

## **Causes and Perceived Effects of Street Hawking among Children in Ibadan, Oyo State, Nigeria**

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### **Abstract**

This study focused on street hawking among children in Ibadan, Oyo State, Nigeria. Specifically it identified the causes of children's involvement in street hawking and perceived effects of street hawking on the children involved. Two research questions and two hypotheses were formulated to guide the study. The study was a descriptive survey. Area of the study was Ibadan. Population was made up of all children both male and female involved in street hawking in Ibadan. Purposive stratified sampling and multi-stage procedures were used to select 150 respondents from the population. Questionnaire was used to collect data. Data were analyzed using mean and t-test at 0.05 level of significance. Major findings are eight causes of street hawking among children, including poor family living conditions, irregular family income, peer parental co-influence, large family size, family cultural heritage and high inflation and cost of living. Other findings area 22 perceived effects of street hawking on children. These include behavior deviance, sexual exploitation, emotional stress/trauma, child mortality rise, coupled with school dropout, among otherst. There exists a significant relationship between the response of male and female on the causes and perceived effects of street hawking by children in Ibadan. This study recommends massive awareness campaign to discourage street hawking by children and strict enforcement of the child's right laws in Nigeria.

**Keywords:** Street, Hawking, Children, Causes, Effects, Perceived

### **Introduction**

Child labour encompasses all activities either economic or otherwise that directly impeded on the overall well-being child development and productivity in his or her immediate environment (International Labour

Organization (ILO), 2010; UNICEF, 2012). Children are considered as viable component that sustains the existence circle of the life force of the humanity. Whence, should be treated consciously as a vital element of the globe. Although there has always been

a mix reaction among scholars especially with child welfare agencies, practitioners, care givers/guardians and policy makers with lots of favors and arguments in the position of the Childs' participation in economic venture of their immediate society (Eboh, 2018). The ILO estimates that, about 168 million children globally are involved in various forms of child labour activities. Out of this number, 59 million were reported to be in sub-Saharan Africa. Furthermore, 14 million children between the age of five and 14 relatively involved in economic labour related activities.

The rising state of children involvement in the job market (street hawking) in Nigeria could be seen as serious form of child abuse which could be detrimental to the wellbeing and social adjustment of the child. The question of what is the social norm for child's involvement in their immediate environment has been jointly addressed with little or no cognizant to reducing the abrupt assumptions of the Child as a viable economic entity especially in the context of the African child. Socially, children who are involved in street hawking are stereotypically harassed, stigmatized and bullied by the society's negligence which projects the complexes of the psychosocial crisis of identity vs role confusion according to Erik Erikson psychosocial theory while interacting with their environment placing them in a state of defensive psychological misfits in the scale of social independence and self-identity. This psychosocial contrast has some

negatively inclined outcomes that could affect the personality growth and development of the child.

It is constructive to note the dynamics of the psychosocial contrast of causes and effects of child's hawking as could be anchored by Erik Erikson's theory of psychosocial development which maintained an explanation that a child undergoes eight stages of psychosocial development which begins from infancy to adulthood, during which development and well adjustment of the child is vital. According to Erikson (1958-1963), it was noted that in the process of development, the child experiences some forms of psychosocial crisis whose nature involves the psychological needs of the child conflicting with societal needs of their environment which could project either positive or negative outcome. This theory went further to identify the two resultant causative effects that accompany each developmental typology noting firstly that successful completion of each stage of development results to a health personality and the acquisition of basic virtues, and secondly failure to successfully complete a stage can result to a reduced ability to complete further developmental stages which therefore projects amore unhealthy personality and a deteriorating sense of self (McLeod, 2018). This implies that the first five stages (Trust vs. Mistrust, Autonomy vs. Shame and Doubt, Initiative vs. Guilt, Industry vs. Inferiority, Identity vs. Role, Confusion) according to psychosocial

theory; the development of the child is very sensitive, crucial and fragile which spans within the period of age bracket zero to eighteen years (0-18years). Therefore, the illicit child labour practices of street hawking in Africa lunch the child to an excessive and frustrating growth and developmental issues which in the long run affects the adaptive adjustment nature of the child. Hence, should be traded with caution especially in the African context.

Street hawking can also be described as street vending, street trading or small scale trade (Mustapha & Mustapha, 2014; Amoo, *et al.*, 2016). Street hawking is a form of trade in which the sellers (hawker) moves around with wares (commodities or goods) from one place to another in search of prospective buyers. It can also be seen as a display of wares by the road side, carrying of goods around from one location to another in search of buyers, this can be on highways, markets, streets, and commuters (Dada, 2013; Abisoye, 2013). Street hawking in relation to children can be seen as a process whereby children/teenagers are involved in the selling of goods (wares) from one location to the other; and this could be done on a regular or irregular basis (Akighir, 2013).

Street hawking among children has been associated to as a socio-economic drive for survival basically in the fight against poverty (Osonwa, *et al.*, 2013) and improve livelihood in supporting themselves and their immediate family, making poverty a key variable

(Eboh, 2018). Other factors attributed to the causes of child street hawking includes; urbanization and modernization, population growth, immigration and migration, family complexity, cultural and religious value and belief. Also, attributed to street hawking to loss of parent through separation, divorce, or death and unemployment, family size and illiteracy (Dada, 2013), amongst other factors could cause involvement of children in street hawking.

The menace caused by street hawking is not only felt by the society based on the anti-social behavioursbut more is on the child particularly in terms of their social rights, health, social, physical, mental and psychological impact, that is why it was clearly ascribed as child abuse/labour (Ayodele&Fatiregun, 2014). The effect of street hawking is not only felt by the victims (the child), but by the society at large with a significant negative effect. Its negative effects on overall human capital formation cannot be quantified (Nduka&Duru, 2014). The impact of street hawking empathically creates more harm than good, this includes sexual molestation and assault which increases the vulnerability of the hawkers to diseases such as HIV/AIDS and other sexually transmitted infections, increased risk of unwanted pregnancies, and unsafe abortions (Muhammad, 2013; Amoo, *et al.*, 2016). Street hawking leads to increased exposure to antisocial activities like smoking, drug and alcohol abuse, cultism and crime. Also,

they are exposed to the vagaries of weather (extremes of cold or heat), illnesses and diseases, hunger, deprivation and kidnapping (Eboh, 2018). When children are involved, in addition to these other risks, they are deprived of education and sound health and these constitute child abuse, leading to poor academic performance and achievement (Ubah&Bulus, 2014; Busari, 2016; Akpotor, 2016). Also, Nuhu, and Nuhu, (2010) opined that street hawking may have negative effects on children education such as high dropout rates, absenteeism and poor school performance. Socially, children could experience negative effects on their educational development and performance (Bosah, *et al.*, 2015).

Childs' Street hawking is a negation of the International Convention on the Right of the Child (Umar, 2018). It is indeed inhuman for anyone to engage a child in money-making ventures; because such a child is denied basic education which is a right for every child. In the long run, working juveniles are at disadvantage in several ways due to their involvement in all sorts of hazardous works which affect their health, mental, moral, spiritual and physical developmental wellbeing's due to injuries (Ayodele & Fatiregun, 2014). The facts remains that the issues of Childs' right in Nigeria despite being rectified, yet faced with challenges of ethnic standing, civil strife, educational, religious, political and economic constrains which inhibits the implementation functionality

(Iyabode, 2012). When children are involved in street hawking they are mostly deprived of education and sound health and this constitutes to child abuse. Hence the persistent dropouts and rise in the number of children of school age involved in street hawking prompted this study to investigating the causes and perceive effects of street hawking among children in Ibadan, Oyo State, Nigeria.

### **Purpose of the Study**

The purpose of the study was to investigate the causes and perceived effects of street hawking among children in Ibadan, Oyo State, Nigeria. Specifically, the study determined:

1. causes of children involvement in street hawking.
2. perceived effects of street hawking on the children involved.

### **Research Questions**

The research questions that guided this study are:

1. What are the causes of children's involvement in street hawking in Ibadan, Oyo State?
2. What are the perceived effects of street hawking on the children involved in Ibadan, Oyo State?

### **Research Hypotheses**

The following null hypotheses that guided the study was tested at 0.05 level of significance:

**H<sub>01</sub>:** There is no significant difference in the mean ratings of male and female children's views on the causes of street hawking among children in Ibadan.

Ho<sub>2</sub>: There is no significant difference in the mean ratings of male and female children's views on the perceived effects of street hawking among children in Ibadan.

### **Methodology**

**Research Design:** Descriptive research design was adopted for the study.

**Area of the study:** Ibadan was the area of the study. Ibadan is the capital city of Oyo state, south western Nigeria. There are twelve (12) wards and eleven (11) LGAs in Ibadan metropolitan Area consisting of five urban and six semi-urban towns with an estimated population of approximately six million people. The principal inhabitants of the city are the Yoruba ethnic group. There are also other ethnic groups.

**Population of the study:** All children of school age of 5-18 years who are engaged in street hawking in Ibadan, formed the population for this study. The children are engaged in petty trades and services such as selling of tomatoes, pepper and vegetables, sachet water and cold carbonated drinks, bananas and plantain, groundnuts amongst various trades. Most of these children were found carrying these items on their heads in tray pans or big bowls, in bags or on their shoulders.

**Sample of the study:** Multistage sampling technique was used. Ten LGAs were randomly selected from the total of eleven LGAs (first stage sampling units). One ward each was selected from the LGAs through purposive and stratified sampling

technique (second stage sampling unit). From each of the selected 10 wards category, a hawking site was randomly selected (third stage sampling unit). From each of the 10 hawking sites, 15 children (respondents of age 5-18 years) were selected using a convenience sampling technique also known as accidental sampling procedure (fourth stage sampling unit). Hence, a total number of 150 children (68 males and 82 females) were selected following their willingness to participate in the study.

**Instrument for Data Collection:** Questionnaire was used for data collection. It was developed based on the specific purposes and extensive literature review. It serves as interview guide for the children who could not read and write. The instrument was validated by three experts who are specialists in child development including child rights. Reliability of the instrument was determined using inter-rater and Cronbach Alpha reliability methods. The instrument was pilot-tested outside Ibadan metropolitan (Oyo town) where hawking activities were seen. Thirty copies of the instrument were administered and retrieved then analyzed for its inter-item reliability (Cronbach Alpha), yielding a coefficient of 0.80 which showed that the instrument was strongly reliable.

**Data Collection Method:** In all, 150 questionnaires were administered to 150 children. The children who could not respond to the questionnaire were interviewed, with the questionnaire as interview guide. All the 150 copies of

the questionnaires were completely filled up and retrieved, giving a return rate of 100 percent.

**Data analysis Techniques:** The data were analyzed using the mean score.

The null hypothesis was tested using t-test at  $\alpha = 0.05$  level of significance.

## Results

### Causes of Children's Involvement in Street Hawking

**Table 1: Mean Responses, Standard Deviation and t-test Analysis on Causes of Street Hawking Children in Ibadan. N=150**

S/N	Causes of Street Hawking	$\bar{X}_1$	SD <sub>1</sub>	$\bar{X}_2$	SD <sub>2</sub>	$\bar{X}_g$	t-cal	Sig (2-tailed)	R	D
1	Lack of finance lured me into street hawking to sustain my family	2.72	1.40	2.71	1.45	2.71	0.57	.955	NS	A
2	Hawking is my family cultural (cultural heritage)	2.57	1.20	2.60	1.24	2.59	-.12	.91	NS	A
3	I hawk due to inflation/high cost of living	2.90	1.27	2.99	1.32	2.95	-.43	.67	NS	A
4	Poor living condition of my family lured me into street hawking	3.00	1.33	2.89	1.32	2.94	.51	.61	NS	A
5	My parent forced me into street hawking due to peers parental co-peer influence	2.62	1.12	2.40	1.20	2.50	1.13	.26	NS	A
6	Parent unemployment forced me into hawking	3.10	1.24	2.72	1.21	2.89	1.91	.06	NS	A
7	Because of my family size, all member were encourage to support the family income via street hawking	2.81	1.32	2.62	1.24	2.71	.89	.37	NS	A
8	Irregularity of my parent income forced me into street hawking	2.57	1.20	2.60	1.24	2.59	-.12	.91	NS	A

Note: Total number of respondents (N) = 150, Number of Male (n<sub>1</sub>) = 68, number of female (n<sub>2</sub>) = 82,  $\bar{X}$  = Grand mean,  $\bar{X}_1$  = Males Mean scores,  $\bar{X}_2$  = Females Mean scores, SD = Standard Deviation, NS = Not Significant; P= 0.05; R= Remarks; D= Decision; A= Agree

Source: Field Survey (2020).

Table 1 shows that the 8 items had their means between 2.50 and 2.95 which falls within the category of agreement to the causes indicated. This

indicates that all the items are agreed to be involved in the causes of child's street hawking. The result also revealed that all the items had their t-test significance above 0.05 with the t-calculated values of between -.43 and 1.91. Hence, the hypothesis of no

significance difference between male and female response on the causes of child's street hawking was accepted.

### Perceived effects of street hawking on the children involved

**Table 2: Mean Responses, Standard Deviation and t-test Analysis on Perceived Effects of Street Hawking on Children in Ibadan.**

S/N	Perceived Effects of Street Hawking	$\bar{X}_1$	SD <sub>1</sub>	$\bar{X}_2$	SD <sub>2</sub>	X <sub>g</sub>	t-cal	Sig. (2-tailed)	R	D
1	I had been a victim of road accident while hawking	2.94	1.54	2.79	1.39	2.85	.67	.50	NS	A
2	I have been bitten by insects during hawking	3.00	1.34	2.94	1.20	2.97	.29	.77	NS	A
3	I often experience sexual assaults while hawking	3.34	1.32	3.31	1.46	3.32	.15	.89	NS	A
4	I find it difficult to meet up with school activities	3.07	1.21	2.94	1.22	3.00	.67	.50	NS	A
5	I often skip classes in order to hawk	3.72	.91	3.38	1.32	3.53	1.81	.07	NS	A
6	I have anger issues due to tough hawking conditions	2.85	1.33	3.26	1.36	3.07	-1.83	.07	NS	A
7	Sometimes I feel depressed and sad due to hawking.	3.16	1.46	3.44	1.32	3.31	-1.22	.22	NS	A
8	Hawking makes me feel less relevant in the society	3.37	1.22	3.46	1.20	3.42	-.48	.63	NS	A
9	I often experience emotional stress	2.92	1.27	2.95	1.38	2.93	-.18	.86	NS	A
10	I often experience fatigue after hawking	3.21	1.11	3.20	1.13	3.20	.059	.95	NS	A
11	I often have musculoskeletal issues due to hawking	3.41	1.33	3.35	1.23	3.23	.28	.78	NS	A
12	I often fall sick after hawking under hot or cold weather	3.44	1.19	3.32	1.37	3.37	.59	.56	NS	A
13	I stand a high risk of being exposed to diseases	3.27	1.31	2.98	1.26	3.11	.68	.17	NS	A
14	I suffer malnutrition due to eating unbalanced food	3.37	1.33	3.40	1.29	3.25	-.16	.87	NS	A
15	I have been sexually exploited	3.02	1.45	2.91	1.58	2.83	0.40	.69	NS	A
16	I am often stigmatized based on my hawking involvement	3.16	1.27	3.23	1.38	3.10	-.32	.75	NS	A

17	I rarely have time to study after hawking all day	3.49	1.19	3.26	1.23	3.36	1.15	.25	NS	A
18	I often see myself as a failure and a misfit	2.81	1.32	2.62	1.24	2.71	.89	.37	NS	A
19	I am aware of victims of assault due to street hawking	3.22	1.34	3.01	1.30	3.11	.97	.34	NS	A
20	I had learned some bad behaviours in the street while hawking	3.19	1.27	2.88	1.26	3.02	1.50	.13	NS	A
21	At times I feel frustrated and less of life	3.18	1.23	2.99	1.20	3.07	.95	.36	NS	A
22	I display attitudes that are beyond my age grade	3.49	1.24	3.15	1.42	3.30	1.54	.13	NS	A

Note: Total number of respondents ( $N$ ) = 150, Number of Male ( $n_1$ ) = 68, number of female ( $n_2$ ) = 82,  $\bar{X}_g$  = Grand mean,  $\bar{X}_1$  = Males Mean scores,  $\bar{X}_2$  = Females Mean scores, SD = Standard Deviation, NS = Not Significant;  $P= 0.05$ ; R = Remarks; D = Decision; A = Agree.

*Source: Field Survey (2020).*

Table 2 shows that the 22 items had their means between 2.71 and 3.53 which falls within the category of agreement to the perceived effects of street hawking indicated. This indicates that all the items are agreed to be the perceived effects of street hawking amongst street hawking children. The result also revealed that all the items had their t-test significance above 0.05 with the t-calculated values of between -1.83 and 1.81. Hence, the hypothesis of no significance difference between male and female response on the perceived effects of street hawking amongst children involved in street hawking was accepted.

#### **Discussion of findings**

The study relatively affirm the latent study on the major factors that causes street hawking to include: Lack of finance, family cultural belief,

inflation/high cost of living, poor living condition (poverty), peers/parental influence, parental unemployment, amongst others. This finding is in agreement with the findings of Osonwa, *et al.*, (2013) and Abisoye (2013) which found that poverty is mainly the central cause of street hawking amongst children of school age. Ebgbo (2003) opined that while poverty is often postulated as the principal cause of forcing children into labour, lack of social services at home, lack of good housing, inadequate food and health care service, have been known to compel parents to send their children into street hawking and child labour. Furthermore, other causes of street hawking to include; high cost of living, lack of sponsorship, poor school performance, poor parenthood, large family size, peer group pressure, poor home conditions, lack of parent care,



poor scholastic achievement, unemployment, loss of parents, and parental perceptual belief (Eboh, 2018; Dada, 2013; Ekpenyong & Nkereuwem 2011; Nuhu, & Nuhu, 2010). Notwithstanding, Ayodele and Fatiregun (2014), submitted that parents allow their children to hawk due to the prevailing harsh economic situation they are faced with in their country.

Concurring to the findings of the study on perceived effect of street hawking, Kwankye, *et al.*, (2007); Lu, (2011); Olutunde, (2013); Busari (2016) and Umar (2018), established that sexual assaults are seen amongst children involved in street hawking especially female children, this invariably increases the vulnerability of the hawkers to diseases such as HIV/AIDS and other sexually transmitted infections, increased risk of unwanted pregnancies, and unsafe abortions. Also, Amoo, *et al.*, (2016) submitted that individuals involved in street hawking are exposed to harsh weather conditions, insect and reptile bites and hunger. Also, the study found out that children involved in street hawking are being exposed to the risk of road accident (Ayodele&Fatiregun, 2014), which invariably affects their attendance to school, emotional intelligence and having tendency of withdrawal from other students or individuals (Eboh, 2018; Ashimolowo, *et al.*, 2010). Furthermore, street hawking was found to expose children to antisocial behavior, during hawking socialization take place and children

while in the street depends on peers and other adults leading to learning of various values, attitude and behaviour that are against the societal norms (smoking, cultism, drinking alcohols amongst other vices). This above finding is in line with the findings of Nduka, and Duru, (2014); Ekpenyong and Nkereuwem (2011) which assert that children street hawkers learn bad behaviour from adult in the public, amongst such anti-social behaviour exposed to include; robbery, smoking, drinking, being sexually active, cultism and vulgar language. Once such behavior is being linked with truancy towards schooling is found and poor academic performance and achievement (Akpotor, 2016; Ubah&Bulus, 2014; Ashimolowo, *et al.*, 2010).

Extensively, from the interview with the adult respondents it was seen that the rate of street hawking among children is on the rise, going by the harsh socioeconomic terrain. The decision of Childs' involvement in street hawking is solely dependent on parent decision based and their educational exposure, family structure, socioeconomic status (Osonwa, *et al.*, 2013) and political strains such as corruptions and poor political implementation will (Alimi& Micah, 2010; Togunde& Carte, 2006; Fetuga *et al.*, 2005; Kempe, 2005). Other causative agent identified by respondents include high unemployment rate, economic instability, high standard of living, low return from education and irregularity of parent income amongst others

(Sagawara, 2010). During the interview session with children involved in street hawking, all child respondents affirmed conforming to the decision of parents as relates to family socioeconomic status and family size. Accordingly, the United Nations International Children's Emergency Fund (2007) identified poverty, large family size, and rapid urbanization among others as the major factor of child's labour. Respondents raised alarm to the hawking conditions as being harsh and unfriendly then hoped for a better alternatives such as going to school and learning vocational skills order than street hawking. Many of the interviewed children were not aware of Child's right, hence wished such right were grossly implemented by the responsive agencies. According to Abisoye (2013) it was found that in Ibadan, as many as 93.3% of juvenile hawkers in his study attributed their involvement in hawking to their parents having no job. Finally, going by the interviews review by 95% of the respondent when asked if they enjoy street hawking, indicated not palatable then wished for better alternatives. This indicates that children are compelled against their will due to family circumstances of socioeconomic constrain amongst other causative factors.

### **Conclusion**

The negative impacts of street hawking cannot be undermine due to certain factors such as poverty and socioeconomic status as major

determinant, as identified by latent studies. Firstly, street hawking by children of school age should be seen as a deprivation of the international conventional child rights and should be considered more seriously from the context of psychosocial perspective. The African culture that stereotypically promulgates the exploitation of children of school age in money making venture has undoubtedly exposed the young generation to variety of social menace and its consequences are very grievous as its psycho-socioeconomic impact cut across all areas of the well-being and natural adjustment of the African child. Moreover, this study underscores that street hawking children are exposed to a long run severe socioeconomic unproductiveness while sustaining lifelong injuries and educational dysfunction by increasing the rate of dropout and out of school age children, increasing child mortality via road accidents, possible rise in antisocial vices due to exposure to deviant behavior (Juvenile delinquency) and the vulnerable gender (Female child) are sexually exploited making her susceptible to STDs, HIV/AIDs and lastly unwanted pregnancy in cases of rape. Therefore, the Nigerian government should enforce child right laws to discourage all forms of child abuse in Nigeria and as a commitment to redeeming her image amongst other nation in promoting a healthy and well-adjusted child in Africa.

## Recommendations

The study suggests the following recommendations to address the issues of causes and perceived effects of street hawking among children in Ibadan, Oyo State, Nigeria:

1. The government should diversify her economy to create a more functional socioeconomic system that will reduce poverty, which leads to children involving in street hawking.
2. Massive campaign against children involvement in street hawking that is policy driven should be encouraged and agencies involved should be proactive and effective.
3. There should be a synergy between governmental and non-governmental organization in the fight against all forms of illicit Child labour and abuse practice in Africa.
4. Parents and families should desist from engaging children of school age into street hawking or any form of child labour.
5. The communities should synergies with child's right agencies and organizations in educating their populace on the perceived impacts of street hawking and discourage the practices of children street hawking.

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