

# Child-Hustling in Ibadan Metropolis: A Cultural Worldview

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**Abstract:** Over the years, the unfavorable situation of children hustling hard under demeaning situations has triggered very serious deliberations among scholars, policy-makers, and human rights' activists globally. The high rate of occurrence of child-hustlers over the years is a crucial factor in explaining child-neglect in form of child-labour and child-abuse. Studies on children protection had focused on child-labour or street-children as a whole. However, little attention has been given to hustling among children. Hence, this study examines a cultural worldview of child-hustlers in Ibadan Metropolis, Oyo state.

Cross-sectional research-design is adopted and a multi-stage sampling technique was used to elicit primary data from six major commercial centres in Ibadan Metropolis, Oyo State. A semi-structured Questionnaire Schedule (QS) was administered to 300 respondents. Data were collected on socio-demographic profile and cultural world-view of child-hustling. The data generated were analyzed with the use of the Statistical Package for Social Sciences (SPSS) Version 20.

On the cultural world-view of child-hustling, majority of the respondents viewed hustling as a means of livelihood. Child hustling has negatively affected the development of children and had compromised the achievement of societal development globally. There is need for effective reorientation, sensitization, and strict enforcement of policies that could help in the protection of child's rights, most especially in the urban centres by both the Government and Non-Governmental Organizations (NGOs).

**Key word:** Child Hustlers, Cultural Worldview, child.

## I. INTRODUCTION

As the most inquisitively susceptible groups in human history, children often acquit themselves, are defenseless and, no doubt, the hope of society (Kurfi and Aliyu, 2014) whose childhood experiences should not be run-down of necessary support and devoid of neglect, and cruelty. Child-hustling is a global phenomenon, even though it varies with developing countries at the centre of the problem, with significant rise in the prevalence of children working, living and surviving on the streets of most urban centres due to the fact that children in these areas are easily caught up in the daily struggle for survival (Ejigbo, 2003 and Akanle, Adeoba, and Adewusi, 2018). As an important element of development, whose welfare in society is a guide for social and economic development of that society Akanle (2012), children are confronted with difficulties leading to the establishment of groups with their own interests, norms and values.

Although child-work has been in existence throughout history, the challenging conditions under which children work occasionally in urban centres has become more evident in recent times (Bass, 2004), due to rapid population-growth as a result of rural-urban migration, high rates of unemployment, inflation, poverty, malnutrition, bad leadership, corruption, and low wages. Moreover, Sub-Saharan Africa continues to be with the highest prevalence of child-hustlers with increasing numbers of children on the streets engaged in one form of business or the other under hazardous conditions (Johnson, 2009, and Alenoma, 2012). Studies, however, show that more than one in five children hustle on the streets for a living (Kurfi and Aliyu, 2014; Johnson, 2009; Aderinto, 2009; and Ojelabi and Oyewole, 2012). While many children who have worked, in recent times are always exposed to long hours of work in dangerous and unhealthy environments, carrying too much responsibility for their age creating a cycle of Child Rights violations (Nwazuoke and Igwe, 2016).

Moreover, Adewusi, 2016 and Akanle et.al, 2018 reports abound that child-hustlers are widely spread across the major streets of Ibadan, as more and more cases of child-hustling in the city is recorded and this has become as source of worry to policy-makers, Non-Governmental Organisations (NGOs) and International Organisations. One marvels why a child can decide to risk his or her life to earn a living. Apparently aware of the dangers of child-hustling on the developmental process of the society, the Federal Government of Nigeria (FGN) in 2003 signed into law the Child Rights Act. However, it is against this background that this study defines a child-hustler as a child who works on the streets most especially roads, market-places and motor-parks to vigorously sell perishable goods, indispensable products and render services under hazardous conditions that endanger their health, educational and societal development. The study aims at examining the cultural worldview of child-hustlers in Ibadan Metropolis, Oyo State towards highlighting the issues involved so as to properly identify the problem, stop the neglect (if any), and that the children should receive professional help.

## II. METHODOLOGY

The major methodology for this study is the quantitative approach to data-collection, while the analysis and presentation of the data collected shall seek to achieve the study's overall objective.

**Research-Design and Methods:** A cross-sectional research-design to include explanatory and descriptive design are

adopted to aid the collection of data on child-hustlers in Ibadan Metropolis. This design is appropriate for this study because it can reveal discrete information about of child-hustlers in the study-area. Hence, the design helps in describing and explaining additional information about the perception of child-hustlers.

**Study-Area:** The study was conducted in Ibadan Metropolis, Oyo State. The choice of Ibadan as the study-area is purposive because it allows for all forms of labour activity and productivity being an urban-centre and the biggest indigenously populated city in Nigeria. It was estimated as a metropolitan city with population of over 3,382,598 (United Nations World Urbanisation Prospect, 2018). The selected areas for the study, purposively selected for being a hub of commercial activities, to capture child-hustlers in the urban area of Ibadan Metropolis include Iwo Road, Bodija Market, Beere, Ojoo, Aleshinloye Market and Dugbe in Ibadan North, Ibadan North–East, Ibadan North–West, Ibadan South–West, Ibadan South–East, and Akinyele Local Government Areas (LGAs) respectively. However, Akinyele LGAs Ojoo was purposively selected though an Ibadan-suburb, for the highest commercial activities. Thus, these LGAs were carefully selected to capture the multi-dimensional child-hustling in urban area of Ibadan.

**Study Population:** The population for this study is made up of male and female members of the public because they, mostly, have direct contacts with child-hustlers daily so as to make their perceptions necessary for the study. The choice of the respondents' characteristics is informed by the need to ensure the inclusion and participation of respondents with relevant knowledge about the research-problem.

**Sampling Techniques and Sample-Size:** The study employed a multi-stage sampling technique. According to Asika (2004) a multi-stage sampling is desirable when sampling-procedures are so complex that a single sampling-technique is not feasible. Multi-stage sampling involves the use of purposive and quota-sampling techniques. Purposive sampling is used to determine the appropriateness and adequacy of the study's sample and its characteristics. This view support Nachmias and Nachmias (1996), argument that purposive sampling techniques assist the researcher to making subjective judgments about the sample that appear to be representative of the target population. A quota-sampling technique is used to determine the number of respondents in various units of the study-area. However, the sample-size for this study is proportionately distributed across the study-area. A total of three hundred (300) sampled respondents was drawn from the study-area for the administration of the QS.

**Methods of Data-Collection:** The study employed quantitative methods of data-collection-a survey method that involved the QS. However, the QS for the study, comprises of two Sections with both open and closed-ended questions. The Section A contains five (5) closed- ended questions to elicit socio-demographic characteristics of respondents; section B consist of twelve (12) closed-ended questions related to the cultural

world-view of child-hustling relating to the main objective of the study.

**Data Collection process:** The administration of the 300 copies of the QS lasted for about a month. However, two hundred and eighty-seven (287) copies were valid after data-cleaning process was done, representing 95.7% Respondent Rate.

**Method of Data-Analysis:** The study employed quantitative analysis to present and analyse the quantitative data, including the Statistical Package for Social Sciences (SPSS) Version 20. The descriptive statistics consisting of the use of frequencies and simple percentages where necessary.

### III. RESULTS

**Socio- Demographic Profile of Respondents:** The socio demographic profiles of the respondents for the study include five (5) variables. The basic description of the characteristics of respondents is, however, depicted in Table 1;

Table I: Socio-Demographic Characteristics of Respondents

Variables	Response	
	Frequency (N=287)	Percentage (%)
Gender		
Male	139	48.4
Female	148	51.6
Total	287	100.0
Age (in years)		
Under 20	14	4.9
20-29	89	31.0
30-39	80	27.9
40-49	55	18.4
50-59	25	9.4
60 and above	24	8.4
Total	287	100
Religion		
Christian	178	62.1
Islam	107	37.3
Traditional	1	0.3
No response	1	0.3
Total	287	100.0
Marital status		
Single	114	39.7
Married	156	54.4
Divorced	2	0.7
Separated	7	2.4
Widowed	8	2.8
Total	287	100.0
Education		
No formal	6	2.1
Primary	13	4.5

Secondary	105	36.6
NCE/OND	60	20.9
Degree	62	21.6
Post Graduate	41	14.3
Total	287	100.0

Source: Field Survey, 2018.

The Table I above shows the socio-demographic characteristics of respondents. The gender of respondents shows that majority (51.6%) of the respondents are females while 48.4% are males. Culturally females are known to provide more services to humanity, especially the family, than males. Regarding the age of respondents, results shows that majority of the respondents (31.0%) were aged 20- 29 years. Respondent’s religion shows that more than half of them (62.1%) were Christian, while some others (37.3%) practice Islam and very few others (0.3%) practice traditional religion. Regarding the marital status of respondents, result shows that greater percentages of the respondents for the (54.4%) study were married. While many others (39.7%) were single and yet few others (2.8% and 2.4%) were widowed and separated respectively and yet few others (0.7%) were divorced. Furthermore, educational background of respondents shows that majority of them (36.6%) had secondary education while many others (21.6% and 20.9%) had degree and NCE/OND respectively; some others (14.3%) have post graduate degree; few percentages (4.5%) had primary education and a very few (2.1%) respondents never had formal education.

**Cultural Overview of Child Hustler:** In order to examine the cultural overview of child hustler, respondents were presented with 13 statements to which they are to indicate their answer. The areas of focus include perception, cultural view, and impact of child hustling. The findings are hereby presented and analysed.

**Perception of child hustler:** In order to examine perception of child hustler, respondents were evaluated in terms of their awareness, perception and their level of understanding pertaining child hustling. The results of the data as provided by the respondents are shown in table below

Table II: Awareness and Perception of Child Hustling

Variable	Response	
	Frequency	Percentage (%)
Child-hustling Awareness		
Yes	277	96.5
No	4	1.4
No response	6	2.1
Total	287	100.0
Child-hustling Perception		
The result of economic recession	212	73.9
Violation of child’s rights	145	50.5
It is barbaric and not cultural	23	8.0

The result of bad leadership and poor government policies	45	5.7
A means of sustaining self and family	123	42.9
A means of financial independence among children	18	6.3
No response	21	7.3
Child-hustling knowledge	Frequency	Percentage (%)
Selling goods and rendering menial service in traffic, market or the road by under age child	117	40.8
Hawking on the street among under age children	73	25.4
Running after car in traffic to solicit for customer by under age children	31	10.8
Hawking edible product in traffic or market	52	18.1
No response	14	4.9
Total	287	100.0

Source: Field Survey, 2018.

The Table II above shows respondents responses regarding their perception of child hustler. The result however, shows that virtually all the respondents (96%) have heard about child hustler. Regarding how respondent perceive hustling among children a greater percentage (73.9%) of the respondent perceive child hustling as the result of poor economic condition while half of the respondents (50.5%) perceive hustling as the violation of the child’s rights; many others (42.9%) opined that child hustling is a means to sustain self and family; few others (15.7%) perceive it to be result of bad leadership and poor governmental policy and very few others (8.0% and 6.3%) perceived it as barbaric and a means of getting financial freedom among children respectively. Regarding respondents response about their understanding of child hustling, a greater percentage (40.8%) of the respondent understand child hustling to mean selling of goods in traffic and rendering of menial service in traffic, market or the road by underage children, many others (25.4%) opined child hustling as hawking among on the street by under age children while fewer percentage (18.1%) viewed it as hawking edible product in traffic on road and a very few others (10.8%) perceived it as running after car in traffic to solicit for customer by under age children.

**Child Hustling Cultural View:** Respondents were asked to respond to questions relating to cultural views of child-hustling. The results of their response were shown in table III

Table III: Child-Hustling Cultural View

Variables	Responses	
	Frequency	Percentage (%)
Enjoyment view		
Yes	86	30.0
No	201	70.0
Total	287	100.0
Enjoyed Hustling	Frequency	Percentage (%)
Means of livelihood	59	68.6

Left with no choice	23	26.7
Better than stealing	18	21.0
Don't enjoy Hustling	Frequency	Percentage (%)
Harsh weather condition	165	82.1
Dubious customers	94	46.8
Environmental hazard	134	66.8
Others	54	26.8
Culture plays vital role	Frequency	Percentage (%)
Yes	96	33.4
No	189	65.9
No response	2	0.7
Total	287	100.0
Cultural view	Frequency	Percentage (%)
Parents helper	57	59.4
Preparation field for adult role	34	35.4
No response	5	5.2
Total	96	100.0

Source: Field Survey, 2018.

The above table shows respondents responses concerning their perception on whether a child hustler enjoys hustling. However, the results specify that majority (70.0%) of the respondent said children does not enjoy hustling however the remaining percentage (30.0%) said children enjoys hustling. Moreover, the table also shows that a greater percentage (68.6%) of the respondents who said they enjoys hustling does so because it's their source of livelihood, many others (26.7%) among these respondent said child hustler enjoys hustling because they are left with no choice and few others (21.0%) said they enjoy it because it's better than stealing. Majority of respondents (82.1%) who perceived that child hustler does not enjoy hustling said the harsh weather condition is a major problem, while many others (66.8%) said the environmental hazard which include hit and run and falling while running after vehicle, few others (46.8%) said they don't enjoy hustling due to dubious customer that go with their product and sometime their money while very few others (26.8%) said they don't enjoy it due to the emotional stress attached, sexual assault.

Regarding respondent's response on culture playing a vital role in the high incidence of child hustling a greater percentage (65.9%) of the respondents opined that culture is not playing a vital role in the high incidence of child hustling. However, majority of respondents (59.4%) who agree that culture plays a vital role justify their stand by saying culturally children are parent helpers, while others (35.4%) said they need to prepare for adult role most especially first born who are male.

**Impact of Child Hustling:** In order to examine the perception of child hustler, respondents were asked questions relating to impact of child hustling and respondent were asked to

highlight various impact of child hustling. The result is presented in the table below:

Table IV: Impact of Child Hustling

Variable	Response	
	Frequency	Percentage (%)
Awareness of dangers in child-hustling		
Yes	265	92.3
No	19	6.6
No response	3	1.0
Total	287	100.0
If "yes" what are the dangers	Frequency	Percentage (%)
Harsh weather	58	20.0
Sexual assault	155	54.0
Accident	227	79.1
Kidnapping	144	50.2
Health issues	94	32.8
Psychological problem	38	13.2
Death	24	8.4
No response	12	4.2
Possible Negative impact	Frequency	Percentage (%)
Underdevelopment	121	42.2
High crime rate	146	50.9
Reproduction of poverty	46	16.0
All	19	6.6
No response	24	8.6
Total	287	100
Most affected	Frequency	Percentage (%)
Children	121	42.2
Family	44	15.3
Society	121	42.2
No response	1	0.3
Total	287	100.0

Source: Field Survey, 2018.

The above table shows respondents perception on the dangers and impact of child hustling. However, findings specify that a verse majority (92.3%) of the respondent opined that there is danger in child hustling activity. Regarding the dangers in child hustling majority of the respondent (79.1%) perceived accident as the danger, while a great percentage (54.0%) said sexual assault and half of the respondent (50.2%) said kidnapping. Also, many others (32.8%) perceived health issues as the danger in hustling while others yet (20.0%) said unfavourable weather condition and few others (13.2%) said psychological problem and very few others (8.4%) said death. However, in terms of the specific impact on society majority of the respondent viewed high crime rate as the possible negative impact on the society while few percentages (18.1%) view underdevelopment, few others yet (16.0%) of the

respondent said reproduction of poverty and very few others said all the listed possible impact are the possible impact. In terms of respondent's response regarding the most affected by child hustling, findings reveal that majority of the respondents (42.2%) equally said children and society are the most affected.

#### IV. DISCUSSION

The central objective of this study is to examine the cultural worldview of child-hustling in Ibadan Metropolis, Oyo State. It should be noted that the findings of this study have a wider implication on child-hustling in Nigeria as a whole. In view of the above, a number of themes emerged in the course of this study that are in line with the objectives of the study. The study has shown that a larger proportion of the study-population have good knowledge of child-hustling and understand this phenomenon in the study-area. As most respondents perceive child-hustling as the product of poor economic conditions, as the economic recession in our society, presently, is unbearable for most citizens while low-income families are at the receiving-end. This study also reveals that violation of the child's rights, sustainability, product of bad leadership, and barbaric-quest for financial autonomy are the different perceptions of child-hustling indicated in the study. This points to the fact that child hustling is contextually constructed as noted by Ugar (2008), Boyden and Mann (2005) and Ebigbo (2003) perceived child hustling from a different perspective, nonetheless.

Similarly, the study reveals a diverse understanding of child-hustling. Most respondents understand the act to mean the selling of goods in traffic and/ or rendering menial services in traffic, markets or the roads by under-age children. This view is in line with Shailong, Onuk, and Besh (2011), who claimed that it involves hawking in commercial buses and at long traffic hold-ups. The study also shows that hustling among children can be in form of hawking on the streets, hawking edible product in traffic, and running after cars in traffic to solicit for customers or perform menial services such as cleaning the windscreen/windshield. Similar observations were made by Onuzulike (2007), Kwankye, Nyarko, and Tagoe (2007), and Winnie (2005). The study indicates there is a low satisfaction-level among child-hustlers. However, there are various reasons for lack of enjoyment as revealed in the study, as noted thus: hustling is a form of street-life, a child-hustler encounters a lot of hazards that makes the work undesirable as widely noted by the respondents. Harsh environmental factors make child-hustlers to be vulnerable to stress, risk and other hazards condition. However, Ayodele and Olubayo-Fatiregun (2014), finding is in line with the results as they went further to highlight some of these risk-behaviours to include running or chasing moving vehicles to sell wares and collect money, shuttling or weaving in and out of traffic and crossing the roads often carelessly manner, imitating touts, street-fighting, hawking at night among others.

Results from the study also show that there is an association between a low-satisfaction level, exposure to harsh weather-conditions, dubious and unfriendly friends who, most of the time, rain curses on them or even go with their goods and, even, money in form of balances. The findings support the assertion of Shailong et.al. (2011) that child-hustlers are exposed to harsh weather conditions, resulting in ill-health as claimed by some of the study's respondents. Also, it is showed that the stress in hustling is more than the gains, indeed the stress is unquantifiable. Study by Udoh and Eme (2012) is in line with this perception of child-hustling.

Similarly, findings indicate that those that enjoy hustling do so because they perceive child-hustling merely as a means of rendering assistance to parents/guardians while the study also reveals that the child-hustler has accepted his/her fate, thereby making them not to dwell more on the stress but the gains. This points to the fact that most child-hustlers who claim to enjoy hustling do so as a means of finding reactive strategies to cope with the stress attached to hustling. The study also shows out that most child-hustlers often decide to hustle as an alternative to anti- social behaviours (ASBs) like stealing, even though the study point to the fact that most child-hustlers end up becoming criminals in the long-run due to exposure to street-life.

Regarding the role culture plays in child-hustling, the study shows that the cultural background of the study-area is against child-hustling. However, the study shows that some of the respondents believe that it is cultural for a child to hustle. This assertion is supported by Akanle et.al. (2018), who emphasized that, traditionally, children are to lend helping hands to their parents/guardians. Hustling among children as revealed in the study is a form of preparatory ground for a child's adult role, in relation to financial responsibility. This finding points to the fact why most male-children, especially the first-born, end up hustling due to family's structural autonomy.

The study points out the danger of child hustling to be high as noted by Awosusi and Adebo (2012). Larger percentage of the respondents assign widespread danger in hustling to accidents, which is supported by Ray (2000), who observed that the main danger of hustling is buses running over hustlers. In addition, several studies like Shailong et.al. (2011); Onuzulike (2007);Nwadinigwe, Ihezue, and Iyidiobi (2006); and Ekpenyong and Sibiri (2011), validate this finding. The study found that accident can be life-threatening or cause serious injuries that can lead to deformities. The observation supports the findings of Akpan and Olubamide (2010).

The study, however, explains that child-hustler are exposed to unfavourable weather-conditions with great implications for their health. Shailong et.al. (2011), noted that working for long hours in an unhealthy weather-condition is the major hazard that child-hustlers faced, which this study's findings support. Furthermore, the study also found that child-

hustling affects children emotionally, causing grave psychological impact, as noted by Akpan and Olubamide (2010), who claimed that child-hustling can lead to moral laxity and imitation of ASBs. Furthermore, the study shows that child-hustling has negative implications on the society. Criminal activities happen to be the most obvious implication of child hustling on society. It is observed that child-hustlers being exposed to economic success which tends to hinder school attendance thereby create a scenario in which they want more money by finding other means to survive street life. They end up imitating older hustlers who dubiously collect sum of money from them and, by so doing, they end up becoming criminals, since such behavior was positively defined by the association in which they find themselves.

The study further reveals that today's child-hustler tends to become tomorrow's terror- i.e, terrorizing the society while causing unrest and, thereby, increasing the crime-rate in the society. The study further reveals under-development as another impact of child-hustling on society. This is understandable since children are the leaders of tomorrow, and, in such a situation where the future and hope of tomorrow is not well prepared for the tasks ahead then, such society's hope is not realistic because such society can be led by mediocre and frauds. Hence, the budget meant for societal development can easily be diverted towards selfish interests rather than to the control of criminal activities and security of the citizenry. This view is supported by the findings of Shailong et.al. (2011) and Okpukpara and Odurukwe (2006), as well as Dada (2013), on the implication of child-hustling for sustainable development. This also points to the fact why most African countries still remain under-developed nations and failing to achieve the Millennium Development Goals (MDGs) due to the high prevalence of child-hustlers in these nations. The study also reveals that the vicious cycle of poverty may never end in such societies. Although, poverty is the principal predisposing factor in hustling among most child-hustlers who see child-hustling as an escape-route, yet, the study has been able to show that poverty may never end in such a generation. Suffice to say, the fact that in a capitalist society the major ladder of social mobility is through formal education, yet, ideologically, it fails to assure equal access to the opportunities for social advancement. Since most child-hustlers end up being school-dropout while those still attending school may, invariably dropout too. Therefore, opening doors for a continuous vicious circle of poverty, due to prolonged child-hustling, can imply dropping out of the ladder of social mobility. This viewpoint is eminently supported by the observations of Agnew (1992) and Merton (1968).

In the final analysis, the study reveals that both children and society are the most negatively affected by child-hustling. This is understandable because when the foundation is bad then the whole building can be faulty. Children are seen as the bedrock of the family while the family is the bedrock of the society at large. The impact of child-hustling on children,

inevitably, affects the family and, in the long-run, have tremendous implications on the society at large.

## V. CONCLUSION

This study examines the cultural worldview of child-hustling in Ibadan Metropolis, Oyo State. As stated earlier, the findings of this study have an inclusive policy implication for children in Nigeria as a whole. However, the negative impact of child-hustling is pervasively felt from the victim to the larger society, ranging from accidents, health hazards, psychological indisposition-such as low self-esteem- to high crime-rates which, in the long-run, hinders both personal and societal development. It is significantly noteworthy that a complex issue like child-hustling requires a general approach capable of involving all stakeholders and not the Government alone. In view of the foregoing, it can be concluded that child-hustling, generally has a negative impact on society as it contributes tremendously to the nation's under-development rather than development in the long run.

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