# IMPACT OF STREET HAWKING ON SOCIAL ADJUSTMENT OF SECONDARY SCHOOL STUDENTS IN MUSHIN LOCAL GOVERNMENT AREA OF LAGOS STATE

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#### Abstract

The study investigated the "Impact of Street Hawking on Social Adjustment of Secondary School Students in Mushin Local Government Area of Lagos State. Four research questions and four corresponding hypotheses guided the study. The descriptive research design was adopted in the study. The simple random sampling technique was used to select two hundred respondents from five secondary schools in the study location. A self-designed thirty-item Likert type questionnaire was used to gather the data used for the study. The formulated hypotheses were tested using independent t-test and two-way Analysis of Variance (ANOVA) statistical tools. Findings from the study showed that there is a significant impact of street hawking on social adjustment of secondary school students. Also, there is significant impact of street hawking and parents' socio-economic status on social adjustment. There is significant impact of gender on street hawking and social adjustment among secondary school students. There is no significant impact of age on street hawking and social adjustment among secondary school students. On the basis of the research findings, recommendations were made which include among the others the need for school administrators to organize or find an avenue to educate parents on the negative effects of subjecting their children to street hawking, State governments should ensure that appropriate sanctions be meted out to parents whose children are found hawking on the streets either during or after school hours. Sociologists of education also need to be involved in educating the public on the detriments of juveniles hawking on the streets and how it contributes in the increased rate of drop-outs.

**Keywords:** Street hawking, Social Adjustment, Socio-Economic Status, Gender, Age.

# **Background to the Study**

Street hawking is not a new phenomenon for it is highly prevalent in many developing and underdeveloped countries of the world. National Association of Street Vendors in India, NASVI (2014) noted that street hawking has been on existence since ancient times. In fact, in all civilizations, ancient and medieval, one reads accounts of travelling merchants who not only sold their wares in the town by going from house to house but also traded in neighbouring countries. Street hawking according to Anyanwu (2007) relates to a wandering-like movement in which the concerned individual carries his/her goods with a tray on the head, or by minor means of transportation such as wheel barrow, bicycle or trolley in search of customers which process may be accompanied by at least one form of advertisement-shouting the name of the item on sale, use of a bell or special mannerisms- to attract the attention of interested public. Street hawking is referred to as an occupation that involves selling of goods along the road from one place to the other (Umar in Adegbola, 2014). It could also mean an act of canvassing for sale items carried by a hawker along the street, from house to house or in the public space.

According to United Nations Children Emergency Fund (UNICEF, 2006) report (2006) report,15million children under the age of 14 are working across Nigeria and the report shows that 64% of Nigerian children between the age of five and fourteen are involved in street vending. In the course of trying to understand why children are made to be involved in street hawking rather than have their needs being provided so that they can face their academics squarely, Shittu (2004) points out the effects of economic status of parents on the Nigerian child. According to him, poverty syndrome imposed by economic crunch, maladministration, corruption and emergency closure of firms, has imposed hardship among parents/workers.

Umar and Garba (2008) states that some parents do not see the need to send their girl child to school not to talk of spending much in their education, when they could be easily married to their prospective suitors. Such parents will withdraw their girls from school to take to street hawking as a way to fight poverty. Therefore, these children are made to be engaged in one form of work or the other especially within the family in which at the end of the day may not even return back to school as they might have lost interest in school activities and for those that return some of them may face the problem of adjusting back to the environment they have left for so long.

Ogoduluwa, Anakwe and Mustapha (2004) opined that, street hawking is highly detrimental to children's physical, mental, psychological, social and emotional development. This is because they will have to share their school time with street hawking thereby making it difficult for them be punctual to school and when they eventually get to school, they are fatigued which leads to lack of concentration or sleeping in class.

Social adjustment according to Jain (2012) refers to an effort made by an individual to cope with standards, values and needs of a society in order to be accepted. The ability of an individual to be able to get along with the members of society as best one can is called social adjustment. Social adjustment is the achievement of balance in social relationships. It is the adaptation of a person to his or her social environment. Adjustment can be termed the reaction to the demands and pressures of the social environment imposed upon the individual. Some children that are involved in street hawking may still be able to cope with the pressures and still maintain a healthy relationship with their classmates and fellow students, while some may not be able to maintain a healthy relationship, due to the fact that they feel ashamed of the work they do, and as well feel they are better off isolating themselves than mingling with others, so as to avoid further embarrassment from their mates.

A study carried out by Shields, Cicchetti and Ryan (2004) on juvenile street hawkers revealed that children who are involved in street hawking are prone to difficulty in forming new relationships with peers and adults, and in adapting to norms of social behavior. Also, Basu and Tzannatos (2003) in their research on children engaged in street hawking and the problems they encounter in relation to their social and psychological well-being, found that juvenile hawkers at times face stigmatization by the public, feelings of disheartenment, stress and irritability, personality disorders, anti-social behaviour, alienation, and isolation from their family and peers.

Parents' socio-economic status have been linked with street hawking among juveniles which may reasonably impair their social adjustment. In most African countries and western world particularly, socio-economic status of a family is usually measured in terms of the family's income, parents' educational level, parents' occupation and social status among. Bass (2004) remarked that, high income

households would prefer not to send their children to work, while low income households that are dire in need may be forced to send their children to work in order to survive. Shittu (2004) asserted that, if adult wages are high enough, all households will benefit from the adult earnings and children can be kept out off the labour force. However, if adult income is too low, the household would not be able to survive on adult wages alone. Consequently, households may be compelled to send their children to work instead of school in order to add the children wages to those of adults for the families to meet up with their basic needs. Such children would not be exonerated from the likely impact of the early economic activities on their social adjustment

Furthermore, studies have examined the interaction of gender, street hawking and social adjustment among juveniles. For instance, a study by Fetuga, Njokanma and Olowu (2005) in Nigeria on child labour revealed a gender bias because parents send girl children to work so as to prepare them with small scale economic trade for boosting their family economy when they grow up. Nnorom (2006) observed that more female children are engaged in street hawking than their male counterparts. This could be explained by the practice of patriarchy which is common in Africa, which diminishes the traditional status of the female child in the family. If social adjustment of such a girl-child is compromised in the process, it could only be traceable to gender discrimination.

The interlink of age, street hawking and social adjustment among adolescents has been another subject of interest to researchers in the field of social pathologies. In Nigeria, most especially in the urban areas, children between the age of eight and fifteen years are seen working even during school hours. According to Olutunde (2013), everywhere you go in cities, towns and some villages, children hawking on streets is no longer an odd sight in Nigeria. Children, mostly boys and girls aged between seven and above, are involved in this practice. Danasty and Okadiran (2012) found that early adolescents (10-13 years) were more likely to engage in street hawking compared to their counterparts in late adolescence (aged 17-19). Such children are often characterized by being on and off school since they have to combine working and schooling. At times by the time they return back to school, they would have outgrown their classes which may affect their interaction with their classmates. Secondary school students who are believed to be adolescents form a self-conscious desire to feel important in their peer groups and enjoy social acceptance but where this is lacking, such an individual is bound to have problem poor social adjustment.

Studies have been carried out on street hawking and academic performance, effects of street hawking on children of school age, street hawking and school attendance and many others. However, not much has been done in the area of how the problem relates with social adjustment of children, man being a social animal which is needful. Against this background, this study investigated the Impact of Street Hawking on Social Adjustment of Secondary School Students.

## Statement of the problem

The problem of poor social adjustment among adolescents has continued to be at the centre of most social discords and other vices involving the youth and even adults. Individuals having social adjustment challenges are seen to openly display aggression, poor relationships, social incompetence skills and a plethora of psychological anomalies, and these are issues of great societal concern. Research have revealed a lot of factors that impinge on adolescents' social adjustment ranging from personality traits, family background, peer group influence to school related factors.

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Street hawking by juveniles especially secondary school students is common place both during school hours and after wards. Parents who engage their children in street hawking see it as a way of augmenting the family income. Such parents may be unmindful of the potential effect of such activities on adolescents' well-being and even their educational outcomes. This study hence investigated the impact of street hawking on social adjustment among secondary school students in Lagos metropolis.

## **Purpose of the Study**

The purpose of this study is to examine the Impact of street hawking on social adjustment of secondary school students. The specific objectives here are:

- To determine the impact of street hawking on social adjustment of secondary school students.
- To examine the impact of parents' socio-economic status and street hawking on social adjustment of secondary school students.
- To determine the gender impact on street hawking and social adjustment among secondary school students involved in street hawking.
- To determine the impact of age on street hawking and social adjustment among secondary school students.

## **Hypotheses**

The following hypotheses guided this study:

- There is no significant impact of street hawking on social adjustment of secondary school students.
- There is no significant impact of parents' socio-economic status and street hawking on social adjustment of secondary school students.
- There is no significant gender impact on street hawking and social adjustment of secondary school students involved in street hawking.
- There is no significant impact of age on street hawking and social adjustment of secondary school students.

## Methodology

Population of the Study

The study population of this research comprised all secondary school students in Junior Secondary School 2 classes (JSS2), in Mushin Local Government Area of Lagos State.

Sample and Sampling Technique

Two hundred students formed the sample size for the study. A simple random sampling technique was used to select the respondents. The technique was used to first, select five secondary schools in Mushin Local Government Areas. Thereafter, twenty (20) students which comprised of 10 male and 10 female respondents were selected from each of the schools to give a total sample size of two hundred participants comprising 100 male and 100 female respondents used in the study.

#### Research Instrument

A self-designed questionnaire titled Impact of Street Hawking on Social Adjustment Questionnaire (ISHSAQ) was used to generate data from the respondents. The questionnaire consisted of two sections, A and B. Section A sought information on the respondents' demographic data such as gender and age while section B consisted of items that sought information on the variables captured in the hypotheses. It adopted a four-point Likert format with optional responses of: Strongly Agree (SA), Agree (A), Disagree (D), and Strongly Disagree (SD) respectively. The research instrument was validated and its

reliability established through experts' opinion and pilot study. The pilot study adopted test-retest method and the reliability coefficient obtained was 0.80 which indicated a positive and high good reliability. The validity and reliability of the instrument was established through a test retest in a pilot study.

#### **Procedure for Data Collection**

The questionnaires were administered on the respondents after obtaining due permission in the various schools. The respondents were clearly informed of the duration of time required for their participation and confidentiality of information to be supplied. The completed questionnaires were retrieved and collated for data analysis. Independent t-test and two-way analysis of variance (ANOVA) statistical tools were used in testing the stated hypotheses at 0.05 level of significance.

## **Results and Discussion**

**Hypothesis One:** There is no significant impact of street hawking on social adjustment of secondary school students. This hypothesis was tested using independent t-test statistical tool. The result obtained is presented in Table 1:

Table 1: Independent t-test analysis of street hawking impact on social adjustment.

Street Hawking	N	X	SD	t-cal	t-crit
High	116	54.92	5.04	5.90	2.64
Low	84	57.64	2.48		
Total	200	57.16	6.61		

Evidence from Table 1 shows that a calculated t-value of 5.90 that resulted is greater than t-critical value of 2.64. The null hypothesis was hence rejected while the alternate hypothesis was accepted. This implies that there is significant impact of street hawking on social adjustment of secondary school students.

**Hypothesis Two:** There is no significant impact of parents' socio-economic status and street hawking on social adjustment of secondary school students. This hypothesis was tested using two-way Analysis of Variance (ANOVA) and the result obtained is presented in Table 2.

Table 2: Two-Way ANOVA Test on Impact of Socio-economic Status and Street Hawking on Social Adjustment of Students.

Street Hawking	SES	N	X	SD
High		57	56.79	4.43
Low	Low SES	30	51.87	7.98
High		29	56.33	4.77
Low	Mid SES	38	55.17	3.92
High		20	55.53	3.83
Low	High SES	26	57.28	7.07
Source of Variation	Sum of Squares	Degree of Freedom	Mean of Squares	F-ratio
SES	345.07	1	172.12	5.25
Street Hawking	47.49	1	47.49	
Social Adjustment	25.28	1	25.28	
Within Group	6335.53	196		
Total	6753.37	199		

<sup>\*</sup> significant at 0.05; df =  $1,19\overline{6}$ ; Feritical = 4.04

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Table 2 shows a calculated F-value of 5.25 resulted as impact of socio-economic status and street hawking on social adjustment of students. This calculated F-value of 5.25 is greater than the critical F-value of 4.04 given 1 and 196 degrees of freedom at 0.05 level of significance. The null hypothesis was hence rejected while the alternate hypotheses was upheld. This implies that there is a significant impact of parents' socio-economic status and street hawking on social adjustment of secondary school students.

**Hypothesis Three:** There is no significant gender difference on street hawking and social adjustment of secondary school students involved in street hawking.

Independent t-test statistical tool was used to test this hypothesis and the result obtained is presented in Table 3.

Table 3: Independent t-test Analysis of Gender Impact on Street Hawking and Social Adjustment among Students.

Variables	Gender	N	X	SD	DF	t-cal	t-crit
Street hawking	Male	100	9.88	2.19	198	2.59	2.20
	Female	100	7.63	2.31			
Social	Male	100	24.20	2.85	198	3.51	2.68
Adjustment	Female	100	14.75	2.63			

Evidence from Table 3 shows that the value of t-calculated (2.59, 3.51) is greater than the value of t-critical (2.20, 2.68) respectively given 198 degrees of freedom at 0.05 level of significance. The null hypothesis was rejected while the alternate hypothesis was upheld. It was hence concluded that there is significant gender difference in street hawking and social adjustment among secondary school students

Hypothesis Four: There is no significant impact of age on street hawking and social adjustment of secondary school students.

This hypothesis was tested using the one-way Analysis of Variance (ANOVA) statistical tool and the result obtained is presented in Table 4.

Table 4: One Way Analysis of Variance (ANOVA) table showing the Impact of Age on Street Hawking and Social Adjustment

Age	N	X	SD
9 – 11 years	28	42.29	3.18
12 – 14 years	137	40.64	4.44
15 – 17 years & above	35	41.09	3.89

Source of	Sum of	Degree of	Mean squares	F-ratio	F-tab
Variation	Squares	freedom			
Between groups	63.57	2	31.78		
Within groups	3473.93	197	17.63	1.80	3.06
Total	3537.50	199			

Evidence from Table 4 shows that the calculated F-value 1.80 is less than F-tab 3.06 at 0.05 level of significance. This indicates that age has no significant impact on street hawking and social adjustment of secondary school students. The null hypothesis was hence—retained. This implies that there is no significant impact of age on street hawking and social adjustment of secondary school students.

#### Discussion,

Hypothesis One states that there is no significant impact of street hawking on social adjustment of secondary school students.

This hypothesis was rejected as the result of the analysis revealed that there is a significant impact of street hawking on social adjustment of secondary school students. This reason for this may be due to the fact that students who are involved in street hawking may truly have difficulties in forming and maintaining relationships among their peers in school or wherever they find themselves. This finding corroborates Shields, Cicchetti and Ryan (2004) who found from their study on maltreated children, that children who are involved in street hawking are prone to difficulty in forming new relationships with peers and adults, and in adapting to norms of social behavior. Similarly, Amin (2004) in his research on children engaged in street hawking and the problems they face, found that, juvenile hawkers at times face stigmatization by the public, feelings of disheartenment, stress and irritability, personality disorders, anti-social behaviour, alienation, and isolation from their family and peers. This explains the reason for their withdrawal from their peers as they feel they cannot measure up to them.

However, this finding contradicts Crosson (2008) who submitted that that, most children form positive and satisfying relationships with their peers, irrespective of the situations surrounding them. Also, Jeanne (2004) found from a research on adolescents and adjustment problem that, it is only when an individual cannot properly manage the situation around him or her that it leads to negative self-perception.

Hypothesis two states that there is no significant impact of parents' socio-economic status and street hawking on social adjustment of secondary school students.

The obtained result revealed that there is a significant impact of parents' socio-economic status and street hawking on social adjustment of secondary school students. This finding is consistent with Bass (2004) who submitted that, high income households would prefer not to send their children to work, while low income households that are dire in need may be forced to send their children to work in order to survive. Ebigbo (2003) also admitted that inadequate income earned by parents have been found to compel parents to push their children into street hawking. It is very rare to find parents who can afford the basic needs of life sending their children to hawk. The finding further corroborates Inniss (2014) who opined that the income of family, education level of parents, the quality of life in family, home environment and standard of living influence the way the child interacts with his or her peers. However, this finding contradicts, Nwosu (2006) who noted that there are some parents who although poor, would not subject their children to street hawking and further explained that low or high self-esteem has to do with how an individual perceives him or herself regardless of the status. Mastin (2008) concluded that there are some children who despite being provided with more than what they need, still find it hard to maintain relationships with their peers.

Hypothesis three states that there is no significant impact of gender on street hawking and social adjustment of secondary school students. The result obtained shows that there is a significant impact of gender on street hawking and social adjustment of secondary school students. The reason for this may be that, in the African society, there is general preference for male children education which keeps a large chunk school age female child out of school who may either take to street hawking or work as domestic helps. Female hawkers are prone to being raped which destroys their already fragile self-esteem. This finding corroborates Johnson and Ihesie (2015) who found that, many of the female adolescent hawkers in their study had procured abortion at least twice, had been pregnant without knowing who was responsible, had experienced rape and also contracted sexually transmitted infections. These are believed to create problems for these girls and the society at large which may result to them having low self-esteem, loss of concentration and loss of self-confidence. These make depression and aggressiveness to set in, making it difficult for them to get along with their peers.

However, Onuzuluike (2007) disagrees with this finding for he stated that that female street hawkers are better adjusted into the society than male street hawkers. Also, Furman and Burhmester (2002) notes that there is no significant influence of gender on social adjustment of street hawkers in secondary schools.

**Hypothesis Four:** There is no significant impact of age on street hawking and social adjustment of secondary school students.

The result of this hypothesis shows that, there is no significant impact of age on street hawking and social adjustment of secondary school students. The reason for this result may be due to the fact that the students' age mostly fall in the age expected of them to be in their present class. They therefore do not feel self-conscious of their age and still find it easy to mingle with their peers. Adegbola (2014) supports that age has nothing to do with street hawking and social adjustment, because it depends on the individual if he perceives himself or herself to be too old for a class that it then begins to affect the relationship of such a person with his or her peers. He dismissed age as being insignificant to how juvenile hawkers socially adjust in their schools.

However, the report of Eke (2004) contradicts this finding as it was pointed out that juvenile hawkers are often characterized for their being on and off school, because of the fact that they have to combine working and schooling, and at times by the time they will return back to school would have outgrown their classes thereby affecting their interaction with their classmates. Also, Ibiam (2006) noted that, secondary school students that are involved in street hawking are denied the opportunity to socialize with their peers in school. Some of the secondary school students, especially those in public schools are less conscious of their age and the class they are. It hereby does not affect the way they get along with their peers or how they perceive themselves.

#### Conclusion

This research has investigated the impact of street hawking on social adjustment of secondary school students and found that street hawking has a significant impact on social adjustment of students. This means that street hawking can affect the way students relate in school either with peers or their teachers. Also reported significant was the impact of parents' socio-economic status and street hawking on social adjustment. Parents' socio-economic status is seen to influence whether or not parents would send their

children to hawk on the streets to augment the family income. Equally, the study reported a significant gender impact on street hawking and social adjustment. Male and female students are differently disposed to street hawking and its attendant impact on their social adjustment. However, age was found not to have a significant impact on street hawking and social adjustment among students. The study has proffered a number of solutions which when duly implemented would help to address the problem of street hawking and its attendant impact on the wellbeing of students.

# **Sociological Implications**

Street hawking generally is not an indication of good societal functioning. Street hawking particularly among adolescents or children of school age spells doom for the future of any society. The future of every society rests on the shoulders of her youth who must be well empowered socially, psychologically and educationally to carry on the task of national development. Disappointedly, street hawking as revealed by this study stands in the way of a child developing the social skills needed to impact positively upon the nation by impinging on his or her social adjustment. Also, the immediate gratification parents get by engaging their children in street hawking is incomparable to the long term benefit of same child were he or she encouraged and supported through a successful academic career. The societal benefits equally would be enormous.

#### Recommendations.

The following recommendations were made on the basis of the research findings:

There is need for school administrators to organize workshops or find an avenue to educate parents on the negative effects of subjecting their children to street hawking.

Parents should make it their responsibility to make ends meet rather than make their children to be the means to an end.

Class teachers and subject teachers should take out their time to understand their students' family background as this will help them in knowing how to relate with them appropriately.

Students also need to be educated on how to properly manage whatever situations they may find themselves in, so that it does not affect their self-esteem and self-efficacy.

There is a need for state governments to ensure that appropriate sanctions be meted out to parents whose children are found hawking on the streets either during or after school hours.

Sociologists of education also need to be involved in educating the public on the detriments of juveniles hawking on the streets and how it contributes to the increased rate of school drop outs.

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