

IMPACT: International Journal of Research in  
Business Management (IMPACT: IJRBM)  
ISSN(E): 2321-886X; ISSN(P): 2347-4572  
Vol. 2, Issue 7, Jul 2014, 57-72  
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## LABOUR UNIONS, CIVIL SOCIETY ORGANISATIONS AND THE ELIMINATION OF CHILD LABOUR IN NIGERIA (A COMPARATIVE ANALYSIS)

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### ABSTRACT

Child labour in Nigeria has been a problem that is becoming alarming in the society and also in the international community. Its elimination remains a major source of concern to the labour unions and industrial relations circles of the nation. This paper tries to look at this problem by looking at labour unions power centrality, its largeness and density of population amongst other associations in the country, to build a framework of alliance and solidarity that shows its central role as the protector of the citizen's right to work, to fair work and treatment of workers. This could be fully enhanced into alliances, and connected networks with the civic society organizations and other meaningful groups to eliminate this modern menace of child labour. We used a comparative study method in which we used the connectedness to power of some civic associations that can change government or persuade its decisions on quick measures that could be employed to eliminate child labour in the Nigerian society. We also tested the key argument that unions power, centrality and largeness has a significant and positive effects on government, in controlling socio economic policies for the common good. Union centered, union linked civic association's networks and connectedness can be useful in mobilizing other groups and the civil society to strengthen forces in the pursuit of a quicker implementation of measures on the elimination of the use of child labour. We highlighted therefore the important role of labour unions with its connectedness, alliance and solidarity with civic society organization in holding the government responsible to making effective policies and being accountable to the education and growth of its children for future socio-economic and political development of this nation.

**KEYWORDS:** Social Legitimacy, Labour Unions, Industrial Society

### INTRODUCTION

Labour unions and civic society associations are all free associations that work for societal rights in the areas of work, work relations and are also watchdogs of the common people at the interest of good governance, social capital evaluation and the dignity of labour.

As social association they highlight the importance inter-organizational linkages and alliance in accounting for social mobilization processes for changes in the society (Dian, 1995; Gould, 1991). Looking at the United States for example we can see that social association researchers have explored coalition mechanism among different social civil society and other social association with labour unions, civic right associations, with the diffusion, alliance process including women's, students and community activists to foster greater agenda for change in the society (Meyer and Whiter, 1994, Olzark, Uhrig 2001). Researchers have also investigated and seen how labour movements have been invigorated by other social associations. by alliance bridging and formal and informal channing as well as transformation of goals within bureaucracies. (Isaac and christranser 2002; Voss and Sherman, 2000).

Organization the theorists have developed the importance of alliance, inter associational linkages and their impact in larger unions and developed an interacted social linkage concept of “connectedness” and “social legitimacy” (Gulati and Garguilo, 1995) (Suchman, 1995). These authors have demonstrated that inter-associational alliance can help in the shaping and broadening institutional changes in society especially in the aspects of child labour and its implications in a democracy.

Social associations like labour unions and civic society capitals as associations of individuals with affiliations to specific and wider civic associations with labour unions, they must strive in promoting the cause to eradicate child labour and its menace to future generations of our societal development and the promotion of demographic rights. Since the rise of labour unions, it has always fought for major democratic work reforms. Such as good working conditions, hours of work, social provisions and ultimately against child labour that inhibits the child’s and the nation’s development. And they still remain the main organ that advocates for the interest of the vulnerable class, the disadvantaged and the poor class- enticed to the global market and its competitors for profits. Given the critical roles of labour unions and the civil society in their contribution in the society. Their significant alliance would help in accounting for government performance in the eradication of child labour in the society.

So the inter alliance of associations in Nigeria, with labour unions connectedness can help in boosting capacity mobilization in fighting for child labour eradications in the society, if it would be named as one of the developed societies even before 2020. This will lead to answering the argument in this study-that labour unions and civil society alliance promoted solidarity would be responsible for persuading government to fasten policies for good governance in eliminating child labour if it wants to be grouped amongst the developed nations.

## **THEORETICAL FORMULATIONS**

### **The Essences of Alliance / Solodarity**

Critics of power resources theory in a social welfare state development and democracy have argued on the alliance between the working class union and civic society is critical to the consolidation of development and workers democracy in welfare society (Collier 1999). Recent attitudes towards “rational approaches to collectives’ action (Diani 2003)” and social solidarity (Gould, 1995) provides explanations to association’s alliance through inter associational connectedness. Inter organizational interactions based on shared and recognized leadership and memberships that provide an important essence of social mobilization process for a common cause (Ropsential et al, 1985).

Solidarity according to Emile Durkheim involves mechanical solidarity or organic solidarity. Mechanical solidarity as defined by Durkheim is a social solidarity based upon a homogeneity of values and behavior with strong social constraints and loyalty to tradition and leadership, while organic solidarity is a type of societal solidarity typical of our modern industrial society in which unity is based on the interdependence of a very large number of highly specialized system involving a complex division of duty that requires the corporation of all the other associated groups or individuals in the society to work together to achieve a common idea or goals (Marjorie Hogan, 2006).

Pure solidarity and inter-organization of interaction in therefore needed between labour unions and other civic society organization to form a large membership to induce the fight against child labour to a successful one. Unions’ connectedness with civic society organization through shared organizational membership is critical for determining the government characteristics and relationship towards their ideas of change and fastness in determining

reasons to certain policies like the elimination of child labour. Solidarity between these two is important because of the strategic strength of the unions, the elitist nature and the intellectual capacities of the civic society groups.

Their ideals could not easily be relegated to narrow economic interest of the manufactures. Labour capitalist solidarity and alliance with civic organization would provide labour unions with strong reformist and societal oriental view for struggles and foster the agenda against child labour and its eradication in our society.

## **REDEFINING UNIONS ROLE AND CIVIC SOCIETY**

### **Labour Unions Role**

Labour unions could be one of the unique civil associations strong enough to play a decisive role in balancing and configuration the relationship between the state, workers, the economy and other civil society association unions can affect policies and economic activities through unions corporations with employers, institution and state to boost economic activities, (Hicks and Lane Keworthy, 1998). Labour unions are the strongest mass movement organization in the country that can establish a position against the state coercions and create alternative viewpoints that could be acceptable nationally on child labour elimination. Labour unions have the option to withdraw workers from production and also recommend stopping child labour or holding the state to ransom for this interest or any other interests that concerns societal welfare and development. Labour unions can have a tremendous impact on the existing structure and social order of a country (Fantasia and Noris-Stephen, 2004)

Labour unions have strong collective leadership that demonstrates strong industrial democratic principles of participation and support from workers. They can rally broader community and other social movement's organization on their side and convey a strong institutional change for a socio-economic cause like the elimination of child labour. Labour unions form one of the few strong civil association that seriously pursue the socio-economic interest and well-being of the society, the subordinate and the poor classes, and provides the basis for economic and social justice for the society- like better working conditions, wages, higher security on employment, better provisions for the firm, welfare schemes and the prevention of child labours. Unions role and connectedness with other civil societies transfers egalitarian ideals of work and movement of resources through organizational channels within civil society, thereby enhancing social legitimacy of unions- civil society agenda that can lead to reform that can totally eradicate child labour in the society. When unions are therefore connected with other civil societies, the interest of the lower vulnerable class is protected and this can easily induce the political arena to changes in pronounced ills like child labour. This certainly will ignite changes in the operation of laws to child labour and other disadvantages (Lipset, 1960)

The labour unions unique positions in organizational formations, strong leadership, density of memberships and resources in the society, alliance and solidarity in the civil society, can afford them greater potentially than any other force to empower all civil societies, community organizations in their rightful course to change these societal ills. (Tell 2012, tackling the subsidy mess). Labour unions can therefore boost the entire social movement's network when they are allied and connected solidly to other civil groups to fight the eradication of child labour.

Nigerian labour unions has the abundant human and material resources, strength and density that can provide other social civil organization with organizational resources such as leadership, membership and equal socio-economic policy agendas that can influence government on the eradication of child labour in Nigeria. (Achugo E, 2013) The long term or short term solidarity for this policy change between unions and other social civil society organizations

would greatly reduce the cost of mobilization for marches, demonstrations and manifestations in strengthening support for political reformist parties through lobbying (Gerhards and Rucht, 1992). Labour union in Nigeria has done so much and can even do more in this regard.

## **CIVIL SOCIETY ROLES**

First of all we saw Gold (1999) define civil society as a whole range of social groups that seek to operate independently of the state, such as private business enterprise, labour unions, professional associations, and religion bodies. Civil society probable peaceful co-existence and rewarding mutual interaction between differing forms of attitude and mode of thought, ensuring from mutually antagonistic social formations or bodies that are at once a desirable and valid objective. Spanning the entire spectrum of social, political, environmental and labour issues, civil society organization in the 1990's boosted and jostled for image in the Nigerian landscape by brandishing and bringing out refreshing alternative to the repressive desultory and irresponsible approaches to issues of officialdom, development and democracy (Alade Rotimi John in Guardian 2013). The civil society goals are the achievements of the much vaunted social goal of advancement and progress, an infinitely sustained uncompromising relationship that is necessary and a sine-qua non for a true social, economic, political growth and development of the society- including the eradication of child labour and its implications.

In civil societies, class very effectively explains its power and membership voice as most educated professional like the Association of University staff Unions, the Association of Women Trafficking and Child Labour Eradication Foundation, Public opinion Leaders, Elites and Civil Society Advocacy Associations via shared organization membership with labour unions could be critical for determining the direction and characteristics of civil society and the government relationship. Middle class civil associations also help acquire knowledge to changing national issues and provide information on global standards of labour, environments and explore potential and realistic policy option that labour and the civil society can take to pursue this issue of Child Labour. Alliance and solidarity with the middle class and civil associations could provide unions with great strength for general interest's agenda that are beyond economic interest but for the social good, like the child labour eradication. For example if labour unions discuss issues of social interests with civil societies. The civil societies muster the other social movement organizations to solidarity and more support for the cause, (Rose 2000, Southwest).

Labour unions leadership and members connectedness to alliance with other civil society organizations such as professionals, associations, faith based religious association, advocacy groups and other class neutral associations could allow unions more deeply embedded and reassured in its general policy issues of eradicating child labour before 2020. It helps to build "social cause legitimacy" of their activity (Cornwell and Harrison, 2004). Recent options to move from the traditional business of unionism to the social movement of unionism in America (Fantasia and Voss, 2004). South Korea 2005 and South Africa 2000 in labour movements shows the foregoing alliance that solidarity and alliance with the civil society and other social movement organizations could be the most critical and positive way for the success of labour unions and civil society groups in the pursuance to the eradication of child labour and its implication for development in Nigeria. Labour unions could therefore ally with the civil society, the professional elites, the opinion leaders like the Sarduana of Sokoto, the Oba Erediuwa of Benin Kingdom, the Oba Asiwaju of Ibadan and the Obi of Onitsha to exert pressure on their people and government to enact strict policies on the elimination of child labour practices

in the society. If not “Nigeria would not be classified a developed nation come 2020” if it fails to eradicate child labour (United Nations-ILO2013) (Daily Times Sept, 2013).

## UNDERSTANDING CHILD LABOUR IN NIGERIA

Before trying to analyse child labour in the Nigerian society, let us first of all understand without doubt the nomenclature of a child. Who then is a child?

Article 1 of the United Nations Convention on the right of the child, Article II of the Africa Convention on the rights and welfare of the child said that any person below the age of 18 is a child. The child right Act 2003 sec.277 also defined a child as a person under the age of 18 years of age. The Nigeria labour Act. Cap. 11, 2004 states that a child means a young person under the age of 12 while a young person is one under the age of 18 years. No matter how these organizations portray to us who is a child, whether he/she is young person or grown up but as far as he/she is below the critical legal age with the non-psychological acceptance for his onerous and reasoning faculty he is deemed a child and has no legal right to be involve in subordinate work.

Child labour in Nigeria today is increasingly obvious and alarming, it is a practice like corruption that is gradually eating into the fabrics of our national economy and destroying our future. Its manifestation in various ways is a cankerworm eating deep to destroy the future of our tomorrow elites and would be bad if not checked, because its consequences would be a total neglect and retarding to our progressive national development. According to Efajeme (2001), millions of children in Nigeria have made the streets their offices and working places. According to her children who are of the ages of six and above are found hawking one thing or the other on the streets, in the market squares, motor parks to earn a living for themselves or their masters. These children are therefore deprived of their youthfulness, their development, education and social developments, the right to life and the reading culture (Efajenune, 2001).

The Wikipedia Free Encyclopedia in its page defined child labour as the employment of children less than 18 years in (Nigeria) a manner that prevents them from basic education and their proper development. The International Labour Organization (ILO) also defined child labour as the manner of endeavor that deprives children of their childhood, their potentials and their dignity which is harmful to physical and mental development. This definition in its terms refers to such work or burdens participated by children below the legal minimum working age based on ILO Minimum Convention of 1973 (No 138) as worst forms of child labour defined by the Worst Forms of Child Labour Convention, 1999 (No 182) (Collins Olayinka, 2013).

Child labour remains a major source of concern in Nigeria despite legislative measures taken by the government to forestall it. Ten years after Nigeria adopted the international prohibition on child labour Act into law, millions of children in the country are still engaged in child labour. The International Labour Organization (ILO) in 1998 estimated that 24.6 percent of children between the ages of 10-14in Nigeria were working illegally, (World Development Indicator 2000). Business Day (2013) noted that it is sad to note that one of the touching reminders to us that we are a poor country is the deluge of children on our streets selling different items to passerby, children under the age of 18, through circumstances beyond their control work to fend for themselves and often their parents as well, through the money they make on the streets. It is therefore not a good attractive sight to see children of school age in Nigeria or in any civilized society during school hours or none, selling food in the streets, or herding animals in the bush, fetching and selling table water, soft drinks or washing dishes at (Mamaputs) local restaurant. (Business 200).

Recently another global report from the (ILO) says that the largest absolute number of child labourers is found in the Asia- Pacific region, almost 78 million but Sub-Sahara African regions including Nigeria continues to be the region with the highest incidence of child labour, at least 21 percent. The number of working children under the age of 14 in Nigeria is estimated at 15 million. These staggering figures of baby workers split into gender brackets consist of 6 million working children that do not go to school. While 1 million are forced to drop out of school due to poverty. About 8 million of these children manage to combine school and work. (Nigeria Tribune 2010) (This Day Newspaper 2010). The United Nations Children's Fund (UNICEF) research in conjunction with the United State Agency for International Development (USAID) disclosed that 39 percent of children aged between 5-14 years in Nigeria are engaged in child labour. Imagine what the future of these children would be.

Arogundade Nofisat, State controller of the Federal Ministry of Labour emphasized that child labour is a violation of fundamental human right, deprives children their schooling and obliging them to leave school prematurely. Child Labour can be a generation heritage trap because a child who acquired less education because of child labour will grow up to be poor and as an adult parent make his children to do child labour. The fact is clear that it seems the Nigerian child has been abandoned and sentenced to perpetual suffering and poverty, deprivation and want, neglected by their super parent or government due to act and commissions that are not of their own makings. Why is the Nigerian government not doing enough, labour unions, civil society and the policy makers?

In 22 of September 2013 Nigeria adopted the Draft National Policy on child labour with the Federal Executive Council to address the challenges faced by over 15million child workers in Nigeria (<http://allafrica.com>) The National Action plan is to eliminate worst forms of child labour by 2015 and 2020. The reason for this policy is to eradicate crimes against children and child labour to enable the country to be a better society and give a boost to her Millennium Development Agendas (MDGS) come 2020. But the ingredients for the implementation and the giving of reality to this quest are seen to be lacking in implementation. This is why this study is using the labour unions in Nigeria plus the civil society, and other social and faith-based organizations to be allied join in solidarity (like Solidanosoc) to enforce government to enforce regulate this flaw before it destroys our future. The Nigerian child has the ultimate right to live in society prepared by her parents that is progressively child labour free, in which they are not involved in hazardeous and exploitative works that is inimical to their total development and future contribution to national wellbeing.

## **METHODOLOGY**

The methodology adopted in this study is a comparative analysis of some countries that has adopted the alliance and connectedness with civil society organization and has been able to make a change in their different government policies by pushing them to good governance and the corrections of social ills and reforms detrimental to social welfare and national development. Also a bibliographical research using old literatures to see how these works, study have effectively being reflected in various civilized societies to eliminate the phenomenon of child labour and abuse. Countries like Sweden, United State of America, South Korea, Poland and mention of Italy and Argentina were taken into considerations as exemplifying unions' magnamity and solidarity with various civil society and faith base organizations to change the course of policies, for the welfare of the society at large and for good governors which is the essence of all democratic institutions. The study concentrated on labour union density, co membership power centrality, connectedness and solidarity amongst other associations or organizations as the first and cohesive element of change to societal malaise.



## SWEDEN

Sweden is a country associated with a strong labour union and also with strong civil society associations. This gives her a paramount decision in the event of the creation and implementation of social-economic policies in the country. Sweden is one of the most noted welfarist states in the North of Europe going by its social policies and reports on human dignity. It is a representative social democratic country, where the majority of the citizens are involved in either church or union activities. It is noted that 71% of its citizens are in church activities and associations while 63% are unionized. The church exhibit signs of the highest membership in its associations, but the labour union are most centralized with highest membership and command a policy making. They have a powerful centrality. Both associations with their overwhelming dominant membership and power centrality records make them more prominent and focused amongst all types of associations. The unions hold more ties with influential public figures and over 50 percent in Sports, culture, the church and this makes them the highest centrality in power influence.

The majority of labour union members in Sweden are jointly affiliated with civil society associations, her civil associations are so strong and are so big enough that it exerts influence on policy networks, so densely connected enough to mobilize the full capacity of the resources reserved in the entire network for changes. So with her unions they are at the helm of a thick network that influences government policies for good governance and child welfare (Cheol-Sung Lee, 2007). This shows that the Swedish labour unions is a network of organizations that embrace a variety of civil society associations and social movements (Rothsters, 2002) With its embeddedness in associational civil society, it guarantees greater social legitimacy for unions which has historically led to a more successful realization of union-oriented and union-involved reform projects in the child right and welfare in the State. The labour union centered but highly popularized civil society associations, in cooperation, alliance, and solidarity with other associations have actively participated in social welfare, labour market, and employment policies of government. This is a fine cooperative model that can be adopted by the labour union in Nigeria, so as to form a formidable group, connected solidly to the welfare of the child and enhance policies that would seriously persuade to implement and see that policies enacted for the elimination of child labour is carried out “*ipsum factum*”. This cooperation must be based on bargaining and interests of the groups and the state opened to the civil society so that control of the process could be enhanced with policy resources and outcomes that guarantee the highest transparency from political gimmicks, accountability that guarantees the truth and effectiveness of all parties.

## SOUTH KOREA

South Korea has a small labour union but with a very strong sense of labour unionism. It is one of the most central union organizations, more than any other in the developing world or countries of the same level of development. This has been so because of its historical sense of development and alliance with other civil society organizations like the students and intellectuals’ movement which for a long time is involved with other social movement and labour unions.

In the 1980s during the military government a lot of South Korea students joined the factory workers in an effort to disguise themselves as workers. “This strong grassroots- student alliance withstood government’s policy, repressions and its own fractionalization within and across other movements and organizations (Koo 2001). This later developed to become a strong national level labour confederated union of workers, with labour inclusive social network of movements, which later became a reformist labour party. The unions, the democratic labour party and their allied civil society

organizations have consistently been on the vanguard for good governance and has always criticized the government and Korea big business and influenced state officials, political parties, judicial system and the media through lobbying, informal networks, and contributions towards eradicating social ills. Despite South Korea's high level of corruption, like in Nigeria the labour unions are in strong alliance with the civil society organization and other movements with relatively durable solidarity which may have accounted for its effective developments in all spheres of the society. Today South Korea is a developing giant and has embedded the international regulations and is against the use of child labour in its society.

## **THE UNITED STATES OF AMERICA**

The U.S has a strong sense of connectedness associations, but in labour union they are weakly connected. Being a country of different culture and its belief in religion, the church is a very strong unit that has strong membership that evokes strength and power centrality necessary for co-opting other unions and associations against government ill policies, or to embark on achieving a common good for the people. Labour unions and civil society members belong to one church or the other, and through their membership the church is a big, central, and embedded association in the association of community, as well as the most particularly voluntary organization with 57.8 percent membership density and 1.3 in power centrality. The United State has higher 3.1 percent church goers more than any other country in the world except some South Asian and African societies.

This implies that the church goers are also heavily involved in voluntary associational activities. Civil society alliance and affiliations are very much smaller but interwoven. Despite this low variation and its tie with most central association, the union's power centrality is still relatively higher than that of developing countries. Labour unions in the United States have been historically involved on their own bargaining for the good and welfare of its members, while mostly confined to business unionism. It is isolated from the entire associational community. The church strong associations has not been so successful like the Swedish church union led association in persuading the government to providing comprehensive and effective government policies and services for the lower vulnerable classes. (Ched – Sung Lee 2001).

The United States have thick and rich unions with strong associational environments to work on if they want. They are in a better position to obtain social legitimacy for their economic and political policies and others, than in some other states. With the recent labour unions move to seek solidarity and alliance with community based religious groups and social movement organization and the civil society, its timely alliance with U.S Unions will achieve more socio-economic agendas and change bad policies for good. (Fantasia and Voss 2004; Kineld off 1999). Based on this study unions in the United States are more likely to succeed in building organizational alliance and solidarity with other association, especially the faith based associations which hold the most central position, and membership strength that would propel policy changes in the society.

## **ARGENTINA**

Like the US, Argentina church goers have the highest associational membership within the country with the Sports group. The problem here is that they are not so connected in associationalism with other associations. Their most central associations are new formed social movement organizations with moderate density membership. Union membership and solidarity is lowest and completely isolated from other associations. Labour unions are not



involved with other association and its power centrality is low compared to other countries in this study. Civil society association is also low and divided into political lines; this is because of the influence of the Peronist dictatorship (Waisman, 1999).

This weakened unionism and associationalism and made it impossible to enforce a minimum monitoring and control mechanism against corrupt government policies and those against the society. With Argentina's experience we could see what happens if weak unions or labour unions fail to connect and ally with the civic society and other association. This makes the lower class and the poor citizens vulnerable, like in going into child labour or the States and business ideological cooperation which makes it difficult to establish a good labour relations order as it is internationally accepted business ideological and economic co-accepted. The labour unions in Nigeria should not allow themselves to be swayed in such an extent as to forget one of their main objectives, to be the protector of the lower class and the vulnerable in labour and employment conditions.

## ITALY AND POLAND

Another model of nations with high density centralized union, civil society and church association, allied with solidarity movements. That have succeeded with their power to make social and policy changes in government is Poland and Italy. Poland is a strong solid unionized country backed in associations with the church, the catholic associationist movements. Most of the trade union members also belong to the catholic associations. The Polish, non-government, independent, self-government trade union the "Solidanos" (solidarity) began in 14<sup>th</sup> August 1980 under the leadership of a great unionist Lech Walesa. It had high density membership of 9.5 million which later increased to 10 million in 1981 with the alliance of other trade unions, the catholic associations and other civic society organizations to fight repression, advance workers cause, rights and socioeconomic change of the society. Its influence on societal changes was so much seen in its membership and centrally it controlled one third of the Polish working class plus the working age population. With its collation, connectedness with other unions the church association, their strength and centrality they were able to solidly force their repressive political group to negotiate with it on social change that the leader Lech Walesa agreed that "the holy father (Pope Paul 11) in his meetings with us demonstrated how numerous he were." This signified that numbers, solidarity and connectedness in the pursuit of a common good, or policies that are effective towards change is practicable. Today the Polish labour union is a major instrument of change in the democratic dispensation and policies of the government of Poland.

The elimination of child labour in Nigeria could be achieved if our unions do likewise, if they solidly ally with other association, and civic society movements, even with our churches, notwithstanding the diversity in religious beliefs. It is from this aspect that we noted that it is possible for self-organized groups with union solidarity would expand in any society and make changes, even in the totalitarian states. It is such sense of unionism alliance, connectedness and solidarity that labour unions in Nigeria, acting on its strength and centrality of position in the society can use to force and change government policies to fasten the eradication of child. It is the constitutional duty of the government to care for the education, development and safety of its children.

Italy also has a strong trade union movement that can and does effect social changes in her society. The Labour unions are divided into political and religion lines. They count also on their density and membership solidly they come together when there are harsh policies that confront workers and the civil society. Like the Polish trade unions, the Italian

trade unions are also supported and backed by the catholic associations, as unions to fight against child, prostitution and abuse of children's right and any policy that do not speak positively on the benefit of the child's right is frowned at and manifested against. Unionism in colation with the civil society group and the church goers induced government change the system of child done by the (Zingeri) the former Yugoslavian Rom nomads who send their children to affront citizens, tourists in the streets, bus stops and train terminals begging for alms. Some are even sent to prostitution. To eradicate this, the government made free compulsory education and forced them to school, arresting their parents or master who send them out to limousine. With the municipal police escorts, the government buses takes them from their various homes to school and back afterschool thereby giving respect and dignity to the child, person, making them to develop to be to useful and contribute to their self-development and that of the society. These are exemplary, comparative actions in developed nations that have passed through what we are now passing through. With the leaders of our trade unions, in alliance with the civic society groups, the church, they could solidly change social ills like child and eliminate this vice in Nigeria, for might is power.

## DISCUSSIONS

From our strategic comparism of unions, the civic society and other faith based or church associations in such civilized society like Swedeen, South Korea, Argentina, the United States, Italy and Poland with their networks of connectedness and solidarity, density of membership and centrality they could persuade fast changes in the polices of their various Nations to solve societal hills such unions and the civic society are made of elites, high class unions in society which can be compared to our unions,

Such as association of academic staff unions, the Nigerian union of teachers, the Nigerian congress, the Christian association of Nigerian and the women's association against child and trafficking can also do like our compared counterpart, from a solid network of connectedness and strong solidarity using the first of their numbers and size of membership to lobby or enforce government to change, change in polices that are not the good of the society, national development and that its citizens. The diverse networks and connectedness of various compared countries with the civic society organizations, associations of the church gives strong evidence that solidarity, alliance, connectedness amongst unions and these bodies could promote change in any society and of course changes in policies and works that are for the common good like the existence and elimination of child labour.

Measures of Unions power centrality in associational networks suggest a potentially strong and able relationship that could move any totalitarian state, example is that of Poland under General Jaruleskis dictatorship with the Polish Labour Union (Solidarnosc). Labour unions with their numerical strength, embededness, membership density and solidarity are a very significant factor for change in Nigeria. Examples have been the Oil Subsidy debacle of 2010, where the labour unions and the civic society led the masses to make the government make an effective U turn to its policy on fuel increase in Nigeria.

On December 2013, Women's Organization Against Violence on Women and Child Abuse marched out in the streets of Ibadan, Nigeria against women's abuse, violence, and women child trafficking and urged for an immediate stop to these vices because women are the mothers of the off-springs of the future and the developments of the society (Guadian2013). The President of the United States of America respected women and children's education and development when he said that, any strategy to reduce intergenerational poverty in a nation has to be centered on children's education

and work, not subordination of the child because education provides order, structure, dignity and opportunities for growth in peoples live.(Barak Obama 2008) The sum total is that the effect of unions government power are so robust and impressive, the recent Academic Staff of Universities Unions strike, the solidarity and courageous manifestations and connectedness with the civil society and other middle class associations, shows in our judgement that they can lead to better governance, policies, and changes in the society and state institutions.

This also strengthens Unions and Civic Society organizations images, and their obligations for being societys watchdogs on policy making within the State. Child labour is one of the mo important socioeconomic problems facing our government today, that may hinder the acceptance of Nigeria as one of the developed nations come 2016 despite other development strides and efforts over the years in other sectors of its political and economic platforms. Mac. John Nwaobiala of the International Program on the Eradication of child labour in Nigeria(IPEC2004, UNICEF2006) report background put the number of working children below 14years at 15million. Out of these groups there are 7.8million males, and 7.2 females in that ratio. According to him 6million out of this 15million children are out of school, while the 2 million at work are badly regulated and work hard with longer hours. John Lekan, Franca Attoh (2011) sees this as work that deprives children of their childhood, their potentialities and dignity that are essential for their developments. Also according to research carried out by Unicef and the International Labour Organization (ILO) in Nigeria indicates that 40percent of children between the ages of 5-14 are working in the streets and and do not attend school (www.ipledgeNigeria.com). This is a sad notion that appears as if these Nigerian have been sentenced to perpetual illiteracy, deprivation of self-knowledge for national development due to neglects to acts or omissions by various labour unions, civic society organizations religious groups and governments to stop this derogatory child capitalism for money and economic purposes. This shows that not much attention has been paid by the Unions, civic society organizations, women and church associations, and even governments to curb child labour. Nigeria is a country known for making good policies on paper. Policies are nothing unless they are implemented and goals achieved.

Despite the economic progress made in Nigeria over the past years, the problem of child is still widespread. But, with the international organizations repot according to Collins Olayinka (2013) the increasing number of children recruitment as Childers worldwide is now on the decline by one third since 2000, from 240million to 168 million. Between 2008 to 2012 be said, child in sub-Sahara Africa has reduce by 6 million, and this have been so because of diverse progress made in policy choices and investment in education and social protection (Guardian 2013). But I believe this has not been so in the Nigerian context because Nigeria's policy on child education and social protection has not been encouraging and nothing to talk home about. You can see the menace today, for example, today in Nigeria the increase in students for admission into the tertiary institution cannot be provided by its institution. Out of 1.7 million applicants for university, polytechnics and colleges of education who applied for admission only 520,000 got places. The fact are there, a government that gave only 1 billion naira each to each of its universities to take off but budgeted 64 billion naira for the Abuja gate apparently has not got its priority (education) right (Punch 2014). Child labour, children street begging's, child trafficking and baby boom factories still strives in the country. The university staff union strikes for 5 months, the Boko Haram insurgency and its brother kidnapping could be signals to show that perhaps Nigeria is not among the sub-sahara countries mentioned by the international organizations on the decrease for child labour. It is however quick to note that the latest improved rate of decline is not enough to achieve the goal of eliminating the worst forms of child labour by 2016 as agreed by the international labour organization (ILO), Guardian Oct.2013.

Given the moral outrage on the issue and the increasing policies of governments, international organization to find measures to reduce or eliminate child labour, the labour unions should take the lead for it is in their domain to ally boldly with the civil society organizations to form a solidly centrally led networks of connectedness with other associations to persuade government to implement its policy on children labour to a reality, to eliminate child labour before 2016. The Executive Director of Civil Society Advocacy Centre, Rafsanjanti said “the eradication of child labour in Nigeria requires the full commitment of Labour Unions, Academic and Non Academic Staffs Unions the Students Associations and Opinion leaders to form a solidarity front on this issue. It also requires commitment of the three tiers of governments and the will.” That is only possible through a clearly coordinated and integrated policies and actions by government, labour unions, and civic society organizations in solidarity “We are owing our children a future without violence, without fear and without exploitation” (Daily Independent 2013).

If child labour continues to go on, how can we meet these objectives? It is on this pretext and worries that in 2013 Nigeria adopted a National Draft Policy on Child which provides for the coordinated need and comprehensive framework for a multi-sectored action and, alliance against the worst forms of child labour in Nigeria. The over 6 million Nigerians engaged in child labour according to (FEC) the federal executive council undermines national development and provides reservoir for the recruitment of children into violent act and terrorism. Labour unions, employers associations, civic organizations, with faith based association should muster a solid alliance to help government combat these ills in the Nigeria society.

Labour unions in Nigeria have evolved into a robust vibrant sort of militant and national liberator movement for the vulnerable in the society. They have today gone beyond the traditional role of championing not only the cause of workers, to wielding much social influences, as acting as vigilant watch dogs for the people (Iyaye, 2008). They have been on vanguard to ask for good policies and governance from successive military and civilian administration in policies like SAP (structural adjustment program) the fuel subsidy and its hikes, cost of living, corruption and even globalization. Then why is the pursuit for elimination of child labour is being slowly delayed? It has been the work of labour union and civic society organization to make sure that the policies that are human and supportive of lives, developments, and of the economic interests of the generality of the citizens are promulgated and enforced.

It is their duty to influence policies reached by government on issues pertaining to works, workers (like the child labour eradication) through coordination with other civic societies by lobbying and pressuring politician and other elites groups in the society. According to Alade Rotimi (2013) it would have been un imaginable how the coordinate struggle of civic society and the labour union against the cavalier attitude of the military with respect to impervious annulment of the June 12<sup>th</sup> 1993 elections and the fuel subsidizing of 2010 could have been sustain d without cardinal connectedness and sacrifice of a legion of the civic society groups of that period

Today why is it that with a much more democratic dispensation, where the general goal of all civic society organization s and other enlightened movements should show up their strength and control, they look polarized and weakened instead of remaining allied., coordinated and strong with the unions against child labour and its eradication. One the pressing agenda for labour unions and civic society organizations in Nigeria today is real alliance connected network for solidarity in achieving the eradication of child labour which is long overdue and must be done.

## CONSEQUENCES OF CHILD LABOUR TO DEVELOPMENT

All over the world consequences of child labour is imminent on the child physical, psychological and mental development before it affects the society and the future development of the child. Child labour in Nigeria is an aberration which takes away the innocence of millions of children and a threat to the future of the country. Through child labour, school attendance is disrupted because of the children are at work, the children do not go to school because of the constraints of work. The children who work in remote agricultural areas with the earth very hard to till, use primitive tools and travel long distances to work. The working hours are usually long and the overall pictures are worse if these children suffer ill health. The same fate befalls those engaged in street hawking (Isama 1997).

Hazards and bad climate conditions makes life and work more difficult with fatigue, constants exposures to danger, accidents and sometimes the death of the child without contributing anything to herself or the economy. Child labour has its consequences of not only being unprogressive to the future development of the child because it imposes the risk of physical, mental, moral as well as the wellbeing of the child worker. It works against the investment, human capacity building and resources with the provision of decent works is wont of the dignity and right of the child (ILO convention No. 138, 182). Psychologically children who work at this age level, look low, disappointed and ashamed when they see other children of their dressed in uniform going to school or driven by their parents to school. They feel lost, their youth lost, the stage of life of playing and learning with their peers all deluding them; because they are engaged in early child labour, child slavery or street beginning (Punch 26<sup>th</sup> jan. 2014).

According to Anti-Slavery International Research (2009), most of the Childers are out of school children who express desires for a proper education and hopes that the government or any well-meaning individual in the society could help them in way to get educated. Adebisi (1993) puts it that at this age when civilized communities, and citizens are aiming at a hundred percent of literacy rate for its citizens, for us to deny any child access to education is to lay foundation for mediocrity, robbery, prostitution and underdevelopment of our society. Child labour exposes children to exploitation, prostitution and even death. Children who have dreams, destined to greatness and bright future are distorted by compulsory working to earn some naira and kobos. Some die while working due to hazards, long work hours, without even having any effect or contribution to the national economy. We must not forget that the long run consequences of today's child labour is that in future, we may not have educated professionals to manage the economy and shaping the growth and productivity of the nation.

It causes a breakdown of the societies moral, and social values because of the engraved ambition and greedy to get rich, children and sent out, trafficked or forced to prostitution and sexual exploitation even abroad by some Edo families in Nigeria. Child and prostitution can be "heritage trap" where parents loss obligations of catering for and taking care of their childs training, now reverse to making their children work at an early age, below international working age standard, to work and cater for them and their brethren. According to Berland, Robinson (2000), Emerson, Souza (2003) a child who acquires less education because of child labour work will grow up to be poor, as an adult parent would bring up children and make them to do child labour. Child labour is a serious problem and a menace to civility, our future economic growth and development. This is why in this study we advocate that it must be tackled now and be eradicated in order to have educated, healthy contributing members of the society later. It is better to eliminate child labour now before its economic and social effects starts to show up.

## CONCLUSIONS

Having seen the comparative analysis of certain civilized society's organizations methods of pursuing and resolving important issues of societal ills and governance in their various systems and countries we strongly feel that the same could be done in Nigeria, with respect to the policy of eliminating child labour in Nigeria. This can be done when labour unions, the greatest association of workers with the greatest numerical strength in the country, and the mouth piece of labour when better connected, with other civic organizations can solidly play a critical role in eliminating child labour by making government more transparent, more effective and more responsible to its children

This article therefore goes to highlight the significance of solidarity amongst organizations and labour unions in the pursuit of good policies that can be relevant to the common good and the future wellbeing for the development of work in the country. We also noted that with centrality and high density in Unions membership, the inter-linkage with civic society organizations and other associations, they can change institutions through their mobilization efforts.

The effects of unions density and power centrality shows a significant and impressive indication that convincingly supports the claim that labour unions could play a critical role in mobilizing civic association and promoting change in government policies. These comparisons offer convincing supports that labour union with its working class embeddedness, cross associational connectedness with existing Nigerian associations could make a change we mean fast changes in the implementation of measures and policies of eliminating child labour. The Nigeria labour union is an attention holding union in the country. In the environment which unions stand alone on their own without allies they cannot build an influential power to confront and influence changes, but the comparative study has shown that strong labour unions, power can be built by embedding themselves in strong and dense association network like (Sweden, and Poland). Even weak unions in terms of great membership may have the opportunity to increase their power when they are connected with strong actors in the networks (Gramsci-Italy, Lech Walesa –solidanose Poland, and the church association in the USA).

So labour unions must borrow a leaf to united itself, hold firm, solid and strong, utilize its density of membership to achieve power centrality in association with civic society organizations networks of connectedness, activating the faith based and community association towards the agenda of eliminating child labour in Nigeria. They must ally and be contingent with each other to see that this is done. This comparative evidence of unions role in strength associational groups shows that unions can purse social unionism and consciously forge alliance with other social groups s, students, women's groups, community based groups to curb this menace of capitalism which is child use and child slavery.

If therefore behooves of labour unions, civic society organizations and other associated bodies to hurry and persuade government by using all its strength, density and all organizational resources to see and ensure that laws prohibiting any form of child labour, and measures relevant to its decline are pursued and immediately implemented to the teeth before we are faced with its consequences. "When Labour unions, civic society organizations, employers of labour, the faith based organizations and the media reinforces themselves with solidarity against the government, child labour can be eliminated, because it is a social issue that cannot be dealt with upside down" (Kris Hnamordy Kukikate-Adviser IPEC, ILO, for west Africa in Guardian 2003).

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