAP and its various consequences. The link between family survival or poverty and child labour has been captured succinctly by Anker (2000) who argues that even though child labour is very hard on children, it is necessary for family survival in developing countries. In this sense, the utilization of children in economic activities of diverse nature is a product of reality,

The reality being the inability of the parents in the light of the crushing economic scenario of the globalisation era to make ends meet. In this situation, some children voluntarily opt for paid labour as their contribution to the survival of the family. Such altruism, even in the face

of reality, emanates primarily from the African cultural viewpoint that survival is a group matter. Therefore, the African child has a stake and gets involved in activities towards this survival. The point therefore is that urban child labour, as it were, has grown out of an increasing scope of family poverty arising from the socio-economic fall out of globalisation. Hence, child labour may represent one more coping mechanism by poor urban households in Nigeria.

6. Mortgaging their Future: The Social and Physical Pathology of Child Labour

The argument on the negative effects of child labour simply implies belabouring the point since copious theoretical and practical studies abound to show the disastrous effects of child labour on the children involved (see for instance, Obikeze, 1984; McGee and Wolfe, 1991; Becker, et al., 1995 etc. in this regard). However in assessing the impact of child labour, Ike and Twumasi - Ankrah (1999:113) opine:

the psychological impact of child labour can never be overestimated.... The physical and emotional stress of work, combined with the denial of opportunities to play or interact fully socially with peers and to explore the world could doom a child to personality and behavioural maladjustment. ... emotional abuse and neglect, separation from family, monotony, and the burdens of premature responsibility, will most likely have some permanent adverse impact on the working child.

Empirically, it has been discovered that factors that tend to increase children's working hours generally tend to decrease their hours of study (Akabayashi and Psacharopoulos, 1999). This then implies some level of trade-off between the two activities. Thus, the working child devotes little time to learning and other meaningful and growth related activities. All said, the adverse consequences or pathology of child labour cannot be over-emphasized. In this sense, increasing incidence of child labour portends grave dangers for the development of any country and more specifically the future of the children. Amin (1994:242) captures this situation thus:

children are put under exploitative situations in the form of low pay, hazardous and dangerous working conditions, excessive long and continuous hours of work, and other types of abusive social and work practices. Under these circumstances, the health, physical, educational and intellectual development of the children as well as their lifetime opportunities may be seriously hampered.

The involvement of children in risky or dangerous work is particularly detrimental to their health. As has been posited by scholars, children are easily tired and fatigued, they easily lose attention and make inaccurate judgements and these make them prone to occupational injuries of different forms, ranging from bruises and cuts to disabilities and even death (see also, Rabin, 1985; Berger, 1984).

It would, however, appear that child labour is not all about negative outcomes. In this sense, some of those involved eventually grow into hard-working and honest citizens. In the views of Amin (1994:242):

some domestic child workers usually learn a trade and some are treated quite well. They are better off than they would have been in the village. Yet some usually become worse off than they started.

Despite the above ambivalence, it is obvious that child labour is potentially injurious to the children involved. As Chuta (1998) discovered, children exposed to child labour are, on the average, less educated than their other mates. Moreover, the chances are that those who becomes something in spite of being exploited as children might have turned out better or greater without involvement in this kind of labour. The probability of turning out better would be affected by the nature and length of exposure to child labour and more significantly the condition or context of the exposure. Thus, those who were involved for a short time or in figuratively clean/decent activities and under the guardian of conscientious people may eventually become better citizens.

CONCLUSION

From the foregoing, one is tempted to agree with the deductions of Amin (1994) and ILO (1986) that child labour can be meaningfully mitigated by enhancing the economic status of adults and in the case of Nigeria, urban households or families deserve particular attention. More so, the withdrawal of government largely from social provisioning all in a bid to generate a private sector driven economy has impacted negatively on the economic status and well being of Nigerian urban families. Therefore, a crucial factor in the campaign against child labour seems to be the role of government in mediating socio-economic hardship confronting urban families.

Economic globalisation, with its emphasis on economic rationality, instrumentality and a commodification of life in general, has increased the incidence of child labour in urban Nigeria. Just like posited by the political economy perspective, globalization hinged on acute economic rationality has created an abundance of child labour for to the advantage of the privileged members of society and capitalists who benefit from lowered production costs and a bigger profit margin. And as this viewpoint posits, child labour now in Nigeria seems like a survival mechanism by the poor who are marginal to the capitalist project of globalisation. Also, the fact remains that child labour is partially a product of the Nigerian social system. The inability of the Nigerian state to provide for the poor and economically fragile or marginal members of society has given impetus to the growth of child labour. So, as the socio-cultural perspective emphasizes, the failure of the institutions of society to provide for or cater for its members creates the objective conditions for the proliferation of child labour. I strongly believe that a globalisation regime that enables government intervention in the area of social provisioning as well as the provision of cushioning measures will go a long way in easing the severe economic hardship on Nigerian families and in this regard curb child labour.

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