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DETERMINANTS OF CHILD LABOUR IN AGRICULTURAL PRODUCTION IN OYO STATE-NIGERIA**AJAO, A.O****SR. LECTURER****AGRICULTURAL ECONOMICS DEPARTMENT****LADOKE AKINTOLA UNIVERSITY OF TECHNOLOGY****OGBOMOSO****ABSTRACT**

The driving force of Agricultural activities is the labour input and rural households rely heavily on their members as primary sources of labour for agricultural activities. This study therefore, examined the determinants of child labour in Oyo State using cross section data derived from a multistage sample of 600 rural respondents from different households, the data obtained was then analysed using Logit regression model. Result indicated that the age and gender of the child along with education of the parents were significantly determinants of child labour use in agricultural activities. It was discovered that male children are more involved in child labour use in agricultural activities than female children and also the education of the parent determines the type of activity option in which the child will be involved in.

KEYWORDS

Child labour, household labour, child abuse, logit.

BACKGROUND TO THE STUDY

Agriculture plays an important role in the economic development of Nigeria as it provides food for the growing population, employment for the population, raw materials and foreign exchange earnings for the development of industrial sector within a given agro ecological environment. Agricultural productivity is determined by the amount of land, capital, labour and other inputs used, also by quality of these factors, the distribution and fragmentation plot, the health and educational level of the farmers, the efficiency of the farmers, receptivity to innovations.

Labour and entrepreneurship are the most important resources next to land in traditional agriculture because it is in them that the decision making power in the production process resides (Olayide and Heady, 1982; Upton, 1997; Ojo and Ajibefun, 2000). Labour here refers to available human effort use in agricultural production. Aredo (1994) categorize labour according to source (household labour, community labour, hired labour, and collective labour) and opined that household labour is the single most important source of labour in the private sector. Obasi (1991) and Nwaru (2004) opined that household count more on their family members than hired labour as source of farm labour. It is within this context that farm households have found children highly useful in agricultural production, processing and marketing activities.

Although the existing rural labour force stations have the tendency to underestimate the contribution of women and children to agricultural production and wellbeing of the household. Most children in commercial agriculture work on seasonal basis, often full time as part of a family unit during the harvest and seeding seasons, but irregularly or on part time basis during the remainder of the year. Studies on child labour in agriculture have found several often overlapping causes and characteristics of which are generally the determinants of child labour supply. When modeling the determinant of child labour supply, the household is taken as the unit of analysis. A number of studies reported that household income is the major factor in the decision for child labour supply. Low household income serves as an incentive for child labour supply. Family size is another important factor that can cause a household to be involved in child labour. In the first place, a large household size could lead to lower per capita income and therefore the need for extra income, which may create an incentive for the parent to send their children to work. Again, a large household size generates more labour within the farm household.

The knowledge of the determinants of child labour in agricultural production would inform a better child welfare management policy in the nations. In the absence of an easily discernible framework for protecting the right of children especially in the rural areas and given the ever growing global legislation and resolutions against child labour and abuse, empirical results on the determinants of child labour would help in the formulation of appropriate child welfare schemes for the nation. The research work therefore examined the determinants of child labour in Oyo state where there is an ineffective law to enforce child rights.

MATERIALS AND METHOD

Child labour use in developing countries is a fundamental social problem with grave consequences for economic development. The participation of young children under the age of 15 years in the labour force in order to earn a living or support household income (Grooteart and Kanbur, 1995) has reportedly led to mass drop out from primary and secondary schools and child abuse as opined by Canagarajah and Coulumbe (1997).

Child abuse is a condition in a child's life when the child is ill-treated or a situation in which the child is wrongly used in undisciplined act. It can also be defined as situation in which adult utter, severe, cruel or unjust things to the children. The most common but regularly ignored form of child abuse is child labour. In the world today, the unlawful use of children in performing various labourious works is quiet alarming that the International Labour Congress felt the need to address the problem.

Literature did not agree on the benefit or otherwise of child labour, e.g. Ray (2000) notes that child labour need not necessarily be "bad", or warrant action from policy makers. Indeed some (low, common human capital affecting) levels of child labour may even stimulate the children in their personal development as well as generate a natural attachment to the labour market at an early age. Thus child labour can be beneficial, rather than harmful, as long as it is not undertaken at the expense of educational attainment.

The review of literature confirms two schools of thought. One view is that child labour is detrimental to the child, the household and even the county's human capital development. While the other showed that child labour is not necessarily harmful to the child provided that it is not undertaken at the expense of the child's schooling. In the rural sector employment where agricultural activities prevails, some children work on family farms while others are employed on farms outside of the sphere of the household. In both cases, child labour has been found to have negative consequences for the children. The heavy and intensive labour that children undergo in the fields many times lead to lack of pay, long hours on the job, physical exhaustion, physical abuse, and exposure to toxic pesticides and herbicides (Arat, 2002; Gill, 1994; International Labour Organisation, 1996; Longford, 1995; Sancho- Liao, 1994). In addition, studies that are particularly focused on child agricultural workers in Africa have recognized a high incidence of injury, inferior living conditions resulting from substandard housing, poor access to clean water and food, poor sanitation, and low wages (Anyanwu, 1993; Francavilla and Lyon, 2002; Manda *et al.*, 2003). It has also been noted that children employed in the agricultural sector experience mental and social consequences. For instance, in Latin America, child workers in agriculture have been perceived negatively and their employment has been a source of tension (Wyer, 1986). In another study conducted in Asia, child labour has been found to negatively affect the educational outcomes of the children, but these effects vary by the gender of the child (Hazarika and Bedi, 2003). Furthermore, in rural Nigeria, it has been observed that child workers engaged in farming have lower school attendance compared to their urban working peers (Robson, 2004). However, there are inconclusive results regarding the effects of agricultural work on children's leisure time (Francavilla and Lyon, 2002; Grooteart, 1999).

SAMPLING AND ANALYTICAL TECHNIQUE

The data used for this study were essentially from primary sources and were obtained with the use of a structured questionnaire to collect information that is relevant to the study. The study used a multi-stage random sampling technique by randomly selected 10 farming communities from the four agricultural zones of the state given a grand total of 40 farming communities out of which 15 households were randomly selected for interview.

This study used household utility model posits that the household chooses a particular child activity option because of utility derived from it, assuming a unitary household model as suggested by Strauss, et al., (2000), the probability that household "h" chooses alternative source of "j" is equal to the probability that the utility derived from using "j" is greater than any other use. In this case, this study assumed that schooling and working decisions of children are independent. In addition the choice decision of the household is determined by a vector of child, parent and household characteristics. The reduced form of the econometric model is explained below.

$$W_i = X_{1i}\beta_1 + \varepsilon_{1i}$$

Where,

W_i^* = the net benefit attained by the family by sending child to work.

X_{1i} = the vector of child, parent and household characteristics that determine W_i^*

ε_{1i} = the random error, with zero mean and unit variance.

However, W_i^* is not observed. What is observed is the following binary variable:

1, if the child worked in the last one week.

0, otherwise correspondingly, the decision to send a child to school is described by the following latent variable model:

$$S_i^* = X_{2i}\beta_2 + \varepsilon_{2i}$$

S_i^* = the net benefit to the family from sending the child to school

X_{2i} = the vector of child, parent and household characteristics as well as regional and community dummies that determine S_i^*

ε_{2i} = the random error with zero means and unit variance.

Again S_i is not observed, what is observed is the following binary variable:

1, if the child participated in the one week

0, otherwise

We can put these two equations into observable form, Y_i

$Y_i = 1: W_i^* > 0$, otherwise, 0 (child involve in economic activities in the last seven days), which is called logit work.

$Y_i = 1: S_i^* > 0$, otherwise, 0 (child attends school in the last one week), which is called logit school.

RESULT AND DISCUSSION

Table 1 shows that 55.8% of the children who participated in agricultural production are male, while 44.2% of the children are female. This shows that male children are more involved in agricultural production than female. The educational level of the children was also sought and it was observed that less than half of the respondents (43.33%) were in secondary school, 37.5% of them were in primary school, 19.2% of them were not in school as at the time of survey. This implies that majority of the children in child labour were making efforts to have a formal education, therefore their participation does not pronouncedly affect their schooling.

Table 1 further shows that 31.7% of the parents had no formal education, 30.8% have tertiary education, 9.2% have adult education, 8.3% have secondary education while 20% have primary education. From this we can say that majority of the parents are literate and knows the import of giving education to their children. Frequency of child participation in farming activities was also examined and it was found out that 15.8% of the children worked daily before school hours, 23.3% of them worked daily after school hours, 17.5% worked on weekends only, 12.5% worked during holidays only, 0.8% of them worked both during weekends and holidays while 30% of them worked daily even during school hours. This implies that participation of children in agricultural production activities does not hinder children from attending schools, though efforts were not made to examine its effect on their performance in academics and frequency of attendance.

Table 1 also shows the distribution of children's parent into different occupations. It shows that 39.2% of the parents are farmers, 16.7% are traders, 10.6% are civil servants, 8.3% are both farmers and traders while 25.28% accounts for artisans such as mechanics, carpenters e.t.c. it could be seeing that the household head are mostly farmers while other have farming activities as secondary occupation.

TABLE 1

Variable	percentage
Sex	
Male	55.8
Female	44.2
Education (children)	
No edu	19.2
Primary edu	37.5
Secondary edu	43.3
Education (household head)	
No edu	31.7
Adult edu	9.2
Primary edu	20
Secondary edu	8.3
Tertiary edu	30.8
Period of participation	
Daily	30
Daily before school	15.8
Daily after school	23.3
Weekends	17.5
Holidays	12.5
Weekends and holidays	0.8
Household head occupation	
Farming	39.2
Trading	16.7
Trading and farming	8.3
Civil service	10.6
artisans	25.2

Since it has been established that child labours are involved in farming activities, the study further examined the kind of activities in which they are involved in and the reasons behind their involvement. It was observed in table 2 that over half (64.1%) of the children have never been involved in land clearing, 58.3% have never been involved in making ridges, 46.67% have never been involved in fertilizer application. Meanwhile 39.2% of them are frequently involved in planting, 30.8% are often involved in packaging while 39.2% rarely participate in processing. The study did not take into consideration of age and sex categories of those involve in each of this activities.

TABLE 2: DISTRIBUTION OF CHILDREN ACCORDING TO THEIR PARTICIPATION IN AGRICULTURAL ACTIVITIES

S/N	Activities	Never	Rarely	Often	Frequently
		%		%	%
1	Land clearing	64.1	20.0	10.0	5.8
2	Making ridges	58.3	18.3	10.8	12.5
3	Planting	28.3	12.5	20.0	39.2
4	Weeding	25.0	8.3	28.3	38.3
5	Fert.application	46.67	26.7	19.2	7.5
6	Harvesting	27.5	20.0	33.3	19.2
7	Processing	33.3	39.2	10.8	16.7
8	Packaging	34.2	23.3	30.8	10.8
9	Hawking	52.5	10.8	13.3	23.3

Source: Authors compilation

The table 3 below reveals that 44.2% of the respondent participate in agricultural production activities in order to assist their parents, 12.5% participated as a means of livelihood, 9.2% participated because of personal interest, almost a third which represents about 34.1 participates for a combination of reasons earlier stated.

TABLE 3: DISTRIBUTION OF RESPONDENTS BY REASONS FOR PARTICIPATION

Reasons for participation	Percentage
Assisting parent	44.2
For livelihood	12.5
Based on interest	9.2
Others	34.1

Source: Authors compilation

The study attempts to examine the determinant of child labour using parent and child characteristics. The empirical work in child labour studies has indicated that the age and gender of the child are important determinant of child schooling. In this recent research work the ages of the children had a significant and positively related to child labour and this implies that older children are more likely than younger children to be engaged economic activities. The gender coefficient in this study was also significant and negatively signed and this implies that male participate than female in work activities.

Empirical evidence from the literature showed that education of the parent affect the child labour decision (e.g. Patrinos and Psacharopoulos, 1995). The usual assumption is that the father's education has more impact on boys while the mother's education affects girls the most. The education of the father at all levels of existence whether primary, secondary or tertiary had a positive and significant relationship with the participation of the child in economic activities. The education of the mother at all level of existence was also significant and positively related to the participation of the child in economic activities. The result reveals a pseudo R square value of 0.708 which indicated 70.8% of the explained variation in the factors that determine child labour was due to joint contribution of all the independent variables specify (i.e. child and parent characteristics) in the model.

TABLE 4: LOGIT REGRESSION RESULT

Variable	Coefficient	T-ratio
Constant	0.10	3.06
Age	0.50	6.53
Sex	-0.68	-15.24
Formal education (Father)	0.36	3.11*
Secondary education (Father)	0.46	3.47*
Primary education (Father)	0.31	2.57*
Tertiary education (Father)	0.60	7.80*
Formal education (Mother)	0.32	2.67*
Primary education (Mother)	0.31	3.09*
Log likelihood estimate (H ₀)	-8.2262	
Log likelihood estimate (H _A)	-86.2727	
Pseudo R ²	0.71	

*implies significance at 1% probability level.

CONCLUSION

The study examined the determinants of child labour in Oyo state using primary data generated from a multi stage random sample of 600 rural household and were analyzed using the Logit regression model. Result indicated that the age and gender and also the education level of the parents were statistically significant determinant of child labour in agricultural activities. It was concluded that if the education of the parent as the driver from poverty trap is not improved significantly, child labour use in agricultural activities would continue to persist irrespective of any legislations to curb the menace of child labour.

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