

Effect of Street Hawking on the Academic Performance of Students in Practical Agriculture: A Case Study of Secondary Schools in Taraba State.

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Abstract

The study determined the impact of street hawking on the academic performance of practical agriculture students in Taraba state. The street child is defined as any child who may have parents or guardians in a locality but living and working in the street. Street children engage in work or employment on a regular basis with the aim of earning a livelihood for themselves or for their families. These children sometimes are absent from school on their parents demand to sell, and sometimes play truancy during practical agricultural science lessons. Their irregular attendance in practical agriculture could affect their performance in the subject. One research question and one hypothesis was formulated for the study. The study employed a survey design, while Taraba State was the area of the study which consists of 16 local government areas and 118 junior secondary schools. The population was made up of 8839 JSSII students as at 2010/2011 school session. The sample size of 384 was drawn using the Taro Yamane formula. A questionnaire for students' responses and a pre-format sheet for collecting students' academic performance were instruments used to collect data from the students, and was validated by two experts. The instruments were pilot tested using the split half method. Data collected were analyzed using the mean while z-test was used to test the hypothesis. For research the question, a mean of 3.5 and above was considered agreed while less than 3.5 were considered disagreed. And for mean academic performance above 3.5 was considered good while below 3.5 was considered as poor. For the null hypothesis, if z-calculated was equal to or more than the table -z at 0.05 level of significance, it was rejected and if the z-calculated was less than the table-z it was accepted. Findings revealed that; (1) the effect of street hawking on student academic performance in practical agriculture was poor. (2) that there was very low rating score of the academic performance in practical agriculture of students that are involved in street hawking. It was recommended that the State government should make basic education free or affordable for the common Nigerian. The State government should legislate against street hawking by school aged children so that they can concentrate on their studies.

INTRODUCTION

Children are regarded as important element of development; therefore, their welfare in the society is an index of social and economic development of that society. That is why child welfare is included in the Millennium Development Goals (MDG), (UNESCO, 2004). But most of them are denied this right by engaging them in some forms of child labor, especially street hawking.

The street child is defined as any child who may have parents or guardians in a locality but living and working in the street. Street children engaged in work or employment on a regular basis with the aim of earning a livelihood for themselves or for their families. Such activities are often carried out at the expense of schooling. Therefore, children are not adequately prepared for the future in a modernized society, (UNICEF, 2004; FME, 2004).

Hawking is a marketing system characterized by many buyers and sellers usually offering very small quantities for sale at a time. (Olukosi, Isitor, and Ode, 2005). It is this system of marketing that becomes a point of concern to the researcher as he sees mostly young children of school age involved in street hawking.

According to Nseabasi 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.

In Nigeria, there has been an increase in the number of children trading or working in the rural areas which affects their acquisition of education and this can be traced to a lot of factors which according to Dustmann (2003), are: cost of schooling, characteristics of the child, parents, households and community, location and distance of formal education centre. Poverty and illiteracy are reinforced by traditional customs such as polygamy and preference for large family size. Child street trading is a threat to the continued survival of the society; it distorts government policies in the education of the youths. It also distorts acquisition of vocational skills and relevant education thereby destroying the economic sector (Esweren 2001).

Danesty and Okediran (2002) lamented that street hawking among young school students have psychologically imposed other problems, like sex networking behavior, juvenile delinquent behavior, which takes most of the students school time and leads to poor academic performance and drop out syndrome noticed among young school students.

For the purpose of this study, one research question and one hypothesis were stated as follows:

1) What is the academic performance in practical agriculture of students that hawk?

Hypothesis

The null hypothesis was tested at 0.05 level of significance.

1) There is no significant difference in the mean rating of the academic performance in practical agriculture of students involved in street hawking and those not involved.

METHODOLOGY

The study was carried out in Taraba State; which lies largely within the middle of Nigeria. Location of Taraba State in Nigeria Coordinates: 8°00'N 10°30'E; and consists of undulating landscape dotted with a few mountainous features (NigeriaGalalari.Com. 2011). The population of the study comprised 8839 JSS II students as at 2010/2011 session according to the Taraba State Post-primary School Management Board (2011), from 118 Junior Secondary Schools in the State.

The Taro Yamene formula was used to draw a sample of 382 JSS II students across Taraba State, and 31 Junior Secondary Schools were randomly sampled at the ratio of 4:1 from the eight (8) Education Zones in the State. Data for this study was collected using structured questionnaire.

The decision rule for the hypothesis was at 0.05 level of significance, if the z-value was less or equal to Table z, then the Null hypothesis was accepted or otherwise rejected and for the research question, a mean of 2.5 and above was considered Agreed while less than 2.5 was considered Disagreed, and for mean academic performance of 2.5 and above was considered Good, while less than 2.5 was considered not good. A bar chart was used in presenting the result of the question.

RESULT AND DISCUSSION

Results from figure 1 indicate that students' academic performance in practical agriculture was not high but within Good and Fair. Table 1 revealed that the mean rating of academic performance in practical agriculture of students involved in street hawking was 1.80 while that of those not involved in street hawking was 3.64 above the mean of 2.5. The calculated z- value was 1.11 which was greater than the critical z- value and so the hypothesis was rejected, implying there was a significant difference in the academic performance of the students involved in hawking and those not involved in hawking.

Results showed that there was a very low rating score of the academic performance in practical agriculture of students that are involved in street hawking. This result agrees with a study by Fatokun (2007), who found out that there was a significant effect of child abuse on the academic performance of the child in science subjects at the secondary school level. The frequency of the abuse has a psychological effect on the abused child in his school and society.

Njoku, (2010) said that truanting behavior is one of the major aspects of indiscipline among secondary school students. This practice of staying away from school without permission has been a perennial problem among students, thereby affecting their academic performances and productivity in the society at large. Most of these truants spend their time in street hawking or other activities such as watching cable network on television, European League Football, video games, play with their handsets during classes, or engage in secret cult activities.

RECOMMENDATIONS

Based on the findings, the following recommendations were made:

- The government should make basic education free or affordable to the common Nigerian child.
- The State government should legislate against street hawking by school aged children so that they can concentrate on their studies.
- Practical agriculture should be made more attractive and rewarding for school children, so that they can develop interest in the subject.

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Figure1: A bar-chart showing the academic performance of students that hawk
ACADEMIC PERFORMANCE OF STUDENTS INVOLVED IN STREET
HAWKING

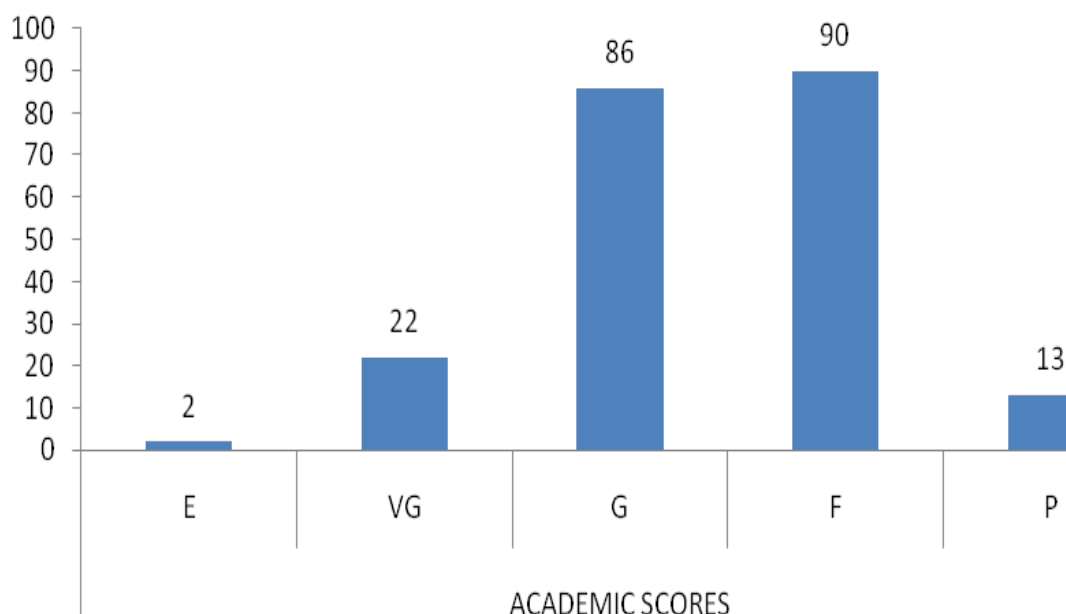


Table 1: Z-test for the mean rating of academic performance of students involved in street hawking and those not involved in street hawking

Subjects	N	Mean	SD	SE	DF	Cal Z-Value	Table Z-Value	Remark
Not involved	97	3.64	1.023	.104	96	1.11	1.96	Rejected
Involved	213	1.80	9.26	.063	212	1.11	1.96	Rejected

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