

## INDICES OF CHILD-ABUSE AND NEGLECT AMONG FEMALE CHILDREN HAWKERS IN SOME SELECTED SATELLITE TOWNS OF F.C.T., ABUJA

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### Abstract

*One of the most spectacular types of child labour resulting into child abuse and neglect is street hawking (Usman, 2007). Ebigo and Abaya (1990) studied 100 male hawkers and 100 female hawkers from various parts of the city of Enugu aged 8 and 15 years with a view to finding out the rate of child abuse and neglect including sexual abuse amongst them. The main result was the over touching, visual and verbal enticement to sexual stimulation. The United Nations Convention and African Union Charter have by their various declarations on the rights and welfare of the child stated that every child, male and female is entitled to receive free and compulsory education, and that education makes children more aware and confident by raising their values senses of responsibility hence empowered in all ramifications. It is in this spirit, that this paper attempt to examine the stations of human right abuses among girl-hawkers. The study adopted the descriptive survey research design and used structured questionnaire to interview the respondents. The sample consisted of 300 girl hawkers (between 12 – 20 years old) who were selected from Kuje and Gwagwalada satellite cities of F.C.T Abuja. 3 research questions were raised meant to be answered by the result Ordinary frequency and percentage scores were used for the analysis of data. The result revealed that more than 70% of children hawkers manifested indices of child abuse and neglect when hawking in both Kuje and Gwagwalada. Based on these findings. It was recommended that girls should be given equal enhance as boys in education, provide gender sensitive legislations and policy guidelines against hawking and also for effective delivery of education services in Nigeria.*

**Key words:** The rights of the child; Hawking; Child abuse and neglect; Counseling implication.

### Introduction

The United Nations, conscious of the peculiarities of the child, has adopted the convention on the rights of the child. Realizing that the child needs special safeguards and care because of his physical and mental immaturity, the declaration has in place rights and freedoms that should be enjoyed by the child. The enjoyment of these rights and freedoms are for the good of both the child and the society. These include among others, health and medicare, education and leisure, parental responsibility, love and understanding. Nor should the parents neglect or abuse the child (UNICEF, 2000 in Usman, 2007).

In many Nigeria cities, hawking by children, especially girls is a common practice. The employers and parents involve girls from villages through families, friends and contacts. (UNICEF, 2000). Though hawking these children may suffer from some physical abuse, neglect and degradation and they often work for long hours at strenuous jobs, selling wares, with no free time and no opportunity for education or leisure. Hawking according to Rotshak (2000) is seen as a child's contribution to the family's meager income and a way by which the girl-child contribution to the family could be recognised. As the education of the girl-child is perceived as a veritable

opportunity cost, they deploy them into income-generating capacity at the expense of their physical and mental development which are indices of child abuse and neglect.

According to UNICEF (1986) in Usman (2007), child abuse can be defined as “the portion of harm to children that results from human action or in action that is proscribed, proximated and preventable”. The African Network for the Prevention and Protection Against Child Abuse and Neglect (ANPPCAN, 1997 in Usman, 2007), defined child abuse as “the intentional, unintentional or well intentional acts which endanger the physical, health, emotional, moral and the educational welfare of the child”. It is the derail of basic right and needs of the child by parents, school, government, community, occurring as acts of omission and or commission. The Federal Republic of Nigeria stipulated in the National Policy of Education that special efforts be made to encourage female education and that equal opportunity to education is the right of all, irrespective of sex, age, locality, creed or social status.

Nigerian girls are still disadvantaged in their access to education. As a result of hawking, many girls failed to enroll and some that have enrolled refused to attend school regularly and some even drop out or learn very little. This situation therefore calls for counselling intervention so as to provide professional guide and services to individual and groups with a view to making education of females more attractive, effective, productive, functional and result oriented, to make girls understand, and appreciate their potentials, utilize their knowledge and skills to acquire self-reliance and sustainable development for the nation.

#### Statement of the Problem

Over 80% of Nigerians live in conditions of poverty. For this 80%, government over the years has had to grapple with the problem of provisions for children Basic education facilities across the country have hardly been sufficient or measured up to expected standards. The result has been disinterest by the ignorant population in the education of children. As many Nigerians suffer the city's neglect of their education, so have such children become highly vulnerable to various ills in the society, some of which are the upsurge of manifestations of human right abuses in form of child hawking, prostitution, trafficking and other social ills. Many national surveys undertaken in 20th and 21<sup>st</sup> centuries in Lagos, Enugu, Kano, Kaduna and Katsina indicated that out-of-school children mostly resort to all kinds of socially unapproved jobs and life styles in society (FGN/World Bank, 1994, Usman, 2007).

The connotation that can be derived here is that the neglect of children's education and their involvement in hawking are manifestations of human right abuses and serve as fertile ground for commercial exploitation of children of which 87.74% street-trading by children are involved and are vulnerable to HIV/AIDS and Vaginal Vagina Fistula (VVF) (Usman, 2007; Bukoye, 2004). These children are no doubt exposed to violence, crime, prostitution, over labour, some killed, kidnapped, pregnant while some other, subjected to pre-mature or early marriage. Child care and protection which used to be one of the jealously-guarded African traditional values is being eroded by modernization trends in contemporary Nigeria.

The consequence is that in the arrangement of human right, Child's right, child abuse and neglect have been on the increase by family units. Jobs entailing children to hawk or vendor are abundant in market places, new construction sites, plants, factories, houses and streets, to mention a few. These happen as a result of socio-economic problem the country is going through low income wages, and salaries by parents, inflation, endangered family life, large size

and people are having to find extra means with which to contend with meeting their basic needs, and those of children. Wilson (2000) and Usman (2007) revealed that Nigeria Office of International Labour Organisation (NOILO) points as much to the alarming rate of hawking phenomenon in Nigeria apart from the persona! Physical, emotional and psychological trauma which hawking and vendoring expose children to. Few Nigerian studies have also shown that the obnoxious practice expose children to all sorts of, human right abuses (Izwora and Ebigbo, 1985; Ololobou and Ramat, 1995; Ebigbo and Abada, 1990; Nzewi, 1991; Wilson, 2000; and Bukoye, 2004).

By UNICEF standards, Nigeria has not been assessed to have fared well enough in term of the social indicators of education, health and welfare as determinations of the over all indices of human right and child developments show Wilson (2000) observed that it is obvious that there are socio-economic and political problem bedeviling the Nigeria people today and these problems require policies to be put in place to address them. According to him, poverty and child hawking have had their toll on the welfare and development of our 39 million children. He revealed that in Nigeria's current report on the implementation of the UN convention on human right and the Rights of the child, quite a number of measures put in place to address problems of children are highlighted. Some of such measures capable of equally protecting children from commercial hawking venturing, trading and exploitation of children include Human Rights Commission (H.R.C.), promulgation of children's decree and children's right and all have not succeeded in the abolition of human right abuses in Nigeria. Despite these measures, the vastness, cosmopolitan and compounding socio-economic problems of Nigeria have not allowed for an effective implementation and monitoring of observation of human right and right of children It is therefore paramount that counselling intervention becomes increasingly needed so as to salvage young females from undue suffering, and to sensitize the public as regards the importance of the girl child education and their contributions to national development (ANPPCAN, 1993, FMWA/World Bank, 1996, [Http:www.123 Helpme.com/view.asp](http://www.123 Helpme.com/view.asp)).

From the foregoing, one can summarize the following statements of problem viz a viz:

- (i) The phenomenon of hawking or begging by children are characterised by indices of human right abuses since parents or guardians allow the practice and can equally prevent it (through intervention).
- (ii) Children hawkers, who are let loose by parents to fend for themselves or their families poses danger and hazards to the lives and health of the children.
- (iii) The disinterest by parents in enrolling or totally engaging these children in formal education is not only an indicator of child abuse and neglect but also an infringement on the human right and children's' rights. No enforcement on social policy as been effected against the phenomenon.
- (iv) The alarming demographic figure of children exposed to all sorts of anti-social attacks, violence, assaults, health hazards, exploitative and commercial labour, hawking, are indices of child neglect and human right abuses.
- (v) The above manifestations of human right abuses therefore require remedial measures in form of counseling intervention to serve as catalyst and preventive measures against the practice of hawking and begging by children.

### Purpose of the Study

The main purpose of this investigation is to survey the views of children hawkers manifestations of human and child abuses in Kuje and Gwagwalada towns in the FCT, Abuja in view of this the study attempted to explore in to the following:

- (i) The indices or manifestations of child abuse and neglect among children who indulge in hawking wares.
- (ii) Various factors that have made these children to hawk wares in market places of Kuje and Gwagwalada in the F.C.T, Abuja
- (iii) How those manifestations of child-abuse and neglect have negatively affected the lives and wellbeing of children hawkers or vendors.
- (iv) Counselling implications with respect to the phenomena of hawking and begging as embarked upon by children (boys and girls) so as to serve as catalyst in changing the attitude of children and parents for the wellbeing and welfare of children victims.

### Research Questions

The following research questions were formulated in to guide the study:

- (i) What are the responses of the girls hawkers on their manifestations of child abuse and neglect as regards hawking in the two towns of Kuje and Gwagwalada of the Federal capital territory, Abuja?
- (ii) What are the responses among girl-hawkers on their manifestations of child-abuse and neglect as regards hawking in Gwagwalada sitelite town of the Federal Capital Territory, Abuja?
- (iii) What are the responses among girl hawkers on their manifestations of child abuse and neglect as regards hawking in Kuje sitelite town of the Federal Capital Territory, Abuja?
- (iv) What relationship exists between manifestations of child-abuse and neglect by girl-hawkers and counselling intervention?

### Methodology

The study is a descriptive survey by its design and the method adopted. The investigation was on 2 satellite towns of the federal capital territory, Abuja (Nigeria) including Kuje and Gwagwalada. The work interviewed 150 children hawkers in Kuje and Gwagwalada, found in the street, market place, motor parks etc. A total of 300 children made up the sample. Random sampling was used to select these subjects in different places where hawking was most predominant.

A structured questionnaire for children hawkers was designed by the researcher to interview the respondents. There were negligible cases of deficiencies or lapses detected in the instrument during the trial testing. After two weeks, the instrument was used to the respondents and only very few responses did not tally. A test re-test reliability values of (0.85) were obtained, using simple percentage as statistical analysis. It was therefore considered that the questionnaire was good enough to be used in data collection for this research. The data collected were analyzed, using frequency distribution, and percentages.

The instrument for this investigation was a 20-item structured questionnaire used for interviewing children hawkers in Kuje and Gwagwalada city areas of Federal capital territory, Abuja. The items were purposely designed and structured using yes or no options. The structure of the questionnaire was in two parts. The first part, which is Section A, depicted information on personal data while the other part (Section B), elicited information on responses of the subjects and was used as yardstick to measure the manifestations of child abuse and neglect). The instrument has content validation as ratified by two experts at the department of guidance and counselling, IBB University, Lapai, Niger State. Using Pearson Product Moment Correlation Procedure, the reliability coefficient of 0.85 was obtained, after using a test-retest within an interval of two weeks.

The study used 300 children hawkers, 150 each in the sitelite towns of Kuje and Gwagwalada using structured questionnaire adopting interview technique. Interviewing the respondents by the researchers brought about a conducive forum and atmosphere for free interaction with the children respondents. The items were explained in the English and also in vernacular (Hausa) to the illiterate respondents, before ticking the options selected by the subjects. Since the respondents were free and on their own, (not with parents or guardian), they were able to express themselves freely. More so, some of them were moving about with their peers which of course motivated them to respond with ardent attention and pleasure. Table 1 shows the characteristics of the sample used.

Table 1: Distribution of Respondents by the Variables

Sex	Variables	Frequency	Percentage
Female	Kuje	150	50%
Female	Gwagwalada	150	50%
Total		300	100%

From the table above, 150(50%) of the female respondents were interviewed in Kuje and the same number 150 constituting 50% were also used in Gwagwalada for the study. Frequency counts and simple percentages scores were used to analyse the responses. The same procedures were used to analyze the data and to answer the raised or formulated research questions.

## Results

Table 2: Structured Questionnaire for Children Hawkers

Responses of children hawkers in both Kuje and Gwagwalada on manifestations of human right abuses

S/N		Yes	%	No	%
1	My parents sent me to hawk wares	256	85.33	44	14.7
2	I involved myself in hawking because of the commission given to me	261	87	39	13
3	I have never been enrolled in school before	266	85.33	34	14.7
4	Hawking is my daily business	260	88.7	40	11.3
5	Any day I enjoy sales in hawking I don't go for games and clubs	293	97.7	07	2.3
6	I am a school drop-out because of my engagement in	46	15.3	254	85.7

	hawking				
7	I some times report to school late because of hawking	280	93.3	20	6.7
8	Some beg for money when ever they have no wares to sell	281	93.7	19	6.3
9	My parents punish me, if I don't make good returns in sales	236	78.7	64	21.3
10	Some times, the commodities I hawk do get lost,	246	82	54	18
11	Hawkers steal each others ware without knowing	217	72.3	83	27.7
12	I don't have new dresses, if I don't make good returns to my parents	236	78.7	64	21.3
13	I am not served with good meals without appreciable sales	210	70	90	30
14	I use to keep late in the night any day I don't make good sales	244	81.3	56	18.7
15	Girl hawkers some times face sexual harassment	201	67	99	43
16	Some girls generate money for marriage preparation through hawking	170	56.7	130	43.3
17	Some times children hawkers are victims of accident by hit and run drivers	212	70.7	88	29.3
18	Any day I don't make reasonable sales, I don't go home to eat in the afternoon	234	78	66	22
19	Some girl-hawkers are some times enticed with money for sexual abuses and therefore consume their wares (groundnut or bread) out right.	202	67.3	98	32.7
20	Some men who propose girls for courtship do buy up all wares from proposed girls to strengthen relationship	209	69.7	91	30.3

From the table above, out of 300 of the respondents used, 256 (85.33%) indicated that parents sent them to hawk in Gwagwalada town. Out of 300, only 44 (14.7%) indicated that parents were not the ones that sent them to hawk wares. 261 (87%) of the subjects used showed in item 2 above that because they enjoyed token commission (benefits) from hawking which made them to be involve in hawking while 39(14.7%) showed that they were not given any financial benefit from their sales. In item 3 above, out of 300 subjects used, 256(85.33%) indicated that they were never enrolled in school education, while 34 (14.7%) showed that they enjoyed school education. Out of 300 subjects 260 (88.9%) answered in the positive that hawking was their daily business while only 40 subjects (11.3%) indicated negative. Regarding recreational activities, 293 (97.7%) showed that they did not enjoy games and social clubs in school as a result of hawking. Only 7 constituting 2.3% used to have chance for club activities in schools. Item 6 depicted that only 46(15%) indicated that they were school dropouts While 274 (84.7%) showed that they were not school drop-outs. 280 out of 300 subjects showed that they used to report to school late while only 20 (6.7%) were in the negative. Item 8 depicted that 281 subjects showed that they used to beg for money whenever they had no wares to sell while 19 out of 300 showed that they had never begged for money.

236 subjects (78.7%) indicated that parents punished them whenever they did not make good returns in sales, while 64(21.3%) had never faced punitive measures from parents. In item 11 above, 217 (72.3%) showed that hawkers steal each others wares without others knowing about the ordeal while 83 (27.7%) never experienced such or having the knowledge of the such act 236 (78.7%) of the subjects in item 12 above indicated that parents didn't provide them with



new dresses if they never made good sales, while only 64 (21.3%) said they had no relationship with provision of new dresses by their parents. In terms of food, 210 (70%) out of 300 subjects showed that parents serve them with meals only when they made good sales while 90 (30%) of the subjects showed negative response. 244(81.3%) subjects showed that they used to keep late any time they never made good sales early in the day, while 56 (18.7%) showed negative response. To item 15 above, 201 (67%) depicted that they used to face sexual harassment from opposite sex while 99(33%) showed negative response.

Out of 300 subjects used 170 (56.3%) showed that girls used to generate money for marriage preparation while 130 (43.3%) responded on the negative side, Item 17 in the table above indicated that 212(70.7%) agreed that some children hawkers used to be victims of accident by hit and run drivers while only 88 (29.3%) showed negative response. 234 which constitutes 78% of the subjects showed that they never went home to eat food in the afternoon, if they didn't make good returns that afternoon. 66 subjects (22%) out of 300 subjects were not in support of this response.

Item 19 above showed that 202 (67.3%) supported that some girl-hawkers were sometimes enticed with money for sexual abuses and therefore girls used to consume their edible wares (oranges, eggs, provisions etc.) while 98(32.7%) were not in support of this item. 209 (69.7%) of the subjects used supported the fact that some men who propose to girls for courtship do buy up all wares from proposed girls so as to strengthen relationship while only 91(30.3%) were not in support of the above statement in item 20.

Table 3: Responses of children hawkers in kuje on manifestations of child abuse and neglect

S/N	Yes	%	No	%
1	99	66	51	34
2	85	56.7	65	43.3
3	39	26	111	74
4	108	72	42	28
5	148	98.7	02	1.3
6	109	72.7	41	27.3
7	88	58.7	62	41.3
8	120	80	30	20
9	115	76.7	35	23.3
10	105	70	45	30
11	92	61.3	58	38.7
12	130	86.7	20	13.3
13	121	80.7	29	19.3
14	93	62	57	38
15	103	68.7	47	31.3
16	140	93.3	10	6.7
17	109	72.7	41	27.3
18	89	59.3	63	40.7
19	97	64.7	53	35.3
20	103	68.7	47	31.3

The above table shows that in item 1, out of 150 subjects used in Kuje township, 99 (66%) supported that parents sent them to hawk wares while 57 (34%) were not in support. In Item 2 above, 85 (56.7%) indicated that they used to receive commission in hawking while 65 (43.3%) were negative over the statement. Only 39 (26.%) supported that they were not enrolled in schools while 111(74%) showed that they were enrolled in schools. Item 4 above showed that 108 (72%) of the subject agreed that they hawked on daily basis while the remaining 42(28%) were not in support.

148 (98.7%) subjects out of 150 (100%) showed that they never enjoyed games and club activities during hawking in market places while only 2(1.3%) did not support the statement. 109 (72.7%) agreed that they were school drop-out while only 41(27.3%) supported that reported to school late while 62(41.3%) did not support this. 120(80%) of the subjects indicated that they used to beg for money from boys whenever they had no wares to sell while 30 (20%) did not agree. 115 (76.7%), 105 (70%), 92 (61.3%), 130 (86.7%), 121 (80.7%) 93 (62%) 103 (68.7%) 93 (62%) 103 (68.7%) subjects used (respectively) agreed that they face punishment from parents when good sales were not made, that their commodities used to get lost that peers used to steal wares, were not to enjoy new dresses when sales are not yielding well, deprived of food at home, keep late in the night when sales were poor, used to face sexual harassment, used gains of sales for marriage preparation, felt victims of hit and run vehicles. The subjects who failed to agree fell below 50(33.3%) as compared to those that supported the statements above. Item 15 of the table above, indicated that out 150 subjects used in Kuje township, 89 (59.3%), 97 (64.7%) 103 (68.7%) of the subjects (respectively) agreed that whenever they did not make reasonable sales, they never attempted to go home to eat (because they would not be provided), that some girl-hawkers sometimes used to be enticed with money for sexual abuses and therefore used to consume their wares (groundnut, sweet, fruit, drinks etc) and that their men who proposed girls for courtship used to buy up all wares from proposed fiancée. On the other side of the coin, less 50 (50%) disagreed with all the three items as discussed in the above paragraph.

Table 4: Responses of children hawkers in Gwagwalada on manifestations of child abuse and neglect

S/N	Yes	%	No	%
1	97	64.6	53	35.4
2	121	80.7	29	19.3
3	10	6.	110	93.3
4	140	93.3	10	6.7
5	111	74	39	26
6	109	72.7	41	27.3
7	99	66	51	34
8	123	82	27	18
9	100	66.7	50	33.3
10	86	57.3	64	42.7
11	122	81.3	28	18.7
12	97	64.7	53	35.3
13	98	65.3	52	34.7
14	129	86	21	14
15	140	93.3	10	6.7



16	94	62.7	56	37.3
17	105	70	45	30
18	97	64.7	53	35.3
19	121	80.7	29	19.3
20	99	66	51	34

One of the above 150 subjects used in Gwagwalada, respondents 99 (66%) and 121 (80.7%) indicated that parents sent them to hawk wares in the street or market places and that they used to go out for hawking because of the commission or economic gains they benefitted from hawking. Less than 50% disagree to this effect.

140 (93.3%), 111 (74%) 109 (72.7%) 99 (66%) of the subjects agreed that hawking was practised on the daily basis, that the day they enjoyed sales of wares, they never went for games and club activities in school, that some of them were school dropout as a result of hawking and that those that attended schools used to report late to school. In item 11, 12, 13 and 14, above, 122 (81.3%), 97 (64.7%), 98 (65.3%), 129 86%) of the respondents agreed that some hawkers used to steal each others wares without the knowledge of the owner, that they never enjoyed new clothes (dresses) when they made poor sales and that they used to keep late in the night to report at home whenever they made poor sales as a result of fear to either be rebuked, punished or denied food.

In items 15, 16, 17 above, 140 (93.3%), 94 (62.7%) and 105 (70%) subjects used. indicated that girls involved in hawking used to face sexual harassment that they used to generate money from hawking for marriage preparation and that some hawkers used to fall victims of hit and run drivers.

On the above table 4, item 18, 19 and 20, 97(64.7%), 121 (80.3%) 99 (66%) of the 150 subjects used in Gwagwalada, all showed that whenever girl-hawkers didn't make reasonable sales, they never went home to eat food in the afternoon, that some of them were one time or the other enticed with money for sexual abuses and for this, girls involved used to consume their wares (groundnut fruits, minerals etc) out right The last item showed that some men who proposed girls for courtship used to buy all wares at one from their proposed girls so as to strengthen relationship.

*Answer to research question 1:* From the responses of the 300 subjects used, more than 60% of their responses depicted that girl-hawkers were deprived of enjoying regular school routine; while some were not enrolled in school education at all, some were school drop-outs while some did not enjoy games and club activities as a result of hawking ware for economic gains. The subjects also indicated that parents or guardians used to punish them for poor returns and that girls used to face sexual harassment and that boys used to entice girls with money for courtship or sexual abuses which used to facilitate early marriage. These acts and negative consequences on the girl-child are manifestations of child abuse and neglect.

*Answer to research question 2:* 100 (70%) of the respondents used in Kuje showed that girl-hawkers did not enjoy western education and those that attended never participated fully in the academic programme of the school and some even drop-out because of hawking wares. These manifestations are indices of child-abuse and neglect (Kungbiyop, 2008; Ebigho, 1990; Bukoye,

2004). The responses of subjects answer question 2 that there are manifestations of child-abuse and neglect in hawking in respect of the respondents used in Kuje town.

*Answer to research question 3:* Out of 150 subjects used in Gwagwalada , more than 100 (70%) agreed that the act of hawking by girls used to indulge girls in stealing wares of others and boys used to embark on sexual harassment against girl-hawkers. More than 140 (93.3%) generate money for early marriage of the hawkers. Some of these girls were not given enough food by parents and they used to fall victims of hit and run drivers as they cross roads, streets or discuss with peers. These characteristics of hawking by girls are manifestations of child-abuse and neglect (Usman, 2001; Wilson, 2000 and Rotshak, 2005).

### Discussions of the Findings

The result of the findings in Kuje and (Gwagwalada is in line with many research studies. Various national surveys have indicated the existence of the phenomenon of human right abuses among children (child- abuse and neglect) in the county (Oloko, 1992; African network for the protection and prevention of child abuse and neglect, (ANPPCAN) 1995; FMWA/World Bank, 1996; Federal Ministry of Health/UNICEF, 1994 in Ebigo & Abada (1990) and Usman, (2007) maintained that common child abuse and neglect are manifested by children hawkers in Nigeria today which include:

- (i) A growing disenchantment and consequently disinterest by the less privileged in matters of the education of children.
- (ii) The increasing phenomenon of child labour mostly in the form of street trading and hawking.
- (iii) The increasing and alarming nature of children in especially difficult circumstances particularly children on the streets, or those of the streets, as well as children of destitute who are unprotected from the dangers prevalent in society.
- (iv) The increasing endangered family life and societal values which has occasioned a culture of turning a blind eye to even the basic needs of children; and
- (v) The emerging culture of an attitude of easy resort to exploitative labour (especially child hawking or labour) by the members of society for example as home-helps, etc, as brought about by the imbalances of socio-economic nature in society.

The findings in Kuje and Gwagwalada as regards punishment to children, sexual harassment, immorality inform of inducement by boys are all in line with FMWA/SD/World Bank (1996) which stated that while the parents may insist on regular returns from their children hawkers vendors or traders, business may sometimes be very dull, so that no appreciable return by these children is made possible. Some of the parents, being largely drawn from the lower strata of the working class may be as desperate as to threaten their children with physical punishment for their hawkers to do well. This coupled with declining morality and moral values, bad company and related factors, lead many of the female child hawkers, to end up hawking their own bodies for a token (money), so as to compensate for the business loss. In the process, the girl-child used to be introduced to a money-making venture in form of child prostitution. This is an outright human right abuses. She suffers other abuses because chances for schooling and its rewards are lost by the child-girl prostitute. Her health is often in danger and her social, emotional and spiritual security is threatened. Oloko (1992), Wilson (2000), Bukoye (2004), Ololobou and Ramat (1995) and Usman (2007) maintained that of the sexual worrisome aspects of street-trading only sexual exploitation is linked to gender (girls). Some of the surveyed children seemed to be aware of this danger. When respondents were asked whether they personally knew any girl who became

pregnant in the course of trading, 47% claimed such knowledge while 50% of the hawkers have had sexual intercourse during hawking and 9% of the non-hawkers have had sexual intercourse (seriously abused) while on errands or on their way to and back on foot from school on sexual escapades to satisfy their psychological sexual orgy. Further more, in the process of hawking, girls are exposed to pornographic films and magazines and child trafficking.

The studies undertaken by Usman (2007) and Bukoye (2004) revealed that hawking is an essentially commercial venture. It is one from which trading takes place within a developing economy. Those who hawk good and commodities roam about, or sit in one place, with their wares visibly displayed. In some instances such a display is matched with an aggressive salesmanship via noise; gestures, alarms, enticements etc. and that the children, male and female alike, are engaged in this trade mostly by their parents, guardians or overseers. They are made to hawk commodities for regular usage etc. the children mostly practice hawking in the streets, in market places, parks, stadia and many other public places in so far as they can find market for their commodities. According to Kungbiyop (2008), Rotshak (2005), they mentioned that generally, hawking is undertaken by children for purely economic reasons. The need to mobilize resources for up-keep of the family for dresses, payment of school fees, and other personal needs to which both the children and their parents or guardians may not be able to attend to.

#### Counseling Implications

From the research, it has been empirically established that children in both Kuje and Gwagwalada satellite towns in the F.C.T. Abuja who were found to be hawking manifested indices of child abuse and neglect. Among these indices include denial of formal educational, liberty, some of them whose school fees were not regularly paid, dropped-out-of school, some were not given regular meals at home or even given new dresses to wear and some were even punished for poor sales of commodities by parents and guardians. Some girls even beg for money and food for sustenance. These findings can be collaborated by the studies under taken by FMWA& S.D/World Bank (1996), Wilson (2000), Bukoye, 2004 and Rotshak, (2005), who all recommended that girls including parent and society need counselling intervention. It becomes imperative that Community Based Counselling (CBC) be embarked upon by professional counsellors for children to exercise their human or child's rights and freedom and to regularly enroll or attend school education. Parents should also be counselled to effectively discharge their parental responsibilities and government, on the other hand to prevent children from hawking. Not only this, there are worst of the concomitant consequences of hawking and by girl-child which are more disturbing. This study discovered that hawking girls who are faced with all sorts of sexual harassment and abuses, and some times leading to prostitution and early marriage deserve counselling for rehabilitation. Hooligans and touts in motor parks, market places who buy wares constitute larger population of the girls' customers and used to entice them with money so as to satisfy their sexual drives. These findings are in line with the studies of Oloko (1996), Ololobon and Ramat (1995), Usman (2007) and Kungbhiyop (2008). Who are advocates of counselling individuals and groups in society so as to enable girls to enjoy formal education and to appreciate their values and contributions in society.

#### Recommendations

Based on the findings of this study, the following recommendations can be made:

- (i) It is a challenge for the professional counselors to continue to organize individual and group counselling to guide and counsel children, hawkers and their parents so as to enlighten them on the negative consequences of hawking.
- (ii) Counsellors should enlighten children and parents on sex education, human rights and child's rights so that parents and guardians are aware of their responsibilities.
- (iii) Government, non-government organizations and counseling association of Nigeria should make collaborative effort to campaign through media (radio, television newspapers do) against the practice of hawking by children, who are the leaders of tomorrow. Seminars and workshops are also viable means of sensitizing society regarding human right and child's right, nation wide.
- (iv) Powerful and enforced social policies should be implemented to guide against hawking by children, and their concomitant consequences such as amoral sexual abuses, HIV/AIDS, premarital pregnancies, Vasico Vagina Fistula (V.V.F:) pandemic and other sex related infections referred to as killer diseases, be emphatically stated for public hearing and adherence.

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