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Determinants and Effects of Street Hawking Among Teenage Girls in Gate Area of Ibadan

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Abstract

The study investigated the causes and effect of street hawking on teenage girls in Gate area, Ibadan. The study adopted the descriptive survey research design while simple random sampling technique was used to select 50 hawkers for the study. The instrument employed was a questionnaire which was tested to be valid and reliable. The research questions were answered using frequency, percentages and mean.

The study revealed that the causes of street hawking among teenage girls in Gate, Ibadan include inadequate family income (Mean = 2.98), unemployment of parents (Mean = 2.52), to support family (Mean = 3.10) and to make money for self (Mean = 2.78). Also, it was found that the effects of street hawking on teenage girls in gate, Ibadan include the following: I sometimes feel unhappy because I am hawking (Mean = 3.04), I have incurred injuries in the course of hawking (Mean = 2.64), I have experienced physical violence while hawking (Mean = 2.82), I have been sexually harassed in the course of hawking (Mean = 2.70) and Some of my colleagues have offered me alcohol to drink while hawking (Mean = 2.66).

The study concluded that street hawking among teenage girls should of importance be stopped. The factors causing street hawking are to be improved upon so as to prevent the negative consequences of street hawking among teenage girls.

It was therefore, recommended that government should enlighten the general public on the negative effects of street hawking by teenagers. Also, government should provide programmes that will increase household income of parents.

Keywords: Street hawking, teenage and teenage girls.

Background to the Study

Street hawking is the third largest criminal activity in the world after arms and drug trafficking (Tola, 2008; Egwu, Ahmed & Tukur 2014). In the last decade, the phenomenon of street hawking has considerably increased throughout the world and most especially in Nigeria. Every year, millions of individuals, mostly female are misled or forced to submit to servitude. Street hawking is the recruitment, transportation, transfer, harbouring or receipt of a female by means of threat or use of force or other forms of coercion, abduction, fraud, deception, abuse of power, a position of vulnerability or the giving or receiving of payments, benefits to achieve the consent of a person having control over the child for the purpose of exploitation (African Network on Prevention and Protection against Child Abuse and Neglect, 2010).

Abisoye (2013) defined it as the act of canvassing for sale of items by hawkers along the street, from house to house or in public places in town. According to Akpan and Oluwabamide (2010), street hawking is a negation of the international convention on the right of the child. 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.

Young female hawkers are in addition particularly vulnerable to all forms of violence including sexual exploitation by men (Fawole, Ajuwon & Osungbade 2004). The men prefer young girls as sexual partners because they assume they are sexually inexperienced and as such, are less likely to be infected with sexually transmitted disease (Lily Collins & Sara 2009). There are also stress related problems when some of the girls are given to rich families as house helps or baby sitters or are sent into the street to hawk. Walking across the street in various cities and towns in Nigeria, one would find a substantial number of boys and girls engaged in menial or odd jobs such as newspaper vending, truck pushing, prostitution or other forms of forced labour. Most often girls are sent to the street to hawk all kinds of wares because of poverty related issues, and to help supplement family income.

Also, female adolescent hawkers on the streets are exposed to numerous hazards ranging from physical violence to loss of wares, risk of accident, robbery, kidnapping and even murder for ritual purposes. Some of these

girls are sexually exploited and forced into prostitution with the risk of unintended pregnancies and contracting sexually transmitted infections including HIV (Muhammad, 2013). Nan (2008) identified market places, bus stops, major thoroughfares, streets where pedestrian traffic is high and where sidewalks are wide, residential areas, as well as newly paved roads that quickly attract new cars and foot traffic as hawking locations. Onuk and Beshi (2011) added that some hawk in commercial buses and along traffic hold-ups.

Risks like motor accident, rape, kidnapping, extortion, sexual molestation and the child involvement in robbery and other anti-social behaviours are too great to overlook among children engaged in street hawking. Child hawking exposes the child to a lot of hazards like sexual assaults, neglects and threat of punishment for speaking out. The outcomes of these acts usually result in an unwanted pregnancy, sexually transmitted diseases, psychological problems and hatred for opposite gender. Street hawking exposes the children to dangers posed by fraudsters and actual murderers because of their vulnerability at odd hawking hours. Although, various efforts to stop teenage street hawking like passage of Child's Rights Bill have been made by both the government and non-governmental organizations, little has been achieved as street hawking continues to be on the increase. This has spurred the researcher to look into causes and effects of street hawking on teenage girls.

Street hawking is the recruitment, transportation, transfer, harbouring or receipt of a female by means of threat or use of force or other forms of coercion, abduction, fraud, deception, abuse of power, a position of vulnerability or the giving or receiving of payments, benefits to achieve the consent of a person having control over the child for the purpose of exploitation (African Network on Prevention and Protection against Child Abuse and Neglect, 2010). Abisoye (2013) defined it as the act of canvassing for sale of items by hawkers along the street, from house to house or in public places in town. According to Nseabasi and Oluwabamide (2010), street hawking is a negation of the international convention on the right of the child. Several reasons have been put forward as predisposing factors to child street hawking. These factors

include poverty, high cost of living, lack of sponsorship, poor school performance, single parenthood, large family size, peer group pressure, poor home conditions, lack of parental care, parents' unemployment, parental pressure, poor scholastic achievements (Fawoleet al., 2003).

Baland and Robinson (2000) found out that these children suffer verbal abuse, low self-esteem and a loss of imagination. Anagbogu, (2000) found feelings of inferiority complex, exhaustion, emotional distress, unhappiness and personality disorders to be associated with street hawking. Teenagers especially the female folks are exposed through hawking to be sexually aware too early in life. In an attempt to sell their wares, teenagers mingle with the touts in the motor packs and in the streets. Some of these female hawkers are lured into sexual relationship that may result into pre-mature pregnancy, some may become promiscuous following exposure through hawking.

Research Questions

The research questions that study answered are:

1. What are the causes of street hawking among teenage girls in Gate area, Ibadan?
2. What are the effects of street hawking on teenage girls in Gate area, Ibadan?

Findings and discussion

Research Question 1

What are the determinants of street hawking among teenage girls in Gate area, Ibadan?

Table 1: The causes of street hawking among teenage girls in Gate, Ibadan

S	Items	SA	A	D	SD	Me	Decision
1	I hawk because of inadequate family income	18 (36.0%)	19 (38.0%)	7 (14.0%)	6 (12.0%)	2.98	Accepted
2	My parents are unemployed	15 (30.0%)	11 (22.0%)	9 (18.0%)	15 (30.0%)	2.52	Accepted
3	I hawk because my father is dead.	7 (14.0%)	5 (10.0%)	17 (34.0%)	21 (42.0%)	1.96	Rejected
4	I hawk because I have no	8 (16.0%)	7 (14.0%)	13 (26.0%)	22 (44.0%)	2.02	Rejected

	mother						
5	I hawk because my parents are separated	13 (26.0%)	9 (18.0%)	16 (32.0%)	12 (24.0%)	2.46	Rejected
6	I hawk to support my family	21 (42.0%)	18 (36.0%)	6 (12.0%)	5 (10.0%)	3.10	Accepted
7	I am happy hawking	8 (16.0%)	10 (20.0%)	12 (24.0%)	20 (40.0%)	2.12	Rejected
8	I hawk to make money for myself	18 (36.0%)	13 (26.0%)	9 (18.0%)	10 (20.0%)	2.78	Accepted

The remote and immediate causes of child hawking among teenage girls in Gate, Ibadan include inadequate family income (Mean = 2.98), unemployment of parents (Mean = 2.52), to support family (Mean = 3.10) and to make money for self (Mean = 2.78).

Research Question 2

What are the effects of street hawking on teenage girls in Gate, Ibadan?

Table 2: Effects of street hawking on teenage girls in Gate, Ibadan

S/	Items	SA	A	D	SD	Mea	Decision
1.	I sometimes feel unhappy because I am hawking	23 (46.0%)	15 (30.0%)	3 (6.0%)	9 (18.0%)	3.04	Accepted
2.	I have been involved in Road traffic accident while hawking	6 (12.0%)	9 (18.0%)	21 (42.0%)	14 (28.0%)	2.14	Rejected
3.	I have incurred injuries in the course of hawking	11 (22.0%)	13 (26.0%)	23 (46.0%)	3 (6.0%)	2.64	Accepted
4.	I have experienced physical violence while hawking	16 (32.0%)	15 (30.0%)	13 (26.0%)	6 (12.0%)	2.82	Accepted
5.	I have been	17 (34.0%)	11 (22.0%)	12 (24.0%)	10 (20.0%)	2.70	Accepted

	sexually harassed in the course of hawking						
6.	I have been raped while hawking	3 (6.0%)	7 (14.0%)	14 (28.0)	26 (52.0%)	1.74	Rejected
7.	I have had sex for money while hawking	5 (10.0%)	3 (6.0%)	18 (36.0%)	24 (48.0%)	1.78	Rejected
8.	I have had an unwanted pregnancy	2 (4.0%)	6 (12.0%)	24 (48.0%)	18 (36.0%)	1.84	Rejected
9.	Some of my colleagues have offered me alcohol to drink while hawking	14 (28.0%)	15 (30.0%)	11 (22.0%)	10 (20.0%)	2.66	Accepted
10	Some of my colleagues have lured me to stealing	4 (8.0%)	6 (12.0%)	18 (36.0%)	22 (44.0%)	1.84	Rejected

The effects of street hawking on teenage girls in Gate, Ibadan include the following: I sometimes feel unhappy because I am hawking (Mean = 3.04), I have incurred injuries in the course of hawking (Mean = 2.64), I

have experienced physical violence while hawking (Mean = 2.82), I have been sexually harassed in the course of hawking (Mean = 2.70) and Some of my colleagues have offered me alcohol to drink while hawking (Mean = 2.66).

Discussion of Findings

The result on Table 1 showed that the causes of street hawking among teenage girls in Gate, Ibadan are inadequate family income, unemployment of parents, to support family and to make money for self. This supports the work of Ekpenyong and Nkereuwem (2011) that the need to continually provide for the family in the midst of unfriendly conditions has led women, men, youths and children (both male and female) to engage in street hawking activities. Similarly, Akpan and Oluwabamide (2010) said that the major reasons given by hawkers for indulging in street trading was not because they were forced by their parents, but it's was due to inadequate family income and the need to support their families. This was attributable to the fact that majority of their parents were unemployed. This is consistent with the findings of Onuzulike (2007) that that low wages contributed to incidents of street trading and child labour as children attempt to help support their families.

The result in Table 2 revealed that the effects of street hawking on teenage girls in Gate, Ibadan include unhappiness, injuries, exposure to physical violence, exposure to sexual harassment, offering of alcohol while hawking. This finding is similar to that of Olutunde (2013) that majority of the street hawkers had been exposed to one or more hazard during the course of trading. He stated further that physical injuries were reported by over three-quarter of the hawkers in this study. Injuries also occurred due to road traffic accident, which was reported by a third of the respondents. This finding is also in line with the study carried out by Abisoye in 2013.

Implications Social Workers

In view of the findings of this study which include unemployment and inadequate family income as major causes of street hawking among

teenagers; physical violence, sexual harassment and road traffic accident as major effects of street hawking, actions must therefore be taking drastically to curb the act of street hawking. The social workers have responsibility to intervene in this social problem and must firstly address the issue education for these teenage girls. The introduction of free education by the government to ensure these children have basic education will go a long way to curb street hawking among the teenage girls. The social worker will have to influence policies through appropriate mediations and ensure implementation of the policies. The social workers will organize education, enlightenment and awareness programmes for various communities to sensitize them on the ill effects of street hawking among teenagers. The social worker through the Ministry of social Welfare will advocate for improvement in workers' remuneration. Furthermore, the social workers will liaise with appropriate authorities to ensure penalties are meted out to parents who violate the policy.

Conclusion

This study showed that street hawking is a common form of child labour in Ile-Ife, in south-western Nigeria. Adolescents engaged in street hawking were more likely to be aged between 10 and 13 years and were also more likely to be females. The occupation of their mothers played a significant role in determining if the child hawked or not. Street hawking appeared to have negative effects on the academic performance of hawkers. Addressing the problem of child labour in Nigeria would need a broad-based approach in terms of policies and programmes to tackle poverty which seems to underline street hawking. Mass education of the entire populace on the ill-effects of all forms of child labour on adolescents would also be helpful. There may be need for legislation against child hawking in the long term to curb this menace.

Street hawking has considerably increased in Nigeria and this is a threat to the implementation of government policies especially labour Child's Rights Bill and Child's Rights Acts. The study found that street hawking resulted in physical violence, sexual harassment, road traffic accidents and much more among teenage girls thereby destroying their future. In view of this, actions need to be taken.

Recommendations

Based on the findings of the study, the following recommendations were made;

- i. The government should enlighten the general public about the negative effects of street hawking by children.
- ii. The government should enact policy that will increase the household income.
- iii. There should be establishment of vocational skills acquisition centres so that those children that wish to learn vocational skills can be assisted.

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