

“Push” and “Pull” Factors Influencing Junior High School Students Engagement in Child Labour in Fishing Communities in Ghana

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Abstract

The literature has multiple reasons for child labour. Poverty, war, HIV/AIDS are amongst the most cited causes. In impoverished fishing communities, decisions by students to engage in labour might be different from the usual causes. This paper therefore, aims at understanding the factors that trigger off Junior High School (JHS) students' decision to engage in child labour and bring out counselling implications. Using the causal network analytic approach of the qualitative methodology designed by Miles & Huberman (1994), data were gathered through in-depth interviews and focus group discussions with 20 participants comprising students, parents and teachers. This is part of a larger research project on socio-cultural context of child labour from two JHSs in fishing communities in the Cape Coast Metropolis in the Central Region of Ghana. The results show that “Push” factors include socio-cultural values regarding work and education, family history of child labour, and desire for formal education. “Pull” factors include peer pressure and materialism. Single-parent condition however, is a “push- pull” factor. The study concludes that school children are pushed as well as pulled into work at an early age and that parents value education but are impoverished. Guidance coordinators in schools are entreated to engage in community/family counselling, to enlighten parents on the need to promoting the total well-being of their children by protecting and providing for their basic needs as enshrined in the UN Convention on the Rights of the Child to which Ghana is a signatory.

Key words: child labour, pull, push, counselling, socio-cultural values.

1. Introduction

Child labour has been a serious problem worldwide. A rough estimate of the number of children between 5-14 years, who were employed according to an ILO survey, was pegged at 250 million globally. Out of this figure, 120 million were full time workers and were involved in work that was hazardous and exploitative (Donnellan, 2002). According to UNICEF, ILO and the World Bank, about 40% of West Africa's population lives below the poverty line due to the deteriorating economic situations and that this has led to a much bigger trade and use of children in particularly large plantation farms where there is high need for cheap and obedient labour (Donnellan, 2002).

In Ghana, according to Golo (2005) some children are recruited from Ada and other coastal towns and used in fishing industries along the Volta Lake. Child labour is dominant in fishing and agriculture sectors in rural areas in Ghana and this is chiefly found in the coastal towns. The study explained that the phenomenon is exploitative, hazardous and infringes on the rights of the child as stipulated in the Children's Act of 1998. This research aims at understanding the factors that trigger off school children decision to engage in child labour activities in some fishing communities in Cape Coast. The research question undergirding this study was “Why do school children engage in child labour activities?” This was to generate responses that brought on board factors that “push” (force) students into child labour as against those that “pull” (lure) them into child labour.

This study aims first, at unearthing the factors that give rise to the phenomenon of child labour by classifying them as “push” or “pull” factors. Secondly, it seeks to posit the urgent need for school guidance coordinators in JHSs to go beyond the classroom to counsel parents and care-givers on the need to promoting the total well-being of their children by protecting and providing for their basic needs as enshrined in the UN Convention on the Rights of the Child. Finally, it would help institutions working on child labour to take a look at and address issues that are embedded in the socio-cultural practices of the people giving rise to students' involvement in child labour.

2 Methodology

The research design employed is the causal network analytic approach of the qualitative tradition. Characteristically, the qualitative paradigm is an approach that seeks to study the ‘lived’ experiences of people through the stories they tell about their “life situations... the embodied here-and-now reality” (Manning & Cullum-Swan, 1994, p. 465) either in the form of interviews, autobiographies, life histories, or other materials which are collected as people compose their lives from their own perspectives (Clandinin & Connelly, 2000). Through purposeful and snowball sampling procedures, 20 research participants made up of 10 JHS students, five mothers, three immediate neighbours (INs) and two teachers of five students who lived with care-givers were selected. The core data analyses are based on

the narratives of the student-participants who are the child labourers since they “are the primary sources of knowledge about their views and experiences” (Christensen and Prout, 2002:481). The parents, INs, and teachers’ stories provided for triangulation.

2. 1 Ethical Considerations

This study considered the special needs of vulnerable population who are victims of a social phenomenon (Creswell 2003). The research established counselling ethics as its pillar before, during and after data collection. These included: acceptance, positive regard and the worth of the participants. Bearing in mind the import of ethical consideration in dealing with minors and marginalised in society, due formal and informal informed consent of the parents, teachers and participants was sought before the commencement of the study. The participants were assured of maximum confidentiality and the right to withdraw at any given time. Care-givers were not contacted when some participants revealed that contact with such care-givers would not be in their best interest. Consequently, immediate neighbours and teachers of such participants were interviewed. An arrangement was made with a senior professional counsellor from the Counselling Centre of the University of Cape Coast to offer counselling services in case of counselling needs that might be beyond the researcher before, during or after the study.

2. 2 Data Collection Procedure

Data were gathered through in-depth interviews and focus group discussions (FGDs). The semi-structured interviews sought to find out factors that trigger off school children’s involvement in child labour through the stories they told. Interview with students lasted approximately 45 minutes and were conducted twice and those with parents/ INs/ teachers lasted for about an hour each. Three FGDs were held and each also lasted for about an hour.

2. 3 Data Analysis

The causal network analytic approach designed by Miles & Huberman (1994) was adopted to break, reduce, display and verify the set of categories that were identified. Miles & Huberman (1994) citing Weick, indicated that in the analysis of sequence with cause that triggers subsequent events, it is difficult to label one “cause” and the other “effect” because the “effect” comes back to modify the “cause”. Weick suggested “cause maps” that put together all the variables and connections that are inherent in them. In causal network, the assumption is that some factors exert influence on others (Miles & Huberman, 1994). The data were first coded with reflective notes written against them then causal maps were produced through the discovery of recurring phenomena noting the associations between and amongst them. These associations were based on the relatedness and contrast of themes that emerged all pulled into a family of themes.

2. 4 Trustworthiness of Results

On the issue of trustworthiness this study employed several devices to reduce bias and establish verification (Padgett, 1998). Member checking, triangulation, and prolonged engagement were employed. Both formal and informal informed consent of parents, teachers and participants were duly sought. Pseudonyms were used for each interviewee to ensure confidentiality and enhance identification.

3. Results

In exploring the factors responsible for students engagement in child labour, the emergent patterns as reported by participants, were useful in the appreciation of the overall understanding of the context of child labour in fishing communities studied. Several reasons responsible for students engage in child labour were disclosed during FGDs and interviews with participants. As indicated in Figure 1 below, some factors are as a cause of other reasons which themselves serve as effect(s) of others.

Analysis of the specific circumstances that triggered off the incidence of child labour is classified into ‘push’ and ‘pull’ factors. ‘Push’ factor is defined in this study as a condition that forces children to engage in income-generating activities to help alleviate the economic constraints of their families either by being directly or indirectly sent by parents. The ‘pull’ factor, on the other hand, refers to what lures participants into work while “push-pull” refers to a phenomenon that shares the characteristics of both push and pull factors.

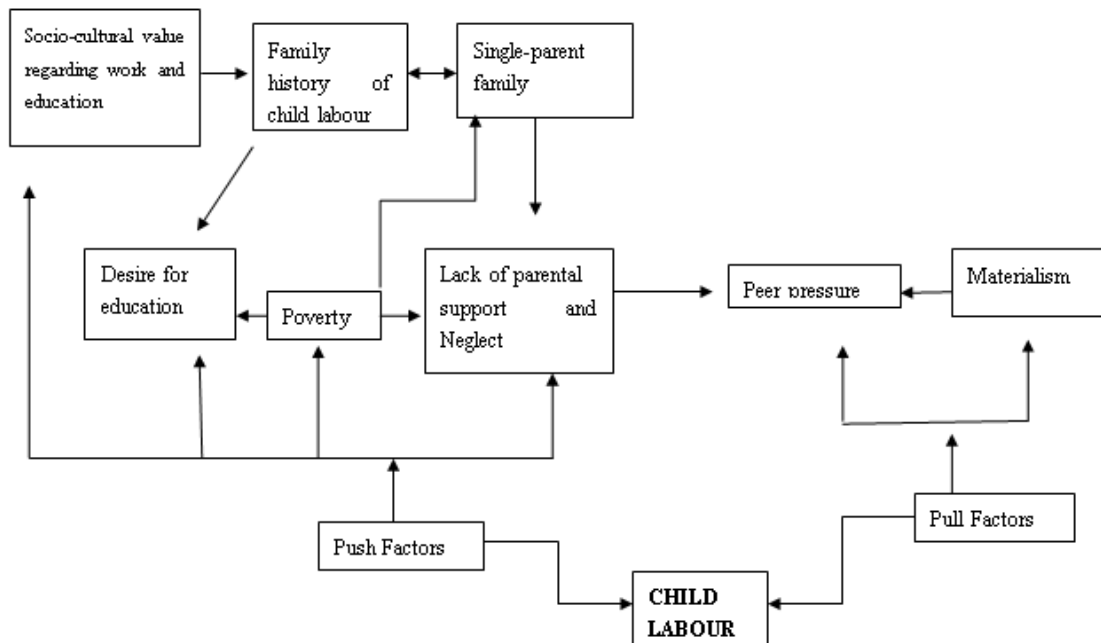


Figure 1. Path Analysis: Factors Influencing Child Labour

Source: Author Constructed, 2013

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Analysis pertaining to the factors is presented in a path analysis induced from participants’ descriptions pulling all the categories together and assessing their dimensions. Having examined the interconnectedness of the factors responsible for students’ involvement in child labour, the following emergent themes are classified and analysed as “push”, “pull” or “push-pull” factors.

3. 1 “Push” Factors

The “Push” factors that emerged were categorised as desire for formal education, lack of parental support and neglect, poverty, socio-cultural values and family history of child labour.

3. 1. 1 Desire for Formal Education

The desire to have formal education emerged as a strong “push” factor underpinning children’s involvement in child labour in the selected fishing communities and this has ‘pushed’ as many as seven out of the 10 student-participants into child labour to either start or stay in school. Agbee reported that at the age of 10 years, he felt that he was missing something. It dawned on him that formal education is very important in one’s life. There was, therefore, a vacuum created in him with a strong desire to go to school. He said:

*... before I started working, I was not going to school
 ... but anytime I saw my friends come back from school,
 I felt that I should also go to school.*

(Agbee, 19 years, Form 3 Boy)

Agbee’s mother corroborated this statement and said that, “...this child (Agbee) became a restless soul anytime he saw his friends in school uniform”. Ericus reported that the desire to continue his formal education after the parents divorced and his father did not provide for his needs made him to start work. He re-echoed this sentiment strongly during an FGD that:

I had to stop going to school because there was no

money to pay my school fees... what my mother does for a living is nothing so I decided to work to support her to look after me and my siblings to be in school.

(Ericus, 18 years Form 2 Boy)

These stories implied that prior to their involvement in paid work these students were either not enrolled into a school or had dropped out of school as a result of lack of financial support from the mother and the father's lack of responsibility. The 'push' factor employed here is not a parental one but a financial push where some children's engagement in child labour activities were influenced positively by the desire to go to school or continue school. The implication is that though some participants set out to work primarily to see themselves in school, to care for their basic needs including their education, they also ended up becoming guardians or bread-winners for their families. Furthermore, though the desire to be in school is a direct cause of child labour as reported by participants in the study, this has the underlying causes of and directly linked to poverty, lack of parental support, and single-parent family conditions.

3. 1. 2 Lack of Parental Support and Neglect

A pattern of parental neglect (particularly fathers) and abandonment emerged strongly from the narratives and experiences of some of the participants as another factor that directly forced them into work. Agbee recalled that total neglect by his father coupled with his mother's inability to support him financially led him to engage in child labour as a means of supporting himself both in school and outside school. Josh shared similar experience:

... I asked my father for money for school and he refused to give me so I looked for work to do... he doesn't mind us at all...

(Josh, 19 years Form 3 Boy)

Inno, talking about whether her father provided for her upkeep when she was living with her own mother narrated that "my father never sent me anything". She went on to say that her mother sent her to live with her aunt as a way of lessening her (mother's) burden. She recalled that, "My mother said that if I'm with my aunt, she wouldn't have to feed me too". However, Chris who lived with both parents reported that his parents did not neglect him but that their provision for him and his siblings was insufficient due to the fact that the father had no proper occupation and his mother was unemployed.

It is evident from the data that there is a kind of parental push which we would justifiably term "incidental" because both the participants and their parents reported that parents did not directly push the students into labour but their inability or failure to fulfil their parental responsibility toward their children, indirectly, pushed the children to engage in economic activities. This assertion is based on the fact that the parents did not report doing anything to stop or prevent the children from engaging in work but rather seem to enjoy the proceeds of the work of their children. This condition is so as a result of poverty that emanates from unemployment.

Conversely, all the four girl-participants seem to have been pushed into child labour by their parents (specifically by their mothers). These girls reported either working for their own mothers or given out by their mothers to live with relatives to help them in their businesses. In return, these relatives were to support these girls by providing their basic needs such as shelter, food, clothing, health care and education. This position was shared by Inno when she disclosed:

... I came to live with my aunt because my mother said that she (my aunt) has no child and she needed somebody to help her. So I'm to live with her... as a way of helping her so that she can also look after me but the work I do makes me too tired and I fall sick often.

(Inno, 15 years, Form 1 Girl)

These girls have not willingly engaged in work, but have been pushed into it by parents (mothers) ostensibly due to financial constraints in the home. This assertion is closely linked to the issue of single-parent families discussed in the next section.

3. 1. 3 Poverty

This factor is an embedded factor which to all appearances also pushed students in fishing communities into child labour. It emerged as a very strong 'push' factor that cause students to engage in work either directly or masked through single parent family condition, family history of child labour, lack of parental support, and peer pressure. It is also an effect of child labour that breeds another cycle of poverty in the generations that were caught up in the chain of child labour history. Seven out of the 10 working students indicated that but for poverty, they might not have found themselves working:

*Because my mother is not working, I have to
work in order to go to school like my friends...*

(Agbee, 19 years, Form 3 Boy)

*After my father died it was becoming very very difficult
for my mother to single-handedly look after all
of us to continue school so ... I started working.*

(Dan, 18 years, Form 3 Boy)

In a sense therefore, poverty may not be directly the pushing factor of the participants' involvement in child labour. It seems to be the result of a combination of factors: parental irresponsibility (specifically, fathers) and unemployment (mothers).

3. 1. 4 Socio-Cultural Values

To ascertain the social and cultural values that underlie and promote child labour in fishing communities, responses were elicited under themes such as cultural values of people in the community regarding work and education; why some parents seem to endorse their children's participation in economic activities; and the world view of people in fishing communities regarding child labour and child labourers. In this study, socio-cultural values refer variously to values relating to work, and education.

3. 1. 4. 1 Socio-Cultural Values Regarding Work

Participants reported that they started work in the domestic settings by helping their families before going out for paid jobs. These children worked partly because of poverty but also because cultural values and expectations support this as a natural and right way to bringing up children and training them to take up adult roles and responsibilities and becoming full members of their families. In fact, this is the traditional mode of instilling informal education and socialization amongst the people of the study sites. Data reveal that six of the 10 student-participants helped their parents in their small home-based businesses. For instance, all the four female participants reported that they assist their mothers or care-givers in their petty-trading activities:

*I help my mother in frying and selling *koliko and
**Accra kenkey at the road side. I join my mother at the
road side after school where I take over the koliko and
she goes to prepare the kenkey. Sometimes when she
has to go somewhere or has something else doing, then
I take over selling both the koliko and kenkey.*

(Tsoeke, 16 years, Form 3 Girl)

* fried yam or fried potato

** a local Ghanaian dish prepared with corn-dough moulded in corn husk

*You see, if I don't insist that she does every work,
she will become lazy in future and if she does not get
any good man to look after her, what will she do then?*

(Tsoeke's biological mother)

All these point to the issue of children engaging in work early in life as a means of helping their parents and or as a way of being trained and prepared for adulthood responsibilities.

In general, some parents, teachers and neighbours who participated were of the view that engaging children as young as four years in work is not a new phenomenon to their traditional cultural practices where one's children are seen as an asset. Children generally are perceived as means of help in the household survival. This implies that child labour is not alien to the culture of the people and seemingly, they do not frown upon it. However, some parents expressed different view to this assumption.

The contrary views expressed indicate that some parents are quite aware of the danger of keeping their children out of school and engaging them in work. Again, it is obvious from the discussion of the data presented that there is no clear cut point in the cultural set up regarding "child service" and "child labour". And that it seems parents and care-givers inadvertently turned to exploit their children and wards who help them all in the name of training and socialisation.

3. 1. 4. 2 Family Values Regarding Education

Family values regarding education are very crucial to the decisions and choices that children make concerning child labour, their schooling and educational aspirations. Some parents and care-givers seem to place education high despite their poor socio-economic status. Most mothers were of the view that education is important and it is the only

thing that can help break the chain of poverty. Dan's mother lamented over her own inability to attend school which she blamed on her parents whom she said did not value sending the girl child to school and were more concerned about the immediate gains they would make when they put her to work. Because she knows, feels, lives, and experiences the adverse effects of lack of formal education, she seems resolved to see her children through school but she is impoverished by lack of financial support. This, she said, was why she has no option than to allow Dan to engage in work to help see him through his schooling. She recalled:

You see, the problem is that we (referring to women in the community) did not go to school so we don't have any good job and we are not skillfully trained so you see, it is either fishing or gari processing and where can this take us and our children to today? ... I want Dan to go to school to become somebody tomorrow so that it will be well for him and he can help us too. So the money he makes he uses it for school...

(Biological Mother of Dan)

This narrative is shared by most adult-participants and it reveals that some parents believe in and value the power of education in breaking the poverty cycle. It is evident from the data that some present day parents value education and are aware of the tremendous prospects that it can bring to the total well being of both the individual and the family but were and still are impoverished by their poor socio-economic conditions. Though they themselves did not get the opportunity to attend or complete school, they are however, resolved better their lot in life and are therefore accommodating and or indulgent as regards their children's decision to engage in work in order to see themselves through education.

3. 1. 5 Family History of Child Labour

Eight student-participants reported that they have a history of child labour in their families. Only two could not tell whether any member of either their nuclear or extended families ever engaged in work when they were children. Reports from the FGDs indicate that three out of the eight participants who have a family history of child labour said that their fathers were child labourers. Six mothers of the participants were also reported to have worked when they were children. The network of child labour history running through families is well summed up in Chris' comment:

My younger brother also works. My cousin who just came to live with us also expressed his desire to work if he gets some. My father used to say that he worked to look after himself in school. He fished. And I think this affected my father's education. As for my mother she said she worked here with her mother before she married my father.

(Chris, 18 years, Form 1 Boy)

On sibling involvement in child labour interviewees reported that their siblings either older or younger than them engaged in work. For the extended family members three participants also indicated that either their aunts and or uncles (either paternal or maternal) also worked as children. The data revealed that majority of participants somehow "inherited" the practice of child labour from their parents. It is embedded in the culture of the families. It is logical to state that child labour is not a new and uncommon phenomenon in most families in the fishing communities studied and this might be the reason why some parents though are not well-to-do and might not support the practice, permitted the practice among their children. This could be pushed further by saying that since parents of child labourers are aware of the help their work offered their families when they were young, they do not detest child labour in their adulthood with the hope that they would also gain from their children's work.

1. 2 "Pull" Factors

The factors that fall under this category are peer pressure and materialism.

3. 2. 1 Peer Pressure and Materialism

Peer pressure and materialism are other driving forces behind child participation in paid work as indicated in Figure 1. All male-participants reported that though they had other reasons to engage in work, the call by their friends to join them to work is also a factor. In this case, peers replace parents in encouraging the participants to engage in work at an early age. The peer group also mostly selects or reinforces the kind of work their friends take up. Male-participants reported that they also get involved in work in order to acquire material possessions that their peers

possess. These participants revealed that they want to enjoy among other things, the things that boys of their age have and the only way for them to have these things is to engage in economic activities that would fetch them some money with which they could purchase the material things such as shoes, trendy or fashionable dresses, and some electronic devices like phone, walk man, and radio sets. These causes are referred to as the 'pull' factors. It is the desire for material possessions: the need to feel loved and belong that 'pulled' a number of school going children into labour:

*... when our friends have some of those things and
you don't have some, they don't respect you so
I work and I use part of the money to buy my things.*

(Prince, 19 years, Form 2 Boy)

These pull factors seem not only as a result of participants succumbing to peer pressure but also the desire to acquire material things as reported in the study. These purchases become a necessity at the same time, a status symbol and give the child labourers a sense of belongingness to the class of their peers.

3.3 "Push-Pull" Factor

The only factor that emerged as a push-pull factor is single-parent family condition of children.

3.3.1 Single-Parent Family condition

A total of seven participants reported that they are from single-parent families and these single-parents are all mothers. Two of the single-mothers had lost their first husbands through death and the five others divorced their first husbands. Ericus lost his father and he and his sister had become a burden on their mother alone. Though his mother remarried twice after the death of his father, she still lives as a single-mother. Ericus' mother sadly recalled, "*I left my husband because not only was he not looking after me and the child I bore him, he also did not like my other children*".

Dan also lost his father and the mother remarried another man and had two children for him. Dan's mother said:

*I married again after Dan's father died. But he
(her current husband) is not looking after his own children
too well. He will be there... and in about three months then
he will bring us GHC 30.00... What is bothering us
(referring to the women in the group and community)
now is the issue of marriage. The men are refusing
to be responsible for the children we bore them. I'm
not the only one in this situation...*

(Biological Mother of Dan in an FGD)

Statements such as the above indicate paternal irresponsibility in the communities where fathers and or husbands have shirked their paternal responsibilities thereby leaving the duty of caring for their children on the mothers alone. This then makes room for the children to engage in work to support themselves and their mothers. Single-parent family conditions seem to present these children some leeway in the home where they tend to direct and control their life. In the case of all the male participants, their mothers or aunts could no longer control them. They do what pleases them to the extent that some even live off their mothers' roof and are more often than not, tempted to respond to the call of their peers to engage in work. One can therefore, say that single-family condition puts a number of children into child labour, because faced with the paternal neglect these children believe that if their mothers were working and well to do, their mothers would have been able to look after them in spite of their fathers' lack of responsibility and they would not have been victims of child labour. The data revealed that fathers were hardly mentioned by the participants as supporters. In place of father responsibility, mothers and aunts appeared to be bearing the responsibility of the children.

There is a pattern emerging from the data to the effect that parental separation coupled with the remarriage of a parent (the mother), brings about unfriendly environment for children from previous marriage and this often gives rise to friction as the stepparent (stepfather) is sometimes unsympathetic and abusive to the step child. This issue came up during both the individual interviews and group discussions. In another discussion, the head teacher of one of the schools also commented that, "*In fact, one of the main problems of this school and the community is that the step fathers and even the real fathers are not responsible at all...*".

Two of the participants in the study who either live with their mothers and or stepfathers reported suffering abuse from their stepfathers. The homes of most of the child labourers do not seem safe and conducive for child development where they need all the parental care and love to develop fully. Stepfathers were reported as making

these stepchildren feel unwanted and they maltreat them at the least provocation. These reports show that though some participants' engagement in child labour activities stem from their desire to acquire formal education, another major triggering factor is basically lack of parental support or neglect. These children, apart from struggling to satisfy their physiological needs, they are also faced with challenges of safety needs and belongingness.

4. Discussion

The study sought to explore the specific "push" and "pull" factors that contribute to the occurrence of the phenomenon of child labour. Looking at the specific factors that propelled children into child labour, it emerged that lack of parental support and neglect pushed many children into work at an early age. Fathers, who either willingly or unwillingly did not financially support their children especially in the area of their education coupled with their mothers' unemployment, both directly and indirectly pushed their children into child labour. This finding confirms studies conducted by Fukui (2000), Gharaibe and Hoeman (2003) and Hawamdeh and Spencer (2001) that children often engage in economic activities in order to pay their school fees and in insuring the well being of the self.

From the analysis of data it emerged that single-parent family is the prominent family type that exists in the study sites where mothers are the sole bread winners of the family. This finding resonates with Gharaibe and Hoeman's (2003) finding that children who engage in child labour are from broken homes. Single-parent family conditions seem to give these children some freedom in the home to direct and control their life. They do what pleases them and sometimes live off their mothers' care and control.

It was found that parents value education and were aware of its prospects but were impoverished by their poor socio-economic conditions and were therefore, accommodating and or indulgent as regards their children's involvement in work which the children use to fund their education and other basic needs of life so that they could secure a better future devoid of the child labour cycle.

It emerged from the data that majority of parents find it difficult to draw the line between what constitutes "child service" to the home and what is "child labour" in their attempt to bring up their children to become responsible adults in future. Parents could not tell when child training ends and where child exploitation sets in in bringing up their children. Parents reported that the duties they made their children to perform that prevent them from going to school some days or make them tired or late for school sometimes, were all to instil discipline and a sense of hard work in the children when they reach adulthood so that these children could be independent and successful in society. They see their children's work as a form of training for future adult life.

It was found that the desire to acquire formal education put children into work to care for their basic needs including their own education. Children who perceive the benefits of education at an early age engaged in work to either start school or to continue school. In addition, it emerged that desire for material possession as a status symbol and a sense of belongingness pulled some children into early work. This finding resonates with the assertion made by George, (1979) that child labour is an outcome of unsuccessful struggles to legitimately achieve societal goals especially as relates to money and power. This also confirms the works of Admassie (2003) and Zeirold et al (2004) that child labour provides child labourers positive self-identity and self-reliance.

5. Conclusion from the Major Findings

The study found that push factors include parental neglect, family history of child labour, socio-cultural values regarding work and education, and poverty while pull factors include peer pressure and materialism. It was also found that single-parent family situation is a "push-pull" factor.

The study concludes that lack of parental support and neglect, and desire to acquire formal education, among others pushed many children into work and that peer pressure and desire to acquire material things also pulled children into work at an early age. Parents value education and were aware of its prospects but were impoverished by their poor socio-economic conditions. A child whose work is a means of self-support and family survival is a child labourer but not a child rendering service towards the home maintenance. Again, majority of parents believe that work helps train children to be responsible and successful in future and are therefore unable to draw the line between the onset of child exploitation and the end of child service.

This study therefore, identified and proposed two defining characteristics of "child labour". These characteristics or features should serve as signals to what one can rightly call child labour should any one or a combination of the features manifest themselves in a child's life. The two defining characteristics of "child labour" are:

1. Where a child works to care for his or her basic needs including his or her own education.
2. Where a child works as an income-earner for the family.

6. Recommendations for Counselling

This study recommends that cultural values regarding work should not override the regularity and punctuality of children's school attendance and provision of opportunities for children to go to school. Parents should be made to understand that regardless of their own history of child labour, it is proper that they take their children out of work or help them manage their time between work and school profitably.

Counsellors could inform and educate parents and care-givers to understand and value what goes into the provision of education so as to reduce the workload placed on children, and or make time for these children to learn at home: that schooling is much more than a child's physical presence in school; that it takes commitment and parental will to invest their wealth, energy and more especially, their time in their children's education.

Counsellors could inform these stakeholders to commit themselves to the total well-being of their children by providing proper guidance to them so as to reduce the intensity of peer pressure which emerged as one of the triggers of child labour. There is the need for community family counselling involving parents whether coexisting or divorced to put the welfare of their children first by protecting and providing for their children as enshrine in the UN Convention on the Rights of the Child to which Ghana is a signatory.

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