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Editorial

One of the pressing questions that reverberates often in African Christianity is: What is an (African) Christian family? Family is very important to the traditional Africans. Raising a family is not just a social and cultural demand that has to be meant, but also a conditional for eschatological redemption or salvation. For the African Christian, the place of family cannot also be over-emphasised. Thus, prayers for the family in all its ramifications occupy the central stage in personal and intercession sessions. Although African Christians have for a long time contended with the notions of the Christian family in general, there is a progressive acceptance of its monogynous union based on heterosexuality. However, Western values and globalisation forces have continued to shape Christian family discourses and practices. Sex and sexuality issues have been escalated and mediated so much so that Christian 'theology' of family, sexuality, and sex has to contend with the throes of globalisation.

This volume, which is a product of the 2023 conference on the theme: Christian Family and Sexuality in Contemporary Society, critically reflects the tensions, challenges, and theological prospects of a Christian family. In the lead article, Professor Knoetze departs from the general conception of the Christian family based on Christ's salvation. Although he points out that family is a contested issue in Africa, he argues that a radical conception of the Christian family should centre around relationality, forging a missional relationship with the Trinitarian God. This is in contrast with the soteriological conception of family that has blurred the missional prospects that understanding family can birth for a long time.

Adu-Gyamfi's article also radically takes on the traditional conception of sex as a purely private issue, and attempts to strike a balance between it and the sexual revolution that theology of sexuality has to contend with. Coming from a heteronormative perspective, Adu-Gyamfi strongly maintains conservative theological stand on sexuality. He argues that the biblical

understanding of sexuality cannot be traded with the offering of the over-sexualised world.

On her own, Ayo-Oladayo explores the significance and nexus between language education and family development. She points out that effective communication in the family is a *sine qua non* for cohesion, unity, and progress. In addition to fostering cultural understanding, supporting cognitive growth, and fostering stronger family ties, it also improves communication abilities. Oladapo and Adererele examine the positive impacts of social change, particularly technological advancement, on the family. They opine that despite the advantages derived from modern communications devices, Christian theological understanding of the family should be countenanced and appropriated by Christian families.

Odesola and Odesola reflect on the significance of sex education in the church. Although sex education has not been a major interest in missional and catechetical teaching, they suggest that contemporary challenges make it imperative for the church to be interested in sex education. Otun's article introduces a philosophical dimension to sexuality discourse. Otun views the relegation of reason in choice- and decision-making processes as unacceptable and recommends a balanced deployment of both reason and faith in sexuality matters. Gombi re-examines the accounts of Genesis and contemporary sexual expressions. In the Genesis creation stories, an explanation of the nature of sexuality takes a central, climactic positioning and is given as a fundamental fact of creation. The excessive amount of material given to sexuality highlights its relevance in the Hebrew Bible within the cosmic context of the creation narratives. The foundation for the rest of the biblical narrative and discourse on human sexuality is provided by the profound depiction of God's original plan for human sexuality at the beginning of the canon, which also captures the core ideas of sexuality. Salifu enumerates the negative effects of street hawking, such as rape, unplanned pregnancies, and violence. He recommends that the state and social institutions should intervene to stem the corrosive tide of street hawking in Nigeria.

Biar explores the disagreement between 'pre-modernism' and postmodernism. He argues that the different positions these schools of thought hold have created serious tension in how to understand human sexuality. The recognition of feeling over reason and the relativistic contours that encircle the arguments of postmodernism, modernism, and premodernism all have impact on Christian notion of sexuality. He, however, maintains that the Bible still reserves the best model of sexual appreciation in contemporary society. For Kosoluware, the negative influences of postmodernism should be frontally addressed by contemporary African Christians. It is essential that the Church in Africa rise to the challenge through teaching, counseling and intentional preaching of the gospel. Atteh examines Christian moral victory, and points out the tensions that have characterised its different interpretations. He opines that the best approach to the theological issue is to insist that the victory believers have over the flesh nature is both positional and progressive, encompassing both the divine and the human responsibilities. Asaolu tackles the increasing cases of marital infidelity in society. Articulating the causes and effects of marital infidelity, Asaolu recommends that couples act in such a way that their actions could conform with Kantian categorical imperative. Finally, Ajao makes a case for sex education as a part of socialisation in the family. He notes that it is no longer possible to hold the view that sex talk is a taboo. Therefore, there should be a conscious approach to addressing sexuality issues.

This volume is a coterie of discourses on sex, sexuality and family. The burning issues raised from multidisciplinary perspectives enrich the volume and provide a critical resource for further engagement. However, the ideas are solely the responsibility of the authors rather than the editorial board of the journal.

Benson Ohihon Igbion
Editor-in-Chief

MORAL IMPLICATIONS OF STREET HAWKING AMONG CHILDREN IN ANYIGBA, DEKINA LOCAL GOVERNMENT AREA OF KOGI STATE

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Abstract

The hawking of wares by children has been a serious issue confronting Nigerian society. Children hawk in some of the most appalling conditions conceivable, where they encounter abuses such as rape or sexual abuse, chronic illness, kidnapping and death. The study examines the moral implications of street hawking among children in Anyigba, Dekina Local Government Area of Kogi state. The population of this study consists of parents of the street hawkers in Anyigba, while cross-sectional survey design was used through the purposive sampling technique to choose one hundred and twenty-four (124) respondents. The validated structured questionnaires served as the instrument for the data collection respectively. The result indicated, among others, that street hawking had significant moral implications among children in the study area. The study, therefore, concluded that the government of Kogi State should carry out an enlightenment campaign through the media and religious institutions on the negative consequences of street hawking. Also, the Child Rights Act instrument and its implementation should be strengthened to curb street hawking in the study area.

Keywords: Moral Implications, Street Hawking, Child Labour, Anyigba Dekina Local Government Area of Kogi State

Introduction

The future of any society depends on the development of children and youth. In Anyigba, children face safety and health hazards from carrying heavy loads and inhaling harmful dust and particles while hawking for their biological, foster parents or guardians. Child hawking exposes the child to a lot of hazards like sexual defilement, assaults, neglect, and the threat of punishment for speaking out these social vices (Eboh, 2018).

Policymakers and ILO organizations favour a total ban on child labour. However, NGO representatives and working children's organisation argued that children need to work to survive and improve their position in society (ILO 2005). At the same time, some scholars (Boyden, Ling and Meyers, 1998) maintained opposing views that children have no right to work. This mixed reactions regarding child labour among various groups necessitated this present study on the moral implications of street hawking among children in Anyigba, Dekina Local Government Area of Kogi State.

Based on the problem of this study, the main objective is to assess the moral implications of street hawking among children in Anyigba, Dekina Local Government Area of Kogi State, while the specific objectives are to determine the causes of street hawking among children in Anyigba and to investigate moral issues such as prostitution, unwanted pregnancies, rape, kidnapping and trafficking and smoking of tobacco as moral consequences of street hawking among children in this area.

Overview of Street Hawking in Nigeria

Hawking among children has been a small-scale means of generating income for parents of different communities in Nigeria. Aderinto (2006) asserts that street trading exposes the operators to various risks and health hazards as most children engage in various economic activities like bus conducting, load carrying, car washing, and hawking as a means of survival. In Nigeria, hawkers are seen on the streets of major cities, mostly young people, primarily teenagers.

These children are usually sent out to hawk by their parents or guardians to earn money for the family. However, these child hawkers are exposed to certain dangers.

In some cases, they are knocked down by reckless drivers. There are cases where some of these children are abducted and used for ritual purposes. Either male customers or strangers rape female hawkers. Many of these children do not attend school, and even when they do, they have little or no time to work on after-school assignments or to rest.

In modern-day Nigeria, child hawkers face much risk. For instance, there are several cases involving young girls as young as ten who are sexually active and who trade in sexual favours for money alongside whatever commodities they are peddling. This scourge is not limited to the female gender alone, as male children fall victim to sexual offenders as well. The consequences of these acts include unwanted pregnancies, illegal and unsafe abortion, sexually transmitted diseases, and psychological trauma. (Akigir, 2012). These hawkers suffer frustration and psycho-social disorientation.

The dramatic increase in child labour and street hawking in Nigeria may be attributed to several factors. These factors include the rapid population growth of many less developed countries, high unemployment rate, inflation low wages and deplorable working conditions which have propelled children to engage in street hawking to help support their families (Charles and Charles, 2004, & Deth, 2007). Ebigbo and Abaja (2003) maintain that street hawking exposes children to sexual abuse and consequently to HIV/AIDS infections. Children who engage in street hawking may indulge in criminal acts like prostitution, armed robbery, and pick pocketing (Hubert, 2009; Humphries, 2010). The problems associated with urbanization are human and environmental poverty, declining quality of life, untapped wealth, and human resources.

Aiyehuro (2009) defines hawking as a system of trading whereby the trader carries his wares about. Street hawking refers to wandering-like movement in which an individual carries his or her

goods with a tray on the head or by means of transportation such as wheelbarrow, bicycle, or trolley in search of customers. This is usually accompanied by at least one form of advertisement – shouting the name of the item on sale, using a bell or special mannerisms to attract the attention or interest of the public (Anyanwu, 2007). It is a trading activity characterized by street movement in residential areas where the hawker aims to sell his goods to any interested buyer. Ezenwa (2011) opines that an adolescent street hawker is a person under the age of 15 years who hawks goods and renders services on a commercial road or street.

The Theoretical Framework

The paper is predicated on Marxian theory. The proponent of this theory is Karl Marx. According to Marx (1963), the social change results from the economic base and superstructural institutions and reflection of the changes in the economic base. The concrete form of this base is the production of man's subsistence needs; the production process itself is understandable as a human social activity in terms of the social relationship between these various individuals and groups involved in the process. Karl Marx posits that all through history, when we consider those social relationships that make the production process a social phenomenon, two significant classes or groups of people are always identifiable. There are few individuals who own and control the means of production, and the majority of people who do not own the means of production but do the actual production using their natural human labour power. Marx opines that a class struggle always emerges between the ruling class and the working class due to the unequal distribution of societal resources. Marxian conflict theory overemphasises the economy as the major source of social conflict. Marx failed to identify other non-economic variables like bad governance, which may create extremes of wealth and poverty in the same society. Despite the shortcomings and deficiencies of Marxian theory, it seems to be the most relevant and suitable theory for this study. In relating the theory to street hawking, it should be observed that unequal allocation of resources and

inequality encourage poverty among members of the society. A high level of poverty influences parents to engage their children in street hawking, which is also associated with moral problems. Hence, Marxian theory is relevant to the discussion at hand.

Causes of Street Hawking

Broken Homes: William (2008) opines that such factors as broken homes, unemployment, and the death of parents can also make or lead a child to be a hawker. According to him, these victims of broken homes are normally compelled to hawk or engage in jobs to cater for themselves since their parents cannot do so. In some cases, some children hawk because of peer pressure.

Poverty: Nnom (2003) posits that while poverty is often regarded as the principal cause of forcing children into child labour, a lack of social service at home, lack of suitable housing, and inadequate food and healthcare services combine to compel parents to send their children into street hawking. It then implies that the less privileged, including children without homes, are the most vulnerable to these social ills. The economic constraints also force parents to look for wealth at all costs to the detriment of their children. Appel (2009) asserts that structural inequality is a significant factor influencing street trading. Nwabueze (1992) attributes street hawking to poverty and inequality. Other factors influencing street hawking are adverse economic environment, unemployment, massive retrenchment, underemployment, and poor quality of life (Okojie, 2007). All these factors are features of Nigerian society.

Marginal Income of Parents: Crosson (2008) posits a link between parents with marginal income and the imperative to push children into work to supplement family income. Children of low-income families have to help generate family income and compensate for societal discrepancies, particularly as the gap between 'the haves and have-nots' has grown in recent years; such a situation breeds poverty

(Bass, 2004; Binder and Sorgin, 2009). Low family income carries with it high risk of illness, limitations on mobility, and limited access to education, thus, the legacy of poverty is passed from parents to children (UNICEF, 2003). In its debut Human development report, the United Nations Development Programme (UNDP) ranked Nigeria 137th out of 184 nations in terms of human development. In Nigeria, poverty encourages prostitution, corruption, armed robbery, street life, increased unemployment, poor living conditions, high mortality, acute malnutrition, short life expectancy, and human deprivation (UBA monthly digest, March April 2006).

Youthful Exuberance: Oloko (1998) posits that some young street hawkers are from relatively affluent families who engage in hawking business for excitement and pocket money. The implication is that youthful exuberance can lead some children to engage in economic activities, and they indulge in them out of the desire for adventure without identifying the adverse effect it will have on their studies.

Urban Organisation and Modernisation: Hayano and Keenan (2007) argue that street hawking may be attributed to urban organization and modernization. These scholars assert that people who migrate from rural areas to urban centers in search of better prospects are often ill-prepared for urban life and, therefore, forced to use their children or other children to enhance their economic situation. Cultural and economic factors interact complexly to encourage child hawking in most African urban centres. Street hawking flourishes because people patronize these hawkers by buying from them.

Methods

This study adopted research in which a cross-section survey design was used. The design was predicated on data generated through a questionnaire to examine the moral implications of street hawking among children in Anyigba, Dekina Local Government Area of Kogi State. The study area, Anyigba is located in Eastern part of Kogi State

in Dekina Local Government Area. The town is between longitude 70121 east of the Greenwich Meridian and latitude 70361 North of the equator. The population of this study consists of members of the public in Anyigba Metropolis in Dekina LGA of Kogi State. The elements of the population consisted of street hawkers, shop owners, market women and civil servants who are residents in Anyigba, Dekina LGA of Kogi state. The elements of the population were drawn from this category of the people because some of their children were involved in street hawking while the street hawkers were the people who are directly involved in hawking, they are in the position to give reasonable answers regarding the questions. This population sample was one hundred and twenty – four respondents comprising the parents and guardians of the child hawkers. The sample size of this population was arrived at using a purposive sampling technique involving snowballing. This entails tracking every mother, caregiver, or guardian of street hawkers through their wards. The primary data for the study were generated through the questionnaire administered to the respondents. A three–point Likert scale of agree, disagree, and undecided was used. There were eleven (11) items in the questionnaire, including causes and effects of street hawking. Data collected were analyzed using simple percentages.

The formula is: $\frac{N}{TN} \times 100$

“N” stands for respondents ,while “TN” means the total number of respondents per question.

Results

The study used a sample size of one hundred and twenty-four (124) respondents in Anyigba, Dekina LGA of Kogi State. From a total of one hundred and twenty-four (124) copies of the questionnaire distributed to the respondents, one hundred and ten (110) copies were returned giving a response of 89%. Data analysis was based on the questionnaire administered to the respondents to analyze the demographic characteristics and the research objectives.

Table 1: Socio – Demographic characteristics of the Respondents

Category	F (%)
Sex	
Male	41 (37)
Female	69 (63)
Marital Status	
-	40 (36)
Married	70 (64)
Age of Respondents	
21-25	25 (23)
26-30	35 (32)
31 and above	50 (45)
Religion	
Christianity	68 (62)
Islam	42 (38)
Traditional Religion	0 (0)
Educational Qualification	
O’Level	34 (31)
NCE/ND	50 (45)
HND/BSc	26 (24)

Source: Field Survey (2022)

Table 1 above shows that the majority of the respondents are female, with the majority being married. Similarly, the table also shows that 25% of the total respondents were within the age brackets of 21-25 years, 32% accounted for those within the age bracket of 26-30 years while 45% were located within are bracket of 31 and above. This implies that most of the respondents fell under age 31 and above. Within the same table, 62% of the total respondents were Christians, while 38% of the total respondents were Muslims. This implies that a little more than half of the respondents were Christians. Table 1

above further shows that 31% of the total respondents had O'Level qualifications, 45% of the total respondents had NCE/ND qualifications, and 24% of the total respondents had HND/BSc. qualifications. This shows that the majority of the respondents were NCE/ND holders.

Table 2: Respondents Reaction to Research Question 1: Is rape a moral implication of street hawking among children in Anyigba?

Variables	F (%)
Agree	59 (54)
Disagree	30 (27)
Undecided	21 (19)
Total	110 (100)

Source: Field Survey (2022)

The response to the question in table two pinpoint that rape is part of the moral consequences of street hawking in Anyigba. The respondents who affirmed this position were 59 (54%) ,and those who disagreed were 30(27%) and 21 (19%) undecided respectively.

Table 3: Respondents Reaction to Research Question 2: Is Risk of unwanted pregnancies a moral consequence of street hawking among children in Anyigba?

Variables	F (%)
Agree	52 (47)
Disagree	38 (35)
Undecided	20 (18)
Total	110 (100)

Source: Field Survey (2022)

The table above made it clear that 52 (47%) of our respondents agree that unwanted pregnancies is a moral implication of street hawking while 38 (35%) and 20 (18%) disagree and undecided respectively. The position of the respondents reaffirms the negative impact of street hawking among children in Anyigba.

Table 4: Respondents Reaction to Research Question 3: Is exposure to prostitution a moral effect of street hawking among children in Anyigba?

Variables	F (%)
Agree	54 (49)
Disagree	30 (27)
Undecided	26 (24)
Total	110 (100)

Source: Field Survey (2022)

From table four above, it is obvious that 54 respondents account for (49%) agreed to the question statement while 30 (27%) disagreed and 26 (24%) were undecided. The observation of our respondents with the highest percentage supports the fact that exposure to prostitution remains one of the major moral consequences of street hawking among children in Anyigba.

Table 5: Respondents Reaction to Research Question 4: Are you certain that tobacco smoking is a consequences of street hawking among children in Anyigba?

Variables	F (%)
Agree	57 (52)
Disagree	33 (30)
Undecided	20 (18)
Total	110 (100)

Source: Field Survey (2022)

From table five ,it is obvious that 57 respondents which account for 52% agreed to the question statement while 33 (30%) disagreed and 20 (18%) were undecided. The observation of our respondents with the highest percentage supports the fact that tobacco smoking remains a form of moral implication of street hawking among children in Anyigba

Table 6: Respondents Reaction to Research Question 5: Do you agree that kidnapping and trafficking has a moral effect on children that have streets in Anyigba?

Variables	F (%)
Agree	53 (48)
Disagree	37 (34)
Undecided	20 (18)
Total	110 (100)

Source: Field Survey (2022)

Table six above shows respondents' responses to kidnapping and trafficking , which indicated that it has moral consequences on children who hawk on the streets in Anyigba. The respondents who affirmed this position were 53 (48%) and those who disagreed were 37 (34%) and 20 (18%) undecided respectively.

Table 7: Respondents' Reaction to Research Question 6: Do you think property theft and burglary is a moral consequence of street hawking among children in Anyigba?

Variables	F (%)
Agree	0 (0)
Disagree	56 (51)
Undecided	54 (49)
Total	110 (100)

Source: Field Survey (2022)

The table above made it clear that 0 (0%) of our respondents agree that property theft and burglary is not a moral consequence of street hawking among children ,while 56 (51%) and 54 (49%) disagree and undecided respectively. However, the position of the respondents affirms that street hawking does not lure children into property theft and burglary in Anyigba, Dekina LGA of Kogi State.

Discussion

This study revealed that street hawking has significant moral implications for children in Anyigba, Dekina Local Government Area of Kogi State. These moral implications include prostitution, unwanted pregnancies, kidnapping and trafficking, rape , and smoking among children in the study area. The research further reviewed that broken homes, poverty and unemployment, a marginal income of parents, youthful exuberance, urban organization ,and modernization are the major causes of street hawking among children in the study area. The predominant factor among the aforementioned points is poverty ,which stemmed from giving birth to more children than they could cater for. However, street hawking does not lure

children into property theft and burglary in Anyigba, Dekina LGA of Kogi State.

Recommendations

On the basis of the findings in the course of this study, the following recommendations were made:

Parents should be encouraged to engage in family planning. This will enable them to have only the number of children they can cater for. It has been observed that some parents who earn low income usually send their children out to hawk on the road in order to earn money for the financial upkeep of their families since their meagre salary cannot take care of the family needs.

The government should ensure that existing laws on street hawking, which is a form of child labour, are strengthened and made more effective to discourage parents and guardians who send their children to hawk on the road or streets. These laws should be implemented rather than enacting new ones.

Churches should establish welfare units that will cater for the needy and also to alleviate the poverty levels of poor parents and their children.

Churches should organize sensitization programs in the form of seminars and workshops to enlighten and educate people on the problems and dangers associated with street hawking.

Conclusion

This research examined the moral implications of street hawking among children in Anyigba, Dekina Local Government Area of Kogi State. The findings confirmed that street hawking among children is associated with rape, unwanted pregnancies, exposure to prostitution, tobacco smoking, and kidnapping and trafficking, among others. If the recommendations proffered so far are imbibed with, this phenomenon will drastically reduce.

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