



Street Trading and Child Labour in Yenegoa

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Abstract

Poverty is a serious problem associated with rapid urbanization in developing nations and is a contributory factor in the growth and exacerbation of street trading and child labour. Street trading and child labour in Yenegoa reflect chronic urban poverty, which can compel parents to send children of school age to work to boost family income. Thus, for many hours each day, children of poor parents are engaged in economic ventures including hawking, plaiting of hair, and being apprenticed to various trades. This research sought to explain the basics of child labour, its causes, and its effect on its victims and society as a whole. A questionnaire was used in this study to collect data. Three hundred questionnaires were distributed and 250 were retrieved. The findings of this study establish that street trading and child labour are a great menace to both the individual and society. This study recommends that the Nigerian government enact laws restricting parents from engaging their children in street trading and labour in Nigeria.

Keywords: menace, street trading, child labour, Yenegoa, Nigeria.

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INTRODUCTION

Street trading and child labour have become a global phenomenon and a global concern. The United Nations International Children Educational fund (UNICEF) has estimated that there are 100 to 200 million child labourers across both industrialized and developing countries. Estimates for Africa shows that 20% of children between the ages of 10 and 14 are involved in child labour and street trading. As such, children have come to comprise 17% of Africa's total labour force. Nigeria alone is estimated to have between 12 and 15 million child labourers. According to Human Right Watch (2004), at 15 million India has the largest child labour force in the world while Pakistan records 7.5 million child labourers and Senegal about 500,000.

The dramatic increase in child labour and street trading in Nigeria can be attributed to several factors. The rapid population growth of many less developed countries, high rates of unemployment, inflation, low wages and deplorable working conditions have contributed to incidents of street trading and child labour as children attempt to help support their families (Charles & Charles, 2004, Deth, 1993). According to Arat (2002), the proliferation of industries can also be linked to an increase in street trading and child labour.

Social ills affecting children have been an area of active empirical investigation. Indeed numerous studies exist on children who, along with their parents, are homeless, and children who hawk on the streets before and after school and on weekends and holidays. This study will bring to light the dangers associated with street trading and child labour as reported by children who engage in these practices. The major objective will be to identify the health, educational and social consequences of street trading and child labour in the Yenegoa metropolis of the Bayelsa State.

In some cases children involved in child labour to help their parents or families in times of financial distress

by paying for some or all of the family's rent, food, clothes, utilities and so on. In addition to these expenses, national estimates put the number of children under 14 years of age working to pay for the cost of school at 8 million (FOS, 2008). The same estimates reveal that about 1 million children have been forced to drop out of school because their parents demand that they stop attending in order to boost the family income. These statistics most certainly carry consequences for manpower development and human resources of the nation.

Street trading and child labour have the potential to corrupt young minds in two ways. First, a child that misses school frequently fails to benefit comprehensively from the education system. This can mean poor performance in examinations and open the door to examination malpractice for those seeking a certificate at all cost. This in turn can lead to incompetent and unlearned graduates with consequences for the nation as a whole, including increased national illiteracy. Second, street trading and child labour may also lead to behavioural patterns inimical to healthy citizenship. They may indulge in negative activities or criminal acts, such as prostitution, armed, robbery, and pick pocketing, and face imprisonment (Humert, 2009; Humphrices, 2010).

Many government policies have been put in place to curb the issue of street trading and child labour, but all to no avail. This is, in part, because of the economic situation of most Nigeria citizens, who barely earn enough to feed themselves and their children. Oruwari (1996), Okojie (1987) and Aderinto (2000) linked the phenomenon of street trading and child labour to socio economic status of poor parents who subsist at the periphery of the urban economy. This research will offer solutions to the menaces of street trading and child labour. It is believed that the solutions discussed below will reduce this menace to its absolute minimum. In the course of this discussion this paper will also attempt to address the following questions: Why do parent engage their children in street trading and child labour? Are parents happy about this situation considering the dangers involved? Why have the policies of government not succeeded?

Objective of the Study

The research has the following objectives:

- To examine the remote and immediate causes of street trading and child labour.
- To assess the social, political and educational implications of street trading and child labour.
- To critically evaluate the measures put in place by government to curb child labour and street trading.
- To proffer solutions that will curb the menaces of street trading and child labour in Nigeria.

Research Questions

This research is focused on street trading and child labour in the Yenegoa metropolis of Bayelsa State. It aims to emphasize the effect of street trading and child labour on society and its impact on children's health, social skills and education. To give direction and guide this study, four research questions were developed:

- Is child labour and street trading on the rise in Yenegoa?
- Does the economic situation of parents necessitate that children engage in street trading and child labour?
- Are street trading and child labour associated with dangers?
- Do street trading and child labour have negative consequences for society?

Definition of Terms

Child Labour: According to Robson (2004), child labourers are children who work long hours for low wages, often under conditions harmful to their health. According to the International Labour Organization (ILO) in 2007, child labour pertains to any child under the age specified by law (5-14), working fulltime, mentally or physically, to earn money for our survival or to add to the family income, that interrupts the child's social and educational development.

Street Trading: The selling or offering for sale of any article in the street or product.

Poverty: According to the WIKEPEDIA, the free encyclopaedia (2007), poverty is the deprivation of those things that determine the quality of life including food, clothing, shelter and good drinking water, but also such intangible things as the opportunity to learn and enjoy the respect of fellow citizens.

LITERATURE REVIEW

Scholars have different views on street trading and child labour due to different theoretical inclinations and ideologies. This literature review is centred around the following: the causes of child labour and street trading, the social, political

and educational implications of street trading and child labour, and the measures put in place by government to curb child labour and street trading.

Causes of Street Trading and Child Labour

Scholars like Appel (2009) have identified structural inequalities, while Nwabueze (1992) sees poverty and inequality as the major causes of street trading and child labour. Okojie (1987) postulated the causes to be an adverse economic environment, underemployment, massive retrenchment, unemployment and a poor quality of life. Nmomo, in his book interpreting social problems and public issues in Nigeria (2003), contended that while poverty is often postulated as the principal cause of forcing children into child labour, a lack of social services at home, a lack of good housing, inadequate food and health care service, combine to compel parents to sell their children into street trading and children labour. The least privileged children, including children without families and/or without homes, are the most vulnerable to these social ills. The economic constraints also force people to look for wealth at all cost to the detriment of their children.

According to Crosson (2008) there is a link between parents with marginal incomes and the imperative to push children into work so as to supplement family income. This view is supported by Bass, (2004), Binder and Sorgin (1999) who hold that children of poor families have to help generate family incomes and compensate for economic discrepancies in society, particularly as the gap between the have and have not has grown in recent years. In such situations, poverty breeds poverty. A poor family has a high probability of staying poor since low family incomes carry with them high risks of illness, limitations on mobility, and limited access to education. Thus the legacy of poverty is passed from parents to children (UNICEF, 1997).

According to the 1996 multiple indicator cluster survey, published by the Federal Office of Statistics (FOS), only one in every ten Nigerians can be described as non-poor. The other nine are either "core poor" or moderately poor. The United Nations Development Programme (UNDP), in its debut Human Development Report, ranked Nigeria 137th out of 174 nations in terms of human development. Graphically, Nigeria's Human Development Index (HDI) value is 0.400. Countries with HDI value below 0.5 are considered to be poor and to have low human development. In Nigeria, this poverty plays itself out as prostitution, corruption, robbery, street life, increased unemployment, poor living conditions, high infant mortality, acute malnutrition, short life expectancy, and human deprivation (UBA Monthly Digest, March/April 1996).

Child labour is also one of the faces of the poverty in 70% of households in Nigeria, providing an essential means of income for poor families. A 2003 ILO survey of child labour in Nigeria identified eight causation factors. These are cultural influence, economic problems, national debt, low education, unemployment/inability to cope, street life and single parents families, with the last three factors exacerbating poverty (Oruwari 1996). In her study of poverty among women and their households in Benin city, Adudu (1987) and Okojie, (1987) identified five factors - housing, illiteracy, possession of consumable, unemployment/underdevelopment/low incomes, and inability to cope with the needs of members of households, as indicators of the extent of poverty among women. The last two indicators are relevant to the focus of this study. For some scholars, child labour and street trading can be attributed to urban organization and modernization. For instances, Hoyano and Keenan (2007) is of the view that people who migrate from rural areas to urban centres in search of better prospects are often ill prepared for urban life and therefore forced to either use their children or other children to enhance their economic situation

In another school of thought, child labour and street trading are linked to child rearing norms and the attributes of parents where, for the purpose of socialization, children are required to carry out assigned domestic chores and economic activities (Aderinto, 2000). Child labour and street trading have also been traced to the rise of capitalism as a system of production, where labour becomes a commodity to be bought and sold. In this understanding, labour can be explained Marxists hold that the sale of one's labour in a capitalist economy, in whatever form, is tantamount to organized slavery. Child labour encourages this, where the less privileged work as servants for an agreed fee, or reciprocal services to be rendered to the servants. Consequently, capitalism breeds class conflict, misery, moral and physical poverty, and most importantly, alienation (Marx, cited in Ake, 1981).

The functional perspective views society as a social system in which components parts interact to accomplish certain goals for the survival of the system. To maintain basic institutionalized values in society, the system tends to solve the problems of pattern maintenance through social institutions such as the family, educational system and religion. The structure and function of families, argues Parsons (Crosson, 2008), plays a central role in shaping the behaviour and skills of children. Children, who form sub-components of the family, must be raised to be responsible members of society with appropriate values, beliefs and training. The ability of the family to function effectively is a factor in child development. Child labour is a sign of family dislocation and disorganization. As a result of child labour, the welfare of the children is adversely affected, as they are exposed to other social ills and dangers. They are forced to live in the adult world away from their families.

Social, Political and Educational Implications of Child Labour and Street Trading

Research has identified the inherent hazards and risks that children are exposed to when working in exploitative industries. The physical consequences range from malnourishment, disease, musculoskeletal disorders from heavy labour, physical and sexual abuse (see Kathleen, 1988), injuries, and exposure to toxic agents (Korbin, 1983; Malinosky–Rummell R & Hansan, 1993). Socially, children can experience negative affects on their educational development and performance. Illiteracy, low school attendance, and low enrolment have developmental and performance implications and have been attributed to children's economic participation (Basu & Van, 1998)

More still, the mental health of the child is negatively affected. Indeed, children engaged in hazardous industries have been observed to suffer verbal abuse from their employers, consistent fear of job termination, low self esteem, and a loss of imagination and future direction in life (Baland & Robinson, 2000).

In the rural employment sector, where agricultural activities prevail, some children work on family farms, while others are employed on farms not owned by their families. In both cases, child labour has been found to have negative consequences for the children. The heavy and intensive labour that children endure in the fields may be accompanied by a lack of pay and lead to physical exhaustion, physical abuse, and exposure to toxic pesticides and herbicides (Arat 2003; ILO, 1995; Gorey & Leslie 1997). Studies focused on child agricultural workers in Africa have found a high incidence of injury, inferior living conditions resulting from substandard housing, poor access to clean water and food, poor sanitation, and low wages (Anyanwu, 1993). It has also been noted that children employed in agricultural sectors also experience psychological and social consequences. In one Latin American study, child workers in agriculture were perceived negatively and their employment was a source of tension and change in inter-familial relations (Waka, 1999).

In another study conducted in Asia, child labour was found to negatively affect the educational outcomes of children (although these effects varied depending on the gender of the child) (Charles & Charles, 2004). In Africa, and particularly in rural Nigeria, it has been observed that child workers engaged in farming have lower school attendance compared to their urban working peers (Robson, 2004). However, the results are inconclusive in terms of the effects of agricultural work on children's lecture time (Ibid, 1992).

Children are engaged in the sales and services sector of the economy in both rural and urban areas as street hawkers, domestic servants, car washers, beggars and even prostitutes. In some studies children employed in these endeavours, often labelled "street children" or "children of the street", have run away from parental or guardian abuse, leaving them to eke out a living on their own (Finkelman, 1995). The physical and health consequences of children participating in the sales and service sector have been identified in Latin America, Asia and Africa and include various diseases such as respiratory problems, injuries, rape and molestation, malnourishment, extortion of income, police harassment and participation in harmful or delinquent activities. In other studies, child labourers face robbery, inadequate sleep due to fatigue and long hours on the job, and confinement in juvenile homes (Ross, 1996).

Children engaged in the sales and service sector of the labour market also encounter problems related to their psychological well-being. Stigmatization by the press and public, feelings of disheartenment, stress and irritability, personality disorders, anti-social behaviour, alienation, and isolation from their family have all been identified (Amin, 1994). Similar to other sectors of children's employment, child labour in sales and services in less developed countries has a negative effect on the level of education attained, school attendance, grades, literacy, lecture time, and overall human capital formation (Murphy et al., 1991).

It is also a known fact that child labourers tend to keep bad company and are negatively pressured by peers to engage in delinquent behaviours (Hughes, 2009). One common thread emerging from the synthesis of literature in all the three sectors is that child labour had detrimental effects for children's health-social and educational well-being, although such effects are common in the other two sectors.

Child Abuse and Neglect

The African Network for Prevention and Protection against Child Abuse and Neglect (ANPPCAN) was established to help ensure the safety and security of children. However, Fuller-Thomson et al (2009) observed that child abuse is not limited to beating and inflicting visible injuries. He opines that a child is abused when the situation at home becomes threatening to the child's survival. Middlebrooks and Audaga (2009) expands on this perspective again by including malnutrition, sexual abuse, educational neglect, medical neglect and mental abuses. Such a broad approach was also supported by John (2004) who said that child abuse includes the abandonment of children, child labour, and the failure to protect a child from physical and social danger. For Hosin (2007), child abuse also implies the misuse or exploitation of under-aged children for economic reasons.

Government Policies to Avert Child Labour and Street Trading

Different forms of violence have been addressed by the Nigerian legal system. First, section 12(3) (Nigeria Constitution, 1999) provides that the state shall direct its policy towards ensuring that all citizens (children inclusive), without discrimination against any group, have the opportunity for security and suitable employment; that conditions of work are just; that there are adequate facilities for leisure, social, religious and cultural life; that the health, safety and welfare of all persons in employment are safe guarded and not endangered or abused; that there are adequate medical and health facilities for all persons; that there is equal pay for equal work without discrimination; that children and young persons are protected from any form of exploitation and against any moral or material neglect.

In addition to the above constitutional provisions, there are also provisions in federal and state legislation that seek to address other forms of violence against children. The Child's Right Act (CRA) 2003 under sections 21-40 provides for the protection of children against discrimination, and harmful and exploitative practices. This includes the prohibition of child marriage, child betrothal, infliction of skin marks, abduction, hawking for alms, prostitution, unlawful sexual intercourse and other forms of sexual abuse and exploitation prejudicial to the welfare of the child.

The CRA further prohibits the recruitment of children into the armed forces of Nigeria, and the importation of harmful publications which portray information on the commission of crimes and acts of violence, as well as immoral and indolent publications which can corrupt or adulterate children. In addition, the Shari'a Penal Codes in the Zamfara, Kano, Kaduna, Kebbi and Sokoto states protect children and young persons by providing punishment for crimes against unborn children, exposure of infants to danger, cruelty to children, any concealment of birth, kidnapping of children or young persons, sexual exploitation of children, trafficking of the girl child, and forced labour.

The CRA (2003) in part (iii), provides for the protection of the rights of children through the prohibition of all forms of discriminatory, harmful and exploitative practices such as forced, exploitative or hazardous child labour, child hawking, begging for alms, and exploitation prejudicial to the welfare of the child in Nigeria.

The contribution of civil society organizations and groups to advocacy, public education, research, prevention, the rehabilitation and treatment of children harmed by violence, the provision of services, and the provision of resources cannot be over-emphasized. Their ability to work with and proximity to the children affected by abuse and mistreatment enhances their ability to network, capacity for advocacy, and ability to gather accurate data. Consequently, the Nigerian coalition of NGOS on the rights of children provide the expertise and technical competence necessary for policy formulation and issue assimilation into mainstream government plans. They are also able to influence legislative reforms and resource allocation. Some of the institutions, groups and non-government organizations that play active roles in addressing violence against children include: Women Trafficking and Child Labour Eradication Foundation (WTOCLEF), Africa Network for the Prevention and Protection against Child Abuse and Neglect (ANPPCAN), the Girls Power Initiative, the Nigerian Children's Parliament, the Galilee Foundation, Mantel Consult and Adolescent Development Initiative, African Women Empowerment Group (AWEG) National Council of Child Rights Advocates of Nigeria (NACCRAN), National Council of Women Societies, and a number of faith-based organizations.

The Nigeria government has provided an enabling environment and support for these civil society organizations (CSOs) to thrive and has drawn from their work formulate policies, programmes and interventions for child victims of abuse and violence. Apart from the above, the government has established child rights implementation and monitoring committees at the national and sub-national levels with CSOs as active members, convened studies on the sexual exploitation of children in collaboration with CSO and development partners, and sought functional membership in Interpol as well as massive workshop-based sensitization to the issue. In all of these activities, civil society organizations, through collaboration and networking, have provided expertise and technical know-how.

The Nigeria electronic and print media have also persistently participated in advocacy on issues dealing with the rights, welfare and protection of children through articulate and provocative publications that have influenced behavioural changes. Recently, a point main-committee/advocacy group made up of executives of the mass media, CSOs, NGOS child rights activists, legislators, judicial law enforcement officers, academics and government officials was formed to push the passage of the Child's Right Act at the National Assembly and eventually its promulgation into law. The group is currently advocating for the adoption of the Act as state law in the 36 states of the federation.

Before moving on to examine the theoretical framework of this research, it is worth reiterating that poverty recycles itself from parents to children and down through generations. This recycling is equally perpetuated through the phenomenon of child labour to earn an income thereby condemning themselves to future poverty. In turn, they may need their own children to work and earn an income. The deprivations associated with child labour ensure that the cycle of poverty and exploitation continues.

THEORETICAL FRAMEWORK

The primary concern of the founding fathers of sociology was to develop ways of examining the nature and functioning of society and social problems and changes from a scientific perspective. Among all of the early theories, Marxian economic theory otherwise called the “political economy approach” will be used in this work due to its suitability to the subject matter. The Marxian political economy approach tends to search out the experiences of those oppressed, marginalized, victimized and exploited by capitalism, including poor families and exploited children. This approach also has historical undertones in that it offers a materialistic analysis of the Nigerian society (historical materialism) and conflict in human society, which play a role in the formulation of social-economic strata (Ake, 1981).

This approach identifies two classes of people: those with the means of production and those without (the working class). The social relations of production tend to be oppressive and exploitative. Those who own the means of production, the bourgeoisie or the dominant class, misappropriate the labour and products of the working class given that they are only interested in the accumulation of wealth. This creates an unbearable situation for the working class, who often have to send their children into the labour force so that they can engage in activities that will generate income to supplement what is already earned and help to sustain the family. The Nigerian economy, which is the base structure of society, reflects the consequences of this conflict including unemployment, underemployment, poverty, insecurity, and inequality. This can be attributed to the country's incorporation of the capitalist mode of production, which has rendered Nigerians dependent on western powers. Prior to the colonial era, Nigerians were able to provide food and other basic necessities for their families. Following colonialism, there was a shift from local economies and sufficiency to the world economy, where Nigerians consume what they do not produce and are dependent on the global capitalist market to meet their needs. The disarticulation of the Nigerian economy accounts for the inability of Nigerians to develop a firm and solid economic base capable of sustaining all citizens. In the socio-political sphere, the general attitude of public office holders is a demanding one. The retrenchment exercise carried out in government establishments by the ruling class seeks to ensure that the gap between the ruling class and the ruled is maintained. The political economy approach, therefore explains the state of the ruled class, their acceptance of defeat, their inability to provide for their families, and consequently in their bid to survive, the use of their children as economic assets. This approach calls for governmental provision of equality in the distribution of goods and services. Should this be the case, over time class distinction would disappear and production would become concentrated in the hands of the majority of the nation. Global powers would lose their relevance and class antagonism would fade (Ake, 1981).

METHODOLOGY

Research Design

According to Asika (1991) and Ololube (2011), a research design is the structuring of an investigation aimed at identifying variables and their relationships to one another. This study is based on the use of a survey to determine the extent or degree of relationship between two or more variables and a major variable and to use such relationships in making predictions. Hence, the study seeks to establish a relationship between two or more variables, such as parents, poverty, and child labour and street trading, in the city of Yenegoa in the Bayelsa State.

Geographically Yenegoa lies between latitude 6° - 12° and 7° - 13° N and between longitude 5°E and 45°E. It is located on a fairly low lying coastal plain and it is about 78.64 meters above sea level. The total area covered by the city is about 1.125Sq.km. Linguistically, Yenegoa is originally an Epie Atissa speaking environment. Owing to urbanization and the rapid influx of people from other parts of the state and the country, Yenegoa now has a heterogeneous population comprised of Ijaws, Ogbia, Nembe, Urhobos, Ibos, Hausa, Yorubas, and Efiks speaking groups.

Sample Size

For this research 300 surveys were distributed and 250 were returned. This sample of 250 is comprised of both parents and children that form the child labour and street trading phenomenon in designated market areas of Yenegoa. The majority were from the Swali ultramodern market, Kpansia market and Opolo market.

Sampling Techniques

The most common method of selecting a sample from the population is the random sampling technique. We used a combination of simple random sampling and accidental sampling so as to be able to cover a sizeable area of Yenegoa city.

Data Collection

Questionnaires and interviews, as the primary instruments of data collection, were administered directly to respondents. Respondents included both parents and children. Interviews were conducted largely in Pidgin English, the common language of the city. In all 60 girls and 40 boys were interviewed. To get the opinion of parents, 200 parents were interviewed or given questionnaires.

Questionnaires were divided into two sections, A and B, both dealing with street trading and child labour. Section A was for child respondents while section B was for parents. Thirty questions were used to get responses on the causes and implications of child labour and street trading in Yenegoa. The researchers also collected data from secondary sources such as text books, research papers and journals.

Data Analysis

We used simple percentages for data analysis. The number of responses in each response group were added together and divided by the total possible response and then multiplied by one hundred. The tabular form of analysis included percentages and frequencies of sex, ages, education, occupation and marital status of respondents.

DATA PRESENTATION AND ANALYSIS

This section presents the analysis of the data collected. Questionnaires were divided into two, one for parents and one for children. This was done in order to assess the remote and immediate causes of street trading and child labour in Yenegoa.

Table 4.1: Respondents by Sex

Gender	No. of respondents	Percentage
Male	90	36.0
Female	160	64.0
Total	250	100

Table 4.1 shows that of 250 total respondents, 90 (36%) were male while 160 (64%) were female. This table suggests that more females are engaged in and promote street trading and child labour than males.

Table 4.2: Educational Status

Educational status	No. of respondents	Percentage
Primary	70	28.0
Secondary	35	14.0
Post secondary	20	8.0
No education	125	50.0
Total	250	100

Table 4.2 shows that 70 (28%) of respondents had primary education, 35 (14%) respondents had secondary education, 20 (8%) respondents had their post secondary education, while 125 (50%) respondents had no education. This data shows that a better part of those children engaged in street trading and child labour are either those not in school or those with only a primary education.

Table 4.3: Age Range of children

Age	No. of respondents	Percentage
6-8	22	22.
9-11	38	38.
12-14	30	30.
14-17	10	10.
Total	250	100

The data show that out of 100 children interviewed, 22 (22%) fall between the age range of 6-8 years, 38 (38%) fall between the ages of 9-11 years, 30 (30%) fall between the ages of 12-14 years, while 10 (10%) fall between the ages of 15-17 years. The data suggests that a large proportion of children involved in child labour are between the ages of 9 and 11 and between the ages of 12 and 14.

Research Question 1: Child labour and street trading on the increase in Yenegoa

Table 4.4: Respondent Assessment of Forms of Street Trading and Child Labour

Description of responses	No. of respondents	Percentage
Domestic servitude	70	28
Street Hawking	180	72
Bus Conductor	-	-
Prostitution	-	-
Total	250	100

Based on the above data, 70 (28%) of 250 respondents are involved in domestic servitude, while 180 (72%) are involved in street hawking activities. The findings show that hawking is on the rise more than domestic work.

Research Question 2: The economic level of parents necessitate children's engagement in street trading and child labour

Table 4.5: Respondents Assessment of Economic Class of Parents and Guardians

Description of responses	No. of respondents	Percentage
Very rich	-	-
Rich	5	2.0
Very poor	245	98.0
Total	250	100

Table 4.5 indicates that children are prone to street trading and child labour because of their family's economic situation. Only 5 respondents out of 250 (2%) are from rich homes, while 245 respondents (98%) are from very poor families opening the door to survival-driven occupations. This data is complemented by the assertions of Oruwari (1996) and Okojie (1987) that the socio-economic situation of poor parents leads to street trading and child labour.

Research Question 3: Dangers associated with street trading and child labour

Table 4.6 Danger and Street Trading and Child Labour

Description of responses	No. of respondents	Percentage
Yes	180	72.0
No	70	28.0
Total	250	100.0

Table 4.6 shows that 180 (72%) of 250 respondents are aware of the dangers of the phenomenon while 70 or 28% are not.

Table 4.7: Types of Dangers Associated with Street Trading

Types of dangers	No. of respondents	Percentage
Kidnapping	60	24
Accidents	100	40
Negative peer influence	90	36
Total	250	100

From the above data, 60 (24%) of respondents out of 250 agree that children are prone to kidnapping as they go about

hawking, while 100 (40%) saw the dangers of the job as the likelihood of accidents. Ninety or 36% concluded that children are likely to be influenced negatively by their peers as they go about these activities.

Research Question 4: Street trading and child labour have any negative impact on society

Table 4.8: Impact of Street Trading on Society

Description of responses	No. of respondents	Percentage
Yes	35	14
No	215	86
Total	250	100

Table 4.8 addresses the research question of whether street trading and child labour have negative implications for society at large in that they do not develop but rather hinder the nation’s progress. Of the 250 respondents, 35 (14%) felt that child labour and street trading led to development while 215 (86%) did not.

Throughout this study, a high percentage of participants perceived the work they did to be an indicator of poverty and they were not inclined to continue with their jobs. They did feel, however, compelled to work due to the harsh economic conditions experienced by their families. This study reveals that although child labour provides significant assistance in the sustenance of the family, children endure negative health and social consequences in the process. Many children are involved in accidents, attempted kidnapping, rape sexual molestation, and invitations to more harmful and criminal activities. Yet others suffer from physical exhaustion and illness as a result of their work. These health problems themselves have detrimental effects on children's school attendance, punctuality and school performance.

DISCUSSION

This research was interested in finding the causes and the consequences of street trading and child labour in the metropolis of Yenegoa. The study began by defining street trading and child labour, its nature and causes. Here premium was placed on low income as a cause of street trading and child labour. This is so because families who struggle to earn an income to provide the necessities of life may need to compliment what they earn by engaging their children in street trading and child labour. The researchers then reviewed other academic literature on street and child labour and their effect on the individual child and society at large. We also looked at policies of government enacted to fight street trading and child labour, and assessed the effectiveness of these policies.

This study is in line with Oruwari (c.f., 1996), Okojie (c.f., 1987) and Aderinto (c.f., 2000) assertions where they likewise linked the phenomenon of street trading and child labour to the socio-economic status of parents. The findings on the cause and effects of street trading and child labour were made possible through formulated and tested research questions which are as follows:

- Which forms of child labour and street trading are on the rise?
- Does the economic situation of parents necessitate that children engage in street trading and child labour?
- Is there any danger associated with street trading and child labour?
- Do street trading and child labour have any negative impact on society?

With respect to the first research question, the individuals polled suggested that prevalence of street hawking was increasing faster than domestic servitude, which is why the CRA (c.f., 2003) called for the protection of the rights of children. The second research question was answered largely in the affirmative with 98% of all respondents attesting to a compromised socio-economic situation (c.f., Aderinto, 2000). The third research question was tested and it was confirmed that street trading is associated with a number of dangers, including kidnapping, accidents and the influence of negative or criminal peer groups (c.f., Oruwari, 1996). Finally, the fourth research question was also tested and it was confirmed that street trading and child labour have a negative impact on society as they lead to underdevelopment rather than development of the nation (c.f., Humert, 2009; Humphries, 2010).

This research work is anchored in the political economy approach which contends that society is polarized into two major groups or classes: the rich and the poor or the bourgeoisie and the proletariat. According to Ake (c.f., 1981), materialism influences the consciousness of man in society such that the children of the bourgeoisie do not engage in street trading and child labour, practices found more commonly among the children of the proletariat. This latter group of children are then rendered vulnerable to the dangers of street hawking/trading; dangers like rape, ritual killing, accidents, and the inability to complete their education. Hence we find a situation where the rich are getting richer and the poor getting poorer, as children engaged in child labour who sacrifice their education will rarely have

the chance later in life to earn a sufficient income.

CONCLUSION

It is no stretch to state that street trading and child labour are a great menace to individual children and society at large. A poor individual or family has a high probability of staying poor as low income carries with it high risks of illnesses, limitations on mobility, and limited access to education. Poor parents often cannot give their children the opportunities for better health and education needed to improve their situation and so the cruel legacy of poverty is passed from parents to children. This situation is made worse when poor families encourage their children to pursue child labour or street trading as these activities further limit the future opportunities and possibilities likely to be experienced by the children.

RECOMMENDATIONS

On this note, the researchers offer the following concise recommendations:

- Government should enact laws restricting parents from encouraging their children to participate in street trading and child labour in Nigeria.
- Government should implement free education in Nigeria, to enable poor children to attend as this (school fees) is a factor in the phenomenon.
- Government and NGOS should organize different sensitization programmes for Nigerian citizens on the dangers associated with child labour and street hawking.
- Government should empower youth with different skill acquisition programmes to ameliorate the phenomenon of street hawking.
- Families should be sensitized to the importance of family planning to enable them to have fewer children. As discussed above, parents with low income who are unable to feed their families properly often introduce their children to the phenomenon of street trading to boost their income.

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