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## Street Hawking Effect on Teenagers Educational Performance in Wukari Metropolis

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### **Abstract:**

*This study examined the impact of street hawking on teenagers in Wukari Metropolis. Two objectives were postulated to guide the study. Questionnaire and interview were used in collecting information from teenagers as regard the study. The statistical tools used in this study include mean, statistical frequency and percentage. The finding includes: shows that there are more female teenage hawkers (84%) than male teenage hawkers (16%) in Wukari. The teenage within the age 13 to 16 years (69%) are more than those within the puberty age of 17-19 years (31%), who are into street hawking in Wukari metropolis. Many teenage children are involved in street hawking to help their parents financially as they agreed that they remit to them after sales. The research was concluded that street hawking is a very visible phenomenon in our society. The hardship and consequences of street hawking among teenagers in Wukari Metropolis is overwhelming. The government need to vigorously bring in poverty alleviation measures to improve the socio-economic status of the population and the recommendations include: The government at all levels should establish and equip more Adult education centers for the training of illiterate parents who send their children to hawk. The government should enact a law that forbid teenagers from hawking in the street.*

**Keywords:** Impact, hawking, educational, performance, teenagers

## **1. Introduction**

### *1.1. Background of the Study*

Involving teenagers in hawking goods in the street, markets and Moto Park is an emerging trend in Wukari Metropolis. This trend is referred to as; child street trading (Ashimolowo, Aromolaran and Inegbedion, 2010), child street hawking (Mathias & Dada, 2013), Juvenile street hawking (Udoh and Joseph, 2012) and child street vendor (Ugochukwu, Okeke, Onubogu and Edokwe, 2012). Children are preferred to adults in hawking goods because they are cheap labor to the employer (Arhedo, Aluede & Arhedo, 2011; Anumaka 2012). This leads to increase in the number of children who roam the street daily hawking goods while those of their age are in school (Ubah, 2014). Studies identified the age bracket of these children to fall between 10 and 19 years (Ashimolowo, 2010). Most of these teenagers hawk before going to school in the morning and continue after school hour until late night. Street hawking has left many children out of school as they drop out, withdrawn by their parents or not enrolled. School age children estimated to be 10.5 million are out of school in Nigeria (The Guardian, 2013 pp 14). These children are being engaged in income generating activities to contribute to the sustenance of the family (Ubah, 2014).

According to the International Labor Organization (2012), the number of working children under the age of 14 in Nigeria is estimated at 15 million. The high level of diverse and tedious jobs that children execute in dangerous circumstances is alarming. These jobs include street vending, car washing, etc. Street hawking involves selling goods along the road from one place to another (Umar, 2009). Street hawking is a veritable means of socialization in all parts of Nigeria and it is widely practiced in the country despite the attendant moral and physical dangers for children. Street hawking can be attributed to urbanization and modernization. Hoyano and Keenan (2006) opined that people who migrate from rural to urban areas 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. Street hawking has also been traced to the rise of capitalism as a system of production where labor becomes a commodity to be bought and sold. At every level of our

society, children are engaged in different works that are in different nature which are detrimental to their upbringing. Street hawking is considered a serious issue that needs a global attention as every child has the right to all forms of economic welfare and protection from any work that is considered to be hazardous to the physical and mental well-being of the child. (Article 15:1 of the African Charter on the Rights and Welfare of the Child, 1990). The sales and service sector of the economy is the major employer of children. This occurs irrespective of the location in rural or urban setting. As a result of the businesses these teenagers involve in, they suffer stigmatization, feelings of disheartenment, physical assault, sexual abuse, stress and irritability, personal disorders and anti-social acts (Hope 2005).

- Rights of a Child under the Child Right Act: Several rights are captured in the act but the ones related to this study include:
- Section 11 of the Act provides that every child is entitled to respect for the dignity of his person and accordingly, no child shall, among other things, be held in slavery or servitude. Every child has the right to parental care and protection, and no child should be separated from his parents against the wish of the child.
- Section 15 states that each child has the right to free, compulsory Universal Basic Education at least to Junior Secondary Education.
- Section 26 states that no child shall be subjected to any forced or exploitative labor or employed to work in any capacity except work of domestic character.
- Section 38 out flaws buying, selling, hiring, or dealing in a child. A child must not be used for the purpose of begging for alms, hawking of foods, guiding beggars, prostitution, domestic or sexual labor.
- Section 29 provides that no person shall have sexual intercourse with a child. Such offence is liable to rape and is liable on conviction and imprisonment for life.

The provisions of this Act are clearly not adhered to particularly Sections 26 and 38 that bonders on street hawking. Studies have found different factors to be responsible for influencing the academic performance of teenagers (students). Some of the factors are; students' perception of teachers' classroom management (Okon, 2005), poor attendance in class (Nyame, 2010), learning environment Ekanem, Apebende, & Ekefre, 2011), financial status of parents, and poor method of teaching (Okoji, 2013). In developing countries, street hawking has tremendous effect on the education of the child such as decrease in school attendance, grades, literacy, leisure time and overall wellbeing of the child. In spite of research finding on how to improve academic performance of students, low performance and failure in examination has been reported. This indicates that there is need to carry out more research on the academic performance of students (teenagers). Hence, the finding of this study is hoped to help in mitigating the problem of poor academic performance of teenagers in Wukari Metropolis.

### 1.2. Statement of the Problem

The major cause of street hawking is economic in nature. This is associated with the high poverty rate in the country. The hawking of wares and food products on the roads and motor parks is an economic means of making ends meet, either sponsored by parents or the child personal interest. Cultural beliefs are seen as a problem of child abuse as children are seen more as mere properties of their parents (Egbo, 2003). Violence and ignorance can also be seen as a problem on the child caused by emotion on the parent or guardian. Several reasons have been put forward as predisposing factors to teenage street hawking. These 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, parent's unemployment and parental pressure. Appel (2009) identified structural inequalities as a problem of street hawking, while Nwabueze (2010) sees it as poverty and inequality International Labor Organization (ILO, 2006), identified eight (8) problems of street hawking in Nigeria. These are cultural influences, economic problems, national debt, law, education and unemployment, inability to cope with the needs of family members, street life and single parent families. Oruwari(2000) and Audu (2002) also identified five problems which are housing, illiteracy, and possession of consumerism, unemployment, low incomes and inability to cope with the needs of members of their households.

Crosson (2008) opined that 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 supported by Bass (2004) that children of poor families have to help generate family incomes and compensate for economic discrepancies in the society.

### 1.3. Research Questions

The following research questions were asked to guide the study:

- What is the effect of street hawking on the academic performance of teenagers in Wukari Metropolis?
- Why do teenagers participate in street hawking in Wukari Metropolis?

### 1.4. Objectives of the Study

The purpose of the study is to:

- Find out the impact of street hawking on the academic performance of teenagers in Wukari Metropolis.
- Find out reasons why teenagers participate in street hawking in Wukari Metropolis.

### 1.5. Scope of the Study

This study focuses on the impact of street hawking on the academic performance of teenagers in Wukari Metropolis. Questionnaire and interviews will be used to guide the study. Street hawking teenagers at designated parts of Wukari will be randomly sampled irrespective of ages and sex. The results obtained will be analyzed.

### 1.6. Significance of the Study

The findings of the study will be useful to academic writings and publishing of educational textbooks as to meet the need of various backgrounds to enhance academic performance among street hawking teenagers. The findings of the study will also enlighten parents on the impact of street hawking on the academic performance of their children. This will enable parents to stop involving their children (teenagers) in street hawking before or after school hours.

In addition, understanding the impact of street hawking on the academic performance of teenagers will enable the Government to make policies that will eradicate street hawking among teenagers as the future of every great nation lies on the quality of education impacted in the life of the younger generation.

### 1.7. Limitation to the Study

In the course of carrying out the study, the researcher encountered some difficulties which serve as the limitation of the study; Weakness on the side of the researcher as a human being who is prone to error, Unwillingness of some respondents to give accurate and reliable response and financial difficulties which do not permit the researcher to extend the study beyond Wukari Metropolis.

## 2. Research Methodology

### 2.1. Study Area

Wukari local government area in Taraba State is the area of study. It lies within latitude 7° 51N of the equator and 9° 47E of the meridian with land area of approximately 4308km (Paul, Joseph & Ogwuche, 2017). The Donga River flows through the area. It is located in the southern part of Taraba state. Wukari has ten (10) political wards namely; Akwana, Avyi, Bantaje, Rafin-kada, Chonku, Hospital, Jibu, Kente, Puje, and Tsonkundi, wards. Wukari local government has a total population of two hundred and forty-one thousand, five hundred and forty-six (241,546) people (NPC, 2006). It is bordered with Takum to the North, Donga to the West, Ibi to the South, at the East with Ukum local government area of Benue state (Abuh, Joseph, & Ogwuche, 2017). The area is inhabited by a number of ethnic groups, prominent among them is the Jukun, which is the main tribe, other tribes are Fulani, Hausa, Jiru, Shomo, Tiv and Chamba.

### 2.2. 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. Meanwhile, the research design employed in this study is a survey inferential. Survey inferential design is the study of a large population through a representative sample in order to find out and describe existing phenomena in the population.

### 2.3. Study Population

The population of the study comprises all teenagers who hawk in the street in Wukari Metropolis.

### 2.4. Sampling Size and Sampling Techniques

The sample size used for this study is one hundred teenagers from Wukari Metropolis. A random sampling method was used for the selection of one hundred teenagers in Wukari Metropolis. One hundred copies of questionnaire (100) were administered on respondents in Akwana, Avyi, Bantaje, Rafin-kada, Chonku, Hospital, Jibu, Kente, Puje, and Tsonkundi, wards respectively.

### 2.5. Techniques of Data Collection

The researcher administers the questionnaire and interview directly to street hawking teenagers within Wukari Metropolis. In the process of administering questionnaire and interview, the researcher assures the respondent of confidentiality in the treatment of their responses so as to encourage frankness.

### 2.6. Method of Data Analysis

The items of the questionnaire were sorted out according to the variables they are designed to measure. The statistical tools used in this study include mean, statistical frequency and percentage. Data was collected on the following items to achieve set objectives; effects of street hawking and reasons or attitude of affected teenagers towards street hawking.

## 3. Presentation of Data Analysis

### 3.1. Bio Data of Respondents

Variables	Frequency	Percentage %
Male	16	16%
Female	84	84%
Total	100	100

Table 1: Sex of Respondents  
Source: Field Survey, 2019

Data Presented in Table above shows that there are more female teenage hawkers (84%) than male teenage hawkers (16%) in Wukari. Therefore, girl child is those mostly compelled by parents or guardian to go into street hawking in Wukari Metropolis.

Variables	Frequency	Percentage %
13-15	69	69
16-19	31	31
Total	100	100

Table 2: Age Distribution of Children in Street Hawking

Source: Field Survey, 2019

Data presented in table 2 above shows that teenage within the age 13 to 16 years (69%) are more than those within the puberty age of 17-19 years (31%). Therefore, younger people are more in street hawking in Wukari Metropolis. The implication is that the children who are meant to be in the active stages of education. 13-19 years are more vulnerable to social and sexual harassment dominate street hawking and, in a way, this has effect in school management as school attendance of students will be highly irregular leading to poor performance in their academic activities.

District	Money for sch fees	Money for my parents	Money for guardian	Money for sibling	A kind of business training	survival	Total
Donga	2	6	9	2	0	1	20
Ibi	1	5	10	2	1	1	20
Takum	2	7	12	4	2	3	30
Wukari Town	4	7	11	4	0	4	30
Total	9	25	42	16	3	9	100
%							100

Table: 3 Reasons Why Teenagers Engage in Street Hawking in Wukari Metropolis.

Source: Field Survey, 2019

Responded that Table 3 shows that among the 100 hawkers sampled, 25 responded that they are involved in street hawking to help their parents financially as they agreed that they remit to them after sales and 42 said they remit to their guardians. It was also gathered that 9 said it was for them to pay their school fees while 11 are involved in street hawking to source for money to take care of their younger ones. Poverty and its related problems are some of the main issues of street hawking in Wukari Metropolis. The money earned by child family members has become a significant part of poor family income. Poverty in Wukari and Nigeria in general is chronic due to population pressure, unemployment, and land degradation among others.

District	A	B	C	D	E	F	Total
Donga	6	4	5	2	3	0	20
Ibi	5	5	4	3	1	1	20
Takum	10	5	4	6	1	3	30
Wukari town	12	8	5	2	1	0	30
Total	33	22	18	13	11	4	100
%							100

Table 4: Effects of Street Hawking on Child Development

Source: Field Survey, 2019

Data presented above shows some common effects of street hawking on child development. Responses indicate that sexual harassment encountered by the sampled children in street hawking is a problem that affects them socially, mentally and medically. The psychological effect of sexual harassment and inducement affects their emotions towards life according to respondents. This is evident as this option received the highest percentage among the others. The response is obvious as it was earlier stated that most of the children in age bracket 17-19 years which is a sexually active period especially among female in takum and wukari town areas dominate hawking. The implication of this result is that these abused children especially females may grow to become used to sex and find it difficult to stay in marriage when they get married. Others may grow to become hostile and ruthless to people around them.

Madu (2009) found out that more than 18.8% of female teenage hawkers had procured abortion and become pregnant without knowing who was responsible, experienced rape and also contracted sexually transmitted diseases and infections. It is clear from responses that leaving a child on the street may lead to having bad influence. They may grow with such influence and become hardened criminals and prostitutes in the future making the society a worthless living.

A recent study by Ikenna et al (2013) among female hawkers in Eastern Nigeria showed that 50% of the crime experienced by girls on the street is sexual in nature. This is of great importance because in the traditional African society,

the concept of sexuality is enshrouded in secrecy. Most abused girls do not report the crime because of the stigma attached to it. Gender-based violence is a major public health concern and a violation of human rights.

#### 4. Conclusion and Recommendation

The study noted that street hawking is a very visible phenomenon in our society. The hardship and consequences of street hawking among teenagers in Wukari Metropolis is overwhelming. The government need to vigorously bring in poverty alleviation measures to improve the socio-economic status of the population. Efforts to curb street hawking and introduce child right policies should be intensified. More so the implementation of the Child Right Acts against street hawking is rather below expectation. The government at all levels should establish and equip more Adult education centers for the training of illiterate parents who send their children to hawk. The government should enact a law that forbids teenagers from hawking in the street. Parents should be educated on the danger which hawking poses to the academic achievement of their children. Parents should think of other means of generating income and desist from sending their teenage children to hawk. The Nigerian culture encourages children to work to develop skills. Traditionally, children have worked with their families but today children are forced to work for their own and family survival. Children are therefore considered as assets to generate funds in time of poverty. Government should adopt measures that will reduce unemployment as many parents are discouraged from sending their children to school due to high rate of unemployment and sending them to hawk instead.

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