

Examining Children's Education and Their Rights in Nigeria

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Abstract

The law on education in Nigeria makes it compulsory for all students between the ages of 6 and 15 to have free access to education, but in practice, only the education of children from birth to the age of 12, that is, to the end of Primary Education is free. Any education of the child after primary level, including all secondary and tertiary levels, is paid for by parents and in some instances, some parents are unable to educate their children beyond the Primary School level. Examined critically, the child's education is under the policies of the Nigerian government and does not form part of the fundamental rights of the child in the constitution (FRN, 1999 chap. IV). Even when it beholds the government to ensure that free and compulsory education is provided, the citizens have no right to enforce the implementation of such provision where there is a need. As a nation, Nigeria is a multicultural society comprised of numerous ethnic groups. Each of the ethnic groups has their own different culture and customary laws. As at the year, 2019, the population of Nigeria is put at 200.96 million; thus, it ranks as the 7th most populated country in the world (National Bureau of Statistics, 2019). The poverty levels in the country have led to hawking by children to raise money for family income. The extended family system is highly valued which allows for the less privileged to get assistance from other members of the family. The purpose of this study is to examine children's education and their rights in Nigeria. Specifically, the paper examines how the notion of rights is applied generally and to the education of the child in consideration of socio-economic and religious factors as well as cultural diversity.

Keywords: Nigeria, education, multicultural, rights, gender