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Child Street Vending and Its Effect on Education Attainment: A Case of Morogoro Municipality

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ABSTRACT

The purpose of the study was to assess the effects of child street vending on education attainment in Morogoro Municipality. The study was guided by three specific objectives, namely: to identify the causes of child street vending in Morogoro Municipality, to identify the challenges faced by child street vending in education attainment, and to propose remedial measures to address these challenges. To achieve the objectives, a phenomenological research design was used based on a qualitative research approach. The findings were gathered using in-depth interviews and observation. The findings of this study revealed that the problem of child street vending is caused by different factors, including the economic difficulties of the parents, which also posed a problem for the village government in combating child street vending. The study also observed that parents/guardians struggle to support themselves financially, making it difficult to prevent their children from engaging in street vending and compromising their education. In addition, in some families, education was not a priority as parents focused on small businesses and children instead of focusing on their children's education. Moreover, the study also found that parents' lack of education prevented them from discouraging their children from engaging in street vending activities. The study concludes that effective policies, laws, rules and regulations are an essential catalyst towards sustainable social change. The need of accessibility to education among all children in the country needs enforceable mechanisms that compel all parents to obey. For these purposes, it is compulsory to introduce laws, rules and regulations at central and local government levels. Therefore, to address the issue of child street vending and its impact on education attainment, the study recommends that adequate funds should be allocated to facilitate awareness campaigns against child street vending, national poverty reduction strategy should be seriously implemented to improve household income and alleviate the economic challenges faced by families. Also, the study recommends for media to introduce special awareness programs to combat child street vending and the government to increase the number of social welfare even at ward level.

Key Words: *Child, Child Vendors, Child Street Vending, Education Attainment*

INTRODUCTION

Despite the government's efforts to eradicate child street vending, the problem still exists. This is because child street vending are associated with various factors. For example, a study conducted by Okumadewa (2018) revealed that there is ineffective machinery in place to enforce child welfare, making it difficult for the majority of children in urban areas to survive due to their parents' economic status. Consequently, life in urban areas poses numerous challenges for these children. To cope with their circumstances, some children engage in various activities to sustain themselves, some of which are hazardous to their health and education. For instance, many of them resort to staying in regional and district council markets to engage in informal small businesses (Okumadewa, 2018).

Furthermore, a study conducted by Onesmo and Koda (2018) found that child street vending threatens the survival of society. It distorts government policies related to youth education due to high dropout rates among boys involved in street vending. Andre, *et al.*, 2019; Nemes, *et al.*, (2019) found that this phenomenon also hampers the acquisition of relevant education, thereby negatively impacting the economic sector. But these studies not show to what extent these young children, influenced by their age and maturation also how child street vending leads to poor education attainment. The current study bridge the gap by assesses the effects of child street vending on education attainment.

MATERIALS AND METHODS

• Target Population

Hartl (2017) states that population is a group of individuals who have one or more characteristics in common that are of interest to the researcher. The targeted populations in this study comprised of 1 DEO, 3 head teachers, 678 teachers and

240 child street vending, selected from the study area. The DEO and head teachers were the key informants of anything about educational affairs related to child street vending in Morogoro Municipality. Child street vending were selected because they have full information on street vending activities, including all the challenges they face in education attainment.

- **Participants**

The study involved 47 participants. The selected size was comprised different individuals based on the occupation as shown in table 3.1:

Table 3.1: Projected Sample Size

S/No.	Details	Frequency
1.	DEO	1
2.	Head teachers	3
3.	Teachers	3
4.	Child Street Vending	40
TOTAL		47

Source of Field data, 2023

- **Data Collection Instruments and Methods**

Data collection refers to the process of gathering specific information aimed at providing a refuting some facts. The researcher used both sources of data (primary and secondary) for compensation reason where one source of information supplements the other. The data from secondary sources were used to supplement the primary data. According to Cohen (2020), the use of a single technique may lead to bias while a multiplicity of methods ensures authenticity of the data. This study utilized primary data collection methods to get information from respondents. Primary data are the data collected afresh from the field for the first time and are original in nature. The study used the following instruments to collect data.

- **In-depth Interview**

An in-depth interview is described as a method of collecting data that involve presentation of oral-verbal stimuli and reply in terms of oral-verbal responses. Qualitative design approach is mostly used to answer “why” and “how” questions. However, depending on the context, “what” questions can also be dealt with qualitative design (Creswell 2014). Interviews allow the researcher to enter in to the other person’s inner world, and help to understand the other person’s perspective and the meaning he or she gives to those perspectives. In this study, interviews were used to gather information from the DEO, head teachers, teachers and child street vending. Specifically, the in-depth interviews were used to critically determine the causes of child street vending, the challenges of street vending and remedial measures to address those challenges. Since in-depth interviews allow flexibility of the interviewer and interviewee, the researcher managed to obtain relevant findings. The data obtained were triangulated with those obtained through observation for accuracy.

- **Observation**

Observation is way of gathering data by watching behavior, events, or noting physical characteristics in their natural setting. Observations can be overt (or covert (no one knows they are being observed and the observer is concealed). In this study, the observation method was used to observe a number of the child street vending at Chief Kingalu and Mawenzi markets. Meanwhile, the researcher observed the types of the small business conducted by child street vendors, and the types of clothing child street vending used in the business.

RESULT AND DISCUSSION

The Causes of Child street vending in Morogoro Municipality

The first objective of the study was to determine the causes of child street vending. The findings revealed various causes of child street vending. First, the children engage in daily street vending work for the purpose of earning a living for themselves or their families. Such activities are often carried out at the expense of the school. Therefore, children are not properly prepared for the future in modern society. The findings revealed that poverty has been blamed as the main source of children selling on the streets as many people do not have the opportunity to rent or find approved places to sell their goods. Some children engage in various activities to earn a living. Some of these activities are sometimes dangerous for the child's health and education.

It was also found that many parents wanted their children to work as street vending because this is one way to increase family income and learn. Parents also consider street children vendors as a place to learn. The results imply that parents are unaware of the short-term and long-term consequences of child street vendors. They also lack knowledge of international laws that prohibit street vendors of children, something attributes to their low level of awareness. It was

realized that children do not have the ability to defend themselves due to the policies/laws set, it is the responsibility of teachers, parents, guardians and everyone who will be close to the child to ensure that the child gets his basic rights, including education, health and protection. Fighting against child maltreatment is a catalyst for change and development of children. Children alone cannot prevent the problems they face, for example knowing the extent to which policies or laws protect their rights.

Challenges of child street Vending on education attainment

The second objective was to determine the common challenges of child street vending on education attainment. The findings showed that the economic condition of the parents is a challenge faced by the village government when they are fighting with children who are doing small business. Many families' parents are not able to help themselves, this has also been a challenge to fight children who fail to go to school and are involved in different businesses. In other families, school issues are not a priority, parents are focused on different small businesses. Little understanding of parents about education, uneducated parents have been difficult to prevent children from engaging in different businesses such as small businesses.

On the other hand, child street vending are a threat to the survival of the community. They distort government policy on the development of youth education and result in high school dropouts. As a result, child street vendors destroy the economic sector because it is a business that does not comply with the rules. Furthermore, the challenges facing these children street vendors while in business lead to mental stress due to the child's age and maturity. Therefore, mental stress reduces child's attention at school and adversely affects the child's health.

Remedial Measures to the challenges of child street vending toward education attainment

The third objective of the current study was to find out the remedial measures to the challenges of child street vending toward education attainment. This section presents sub-themes of the existing policies on the rights of Child Street Vendors are effective and local government ever tried to combat Children who engage in child street vendors. The findings indicated that each of Tanzania's Children's Rights Code sets out steps businesses can take based on their corporate responsibility to respect children's rights, as well as recommended steps to support children's rights in the workplace, market and society. In this way, the Code aims to help businesses better understand their responsibilities to children in various contexts, including hiring young workers, marketing practices, interactions with local communities and business operations in emergency situations.

The findings found that parents and society need to be aware and be alert, disruption in children's education can be prevented and most of them will not be pushed to sell children on the street. Aware communities can understand and respond to children's issues more effectively. Mobilization also ensures that communities take advantage of opportunities for growth, education, employment, and business and create a socially and economically prosperous society in which children suffer less. The government should conduct community events, sports, arts and dramas to educate the community about the importance of child rights.

CONCLUSION

This study aimed at assessing the effects of child street vending on education attainment in Tanzania. The results have indicated that the existing policies, laws, rules and regulations are necessary for long-term social change and significant benefits. However, policies, laws, rules and regulations are not sufficient without the collective willingness of the community to eradicate the child street vending problem. Therefore, all stakeholders, such as government, the media, teachers and parents, must play an active role in this effort. Furthermore, the study highlighted some of the problems and the possible solutions that could be suitable for overcoming child street vending problem and its effects on education attainment. One of the challenges is economic hardship of some parents. Because they are also dependants to their children, these parents fail to stop their children engaging in street vending. As a result, these parents find themselves contributing to street vendors instead of making sure their children attend school to meet their educational goals. This is because these parents are also dependant to these children. Consequently, the economic situation of parents hinders their effective collaboration with the government and society to overcome the problem. Therefore, addressing this problem requires high parental involvement.

Recommendation

• To children themselves

Children as victims and part of society must be involved in the fight against child street vending in the following ways: children may be involved in child welfare by reporting any parent or guardian who encourages them to work rather than go to school. The government should ensure that children participate fully in all matters concerning their welfare, in accordance with the various international agreements ratified by Tanzania.

- **To families and communities**

It is the responsibility of parents and guardians to prioritize the well-being of the children under their they care and to provide them with utmost protection. These include meeting their basic needs, keeping them safe and promoting their overall well-being.

In order to address the issue of child street vending, it is also important to establish child protection teams at the village level. Parents and guardians teams should actively collaborate with these teams to make children aware of the detrimental effects associated with child street vending. By raising awareness of the risks and challenges children face in such situations, parents can be well informed to make proper decisions that prioritize their children's well-being.

Additionally, these child protection teams should encourage and empower community members to report any instances of child labor or exploitation. By creating a system of accountability, it is easy to identify the individuals who hire children for street vending, and appropriate measures can be taken to protect the children involved.

It is crucial for parents, guardians, and the community as a whole to work together in ensuring the safety, development, and protection of children. Through the provision of the necessary support, education and reporting mechanisms, we can create a supportive environment that protects the rights and well-being of all children.

- **To the government**

District councils should allocate an adequate budget to the Department of Social Welfare to support the campaigns that promote awareness against child street vending. These campaigns play a vital role in educating the public about the risks and negative consequences associated with children involvement in street vending activities.

The Ministry of Finance should also prioritize initiatives that bring about positive changes in household income. By implementing policies and programs that promote economic growth and provide opportunities for increased household income, families can be empowered to meet their basic needs and reduce the likelihood of resorting to child street vending as a means of survival.

The government, through the Department of Social Welfare, has a responsibility to protect and take care of the children of the country. One way to address the issue of children involvement in street vending is by conducting trainings to facilitate effective parenting skills in rural communities. These trainings will improve traditional parenting practices and customs that may contribute to children becoming involved in street vending. By equipping parents with effective parenting knowledge and skills, the risk of engaging children in street vending can be eradicated.

Tanzania Broadcasting Corporation (TBC) should consider dedicating specific TV and radio programmes to promote awareness about the negative impacts of children selling on the streets. Through informative and engaging content, these programmes can reach a wide audience and educate them about the risks, dangers, and long-term consequences faced by child street vendors.

The government should also enforce the laws and regulations against child street vending. The Department of Labour should also increase the number of officers at ward and village levels. These officers will be responsible for monitoring and ensuring compliance with the laws, as well as taking appropriate action against those who exploit or employ children for street vending. Strengthening the enforcement of laws will serve as a deterrent and contribute to the protection of children from exploitation and hazardous working conditions.

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