



CHILDREN'S INVOLVEMENT IN RURAL MARKET LABOUR ACTIVITIES IN OSUN STATE, NIGERIA: A GENDER PERSPECTIVE

Faborode, H.F.B. and Fadodun, A. R.

Department of Agricultural Extension and Rural Development, Obafemi Awolowo University
Ile-Ife, Osun State, Nigeria

Corresponding author email address: hfbfaborode@yahoo.com

ABSTRACT

This study examined gender differences in children's involvement in rural market labour activities in Osun State, Nigeria, to mitigate the consequences of early socialisation into labour roles without consideration for their future development. A multi-stage sampling procedure was used to select 50 male and 50 female children aged 18 years and below who were involved in rural market labour activities in Ife North and Ife South Local Government Areas (LGAs) in Osun East Senatorial District. Data were analysed using frequency, mean, and standard deviation, and an independent t-test was used to draw inferences. Results include an average age of 11.2 and 12.0 for male and female respondents, respectively; 73.0 percent of respondents were in school; and contribution to family income was the main reason for male (78.0%) and female (74.0%) involvement in activities. More females (60.0%) than males (56.0%) had the highest involvement in more than five labour activities. There was no significant difference ($t = -1.469$, $p > 0.05$) in their level of involvement. It was concluded that although male and female involvement levels were comparable, greater female involvement in the types and number of activities undertaken, and in the mode of engagement, may affect their performance in school and future development in favour of the male gender.

Keywords: Children, development, family socialisation, involvement, labour activities, rural market

INTRODUCTION

Children's involvement in labour activities is a complex global issue, deeply embedded in historical, cultural, and socioeconomic contexts. Its manifestations have shifted over time and across space, from children assisting in subsistence farming in early agrarian societies to performing hazardous work during the Industrial Revolution. This was when children were exploited in mines, factories, and domestic service with serious developmental consequences (Cunningham and Viazzo, 1996; Zsögön, 2021). However, several changes in international labour laws have occurred in favour of children due to the work of local and international pressure groups. This has prompted the establishment of several human rights centred on children's protection.

Despite global progress, the exploitation of children in the labour force persists most intensely in developing countries, particularly in rural and informal economies. Children's work often intersects with poverty, weak institutional enforcement, cultural practices, limited educational opportunities (International Labour Organisation ILO, 2014; Okyere, 2022), and threatens future development.

The involvement of children in the labour force is frequently framed as purely exploitative, but recent studies emphasise the need to examine how children's involvement in labour activities is being shaped by multidimensional factors such as socialisation processes, cultural norms, family labour obligations and socio-cultural considerations. Zamfir (2019) defined child labour, child work, and hazardous child labour. He defined child labour as any form of work that is harmful to children, and emphasized that productive activities adapted to children's age and skills, and that do not interfere with their education and wellbeing, constitute child work. The author, however, defined **hazardous child labour** as a severe or dangerous physical activity that threatens a child's life, morals and safety. In many rural African contexts, children are socialised early into roles that prepare them for adult responsibilities through participation in household and market-based activities (Razavi, 2011). These practices reflect the cultural institutionalisation of child participation in family labour, where work is not only an economic necessity but also a socially sanctioned expectation within family survival strategies. However, when such work interferes with schooling, exposes children to harm, or entrenches cycles of poverty, it becomes detrimental and falls under the international definitions of child labour (ILO, 2014; Okyere, 2022).

The gendered dimensions of children's involvement in the labour force in sub-Saharan Africa further complicate this debate. Boys and girls are differently socialised and institutionally directed into labour roles. While girls are often tied to domestic activities, petty trading, and service-oriented work, boys engage in heavier tasks such as head portering, loading and unloading in markets, or artisanal work (United Nations Children's Fund UNICEF, 2017). This differentiation reflects broader cultural constructions of masculinity and femininity, institutionalised within both the family and community. Thus, children's engagement in labour activities is an integral part of daily market activities. This simultaneously exposes them to physical strain, economic exploitation and, in the case of girls, risks of physical, emotional and sexual abuse.

Some often drop out of school, either temporarily or permanently, thereby contributing to the large proportion of child workers in rural markets. Their absence from school reflects both household poverty and institutional failures in ensuring universal access to formal education, and this may jeopardise their future development. In Nigeria, as in many other African countries, economic crises, declining school quality, and cultural attitudes towards child work have fuelled rising child labour in rural markets (UNICEF and ILO, 2021; Chipenda and Cochrane, 2024). This trend suggests the institutionalisation of children's work within family economies, where education is de-prioritised in favour of short-term household survival, with little or no consideration for children's future development.

The high volume of transactions in rural markets, coupled with adult labour migration to urban centres, has fueled demand for child labour. Rural children often engage in tasks such as head portering, sales assistance, packaging, and transportation of goods. While these engagements are culturally acceptable and viewed as "helping the family" or "learning responsibility," they constitute child labour that undermines children's rights to education, safety, and leisure (Chipenda and Cochrane, 2024). Moreover, the early socialisation of children into rural market labour is being institutionalised as a normalised practice, with long-term implications for human development and intergenerational poverty if necessary action is not taken.

Although previous studies have established poverty as a major driver of child labour in developing countries, limited empirical evidence exists on how gendered cultural norms shape children's labour involvement within rural market systems in Osun State, Nigeria. Existing

studies also rarely examine differences in labour intensity and task allocation between boys and girls. This study addresses these gaps by providing a gender-disaggregated analysis of children's labour activities and level of involvement in rural markets of Osun State. Thus, the study focused on gender differences in children's involvement in rural market labour activities to contribute to the growing body of literature on gender and early socialisation of children into the labour force. The specific objectives were to describe the personal and socioeconomic characteristics of male and female children involved in labour activities; identify and examine the labour activities performed; and analyse gender involvement in labour activities.

RESEARCH METHODOLOGY

The study was carried out in Osun State, Nigeria. Osun State is located in Southwestern Nigeria. Farming and informal trading are the main livelihood options for many rural households in the State. Rural periodic markets play a central role in the marketing of agricultural produce and provide employment opportunities for household members, including children.

The first stage involved purposively selecting Ife North and Ife South Local Government Areas (LGAs) in Osun East Senatorial District because they have numerous rural periodic markets with high volumes of agricultural produce that generate substantial demand for labour. At the second stage, three communities with the most frequent periodic markets were purposively selected from each LGA, for a total of six communities. At the third stage, using systematic random sampling, male and female children involved in market labour activities were identified, and every 2nd child was selected after a random starting point, selecting an equal number of male and female from each community, based on availability, to make a total of 100 respondents for the study. Equal representation of male and female participants is necessary to ensure fair representation of both genders, prevent bias, and allow accurate comparison of findings between male and female children's involvement in rural market labour activities.

The indicator, number of hours of involvement per day in fifteen labour activities were measured on an ordinal four category scale: not involved (0), slightly involved (1 – 4 hours), occasionally involved (5 – 8 hours) and fully involved (9 – 12 hours; for those children who work throughout the day in the market) were scored 0, 1, 2 and 3, respectively. The second indicator, the number of market days per week in fifteen labour activities, was measured on a 3-point Likert-type scale:

not involved (0), occasionally involved (1 – 3 days) and fully involved (4 – 6 days) and was scored 0, 1, and 2, respectively. The third one, mode of involvement, was measured on a 3-point Likert-type scale: None, Part-time, and Full-time were scored 0, 1 and 2, respectively. The three indicators were checked for 15 labour activities; hence, the maximum and minimum obtainable involvement scores for the three indicators were 45 and 0, 30 and 0, and 30 and 0, respectively. The composite involvement score is the sum of these 3 indicators: $45+30+30=105$. Overall, the maximum obtainable involvement score was 105, and the minimum was 0. The composite score was divided into three categories using an equal-interval approach: low (< 35), moderate (35-70), and high (> 70) (Faborode and Koledoye, 2014).

An interview schedule was administered to the respondents to obtain quantitative data, while key informant interviews were conducted to obtain qualitative data from a male and a female teacher, a principal, and a market leader in each community, making a total of six male and six female teachers, six community school principals and six market leaders. Experts in Agricultural Extension and Rural Development reviewed the interview schedule and key informant interview guides for content validation to ensure relevance, clarity, and adequate measurement of variables. Their suggestions were used to develop the final version of the instruments before data collection. Reliability was assessed using the test-retest method to check the instrument's consistency. The validated interview schedule guide was administered twice at a two-week interval to 5 male and 5 female children involved in market labour activities in a periodic market at Atakumosa LGA. Using Pearson's Product-Moment Correlation, the scores were correlated, and r was 0.83; hence, the instrument was judged reliable for the study. However, it is limited by a relatively small sample size.

RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

Demographic and socioeconomic Characteristics of Children in Labour Activities

Table 1 shows the demographic and socioeconomic characteristics of male and female children in rural market labour activities. The age distribution shows that most (63%) children engaged in rural market labour were between 11 and 15 years, with an average age of 11 years for males and 12.0 years for females. This suggests that most children involved in rural market work were of school age, yet likely missed classes on market days. Notably, the slightly higher involvement of females at older age differs from some international patterns that typically report higher male involvement at these ages (ILO, 2017). This may reflect localised cultural socialisation processes that draw adolescent females into rural market labour at critical stages of their education.

Religious affiliation was evenly split between Christianity (51%) and Islam (49%), showing that children's involvement in rural market labour occurred across the two prominent religions. This suggests that it is more strongly linked to structural poverty and cultural norms than to faith-based practices. Similarly, the State of origin and ethnic profile of respondents revealed that the vast majority (96%) were of the Yoruba ethnic group, who were indigenes of Osun State (65%), neighbouring Ondo (14%) and Oyo (8%) States. This concentration highlights the cultural embeddedness and normalisation of child work in the Yoruba family labour system, despite the region's reputation for comparatively higher educational attainment nationally (Suleiman, Akinrefon, and Olakiitan, 2024). The predominance of Yoruba respondents further situates rural market labour within a shared socio-cultural framework of family obligations and early socialisation of children into economic roles.

Residency patterns revealed gendered mobility. While most (77.0%) respondents lived within the study area, more male children (32.0%) than female children (14.0%) moved from neighbouring communities to engage in market labour activities. This result reflects cultural restrictions on female mobility and suggests that the males were socialised into more spatially expansive labour practices, while the female involvement was more localised and tied to household-based family labour. Nearly half (48%) of the children came from households with 6–10 members, and another 44% from households with fewer than 6. This is consistent with evidence that poverty and household size increase the likelihood of children contributing economically (Abubakar, 2022; Nyong et al., 2024), and this may adversely affect their human, social, and economic

development. The slightly higher mean household size among females (6.8 ± 2.6) than males (5.8 ± 2.4) may suggest that females in larger households are more likely to be affected than their male counterparts.

The educational profile of respondents showed that most (73.0%) of the children were still enrolled in school but were frequently absent on market days. This finding corroborates Emerson *et al.* (2017), who found that child labour providers often combine schooling with work. Qualitative evidence also indicated that parents and teachers frequently sanctioned children's absence from school, reflecting a normalised acceptance of labour-school trade-offs in rural communities.

The following KII excerpt buttressed the findings above: *"Parents come to school to seek permission for their children to be absent from school a day before the market day and on market days"* (Vice Principal of a rural community school)

Also, many (69.0%) of the children were from monogamous families; an indication that even within nuclear households, economic necessity drives children into the labour force. Results also showed that older siblings, particularly first-, second-, and third-born children, shouldered greater responsibilities for household support. This aligns with the traditional notion of sibling hierarchies in labour allocation and income generation mobilisation activities in the study area.

Findings on group membership showed that an overwhelming majority (97.0%) of respondents did not belong to any formal group or association that could represent the interests of children working in rural markets and were unable to access group membership benefits, including protection from economic exploitation and abuse.

The economic drivers of child labour are evident in the reported reasons for involvement in market labour activities. The vast majority (76.0%) engaged in market work to complement household income, confirming poverty as a central driver of children's involvement in the market labour force. Many (78.0%) males and (74.0%) females attributed their involvement to contributing to family income, while a few (males: 26.0% and females: 32.0%) mentioned the need for personal income, highlighting both structural and agency-related factors. These results are consistent with ILO (2010), which identifies poverty as the root cause of child labour in low-income countries, and they echo the narratives from key informants who described child market engagement as a survival strategy.

” Parents alone cannot provide the family’s needs in the present difficult economic situation, so the children must contribute to the family to survive” (A female rural market leader)

Work duration and experience provide further insight into the dynamics of children’s gendered involvement in the market labour force. Many (42.0%) respondents had worked for more than three years, suggesting a growing trend of children entering the labour force early. Notably, female children reported longer mean work durations (3.7 ± 1.8 years) than their male counterparts (3.2 ± 1.5 years), suggesting greater persistence in market labour engagement, which may be associated with unequal future human and economic development between males and females in favour of males.

Table 1: Demographic and socio-economic characteristics of male and female children involved in rural market labour activities

Variables	Male		Female		Total	
	Freq.	%	Freq.	%	Freq.	%
Age (years)						
≤ 10	19	38.0	15	30.0	34	34.0
11 – 15	30	60.0	33	66.0	63	63.0
> 15	1	2.0	2	4.0	3	3.0
Mean	11.2 ± 2.2		12.0 ± 2.7		11.6 ± 2.5	
Religion						
Christianity	23	46.0	28	56.0	51	51.0
Islam	27	54.0	22	44.0	49	49.0
State of Origin						
Osun	32	64.0	33	66.0	65	65.0
Ondo	6	12.0	8	16.0	14	14.0
Oyo	4	8.0	4	8.0	8	8.0
Ogun	5	10.0	2	4.0	7	7.0
Kano	1	2.0	2	4.0	3	3.0

Ekiti	1	2.0	1	2.0	2	2.0
Anambra	1	2.0	0	0.0	1	1.0
Ethnicity						
Yoruba	48	96.0	48	96.0	96	96.0
Hausa	1	2.0	2	4.0	3	3.0
Igbo	1	2.0	0	0.0	1	1.0
Residency						
Yes	34	68.0	43	86.0	77	77.0
No	16	32.0	7	14.0	23	23.0
Household size						
< 6	28	56.0	16	32.0	44	44.0
6 – 10	19	38.0	29	58.0	48	48.0
> 10	3	6.0	5	10.0	8	8.0
Mean±SD	5.8 ± 2.6		6.8 ± 2.1		6.3 ± 2.4	
Educational profile						
Not in school	11	22.0	16	32.0	27	27.0
Schooling	39	78.0	34	68.0	73	73.0
Family type						
Monogamy	38	76.0	31	62.0	69	69.0
Polygamy	9	18.0	19	38.0	28	28.0
Single parent	3	6.0	0	0.0	3	3.0
Birth order						
First	11	22.0	8	16.0	19	19.0
Second	15	30.0	13	26.0	28	28.0
Third	14	28.0	18	36.0	32	32.0
Fourth	3	6.0	3	6.0	6	6.0
≥fifth	7	14.0	8	16.0	15	15.0

Membership of group/society						
Non-member	49	98.0	48	96.0	97	97.0
Wheelbarrow porters' association	1	2.0	0	0.0	1	1.0
Provision sellers' association	0	0.0	1	2.0	1	1.0
Cloth sellers' association	0	0.0	1	2.0	1	1.0
*Reason for involvement in market activities						
Contribute to family income	39	78.0	37	74.0	76	76.0
Money (school/ apprenticeship)	8	16.0	9	18.0	17	17.0
Fend for self and siblings	5	10.0	7	14.0	12	12.0
Serve master	1	2.0	0	0.0	1	1.0
Years of work experience						
≤3	34	68.0	24	48.0	58	58.0
>3	16	32.0	26	52.0	42	42.0
Mean±SD	3.2 ± 1.5		3.7 ± 1.8		3.4 ± 1.7	

Source: Field survey, 2021 *Multiple responses

SD = Standard Deviation

Involvement of Males and Females in Labour Activities

Results in Table 2 reveal that 85.0 percent of the respondents (76.0% of males and 94.0% of females) were involved in advertising and selling of goods, while Head portering emerged as another dominant activity (76.0%), with a higher proportion (80.0%) among males compared to females (72.0%). Hawking of goods was also common, involving 73.0 percent of respondents, nearly equally distributed between males (74.0%) and females (72.0%). However, certain tasks reflected sharp gendered patterns: portering with a wheelbarrow showed a male-to-female ratio of 9:1 (18.0% vs. 2.0%), underscoring cultural expectations that ascribe energy-intensive roles to males. Conversely, a greater proportion of females concentrated on less physically demanding but time-consuming activities, aligning with the traditional gender division of labour.

Less common forms of labour activities, such as pepper grinding in stalls, fetching water, washing clothes for masters, and running secret errands, were reported by only 1.0 percent of the respondents, indicating a narrower spread of children into such marginal activities. Nevertheless, the diversity of tasks suggests that the involvement of children in market labour could expose them to both socially sanctioned roles and more exploitative and informal ones.

Importantly, while many male (78.0 %) and female (68.0 %) children appeared to combine schooling with market labour, a subset (22.0 % of males and 32.0 % of females) were out of school and were involved full-time. Strikingly, more females than males engaged in market labour activities full-time; this could contribute to a greater number of out-of-school children if decisive policy controls are not put in place. This finding aligns with broader evidence in sub-Saharan Africa that girls disproportionately shoulder domestic and informal labour responsibilities, often putting them at a disadvantage in future development (Dunne, Humphreys and Szyp, 2023).

Also revealed was a high-intensity involvement of the children in multiple labour activities. About half (58.0%) of the respondents performed over five different labour activities, but females (60.0%) slightly outnumbered their male counterparts (56.0%). The average involvement in market activities reported by both genders (6 ± 1.2) suggests that while engagement volume was comparable, the types of activities differed by gender. This points to diversification of labour roles, with the female children demonstrating marginally higher workload multiplicity.

Gender Differences in Labour Involvement Intensity

The labour intensity analysis (Table 3) revealed gendered patterns in the number of hours children devoted to different activities each market day. While the males spent most of their time hawking goods (mean = 1.42), advertising goods (1.38), and head portorage (1.30), the females devoted slightly longer hours than their male counterparts to advertising goods (1.48) and fewer hours (1.40) for hawking and head portorage (1.28). The overall grand mean scores (0.51 for males; 0.54 for females) suggest limited engagement, which indicates partial rather than full-time involvement. This finding is consistent with their dual role as students and contributors to household income. The ranking orders activities by average level of involvement. This finding

aligns with the periodic nature of the rural market, which restricts the number of market days per week.

Table 2: **Distribution of children by labour activities in rural markets**

	Male		Female		Total	
Variables	Freq.	%	Freq.	%	Freq.	%
Number of labour activities						
≤5	22	44.0	20	40.0	42	42.0
>5	28	56.0	30	60.0	58	58.0
Mean±SD	6.0 ± 1.1		6.0 ± 1.3		6.0 ± 1.2	
Type of labour activities*						
Performing menial jobs	38	76.0	47	94.0	85	85.0
Advertisement of goods	38	76.0	41	82.0	79	79.0
Sorting out agricultural produce	37	74.0	40	80.0	77	77.0
Head portorage	40	80.0	36	72.0	76	76.0
Hawking of goods	37	74.0	36	72.0	73	73.0
Record keeping	23	46.0	38	76.0	61	61.0
Sales of goods in stalls	15	30.0	16	32.0	31	31.0
Collecting debts	13	26.0	18	36.0	31	31.0
Loading and offloading agricultural produce	17	34.0	5	10.0	22	22.0

Purchase of goods on behalf of employer	4	8.0	6	12.0	10	10.0
Porterage with wheelbarrow	8	16.0	1	2.0	9	9.0
Gathering agricultural wastes	5	10.0	2	4.0	7	7.0
Grinding pepper at stall(s)	0	0.0	1	2.0	1	1.0
Fetching water and washing clothes for master	0	0.0	1	2.0	1	1.0
Running secret errands	1	2.0	0	0.0	1	1.0

Source: Field survey, 2021

*Multiple responses

Table 3: Intensity of involvement of males and females in labour activities of rural markets
(Number of hours per day)

Labour activities	Male		Female	
	Mean score	Rank	Mean score	Rank
Hawking of goods	1.42	1 st	1.40	2 nd
Head porterage	1.30	3 rd	1.28	3 rd
Porterage with wheelbarrow	0.26	10 th	0.06	11 th
Sales of goods in stalls	0.50	6 th	0.64	7 th
Advertisement of goods	1.38	2 nd	1.48	1 st
Purchasing of goods for employers	0.08	12 th	0.12	9 th
Record keeping	0.46	7 th	0.86	5 th
Collecting debts	0.28	9 th	0.36	8 th
Performing menial jobs	0.74	4 th	0.95	4 th
Running secret errands	0.02	13 th	0.00	15 th
Loading and offloading agricultural produce	0.34	8 th	0.10	10 th
Sorting out agricultural produce	0.74	4 th	0.80	6 th

Gathering agricultural wastes	0.10	11 th	0.04	12 th
Grinding pepper at stalls	0.00	14 th	0.02	13 th
Fetching water and washing clothes for master	0.00	14 th	0.02	13 th
Grand mean	0.51		0.54	

Source: Field survey, 2021

Male and Female Levels of Involvement

Figure 1 shows the levels of involvement of male and female children's in rural market labour activities, using a composite involvement index derived from hours spent per day, days per week, and mode of involvement, which provides a holistic measure of labour intensity. The results showed that most respondents (76.0% males; 78.0% females) fell within the moderate involvement category. Smaller proportions recorded low involvement (18.0% males; 10.0% females), while a limited number of females, more than males, reported high involvement (6.0% males; 12.0% females). Overall, 77.0 percent were moderately involved, 14.0 percent lowly involved, and 9.0 percent highly involved.

The results also showed that female children had a slightly higher mean score of involvement in labour activities ($\bar{x} = 2.02$) than their male counterparts ($\bar{x} = 1.88$). This difference is consistent with earlier findings in the study, which indicated that more female children engaged in activities such as menial jobs, advertising, and record-keeping, while the males were more visible in physically demanding tasks like head portorage and hawking.

.

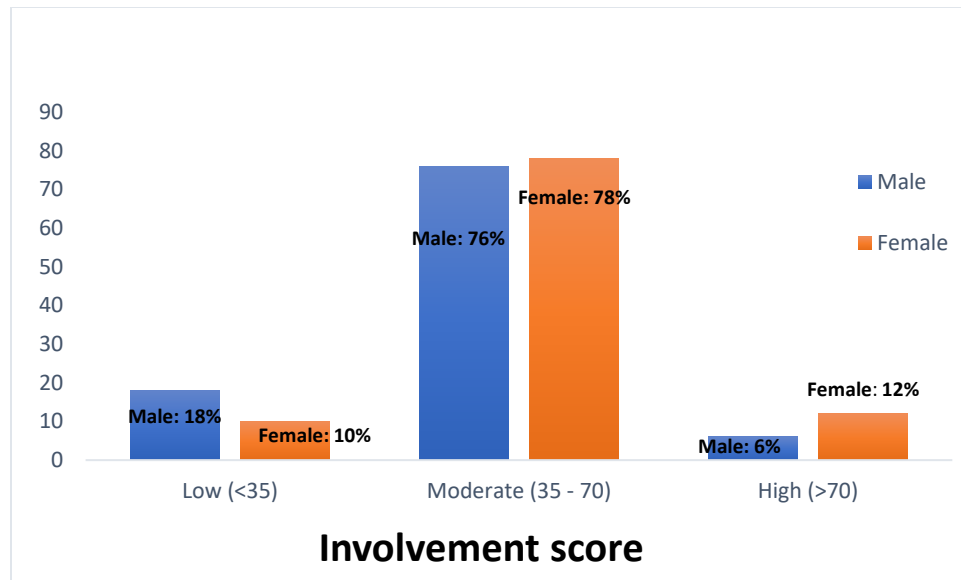


Fig. 1: Level of male and female children involvement in rural market labour activities

Results of t-test

Results of the t-test in Table 4 revealed that the observed difference between male and female involvement was not statistically significant ($t = -1.469$; $p = 0.145$). This suggests that, although descriptive statistics indicated slightly higher female involvement in labour activities, the disparity between overall male and female involvement was not significant when tested inferentially.

Table 4: Result of t-test Analysis

Variable		Levene's Test of Variances		t-test for Equality of Means				
		F	Sig.	t	df	P-value	Mean Diff	Std. Error Diff
Children's level of involvement	Equal variances assumed	1.127	0.291	-1.469	98	0.145	-0.140	0.095

Significance at $p < 0.05$

Source: Field Survey, 2021

CONCLUSION

In conclusion, the findings indicate that children were moderately involved in market labour activities, suggesting that many children attempted to balance schooling and market labour, although a notable proportion showed high levels of involvement, particularly among female children. This could signal greater female vulnerability to educational disruption when compared to their male counterparts. The findings suggest that cultural norms and social expectations may contribute to children's involvement in rural market labour activities. These findings suggest that children's participation in market labour has become normalised within household livelihood strategies, despite consequences that could jeopardise their sustainable development, especially for female children if not addressed.

RECOMMENDATIONS

Governments at all levels and non-governmental agencies should implement poverty-reduction programmes targeting rural households to reduce the economic pressure driving children into ket labour. In addition, cultural expectations that prioritise male education over female education should be discouraged while education for all should be promoted through various mass and social media channels. Gender-responsive interventions, such as gender-responsive educational policies, are also imperative to address gender-specific needs.

Children's concerns should be integrated into rural market governance through the establishment of community child-protection committees or market cooperatives. These institutions would provide the necessary support and monitoring to ensure that children's socialisation into adult responsibilities occurs in ways that safeguard their education, well-being, and overall development. Existing human rights and labour laws should be reviewed and enforced to protect children from harmful cultural practices that jeopardise their present and future development.

REFERENCES

Abubakar, I. R. (2022). Multidimensional poverty among Nigerian households: Sustainable development implications. *Social Indicators Research*, 164(2), 993–1014. <https://doi.org/10.1007/s11205-022-02963-0>

Chipenda, C., & Cochrane, L. (2024). Out-of-school children in the context of new policy trajectories and interlocking crises in Zimbabwe: A transformative social policy perspective. *SN Social Sciences*, 4(7), Article 131. <https://doi.org/10.1007/s43545-024-00938-1>

Cunningham, H., & Viazzo, P. P. (1996). Some issues in the historical study of child labour. In H. Cunningham & P. P. Viazzo (Eds.), *Child labour in historical perspective*. UNICEF International Child Development Centre.

Dunne, M., Humphreys, S., & Szyp, C. (2023). Education and work: Children's lives in rural Sub-Saharan Africa. In *Children's work in African agriculture* (pp. 81–115). Bristol University Press. <https://doi.org/10.51952/9781529226072.ch004>

Emerson, R. M. (2017). *Judging delinquents: Context and process in juvenile court* (1st paperback ed.). Routledge.

Faborode, H. F. B., & Koledoye, G. F. (2014). Perceived effects of oil exploration among male and female fishers in Ilaje and Ese-Odo local government areas of Ondo State. *Nigerian Journal of Rural Sociology*, 15(1), 66–80.

United States Department of Health and Human Services, Administration for Children and Families. (2015). *Child maltreatment 2013*. U.S. Government Printing Office. <https://www.acf.hhs.gov/programs/cb/research-data-technology/statistics-research/child-maltreatment>
(acf.hhs.gov in Bing)

International Labour Organisation, & United Nations Children's Fund. (2021). *Child labour: Global estimates 2020, trends and the road forward*. International Labour Organisation & UNICEF.

International Labour Organisation, & Walk Free Foundation. (2017). *Global estimates of child labour: Results and trends, 2012–2016*. International Labour Organisation.

International Labour Organisation. (2006). *The end of child labour: Within reach. Global report under the follow-up to the ILO Declaration on Fundamental Principles and Rights at Work (Report I(B), International Labour Conference, 95th Session)*. International Labour Organisation.

International Labour Organisation. (2010). *Joining forces against child labour: Inter-agency report for the Hague Global Child Labour Conference*. International Labour Organisation.

International Labour Organisation. (2012). *Tackling child labour: From commitment to action*. International Programme on the Elimination of Child Labour.

International Labour Organisation. (2014). What is child labour? <https://www.ilo.org/ipec/facts/lang--en/index.htm>

International Labour Organisation. (2017). *Methodology of the global estimates of child labour*. International Labour Organisation.

International Labour Organisation. (2023). *World report on child labour: Economic vulnerability, social protection and the fight against child labour*. International Labour Organisation.

Nyong, I. E., Udoh, E. J., Edet, G. E., & Inyang, E. B. (2024). Effect of child economic contribution to farming households' income in Akwa Ibom State, Nigeria. *International Journal of Research and Innovation in Social Science*, 8(6), 684–696. <https://rsisinternational.org/journals/ijriss/Digital-Library/volume-8-issue-6/684-696.pdf>

Okyere, S. (2022). Moral economies and child labour in artisanal gold mining in Ghana. In *International child protection: Towards politics and participation* (pp. 29–55). Springer International Publishing.

Razavi, S. (2011). Rethinking care in a development context: An introduction. *Development and Change*, 42(4), 873–903. <https://doi.org/10.1111/j.1467-7660.2011.01722.x>

Suleiman, K. A., Akinrefon, A. A., & Olakiitan, A. I. (2024). Variation in educational attainment levels: Statistical evidence from the Nigeria Demographic and Health Surveys (2008, 2013 and 2018). *International Journal of Development Mathematics*, 1, 191–199. <https://doi.org/10.62054/ijdm/0102.15>

Zamfir, I. (2019). **Child labour: A priority for EU human rights action**. European Parliamentary Research Service (PE 633.142). [https://www.europarl.europa.eu/RegData/etudes/BRIE/2019/633142/EPRS_BRI\(2019\)633142_EN.pdf](https://www.europarl.europa.eu/RegData/etudes/BRIE/2019/633142/EPRS_BRI(2019)633142_EN.pdf)

Zsögön, M. C. (2021). Discourse analysis around the issue of child labour in the Global South. *Language, Discourse & Society*, 9(1), 17–31. https://www.language-and-society.org/wp-content/uploads/2021/06/Pp-94-105_Cecilia-Zsogon_-from24_06_21_issue17_LDS-8.pdf (language-and-society.org in Bing)

Appendix 1

Labour Activity	Definition
Performing menial jobs	Carrying out simple manual tasks for traders or customers in exchange for money or other forms of reward.
Advertising goods	Calling out or displaying merchandise to attract the attention of potential customers and promote sales
Sorting agricultural produce	Separating agricultural products according to size, quality, type, or condition before sale or storage.
Head portorage	Carrying goods or agricultural produce on the head for traders or customers within or around the market for payment.
Hawking of goods	Moving around the market or nearby areas to sell goods directly to customers.
Record keeping	Assisting traders by recording sales, purchases, debts, or other business transactions.
Sales of goods in stalls	Selling goods directly to customers from a designated market stall or shop.
Collecting debts	Recovering money owed to traders by customers or business associates on their behalf.
Loading and offloading agricultural produce	Lifting, carrying, and transferring agricultural produce onto or from vehicles or storage facilities
Purchase of goods on behalf of employer	Buying goods or market supplies for a trader or employer as instructed.
Portorage with wheelbarrow	Transporting goods using a wheelbarrow within or around the market in return for payment.
Gathering agricultural waste	Collecting discarded agricultural materials or market waste for disposal, recycling, or livestock feeding.
Grinding pepper at stalls	Operating or assisting with pepper-grinding machines for customers in exchange for payment
Fetching water and washing clothes for employer	Collecting water and washing clothes or other household items for traders or employers as part of domestic service
Joining drivers on trips	Accompanying commercial drivers to assist with loading, unloading, collecting fares, or other transport-related tasks.

Running secret errands	Carrying out private or confidential tasks assigned by traders or employers that are not openly disclosed to others
-------------------------------	---
