

THE BOY CHILD -

A Corollary from legal frameworks and legislations.

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INTRODUCTION

A child is defined as a young human being below the age of puberty or below the legal age of majority. Child. A child is a human being between the stages of birth and puberty, or between the developmental period of infancy and puberty, thus a child child is said to be a young person typically older than a baby, but younger than a adult or teenager.

All over the world, the need to protect and safeguard the child, has been a thing of utmost concern for the human race. To this end, international, Regional and Local instruments have been put in place to ensure the protection of the rights of the child. The rights of children, including boys, are enshrined in various international and national laws aimed at ensuring their protection, development, and well-being. The Convention on the Rights of the Child (CRC), adopted by the United Nations General Assembly in 1989, is the most comprehensive framework for children's rights. In Africa, the primary legal instrument that protects the rights of children is the African Charter on the Rights and Welfare of the Child (ACRWC). This treaty, adopted by the Organization of African Unity (now the African Union) in 1990 and entered into force in 1999, specifically addresses the unique cultural, social, economic, and political contexts of African children. Consequently, this article will explore a few key provisions of these legal frameworks as they pertain to the boy child.

1. RIGHT TO EDUCATION

One of the most fundamental rights outlined in both the CRC and the Children's Rights Act is the right to education. Article 28 of the CRC emphasizes that primary education should be compulsory and free for all children. It also stresses the importance of making secondary

education accessible and available to every child. Similarly, Article 11 of the African Charter on the Rights and Welfare of the child provides that “every child has the right to an education, and primary education should be free and compulsory.” The Import and implication of the above provisions enunciates that, the boy child must have access to good qualitative education, irrespective of class struggle and social status in order to enhance his intellectual growth and capacity. Furthermore, school should provide a safe learning ground free from discrimination and bullying.

2. RIGHT TO PROTECTION FROM EXPLOITATION AND ABUSE

Imperatively to note, articles 19 and 34 of the CRC espouses the need to protect children from all forms of physical or mental violence, injury, abuse, neglect, and exploitation, including sexual exploitation and abuse. In affirmation of the above provisions, Article 16 of the African Charter on the Rights and Welfare of the Child, Protects children from all forms of torture, inhuman or degrading treatment, and abuse. As such, we can glean from the above statutory provisions that the boy child should at all time be protected from torture, inhuman or degrading treatment be it at home, school, church or among his playmates and peers. In view of this, there should be access to counseling and rehabilitation services for boys who have been victims of abuse or exploitation. Moreover, Effective mechanisms must be in place to protect boys from abuse and exploitation in all settings - home, school, and community.

3. RIGHT TO HEALTH AND WELFARE

Article 24 of the Convention on the Rights of the Child (CRC) states as follows

1. States Parties recognize the right of the child to the enjoyment of the highest attainable standard of health and to facilities for the treatment of illness and rehabilitation of health. States Parties shall strive to ensure that no child is deprived of his or her right of access to such health care services.

2. States Parties shall pursue full implementation of this right and, in particular, shall take appropriate measures:

(a) To diminish infant and child mortality;

(b) To ensure the provision of necessary medical assistance and health care to all children with

emphasis on the development of primary health care;

(c) To combat disease and malnutrition, including within the framework of primary health care, through, inter alia, the application of readily available technology and through the provision of adequate nutritious foods and clean drinking-water, taking into consideration the dangers and risks of environmental pollution;

(d) To ensure appropriate pre-natal and post-natal health care for mothers;

(e) To ensure that all segments of society, in particular parents and children, are informed, have access to education and are supported in the use of basic knowledge of child health and nutrition, the advantages of breastfeeding, hygiene and environmental sanitation and the prevention of accidents;

(f) To develop preventive health care, guidance for parents and family planning education and services.

3. States Parties shall take all effective and appropriate measures with a view to abolishing traditional practices prejudicial to the health of children.

4. States Parties undertake to promote and encourage international co-operation with a view to achieving progressively the full realization of the right recognized in the present article. In this regard, particular account shall be taken of the needs of developing countries.

Therefore we can deduce from the above that the CRC recognizes the right of the child to the highest attainable standard of health and access to healthcare services. In same vein, Article 14 of the African Charter on the Rights and Welfare of the Child, ensures the right to the best attainable state of physical, mental, and spiritual health. The implication of the above provisions are to the effect that the boy child should have access to quality healthcare services, including preventive and curative health services. Also, proper nutrition is essential for the healthy development of boys, and they should have access to adequate and nutritious food while taking into consideration their mental health, as mental health services should be available to address issues such as depression, anxiety, and trauma, which boys might experience.

Conclusively and in line with word of God, Psalm 127:3-5: categorically states that "Children are a heritage from the Lord, offspring a reward from him. Like arrows in the hands of a warrior are children born in one's youth." as such, states, parents and humanity at large are duty bound to ensure the protection and enhance the growth of the boy child.

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