

work socialization and training (Adonteng-Kissi, 2018b; Afenyadu, 2010; Salah, 2001). The foregoing also reflects what academic scholars have identified as the causes of child labour, especially, in Ghana, including cultural attitudes (Adonteng-Kissi, 2018a; Zelizer, 2005), the poverty levels and economic status of some families such that they need the support of children to be able to generate enough income to feed themselves (cf. Adonteng-Kissi, 2018a; Ahmed, 1999; Frimpong et al., 2021). As another MP articulates:

Example 5: Hansard: 2 April 2019/Col.4556-4557

... the International Labour Organisation (ILO) has some statistics on Ghana, but much of it, like the team from House of Commons, Westminster, UK – we do not have modern slavery in Ghana. We find those words abusive and insulting to our culture and the training of young children. What we do know exists in Ghana are packets of abuses of children who are working but ought not to be working. The solution lies in Free Compulsory Universal Basic Education (FCUBE), and Free Senior High School (FSHS) for us to encourage children to take full advantage of.

The issues and questions posed by MPs about what constitutes child labour raise fundamental questions about the fight against child labour in Ghana: it makes the problem of child labour complex. While it is good that the MPs admit that there is, at least “packets of abuses of children who are working but ought not to be working” (Example 5) and they “admit that, in some few cases, some of these children are abused” and “we must all condemn the abuse” (Example 4), this way of framing child labour can negatively affect the fight against it. The expressions “packets of” and “in some few cases” appear to underestimate the incidence of child labour and child abuse in Ghana, which can negatively affect the scale of measures needed to fight child labour. When problems are seen as enormous, stronger measures and commitment are needed to solve them, but when perceived otherwise, measures will be milder (cf. Sarfo-Kantankah, 2018). This is important because, how MPs frame child labour affects the attention they will pay to it, for “framing affects what we pay attention to and how we interpret it” (World Bank Group, 2015) and “the way a problem is defined has a major effect on the kinds of ‘solutions’ that are proposed to cope with it” (Mayer, 1996). Thus, underestimating the incidence of child labour has the potential to undermine the existence, the fight against it and reduce the commitment of stakeholders in the fight, because:

The language of parliamentarians does not only reflect social structures and practices, but also creates them, for social structures do not only determine discourse, but they are also a product of discourse, i.e., they are socially constitutive (Fairclough, 1989). Thus, understanding the language of MPs is crucial for appreciating the social problems it reflects, upholds and which it can change.

Sarfo-Kantankah (2022: 4)

The question is: where do we draw the line between child “apprenticeship” (Example 4) and child labour/child abuse? Who monitors the “apprenticeship” engagements of these children? Since the majority of child labour activities in Ghana occur in the agricultural sector (cf. Taylor Crabbe, Forest Trends and Fern, 2020), the major part of which is found in rural areas, with parents who know little about hazards of exposing children to hazardous activities, how are they going to determine the amount of work that is not dangerous to the child’s health? If

Parliament intends to help fight child labour, then there must be monitoring mechanisms and education of parents on the issues of child labour and its detriments.

4.4 One in five girls suffers child marriage in Ghana; it destroys the future of girls

Child marriage is one of the core issues that MPs raise about children. Child marriage is considered a global problem (see Figure 7, lines 1, 18). It is rampant in Ghana (line 1), as one out of five girls in Ghana marries before the age of 18 years (line 6). As stated by one MP:

Example 6: Hansard: 3 July 2019/Col.2619-2620

Indeed, Mr Speaker, child marriage is truly a global problem that cuts across countries, cultures, religions and ethnicities. Statistics show that worldwide, each year, 12 million girls are married before the age of 18. That is 23 girls per minute, and nearly one girl per two seconds. The prevalence rate of child marriage is, however, very high in Africa than in most areas... The picture in Ghana is not very much different. Even though child marriage ... is illegal in the country ... child marriage is a practice estimated to affect one in five girls. According to UNICEF, 21 per cent of girls in Ghana are married before their 18th birthday.

Considered as a menace (line 12), a serious matter (line 11), child marriage seen as deep-rooted in Ghanaian socio-cultural norms and traditions (lines 4, 12, 21) and partly caused by economic factors and poverty (line 18): “Mr Speaker, child marriage is very often fuelled by gender inequality, poverty, traditions, and insecurity; but these causes are not insurmountable problems” (Hansard: 3 July 2019/Col.2620). The above-stated issues have largely been noted in scholarly literature on child marriage. As Yaya et al.’s (2019) study of 34 sub-Saharan African countries reveals, 54% of women in the sub-region experience child marriage, with cross-country variations. In Ghana, it has been found that 20.68% of women experience child marriage, which was occasioned by factors such as poverty, teenage pregnancy and betrothal marriage (Ahonsi et al., 2019).



Figure 7. A screenshot of the first 26 concordance lines of *child marriage*

Unlike the issue of child labour, MPs have no argument against what constitutes child marriage; they condemn it outright. The MPs implore each other to rise together to fight against child marriage (line 7): “We must tackle them seriously, given their devastating impact on the girl-child, society and the economy of our country” (Hansard: 3 July 2019/Col.2620). The MPs often bemoan the consequences and impact of child marriage, as exemplified in example 7.

Example 7: Hansard: 3 July 2019/Col2619-2621

Mr Speaker, the impact on the girl child should be seen as a human rights violation that could produce devastating repercussions on a girl’s life, effectively ending her childhood. These also include the huge challenges that child brides face because they are married as children. They often feel isolated and with limited freedom, feel disempowered. They are deprived of their fundamental rights to health, education and safety. Child brides are neither physically nor emotionally ready to become wives and mothers. They are therefore likely to experience dangerous complications in pregnancy and at childbirth, contract HIV/AIDS and suffer domestic violence. With little access to education and economic opportunities, they and their families are more likely to live in poverty and to be trapped in the trans-generational cycle of poverty. Moreover, child marriage usually destroys the future marital life of the girl-child, as available evidence suggests that child-marriage almost always ends in failure.

There are several ways in which MPs think the problem of child marriage can be addressed, including: campaign, education and sensitisation against child marriage (lines 14, 22, 23, 24, 25); increased reportage (line 17); passage and implementation of legislation (line 9) and action against perpetrators (line 19). Article 34 of the UNCRC abhors sexual exploitation of children and charges state parties “to protect the child from all forms of sexual exploitation and sexual abuse”. According to Afranie et al. (2019), the fight against child marriage in Ghana has been spearheaded by several state institutions, which include the Ministry of Gender, Children and Social Protection (MoGCSP); the Ministry of Health; the Domestic Violence and Victim Support Unit (DOVVSU); the Girl Child Education Unit of the Ghana Education Service (GES) and the Commission for Human Rights and Administrative Justice (CHRAJ), UNICEF Ghana, Ark Foundation, Gender and Human Rights Documentation Centre, ActionAid Ghana, and the Muslim Family Counselling Service. These institutions undertake programmes such as community sensitisation and empowerment training for girls, reproductive health services, support for girls’ education as well as rescue and management of victims of child marriage. However, these institutions appear to have been ineffective in the fight against child marriage due to the absence of national policies to coordinate their activities as well as certain socio-cultural practices that are highly difficult to fight against (cf. Sarfo et al., 2020).

4.5 Child trafficking, child slavery or child labour?

Child trafficking is another fundamental issue about which MPs talk. Child trafficking is an international problem affecting millions of people (Johansen, n.d.) and one of the fastest growing and most lucrative criminal activities in the world (Rafferty, 2013). Child labour refers to an illegal procurement and recruitment of children and relocating them for the purpose of either sexual or labour exploitation (cf. Smolin, 2004). The definition implies that the mere sale of children does not constitute child trafficking (Smolin, 2004). Thus, the definition of child trafficking encompasses child labour and sexual exploitation: “child labour is a major issue and it relates to human and child trafficking” (Hansard: 6 June 2017/Col.218). This reflects how Ghanaian MPs frame child trafficking: it mostly occurs in the context of child labour (see Figure 8, lines 8, 10, 12, 16, 17, 19, 20, 27) and child slavery (lines 3, 16, 18, 24).



Figure 8. A screenshot of the first 26 concordance lines of child trafficking

Ghanaian MPs recognise that there is child trafficking Ghana: “Mr Speaker, in a situation of hopelessness, child trafficking has become a phenomenon which has been somehow ‘regularised’. This cannot continue” (Hansard: 31 May 2013/Col.115). Recognising the issue of child trafficking in Ghana (lines 2, 5, 6, 11, 12, 18, 20), Ghanaian MPs commemorate the World Day against Human/Child Trafficking every year (line 1). Child trafficking is seen by the MPs as a danger (lines 5, 12) and a menace (lines 8, 13), as, for example, “while reported cases of human trafficking increased by 60.9 per cent from 36 to 92 in 2015, the number of reported cases of child trafficking rose from four in 2014 to 11 in 2015” (Hansard: 21 March/Col.3262) and “human or child trafficking is all over in this country” (Hansard: 15 June 2017/Col.762-764). The MPs express the need to fight against child trafficking or combat it (line 14). They have, therefore, identified a number of ways in which it can be fought against or combatted (lines 5, 8, 13, 25). Consider the metaphorical use of the words “fight” and “combat”, which suggest a warfare, implying that stronger measures are needed to address child trafficking (cf. Sarfo-Kantankah, 2018). The various means of combatting child trafficking include: sensitization (line 6), empowerment (line 14) and education (12, 20, 22, 23). The support of international development partners and NGOs is also sought (lines 17, 25), as envisaged by Article 35 of the UNCRC, which enjoins state parties to “take all appropriate national, bilateral and multilateral measures to prevent the abduction of, the sale of or traffic in children for any purpose or in any form”. While the afore-mentioned recognition is expressed by the MPs, they seem to sometimes question the description and reportage of the magnitude of child trafficking in Ghana, as an MP explains in example 8.

Example 8: Hansard: 3 April 2019/Col.4543

Mr Speaker, I challenge CNN’s ‘Freeing the child slaves of Lake Volta’ and any other actor alleging “pervasive” child trafficking and child slavery in communities along the Volta Lake to provide independent evidence to corroborate these claims. These cases should be described or defined at best as “child labour” and are deliberately being distorted to tell stories of “child slavery” and “child trafficking”, feeding into stereotypes of supposed primitiveness and backwardness of African communities.

As noted previously, such framing of child trafficking may hinder the fight against it. This is because, by framing child trafficking as shown above, MPs are selecting, emphasising and excluding aspects of child trafficking to satisfy specific interests, thereby legitimising and illegitimising issues of concern (cf. Gitlin, 1980; Sarfo-Kantankah, 2018).

5. Conclusion

The purpose of this paper was to examine the discursive framing of children in the discourse of Ghanaian Members of Parliament (MPs), using Hansards as data. The analysis shows that Ghanaian MPs frame children as vulnerable people who suffer mainly from child labour, child marriage and child trafficking. As a result of children’s vulnerability to these socio-cultural problems, the MPs think that certain measures should be put in place to protect children. These measures include: campaigns, education and sensitisation against child marriage, increased reportage, passage and implementation of legislation, and action against perpetrators, empowerment of children and the support of national, bilateral and multilateral bodies and development partners.

Whereas the MPs condemn child labour, they question the international communities’ definition of what constitutes child labour as a result of certain socio-cultural differences between what can be considered as child “apprenticeship” and child labour. The MPs believe that if children help their parents on the farm and it does not prevent them from acquiring education or pose danger to the child’s health, it cannot constitute child labour. The MPs share similar sentiments on the issue of what constitutes child trafficking and child slavery. They think that the definition of child labour and child trafficking or child slavery must be considered according to culturally-specific circumstances. Some MPs feel that international bodies and organisations sometimes deliberately distort the definitions of child labour and child trafficking to stereotypically paint Africans as primitive and backward. However, the MPs raise no argument(s) about what constitutes child marriage.

The arguments about what constitutes and the framing of child labour and child trafficking can blare their actual existence in Ghana, such that it can negatively affect the implementation of legislation and other measures geared towards the fight against these problems affecting children. This is because the way a problem is framed affects what kinds of measures are needed to fight the problem (Reese, 2001; Entman, 2010). As Sarfo-Kantankah (2018) notes, if problems are seen as huge, it suggests that stronger measures and more formidable commitment are needed to fight such problems.

References

- Aalberg, T., Strömbäck, J. & de Vreese, C. H. (2011). The framing of politics as strategy and game: A review of concepts, operationalizations and key findings. *Journalism*, 13(2), 162-178. DOI: 10.1177/1464884911427799.
- Abdullah, A., Cudjoe, E. & Frederico, M. (2018). Barriers to children's participation in child protection practice: The views and experiences of practitioners in Ghana. *Children Australia*, 43(4), 267-275.
- Adonteng-Kissi, O. (2018a). Causes of child labour: Perceptions of rural and urban parents in Ghana. *Children and Youth Services Review*, 91, 55-65.
- Adonteng-Kissi, O. (2018b). Parental perceptions of child labour and human rights: A comparative study of rural and urban Ghana. *Child Abuse and Neglect*, 34-44. <https://doi.org/10.1016/j.chiabu.2018.07.017>.
- Adonteng-Kissi, O. (2021a). Parental perceptions of the nature of child labour in rural and urban Ghana: Cultural versus economic necessity. *Child Care in Practice*. DOI: 10.1080/13575279.2020.1868407.
- Adonteng-Kissi, O. (2021b). Child labour versus realising children's right to provision, protection, and participation in Ghana. *Australian Social Work*, 74(4), 464-479. DOI: 10.1080/0312407X.2020.1742363.
- Afenyadu, D. (2010). Child labor in fisheries and aquaculture, a Ghanaian perspective. In: *FAO workshop on child labor in fisheries and aquaculture in cooperation with ILO*, 1-15.
- Afranie, S., Gyan, E. S. & Tsiboe-Darko, A. (2019). Child marriage in Ghana: Who cares? *Ghana Social Science Journal*, 16(2), 19-45.
- Afriyie, L. T., Saeed, B. I. I & Alhassan, A. (2018). Determinants of child labour practices in Ghana. *Journal of Public Health: From Theory to Practice*. <https://doi.org/10.1007/s10389-018-0935-3>.
- Agbenya, L. (2009). *Child labor trafficking in the Lake Volta fishery of Ghana: A case study of Ogetse in the Krachi west district of the Volta region* (Master's thesis, University of Tromsø, Norway). Retrieved from <http://munin.uit.no/>
- Ahmed, I. (1999). Getting rid of child labour. *Economic and Political Weekly*, 34(27), 1815-1822.
- Ahonsi, B., Fuseini, K., Nai, D., Goldson, E., Owusu, S., Ndifuna, I., Humes, I. & Tapsoba, P. L. (2019). Child marriage in Ghana: evidence from a multi-method study. *BMC Women's Health*, 19 (126). <https://doi.org/10.1186/s12905-019-0823-1>.
- Al-Hassan, S. & Abubakari, A. (2015). Child rights, child labour and Islam: The case of Muslims in the Tamale metropolis, Ghana. *International Journal of Research in Social Sciences*, 5(2), 27-36.
- Bales, K. (2005). *Understanding global slavery: A reader*. Los Angeles: University of California Press.
- Bateson, G. (1954). *Steps to an Ecology of Mind*. New York: Ballentine.
- Barry, C. L., Jarlenski, M., Grob, R., Schlesinger, M. & Gollust, S. E. (2011). News media framing of childhood obesity in the United States from 2000 to 2009. *Pediatrics*, 128(1), 132-145.
- Berlan, A. (2003). Child Labour, Education and Child Rights Among Cocoa Producers in Ghana. In: van den Anker, C. ed 2003. *The Political Economy of New Slavery*. New York: Palgrave Macmillan, 158-178.
- Berlan, A. (2013). Social sustainability in agriculture: An anthropological perspective on child labour in cocoa production in Ghana. *The Journal of Development Studies*, 49(8), 1088-1100. DOI: 10.1080/00220388.2013.780041.
- Brown, S., Souto-Manning, M. & Laman, T. T. (2010). Seeing the strange in the familiar: Unpacking racialized practices in early childhood settings. *Race Ethnicity and Education*, 13(4), 513-532.
- Campbell, S., Smith, K. & Alexander, K. (2017). Spaces for gender equity in Australian early childhood education in/between discourses of human capital and feminism. *Australasian Journal of Early Childhood*, 42(3), 54-62.
- Chawla, L. Ed. (2001). *Growing Up in an Urbanising World*. London: Earthscan/UNESCO.
- Cudjoe, E. & Abdullah, A. (2019). Parental participation in child protection practice: The experiences of parents and workers in Ghana. *Qualitative Social Work*, 18(4), 693-709.
- Cudjoe, E., Abdullah, A. and Chua, A. A. (2020a). Children's participation in child protection practice in Ghana: Practitioners' recommendations for practice. *Journal of Social Service Research*, 46(4), 462-474.
- Cudjoe, E., Uggerhøj, L. & Abdullah, A. (2020b). 'We are consultants, not collaborators': Young people's experiences with child protection meetings in Ghana. *Children and Youth Services Review*, 109, 104748. <https://doi.org/10.1016/j.chilyouth.2020.104748>.
- Dalkilic, M. & Vadeboncoeur, J. A. (2016). Regulating the child in early childhood education: The paradox of inclusion. *Global Studies of Childhood*, 6(1), 17-30.

- de Groot, R., Kuunyem, M. Y. & Palermo, T. (2018). Child marriage and associated outcomes in northern Ghana: A cross-sectional study. *BMC Public Health*, 18(1), 1-12.
- de Vreese, C. H., Peter, J. and Semetko, H. A. (2001). Framing politics at the launch of the euro: A cross-national comparative study of frames in the news. *Political communication*, 18(2), 107-122.
- Entman, R. M. (2004). *Projections of Power: Framing News, Public Opinion, and U.S. Foreign Policy*. Chicago: University of Chicago Press.
- Entman, R. M. (2010). Media framing biases and political power: Explaining slant in news of campaign 2008. *Journalism*, 11(4), 389-408.
- Evison, J. (2010). What are the basics of analysing a corpus? In: O’Keeffe, A. & McCarthy, M. (Eds.) *The Routledge Handbook of Corpus Linguistics*. London and New York: Routledge, 122-135.
- Frimpong, A., Oppong, S. Y., Babah, P. A., Mensah, R. O., Acquah, A. & Acheampong, J. W. (2021). Concepts, causes and institutional response to child labour in Ghana: A socio-economic review. *Journal of Economic Research and Reviews*, 1(1), 1-6.
- Gabrielatos, C. & Baker, P. (2008). Fleeing, sneaking, flooding: a corpus analysis of discursive constructions of refugees and asylum seekers in the UK press 1996-2005. *Journal of English Linguistics*, 36(5), 5-38.
- Goffman, E. (1972). *Frame Analysis*. New York: Harper and Row.
- Golo, H. K. (2005). Poverty and child trafficking in Ghana: A study of the fishing sector. M.A.thesis. Institute of Social Studies.
- Hamenoo, E. S. & Sottie, C. A. (2015). Stories from Lake Volta: The lived experiences of trafficked children in Ghana. *Journal of Child Abuse & Neglect*, 40, 103-112.
- Hamenoo, E. S., Dwomoh, E. A. & Dako-Gyeke, M. (2018). Child labour in Ghana: Implications for children's education and health. *Children and Youth Services Review*, 93, 248-254.
- Hart, R. A. (1992). *Children’s Participation: From Tokenism to Citizenship*. Florence: UNICEF.
- Hart, R. A. (1994). Children’s role in primary environmental care. *Childhood*, 2(1/2), 92-102.
- Hilson, G. (2010). Child labour in African artisanal mining communities: Experiences from Northern Ghana. *Development and Change*, 41(3), 445-473.
- Human Trafficking Act, 2005 (Act 694) (Ghana).
- Hunston, S. (2010). How can corpus be used to explore patterns?. In: O’Keeffe, A. & McCarthy, M. (Eds.) *The Routledge Handbook of Corpus Linguistics*. London and New York: Routledge, 152-166.
- Ibrahim, S. & Komulainen, S. (2016). Physical punishment in Ghana and Finland: Criminological, sociocultural, human rights and child protection implications. *International Journal of Human Rights and Constitutional Studies*, 4(1), 54-74.
- International Labour Organisation (ILO). What is Child Labor? Accessed 12 February 2022, from: <https://www.ilo.org/ipecc/facts/lang--en/index.htm>.
- Issahaku, P. A. (2019). Raising the future leaders: An analysis of child and family welfare policy in Ghana. *Journal of Public Child Welfare*, 13(2), 148-169.
- Johansen, R. (n.d.). Child trafficking in Ghana. <https://www.unodc.org/unodc/en/frontpage/child-trafficking-in-ghana.html>.
- Kjørholt, A. T. (2002). Small is powerful: Discourses on ‘children and participation’ in Norway. *Childhood*, 9(1), 63-82.
- Kjørholt, A. T. (2003). Creating a place to belong’: Girls’ and boys’ hutbuilding as a site for understanding discourses on childhood and generational relations in a Norwegian community. *Children’s Geographies*, 1(1), 261-279. DOI: 10.1080/14733280302178.
- Koomson, I. & Asongu, S. A. (2016). Relative contribution of child labour to household farm and non-farm income in Ghana: Simulation with child’s education. *African Development Review*, 28(1), 104-115.
- Koomson, B., Manful, E., Yeboah, E. H. & Dapaah, J. M. (2021). “Work socialisation gone wrong? Exploring the antecedent of child trafficking in two Ghanaian fishing communities”. *Children's Geographies*, 1-12.
- Koomson, B., Manful, E., Dapaah, J. M. & Yeboah, E. H. (2022). I agreed to go because.....: Examining the agency of children within a phenomenon conceptualised as trafficking in Ghana. *Children & Society*, 36(1), 101-117.
- Lawrence, R. G. (2000). Game-framing the issues: Tracking the strategy frame in public policy news. *Political Communication*, 17(2), 93-114.
- Manful, E., Cudjoe, E. & Abdullah, A. (2020). Towards child-inclusive practices in child protection in Ghana: Perspectives from parents. *Children and Youth Services Review*, 119, 105594. <https://doi.org/10.1016/j.childyouth.2020.105594>
- Mayer, W.G. (1996). In defence of negative campaigning. *Political Science Quarterly*, 111(3), 437-455.

- McEnery, T. & Hardie, A. (2012). *Corpus linguistics: Method, Theory and Practice*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press.
- Mchakulu, J. E. Z. (2011). *Framing political communication in an African context: A comparative analysis of post-election newspaper editorials and parliamentary speeches in Malawi* (PhD thesis). University of Leicester.
- Miljeteig, P. (1994). Children's involvement in the implementation of their own rights: Present and future perspectives. Paper presented at Symposium on the Social and Psychological Implications of the UN Convention of the Rights of the Child, International Society for the Study of Behavioural Development XIIIth Biennial Meetings, Amsterdam.
- Moss, P., Dillon, J. & Statham, J. (2000). The 'child in need' and 'the rich child': discourses, constructions and practice. *Critical Social Policy*, 20(2), 233-254.
- Müller, A. (2016). *Framing Childhood in Eighteenth-Century English Periodicals and Prints, 1689-1789*. London: Routledge.
- Nielsen, A. S. (2021). Saving racialized children through good schooling: Media discourses on racialized children's schooling as a site for upholding danish whiteness. *Nordic Journal of Studies in Educational Policy*, 7(3), 200-208. DOI: 10.1080/20020317.2021.1980275.
- Pacini-Ketchabaw, V., White, J. & de Almeida, A. A. (2006). Racialization in early childhood: A critical analysis of discourses in policies. *International Journal of Educational Policy, Research and Practice*, 7, 95-113.
- Pacini-Ketchabaw, V. & de Almeida, A. A. (2006). Language discourses and ideologies at the heart of early childhood education. *International Journal of Bilingual Education and Bilingualism*, 9(3), 310-341. DOI: 10.1080/13670050608668652.
- Partington, A. (2010). Modern diachronic corpus-assisted discourse studies (MD-CADS) on UK newspapers: An overview of the project. *Corpora*, 5(2), 83-108.
- Pearce, M. (2014). Key function words in a corpus of UK election manifestos. *Linguistik Online*, 65 (3), 23-44.
- Rafferty, Y. (2013). Child trafficking and commercial sexual exploitation: A review of promising prevention policies and programs. *American journal of orthopsychiatry*, 83(4), 559.
- Reese, S. D. (2001). Prologue – Framing public life: A bridging model for media research. In: Reese, S. D., Gandy Jr., O. H. & Grant, A. E. (Eds.) 2001. *Framing Public Life. Perspectives on Media and Our Understanding of the Social World*. Mahwah, NJ: Lawrence Erlbaum, 7-31.
- Salah, R. (2001). Child trafficking in west and central Africa. Retrieved from <http://www.unicef.org/media/newsnotes/africchildtraffick.pdf>.
- Sarfo, E. A., Salifu Yendork, J. & Naidoo, A. V. (2020). Understanding child marriage in Ghana: the constructions of gender and sexuality and implications for married girls. *Child Care in Practice*, 1-14.
- Sarfo-Kantankah, K. S. (2018). Corruption is a big issue: A corpus-assisted study of the discursive construction of corruption in Ghanaian parliamentary discourse. *Legon Journal of the Humanities*, 29(1), 226-258.
- Sarfo-Kantankah, K. S. (2021). The discursive construction of men and women in Ghanaian parliamentary discourse: A corpus-based study. *Ampersand*, 8, 100079.
- Sarfo-Kantankah, K. S. (2022). Gender-based violence in Ghanaian parliamentary debates: a corpus-assisted discourse analysis". *Critical Approaches to Discourse Analysis Across Disciplines*, 14(1), 1-21.
- Schuck, A. R. & de Vreese, C. H. (2006). Between risk and opportunity: News framing and its effects on public support for EU enlargement. *European Journal of Communication*, 21(1), 5-32.
- Sertich, M. & Heemskerk, M. (2011). Ghana's human trafficking act: Successes and shortcomings in six years of implementation. *Human Rights Brief*, 19(1), 1.
- Sinclair, J. M. (1991). *Corpus, Concordance and Collocation*. Oxford: Oxford University Press.
- Sinclair, J. (2004). *Trust the Text*. London: Routledge.
- Slee, R. (2014). Discourses of inclusion and exclusion: Drawing wider margins. *Power and Education*, 6(1), 7-17.
- Smith, K. (2014). Discourses of childhood safety: What do children say? *European Early Childhood Education Research Journal*, 22(4), 525-537, DOI: 10.1080/1350293X.2014.947834.
- Smolin, D. M. (2004). Intercountry adoption as child trafficking. *Valparaiso University Law Review*, 39, 281.
- Strömbäck, J. & Dimitrova, D. V. (2006). Political and media systems matter: A comparison of election news coverage in Sweden and the United States. *Harvard International Journal of Press/Politics*, 11(4), 131-147.
- Taylor Crabbe, (2020). Child labour laws and policies in Ghana with specific emphasis on the cocoa sector. *Forest Trends and Fern*. https://www.forest-trends.org/wpcontent/uploads/2020/06/Ghana_Cocoa_Child_Labor_web_REV.pdf

- The United Nations Convention on the Rights of the Child, 1989. <https://www.ohchr.org/en/professionalinterest/pages/crc.aspx>.
- van Hear, N. (1982). Child labour and the development of capitalist agriculture in Ghana. *Development and Change*, 13(4), 499-514.
- Warming, H. (2011). Inclusive discourses in early childhood education? *International Journal of Inclusive Education*, 15(2), 233-247. DOI: 10.1080/13603110902783365.
- Weiss, G. & Wodak, R. 2007. Introduction: theory, interdisciplinarity and critical discourse analysis. In: Weiss, G. & Wodak, R. (Eds.) *Critical Discourse Analysis: Theory and Interdisciplinarity*. New York: Palgrave Macmillan.
- World Bank Group. (2015). World development report 2015: Mind, society, and behavior. Washington, DC: World Bank. Retrieved from <https://openknowledge.worldbank.org/handle/10986/20597>.
- Yaya, S., Odusina, E. K. & Bishwajit, G. (2019). Prevalence of child marriage and its impact on fertility outcomes in 34 sub-Saharan African countries. *BMC International Health and Human Rights*, 19(1), 1-11.
- Zelizer, V. (2005). The priceless child revisited. In: Qvortrup, J. *Studies in Modern Childhood*. United Kingdom: Palgrave Macmillan, 184-200.
-

Creativity and Authenticity in an Emerging Naija's Youth Hip Hop Culture

Idom T. Inyabri²⁰, Eyo O. Mensah²¹, Kaka Ochagu²²

Abstract

Since the last quarter of the 20th century, hip hop has become a cultural means of self-expression, entertainment, and empowerment for youths throughout the world. The creative manipulation of verbal and non-verbal codes has been the main vehicle through which the enormous hip hop cultural industry has been sustained and revitalized. This study investigates the creative ingenuity of a group of Naija (Nigerian) youths in Calabar, south-eastern Nigeria, in the creation of a peculiar hip hop brand in the Nigerian Hip Hop Nation (NHHN). Particularly, the study works through Appadurai's (1996, 2002) theory on migration and the electronic media as agents of modernity to apprehend the emergence and development of hip hop in Nigeria through the example of Calabar hip hop exponents. This article also derives discursive insight from Alim's (2009) idea of style as a major non-verbal linguistic vector of hip hop to identify and interrogate the creative ingenuity of the Nigerian youths here examined. Our study concludes that through the formation of a creative bond and the manipulation verbal and performance codes from their cultural space these Nigerian youths have established a peculiar brand of hip hop and are contributing to the transnational, multi-vocal Global Hip Hop Nation.

Keywords

Naija Hip Hop, Calabar; Electronic Media, Migration, Identity, Style, Youth; Creativity, Authenticity, Postcolonialism, Poststructuralism.

First submission: January 2022; Revised: April 2022, Accepted: May 2022

²⁰ PhD, Department of English and Literary Studies, University of Calabar, Nigeria

²¹ PhD (Corresponding Author), Department of Linguistics, University of Calabar, Nigeria, ORCID: 0000-0001-5838-0462, e-mail: eyomensah2004@yahoo.com

²² PhD, Department of General Studies, College of Health Technology, Calabar, Nigeria