

IMPLEMENTATION OF CHILD CONTROL MEASURES: A PANACEA TO RURAL AND URBAN FAMILIES

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Abstract: *This study examines the implementation of child control measures as a potential panacea for managing children's behaviour and safety in both rural and urban families. The study makes the case that parental oversight, monitoring software, parental controls on devices, and disciplining methods can all help to address the particular issues that rural and urban families experience while also promoting good results for kids and families. The study outlines the key ideas and stresses the need of putting child control measures into practice in a way that supports favorable outcomes for kids and families. The study contends that while child control methods cannot solve every problem faced by rural and urban families, they can be a useful tool for fostering healthy growth and conduct. Child control measures can be a useful tool for fostering healthy and happy families by acknowledging the advantages and limitations of various types of measures, addressing concerns about children's rights and creativity, and implementing measures in a way that is tailored to the needs of individual families.*

Keywords: *Child Control Measures, Panacea, Rural and Urban Families.*

INTRODUCTION

Every child wants to be in control, it is one of children's driving factors. Having control over their world helps them feel significant. But there is a point where it becomes an issue and the causes of children developing control issues are not entirely known. However, there are a number of significant factors that can lead to children struggling with control issues. Knowing the child by law is below the age of 18. Therefore, is still under a guardian or parents who daily struggle with children frequent and severe tantrums some having difficulty with interpersonal relationships, poor impulse control and some with serious behavioural problems like rule-breaking, bullying and self-harm. Child control measures have become increasingly popular as a means of managing children's behaviour and safety in both rural and urban families because a child is a child whether in rural or urban environment. Moreover, the ubiquity

of technology and the difficulties parents confront in today's complicated culture make child control tactics occur in a variety of forms and have various advantages and restrictions, including parental control on device, parental supervision, monitory software, and disciplining method.

Rural families may find child control measure to be of particular importance as they frequently confront particular difficulties that can make it challenging to monitor and regulate their children's behaviour. Rural families may have less access to resources and may be further from social networks, making it more difficult for them to obtain help when they need it removed from social nets. Additionally, they could experience higher rates of poverty, which can make it challenging for them to meet the necessities for their kids. Child control measures can give rural families the skills they need to monitor and control their children's conduct, encourage positive growth, and help them overcome these difficulties.

For urban families who could experience greater rates of crime and exposure to harmful behaviours, child control measures can be crucial. Parents may worry about their children's safety in urban settings as they navigate crowded environments and interact with friends who might be engaging in risky behaviour. Child control measures can aid parents in reducing these dangers by giving them the means to keep an eye on and control their children's conduct while encouraging healthy growth. Despite the potential advantages of child control measures, there are also worries about how these measures may limit children's creativity and liberty. Some claim that child control measures might be overly onerous and may prevent children from exploring and learning from their environment. Others are concerned that excessive child control measures could have unfavorable effects.

CONCEPTUAL CLARIFICATION

Child Control

Child control, as defined by various researchers encompasses a range of perspectives rooted in cultural, social, and legal contexts. From the writings of renowned scholars and activists to the insights of practitioners and policymakers, Nigerian discourse on child control reflects a multifaceted understanding of the rights, responsibilities, and challenges inherent in shaping the lives of young individuals. Achebe explores the traditional Igbo concept of child control within the context of pre-colonial Nigerian society. Achebe depicts a society where children are subject to the authority of their elders, with obedience and respect for parental authority emphasized as fundamental values. Through the character of Okonkwo, Achebe illustrates the tensions between traditional notions of control and the influence of external forces, such as colonialism, which disrupt established social structures (Achebe, 1958; Ododo, 2016).

Similarly, Emecheta, in novels like "The Joys of Motherhood," delves into the complexities of child control within the framework of modern Nigerian society. Emecheta's works often depict the struggles of women in balancing the demands of motherhood with societal expectations and economic pressures. Through her characters, Emecheta explores themes of agency, autonomy, and the impact of patriarchal norms on the lives of women and children (Nwafor, 2020). In the realm of legal scholarship, authors

like Professor Akin Oyeboade have contributed to the discourse on child control by examining the intersection of customary law, statutory law, and international conventions. Oyeboade's analyses highlight the challenges of reconciling traditional practices with modern legal frameworks, particularly concerning issues such as child marriage, child labour, and child abuse. By advocating for legal reforms and greater enforcement mechanisms, Oyeboade underscores the importance of ensuring that children's rights are protected and upheld.

On the front lines of social work and activism, figures like Hafsat Abiola-Costello have been instrumental in advocating for the rights of children in Nigeria. Through her organization, the Kudirat Initiative for Democracy (KIND), Abiola-Costello has worked to address issues such as child trafficking, child labour, and access to education. By empowering communities and mobilizing grassroots efforts, Abiola-Costello exemplifies a bottom-up approach to child control that emphasizes community engagement and collective action. Additionally, scholars like Osotimehin have focused on the intersection of child control and public health, particularly regarding issues such as maternal and child mortality, adolescent reproductive health, and HIV/AIDS prevention. Osotimehin's research underscores the importance of addressing socio-economic determinants of health and implementing comprehensive strategies that prioritize the well-being of children and adolescents (Osotimehin, 2010). In conclusion, the discourse on child control in Nigeria reflects a diverse array of perspectives, ranging from literary explorations of traditional values to legal analyses of human rights frameworks and grassroots efforts to empower communities and protect vulnerable children. By engaging with these varied perspectives, policymakers, practitioners, and scholars can work towards holistic approaches to child control that promote the rights, dignity, and well-being of all children in Nigeria.

The Need for Child Control Measures

Parenting is a difficult undertaking, particularly in today's environment where children are exposed to a variety of influences and difficulties that may have a detrimental effect on their development. Families in both rural and urban areas struggle differently to control their children's conduct and safety, which can have serious long-term effects on their well-being and potential for success (Donner et al., 2021). Isolation and limited resources are two major issues that rural families have to cope with. Rural communities may have limited access to community resources like healthcare, education, and social services, which can make it difficult for parents to give their kids the support they need. Additionally, there may be a lack of employment options for rural families, which can put a strain on their finances and make it harder for them to meet the basic needs of their children. Rural families may find it challenging to give their kids the tools and support they need to succeed as a result of these obstacles (Anderson et al., 2017).

On the other hand, urban families could experience various issues specific to the metropolitan setting. Urban children may be exposed to crime, violence, and other harmful influences that may affect their behaviour and safety. Due to the fast-paced and frequently chaotic nature of city living, urban families

may also experience higher levels of stress and anxiety, which may hinder their capacity to practice consistent and effective parenting (Evans et al., 2018). The effect of technology on children's conduct and safety is another issue that both rural and urban families must deal with. Parents may find it difficult to successfully supervise and restrict their children's usage of digital devices and online platforms because children today are exposed to them from an early age. This may have unfavourable effects like cyberbullying, exposure to objectionable material, and technology addiction (Rideout et al., 2019). Finally, parenting methods and cultural beliefs may present difficulties for families living in rural and urban areas. Parents may struggle to reconcile these expectations with their parenting style because different cultures may have different standards for raising children. This may make it difficult for parents to successfully regulate their children's conduct and safety and may lead to conflict and tension within the family (Linver et al., 2015).

Types of Child Control Measures

Child control measures refer to the numerous methods, plans, and procedures parents and other adults use to keep an eye on and regulate their kids' conduct and safety. Parental supervision, monitoring software, parental controls for electronic devices, and disciplinary techniques are only a few examples of the various kinds of child control mechanisms available. Each of these strategies has a specific function and can be applied in various contexts to encourage favourable results for both families and children. One of the simplest kinds of child control is parental supervision. It entails keeping a close eye on a child's conduct and activities, either in person or remotely. In addition to observing their children play or interact with others, parents who employ parental supervision may also use devices like baby monitors or video cameras to keep a check on their children's whereabouts (Grolnick, 2016). Parental supervision can assist parents in spotting potential hazards or harmful influences so they can take action before they become an issue.

Monitoring software is another kind of child control technique that is frequently used to keep an eye on children's internet activity. Monitoring software can keep tabs on a child's online activity, including the websites they visit and the searches they conduct (Livingstone & Haddon, 2017). It can also send parents regular reports on how their children behave online. For parents who are concerned about their children's exposure to unsuitable content or internet predators, this kind of child control tool can be especially helpful. Another form of child control technique that may be used to restrict a child's access to particular features or categories of content on their devices is parental control. Parental controls, for instance, can be used to restrict a child's screen time, ban particular websites or apps, or stop a youngster from making purchases without their consent (Radesky et al., 2016). Smartphones, tablets, and other devices can be configured with parental controls, making them useful tools for regulating a child's behaviour and safety.

Another form of child control measures that parents can employ to encourage good behaviour and lower risk is discipline techniques. The use of suitable consequences, such as timeouts or loss of privileges, as

well as the establishment of clear rules and consequences for inappropriate behaviour are all examples of effective discipline approaches (Sanders et al., 2014). Children who are being disciplined might learn the limits of appropriate behaviour as well as social and self-control skills.

Parents who use these tools wisely can keep an eye on their children's behaviour, prevent them from being exposed to harmful influences, encourage good behaviour, and improve their relationships with their children.

The Impact of Child Control Measures on Rural Families

Child control measures can be a key component in assisting rural families to overcome particular issues including poverty, isolation, and resource scarcity. How each type of child control measure can be modified to handle these issues is covered in the section that follows.

Parental supervision: is a term used in child development research to describe the act of monitoring, guiding, and directing children's behaviour s and activities. This can include setting rules and boundaries, providing positive reinforcement and guidance, and providing consistent discipline. The goal of parental supervision is to help children develop self-control, self-reliance, and a sense of responsibility. The amount and type of supervision needed varies by age, developmental stage, and the child's unique needs and circumstances. Due to their distance from resources and other rural residents, rural families frequently confront particular difficulties that can make it more difficult for parents to keep an eye on their children. Rural families can, however, adopt a variety of techniques to get beyond these obstacles. For instance, parents can create a controlled and safe setting for their children to play in as well as explicit rules and expectations for their behaviour . To help with additional support and supervision, parents can also solicit the aid of other family members, neighbors, or community members.

Monitoring software: Due to restricted access to broadband internet and other technologies, using monitoring software may provide significant difficulties for rural households. Rural families can, however, adopt a variety of techniques to get beyond these obstacles. For instance, parents can use the community library or center in their area to access technology and online resources. Even if they don't have access to a home computer, they can still monitor their children's online activity using mobile devices and other technology (Jensen & Fraser, 2017).

Parental controls on devices: Rural families could also have difficulties since they have less access to technology and gadgets, which can make using parental controls more challenging. Rural families can, however, adopt a variety of techniques to get beyond these obstacles. To limit their children's access to particular types of information or features, parents can use shared family devices or collaborate with their local school or community center to access technology and devices. To reduce their children's exposure to violent or unsuitable content, parents can also install parental controls on gadgets like televisions and gaming consoles.

Discipline techniques: The lack of resources and additional difficulties that may be faced by rural households can make it more difficult to implement discipline techniques. Rural families can, however, adopt a variety of techniques to get beyond these obstacles. Parents can, for instance, set up clear rules and punishments for bad behaviour while using positive reinforcement and praise to promote good behaviour. In order to access parenting and discipline resources like counseling and support groups, they can also collaborate with community organizations, schools, and other resources (Jensen & Fraser, 2017).

Examples of Successful Implementation of Child Control Measures in Rural Communities

There are several successful examples of the implementation of child control measures in rural communities that have resulted in positive outcomes for children and families. The following are a few examples:

The Rural Online Initiative: Utah State University, United State created the Rural Online Initiative, a program that gives remote populations access to technology and internet services. The application also provides guidance and assistance to parents so they can keep an eye on and regulate their children's internet behaviour. Rural families have benefited from the program's success in assisting them in overcoming the difficulties posed by their limited access to technology and internet resources (West et al., 2020).

The Nigerian Communications Commission (NCC): In Nigeria, the telecommunications sector is governed by the Nigerian Communications Commission. The NCC has put in place a number of initiatives, such as the creation of the Child Online Protection (COP) project, to safeguard kids from online abuse and exploitation. The campaign aims to educate parents and kids about the dangers of online activity and offer advice on how to behave safely online (NCC, 2021).

The Strong African American Families Program: A parenting program called the Strong African American Families Program was been established in rural areas of the United States. The program's main goal is to support good parenting habits including parental supervision and efficient correctional methods. According to Brody et al. (2019), the program has proved effective in enhancing children's behavior and lowering unfavorable outcomes like substance use and delinquent behaviour.

Child Protection Network: In Nigeria, a program called the Child Protection Network (CPN) works to safeguard kids from maltreatment, exploitation, and neglect. To detect and address instances of child abuse and neglect, the program works with community-based child protection groups. According to Oyedele et al. (2002), the CPN has been successful in lowering the prevalence of child abuse and neglect in Nigeria.

The Parent-Child Assistance Program: In rural areas of the United States, a home visiting program called the Parent-Child Assistance Program has been put into place. The program's main

objective is to support and help parents who are dealing with substance misuse and other issues. The program has been effective in enhancing parenting styles and decreasing the likelihood of child abuse (Zhang et al., 2021).

The Youth Empowerment and Development Initiative (YEDI): An NGO in Nigeria called the Youth Empowerment and Development Initiative strives to enhance young people's leadership, academic, and health outcomes. The Positive Parenting Program is one of the initiatives that YEDI has put in place to support good parenting techniques. In order to deepen the link between parents and children and to improve parenting techniques, the program offers parents knowledge and skills (YEDI, 2021).

These examples show that child control strategies can be successfully adopted in rural areas to support children's and families' well-being. Rural communities can overcome the particular difficulties they encounter and support healthy child development by providing access to technology and resources, involving community-based child protection committees, implementing online protection initiatives, providing parenting programs, providing training and support to parents, and implementing evidence-based parenting programs.

The Impact of Child Control Measures on Urban Families

Child control measures can have significant impacts on urban families, affecting various aspects of their lives. These impacts can be both positive and negative, shaping family dynamics, parent-child relationships, and the well-being of all family members. Below, I'll outline some of these impacts with citations to support the discussion:

Parental Stress and Mental Health: Implementing strict child control measures, such as curfews or extensive monitoring, can contribute to increased parental stress and mental health issues. Research by Conger and Donnellan (2007) found that parental stress is associated with authoritarian parenting styles, which may include rigid control measures. This stress can affect parents' overall well-being and their ability to effectively parent their children.

Parent-Child Conflict: Overly restrictive child control measures can lead to heightened parent-child conflict, particularly during adolescence when young people seek autonomy and independence. According to research by Smetana (2011), conflicts often arise when parents enforce rules without considering their children's perspectives or input, leading to feelings of resentment and rebellion.

Psychological Development of Children: The way child control measures are implemented can impact children's psychological development. Harsh or overly controlling parenting styles have been linked to negative outcomes such as low self-esteem, anxiety, and depression in children (Chang et al., 2003). Conversely, supportive and authoritative parenting styles, which balance control with warmth and responsiveness, are associated with positive child outcomes.

Socialization and Peer Relationships: Strict child control measures may limit children's opportunities for socialization and the development of peer relationships. Research by Hart et al.

(2003) suggests that overly controlling parenting practices can hinder children's ability to navigate social interactions and form healthy relationships outside the family environment.

Academic Achievement: The impact of child control measures on academic achievement is complex. While some level of parental monitoring and involvement in children's education is beneficial, excessive control can backfire. Studies have shown that overly controlling parenting styles are associated with decreased academic motivation and performance (Amato & Fowler, 2002).

Cultural and Contextual Factors: It is essential to consider cultural and contextual factors when examining the impact of child control measures on urban families. What may be considered appropriate or necessary control in one cultural context may be perceived differently in another. For example, research by Cheah et al. (2006) highlights the importance of understanding cultural variations in parenting practices and their implications for child development.

In other words, child control measures can have multifaceted impacts on urban families, influencing parental well-being, parent-child relationships, children's development, and family dynamics. While some level of control is necessary for children's safety and well-being, parents and policymakers must strike a balance between control and autonomy, taking into account the individual needs and circumstances of each family.

Examples of Successful Implementation of Child Control Measures in Urban Communities

There are several examples of successful implementation of child control measures in urban communities, including Nigerian urban communities. Here are a few examples:

Lagos State Child Rights Law: To safeguard the rights and well-being of children, Lagos State, Nigeria, approved the Child Rights Law in 2007. Parental obligations, children participation, and child protection are all addressed by the law. Additionally, it created the Lagos State Domestic and Sexual Violence Response Team (DSVRT), which offers counselling, legal support, and other assistance to victims of domestic violence and child abuse. In metropolitan areas, the law has been effective in advancing children's rights and safeguarding them from harm.

Community Policing: Building relationships between the police and the community is a key component of the method known as "community policing" for addressing crime and disturbance. In metropolitan regions, where crime rates are frequently greater, community policing can be very successful. Community policing can contribute to a decrease in crime and safer neighborhoods for families and children by fostering trust and cooperation between the police and the community.

Positive Discipline Programs: Effective disciplinary techniques that encourage positive conduct and minimize the need for punishment are taught to parents and other caregivers through positive discipline programs. The main objectives of these initiatives are to strengthen the bonds between parents and their children, teach them how to make wise decisions and solve difficulties, and establish

clear guidelines for appropriate behaviour. The Triple P-Positive Parenting Program and the Incredible Years are two examples of positive discipline initiatives.

Parental Monitoring Apps: Parental monitoring apps have been more popular in Nigeria's urban areas in recent years. With the use of these apps, parents can keep tabs on their children's whereabouts, observe their online behaviour, and establish usage restrictions for their devices. Secure Teen, Norton Family, and Qustodio are a few of the most well-liked parental control applications in Nigeria. These apps have been effective in assisting parents in ensuring the safety of their children and encouraging good behaviour.

Neighbourhood Watch Groups: Community-based organizations called neighbourhood watch groups work to reduce crime and advance safety in metropolitan areas. In Nigeria, a lot of neighbourhoods have set up neighbourhood watch programs to help cut down on crime and guarantee the protection of locals, including children. To advance safety and security, these groups frequently collaborate closely with police enforcement and other neighbourhood organizations.

After-School Programs: After-school programs have been created in many metropolitan communities to give children a safe place to go after school. Sports, arts & crafts, tutoring, and mentoring are a few examples of these programs. For instance, the Boys and Girls Clubs of America provide after-school activities in numerous urban locations around the country, giving kids a secure and encouraging atmosphere in which to learn and develop.

School-Based Programs: Urban schools in Nigeria have many programs in place to encourage good behaviour and curb harmful behaviour among students. Mentorship, character education, and peer counseling are possible components of these programs. To further support children and families, some schools also work in collaboration with local businesses and the police.

Criticisms of Child Control Measures

The promotion of children's safety and well-being can be aided by child control measures, but it is necessary to recognize their possible drawbacks as well. Child control measures can limit children's liberty and inventiveness, and they may not always be successful in encouraging positive conduct, according to one possible complaint. For instance, several research has discovered that rigorous parental supervision might negative impact on teenage outcomes like self-esteem, social skills, and risk-taking behaviour (Soenens & Vansteenkiste, 2010). Similar to overusing monitoring software, parental controls on gadgets may not always be successful in avoiding harmful conduct and may foster mistrust between parents and children. Additionally, some critics contend that child control measures might be employed in place of more beneficial ones including parent-child interaction, constructive discipline techniques, and community-based treatments (Coyne et al., 2018). These critics contend that rather than depending primarily on restrictive measures, child control measures should be used in concert with other tactics to improve children's autonomy and well-being.

Even though these criticisms may apply to child control measures, it's crucial to remember that there are counterarguments to them. Child control measures that are properly applied can be utilized to help children's growth while also promoting their safety and well-being. First, child control measures should be employed as part of a holistic parenting strategy rather than in isolation. To ensure that children can express themselves while simultaneously preserving boundaries and fostering safety, parents and other adults who are responsible for them should work to strike a balance between control and autonomy. Parents can foster a sense of trust and respect between themselves and their children by being upfront with them and involving them in decision-making.

Furthermore, it is important to execute child control measures in a way that promotes rather than obstructs children's growth. Instead of relying entirely on punishment, discipline techniques like modelling and positive reinforcement can be utilized to promote positive conduct. Parental supervision can be a chance to do things like play outside or read aloud to your children, which encourages their physical and mental growth. Finally, it's important to respect children's rights when using child control measures. Children have the right to safety, privacy, and freedom of speech. To make sure that children's rights aren't being violated, monitoring tools or parental restrictions should be used sparingly and in conjunction with open communication.

Conclusion

In conclusion, child control measures have the potential to be a useful tool for encouraging favourable outcomes for children and families in both rural and urban areas. While monitoring their children's conduct and safety might be difficult for parents, it is crucial to recognize these difficulties and any potential drawbacks of child management methods. Child control measures that are properly implemented can aid in addressing these issues and fostering favourable results for children and families. Parents and other caregivers can promote healthy conduct, respect children's rights, and strike a balance between control and autonomy by utilizing a variety of strategies such as parental supervision, monitoring software, parental controls on devices, and discipline approaches. It is also critical to remember that effective child control measures necessitate open communication, child participation in decision-making, and a well-rounded parenting style. Child control measures can then be utilized to help children's growth while also promoting their safety and well-being. Overall, child control measures should be viewed as a component of a larger parenting philosophy that attempts to establish a secure and nurturing environment for children to mature and thrive.

Addressing the Challenges and Promoting Positive Outcomes for Children and Families

Addressing the challenges faced by children and families while promoting positive outcomes requires a multifaceted approach that addresses various aspects of their well-being. Below, I'll outline some strategies and interventions to tackle these challenges and foster positive outcomes, drawing on research and best practices:

Early Childhood Education and Development: Investing in early childhood education and development programs can have a profound impact on children's cognitive, social, and emotional development. High-quality early childhood interventions, such as preschool programs and home visiting services, provide children with the foundational skills they need to succeed in school and beyond (Heckman, 2006).

Parenting Support and Education: Providing parents with access to parenting support and education programs can strengthen parent-child relationships, improve parenting skills, and reduce stress. Parenting programs that emphasize positive discipline, communication strategies, and child development knowledge empower parents to create nurturing and supportive home environments (Sanders et al., 2014).

Access to Healthcare and Social Services: Ensuring access to healthcare, social services, and basic needs support is essential for promoting the well-being of children and families. Comprehensive healthcare services, including preventive care, mental health services, and early intervention programs, can address both physical and mental health needs (Halfon & Hochstein, 2002).

Community Engagement and Support: Building strong, supportive communities is crucial for fostering positive outcomes for children and families. Community-based interventions, such as neighborhood centres, family resource centres, and mentorship programs, provide families with social support, resources, and connections to local services (Mincy et al., 2005).

Addressing Economic Inequality: Economic inequality is a significant barrier to positive outcomes for children and families. Policies and programs aimed at reducing poverty, increasing access to affordable housing, and providing economic support to low-income families can help alleviate financial stress and improve family well-being (Duncan & Magnuson, 2011).

Trauma-Informed Care: Many children and families experience trauma and adversity, which can have lasting effects on their well-being. Adopting a trauma-informed approach to service delivery, which recognizes the impact of trauma and promotes resilience, can help mitigate the negative effects of trauma and support healing (SAMHSA, 2014).

Education and Skill Development: Supporting children and parents in acquiring education and skills is essential for promoting positive outcomes. Education and skill development programs for children and adults, including vocational training, job readiness programs, and adult education classes, can increase economic opportunities and stability for families (Holzer et al., 2008).

By addressing these challenges and implementing strategies to promote positive outcomes, policymakers, practitioners, and communities can create environments where children and families can thrive.

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