

APPRENTICESHIP CONTRACT IN NIGERIA AND SELECTED JURISDICTIONS: THE NEED TO CONFORM NIGERIA'S LAW TO INTERNATIONAL STANDARD

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ABSTRACT

This article compares the practice and legal framework on apprenticeship contracts in Nigeria with Canada, Ghana and South Africa highlighting the inadequacies in the Nigerian legal framework vis-à-vis International Labour Organization (ILO) standards. It interrogates if the jurisdiction vested by the *Labour Act* in the Magistrate Court (MC) for settlement of apprenticeship disputes creates a jurisdictional tension between the National Industrial Court of Nigeria (NICN) pursuant to its exclusive jurisdiction under Section 254C (1) of the 1999 *Constitution of the Federal Republic of Nigeria (Third Alteration) Act* 2010 and the MC. It highlights the similarities and differences between apprenticeship and employment contract. It found that awareness on the regulatory framework on apprenticeship is low; apprenticeship contract has become a legitimised form of employment slavery and the law in Nigeria, is inadequate and not in tandem with ILO minimum best practices on apprenticeship. Further, there is lack of enforcement of the obsolete laws particularly by the Minister of Labour, the chief regulator of apprenticeship. It recommends review of Nigerian law to conform to ILO standards, awareness creation on regulation of apprenticeship, enforcement of the reviewed laws, and the Minister of Labour should become alive to his responsibilities as it pertains to apprenticeship.

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