

# Push and Pull Factors of Child Work: Implications for Life Skills Development Among Children in Semi-Urban Centres in Cameroon

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## Abstract

This study investigated the push and pull factors of child work among school-going children in Fako Division of the South West Region of Cameroon. It was largely descriptive and adopted the mixed methods design. Data collected with the use of a questionnaire from a purposively selected sample of seventy-six (76) school-going child workers. Among the 76 working children, five (05) were purposively selected and interviewed with the aid of an interview guide. The study was carried out in some semi-urban centres in Fako Division of Cameroon. Data were analysed by calculating frequencies, percentages; weighted means ( $\mu$ ) and standard deviations ( $\sigma$ ). Among others, findings revealed that child workers engaged in work for economic, socialisation and responsible behaviour reasons. The study showed that child work in Africa is a reality for both cultural and economic reasons. Work in the African culture aims at socialising, training and educating a child to become responsible in the family, kin and community at large. Furthermore work contributes to child development and child workers who follow a proper school-and-work programme tend to acquire many life skills needed for survival in the changing world. It is therefore rewarding to focus on the benefits of child work and reconsider the fight against it. Parents and children should plan work activities such that they do not interfere with school activities of working children.

**Keywords:** Child work; Push and pull factors of work; Life skills

## Introduction

There are significant calls from international agencies, non-governmental organizations and even national governments against child work. Such calls conceive of child work as abuse and argue that their work is against their fundamental rights. However, other notions, typically maintain that child work is decent for child upbringing and that when children work, they do so for various reasons. Fyfe (1989) averred that child work is not a new phenomenon as it was common to see children in pre-industrial period, helping out with agriculture and hunting, taking more responsibility as they grew older. Apprenticeship was the basic means children were educated in the pre-industrial period (Lieten, 2009). Child work was further enhanced during the industrial revolution, where children were used as labour, especially in factories and mining. Fyfe (1989) confirms this by stating that "industrialization did not invent child work; it intensified and transformed it," probably from a less to a more rewarding venture.

In the late 19<sup>th</sup> century, the incidence of child work started to decline, and today it is more or less non-existent in the developed world (Basu, 1999). However, its decline in the developed world has met with its rising incidents in the developing world which has coincided with outright calls against it (ILO, 2002). In this light, the past decades have emphasised child labour and not child work practices. This can be seen from the growing international concern over the issue of child labour and in particular the social, economic, and human rights of children (ILO, 2008). These concerns project children involvement in work as violating their rights with the argument that it disturbs their schooling and their appropriate development.

Nsamenang (2011) argues that every African culture invests in children, not as an end state but in recognition that variation among today's adults is an outcome of diversity of experience in childhood. He maintains that in Africentric traditions, children are buds of hope and seen as virgin gardens; implying their extent of competence and support through work. It is based on these arguments that this article articulates the reasons (push and pull factors) for child work among school-going children in Fako Division of Cameroon and how it contributes not only as a support system for their school needs but for their acquisition of life skills.

## Conceptualising the notion of child work

Two major concepts dominated the conceptualisation of this study. The concept of child work and that of life skills were dealt with in this study. According to Morse and Weiss (1955) work means different things to different people in different situations. Many have defined work based on the economic or non-

economic function of the activity. Kaplan & Tausky (1974) pointed out that the economic definition simply sees work as a means of earning a livelihood while the non-economic sees work as the means through which self-expression and status needs are met.

Morse and Weiss (1955) asserted that work is an activity that enables connection with the wider society, keeps people occupied, gives them a sense of purpose and boosts the feeling of contribution and self-respect. According to Wambiri (2014) informal work by children helps put food on the family table and if it is stopped the children's means of survival is also blocked. Most children in sub-Saharan Africa are economically active because their parents initiate them into the family business and encourage them to work in order to learn the family trade. Boyden & Mann (2005) argues that in less developed societies children are expected to work and are assigned responsibilities as part of growing up.

Representatives of NGOs and working children's organisations accept that children need to work in order to survive and improve their position in society (Bourdillon, 2000). Politicians, United Nations Children Fund (UNICEF) and International Labour Organisation (ILO) on the other hand favour a total ban on child work. The ILO and others who hold this view strongly advocate that children should be placed in school in order to stay out of work (Muscroft 1999). Their justification is based on the fact that free and compulsory education will solve the problems associated with children's labour involvement (Myers, 1999). Punch (2003) however argues that schooling does not guarantee absolute safety and protection of children.

Work provides children with practical skills and social skills which are key to negotiating work as they are socialised by their parents in family work and businesses (Thorsen, 2014). Children therefore can combine work and school with leisure and therefore work does not and should not necessarily stop children from school or play (Punch 2003). Proponents of this view focus not only on the economic aspect of work by children, but also on children's social relations and networks and their ability to participate in matters that shape their lives and influence decisions that affect them (Woodhead, 1999). The Africentric view sees a child as an active and integral part of society who, along with peers, parents, family members and others makes a contribution to society with his or her daily actions (Invernizzi, 2003).

Theoretically, the study adopted the ecological model by Bronfenbrenner (1979) which provides a realist view of the context of child development. The model maintains that a child's development is shaped or conditioned by the factors within his/her environment and has five distinct levels which represent sources of care and/or influences on the child as he/she grows up. These factors or situations can therefore be identified within the home context, community context, and the wider contexts.

### **Child work in Africa**

The Africentric perspective sees a child as an active and integral part of society who, along with peers, parents, family members and others makes a contribution to society with his or her daily actions (Invernizzi, 2003). Africans perceive work as part of the everyday life of children and a means of developing skills and competencies and a means of offering children confidence and experience for future adult work (Punch, 2001). There is an Africentric paradigm which presents a model for viewing children's work (Schiele, 1994). It seeks to contextualize sociological phenomena, such as street vending, children's work or child labour, within the cultural milieu of people of African origin (Asante, 1988). The paradigm challenges the Western, rights-based dominant perspective on childhood and children's work and questions the appropriateness of the application of Eurocentric theories of human behaviour and ethos of people of African cultures (Akbar, 1984).

In this light we pull together two broad categories of explanation to the causes of child work. The first category concerns the household decision and conditions which make a child work (push factors) and the second concerns a market demand to use children as a part of their work force (pull factors). Poverty is the single greatest force that creates the flow of children into the workplace. Bourdillon (2014) points out that children engage in work activities around them wilfully as a result of poverty in order to raise income in their family for feeding, clothing and schooling. Wambiri (2014) points out that child work augments family income and enables stability.

According to Lo-oh (2014), the push factors of work are poverty, need for education, need to learn a trade, need for education and trade, need to develop and help one's family, rural-urban migration and school dropout. Whereas the pull factors are: perceiving employer as family, going to live in a better environment, debt bondage, envisaged educational opportunities. Similarly Koffi (2014) averred that most children work because of poverty and that work provides them with opportunities to be educated either in school or to learn a trade as they save money from the work and it also trains them to be responsible wives and mothers in future as they are trained on home management skills. Wambiri (2014) further asserts that work provides children opportunities to pay for their schooling as they negotiate between school and work.

Nsamenang (2003) on the other hand posits that working can actually equip children with a sense of responsibility and a set of valuable skills which may not be available by means of schooling. Provided that child work is not hazardous to the child's development, it can even be in the child's interest. By contributing to the

family's income children can obtain higher levels of decision-making within the household and/or decide more autonomously about their future (Bachman, 2000). Jacquemin (2004) points out that children work as a result of the tradition of sharing responsibility among the kinship group, with benefits on both the adult and the child. Ofosu-Kusi (2014) asserted that work enables the child to be respected in the family as he/she contributes for the running of the family through work. This means work provide children opportunities for decision making in their families as they are regarded as responsible. Anker (2000) averred that school attendance and completion do not necessarily guarantee the acquisition of knowledge, particularly in areas of low-quality schooling. Bourdillon (2014) posits that most schools in Africa do not provide children with adequate training that enables them to succeed in their daily life as work does.

### Methodology

The area of study was Fako Division of the South West Region of Cameroon and it is situated in the South West Region of Cameroon. Data was collected in urban and semi-urban settlements in Limbe, Buea, Ekona, Mutengene, Muyuka and Idena municipalities. According to Fonjong (2004) these localities are growing urban areas with population generally exceeding 5,000 inhabitants, whose dominant activity is farming and petty trading. Culturally, most of the inhabitants of Fako are from diverse backgrounds who share the same beliefs of proper and responsible upbringing of their children through work.

The study employed a mixed methods design to obtain a variety of information on the same issue and to use the strengths of each method to overcome the deficiencies of the other on the phenomenon under investigation (Kumar, 2005). The questionnaire survey was used to obtain quantitative data. The interview guide was used to obtain qualitative data. Data was collected for the study within two weeks. The target population of the study consisted of 2000 school-going children of both sexes between six and 12 years old in Fako Division. The sample was made up of 76 (37 (48.7%) males and 39(51.3%) females) school-going child workers. The purposive sampling technique was used to recruit child workers met in the market places and in parks as they were working with their parents whom gave consent for the study.

The questionnaire was structured into sections based on the objectives of the study. It consisted of statements rated on a four point Likert scale (Strongly agreed = 4, agreed = 3, disagreed = 2 and strongly disagreed = 1). The interview consisted of questions to elicit information based on the objectives of the study. The supervisor read through to ensure face validity. Lecturers in the Faculty of Education judged the content of the questionnaire and content validity index (CVI) was appreciated mathematically at CVI = 0.96. A pilot study was carried out on ten child workers in Tiko locality to check reliability and suitability of the instruments used. Then the reliability of the instruments was calculated using Cronbach's alpha coefficient ( $\alpha = 0.93$ ) for the questionnaire.

Data was analysed descriptively by calculating frequencies, percentages; the weighted mean ( $\mu$ ) of each indicator on a theme and the weighted standard deviations ( $\sigma$ ). Interview data was grouped into themes which constituted the unit of analysis and the voices of the interviewees were further brought out on the phenomenon. The names used for interview findings of respondents were all fictitious names in order to hide their identity.

### Findings

#### Benefits of child work in Cameroon

Findings revealed economic reasons for work, work as a socialisation process, work as responsible behaviour and work as a forum for acquisition of life skills.

#### Work for economic reasons

The economic reasons of child work consisted of both push and pull factors of work.

**Table 1: Showing the economic reasons of child work**

Economic reasons	Agreed		Disagreed		N	Wt Sum	Wt $\mu$	wt $\sigma$
	n	%	n	%				
Poverty	20	26.3	56	73.7	76	149	1.96	1.06
Raise money for cloths and school needs	66	86.8	10	13.2	76	249	3.28	0.79
Support in the family business	68	89.5	08	10.5	76	257	3.38	0.85
Selling is carried out by all family members	35	46.1	41	53.9	76	193	2.54	1.17
<b>Total</b>	<b>189</b>	<b>62.2</b>	<b>115</b>	<b>37.8</b>	<b>304</b>	<b>848</b>	<b>2.79</b>	<b>0.97</b>

From table 1 above, majority (73.7%) of respondents disagreed that they work because of poverty while 26.3% agreed that they work because of poverty. On the other hand, 86.8% of respondents agreed that they sell to raise money for cloths, food and school needs and other basic necessities while 13.2% disagreed. Likewise, majority (89.5%) of respondents agreed they sell to support in the family business while a few (10.5%) disagreed. Furthermore, 53.9% of respondents disagreed that everyone in the family is involved in selling while some (46.1%) of the respondents agreed.

Additionally, the weighted mean indicated that the most rated reason for work ( $\mu=3.38$ ) showed that child workers sell to support the family business whereas the least rated ( $\mu=1.96$ ) was that they sell because of poverty. Besides these other economic reasons showed that child workers sell to raise money for cloths, food and school needs ( $\mu=3.28$ ); to support the family in business ( $\mu=3.38$ ) and because everyone in the family was involved in selling ( $\mu = 2.54$ ). However the average weighted mean of 2.79 showed that majority (62.2%) of child work was for economic reasons while some (37.8%) do not work for economic reasons.

All child workers interviewed reported that selling provided money for fees, dresses, shoes and food for the home; family welfare; hospital bills. Divine a child worker who hawks plantain chips in Muyuka emphasised that "... selling helps provide money for shoes, cloths, school needs and family welfare". Still Becky who hawks and sell *koki* stated that "...selling helps pay bills." John a child worker in Ekona who hawks oranges and bananas said "... I live with my parents and we are poor and through selling my elder brothers and sisters have gone to school and they have graduated from the university and they are currently working."

Furthermore, Edna a child worker selling at the mother's shop in the market in Limbe pointed out that selling has provided enough money for the mother to pay her debts and also to save in tontines. Edna reported that "... assisting my mother in the market has helped to raise enough money such that her debts are paid and enough money is raised to save in her *njangis* ... also my parents takes good care of us by providing for our needs." Additionally, Nancy selling vegetables pointed out that "...selling provides extra money which we buy our toys and games to use at home...we bought play station from our personal savings."

### Work as a socialisation process

Another reason for which children considered work was doing work as a process of socialisation. That is through work children are trained to adjust to everyday life in the family and also to adapt to life circumstances.

**Table 2: Showing work as a socialisation process**

Socialisation reasons	Agreed		Disagreed		N	Wt Sum	Wt $\mu$	Wt $\sigma$
	n	%	n	%				
To learn how to do business	68	89.5	08	10.5	76	248	3.26	0.73
Absence of teachers in school	00	00.0	76	100	76	84	1.11	0.10
Opportunities to live a healthy life	64	84.2	12	15.8	76	253	3.33	0.54
Encouraged by parents/guardians	67	88.2	09	11.8	76	255	3.36	0.63
<b>Total</b>	<b>199</b>	<b>65.5</b>	<b>105</b>	<b>34.5</b>	<b>304</b>	<b>840</b>	<b>2.77</b>	<b>0.50</b>

From table 2 above, majority (89.5%) of respondents agreed that work is a learning process where they learned how to do business whereas a few (10.5%) of respondents disagreed. Moreover, all the respondents disagreed to the fact that they were selling because there were no teachers in schools to teach. Besides, majority (84.2%) of respondents agreed that selling provided opportunities for a healthy life whereas a few (15.8%) respondents disagreed. As well, majority (88.2%) of the respondents agreed that they were encouraged by parents/guardians to learn how to sell whereas few (11.8%) disagreed.

Furthermore, the weighted mean on a four point scale showed that most children work because of parental encouragement to learn how to sell ( $\mu = 3.36$ ) whereas the least rated reason was that selling was because of no teachers in school ( $\mu= 1.11$ ). Therefore through selling, child workers learn how to do business ( $\mu=3.26$ ); learn opportunities to live a healthy life ( $\mu=3.33$ ) and parents/guardians encourage them to learn how to sell ( $\mu = 3.36$ ). The average weighted mean of 2.77 showed that majority (65.5%) of respondents agreed that child work socialises children while some (34.5%) disagreed.

Additionally interviews conducted revealed that selling was a process of socialisation as all respondents reported that selling taught them business. Edna pointed out that "... I know how to do business and I can run a business of my own." John averred that "... selling has taught me how to talk with different people and even to talk freely with my classmates and to answer questions in school." Moreover, Becky pointed out that "... work teaches every child how to be patient if not they would not sell anything in the market." Also, Divine pointed out that "... selling teaches children to be careful as they learn how to handle money with care and to be vigilant when selling if not they would be cheated." Nancy further pointed out that "...through selling I have learnt to control and direct my younger ones in the market and at home... also I have learnt how to interact with people whom I just meet as I meet new people in the market every day."

## Work as responsible behaviour

**Table 3: Showing work as a form of responsible behaviour**

Responsible behaviour	Agreed		Disagreed		N	Wt Sum	Wt $\mu$	Wt $\sigma$
	n	%	n	%				
To learn the family business	53	69.7	23	30.3	76	232	3.06	1.02
To be busy	70	92.1	06	07.9	76	267	3.51	0.64
To contribute for family welfare	72	94.7	04	05.3	76	266	3.50	0.60
To interact with other people	74	97.4	02	02.6	76	273	3.59	0.55
<b>Total</b>	<b>269</b>	<b>88.5</b>	<b>35</b>	<b>11.5</b>	<b>304</b>	<b>1038</b>	<b>3.41</b>	<b>0.70</b>

From table 3 above, the findings revealed that work is a form of responsible behaviour as majority (97.4%) of respondents agreed that selling enables them to learn how to interact with other people whereas very few (02.6%) of respondents disagreed. Moreover, majority (92.1%) of respondents agreed selling keeps them busy and not idle while few (07.9%) respondents disagreed. Additionally, majority (94.7%) of respondents agreed they sell to contribute for family welfare while few (05.3%) respondents disagreed. Furthermore, majority (69.7%) of respondents agreed that they sell to learn the family business whereas some (30.3%) respondents disagreed. The average weighted mean of 3.41 revealed that majority (88.5%) of respondents agreed that child work is a responsible behaviour while 11.5% disagreed. Children responsibility is demonstrated through learning the family business ( $\mu = 3.06$ ); being busy ( $\mu = 3.51$ ); contributing for family welfare ( $\mu = 3.50$ ) and learning how to interact with other people through selling ( $\mu = 3.59$ ).

Interviews conducted further revealed that child work is a form of responsible behaviour within the families or community as all respondents reported that work enabled them to earn respect in the family as responsible children. Edna iterated that "... I can contribute to pay my mother's debt and also contribute my own part to see that my family is comfortable as I play my role as a child." Moreover, all the child workers interviewed said they sell because they do not want to be idle and lazy. Divine emphasised that "... selling keeps me busy rather than moving about doing nothing to support my mother."

Furthermore, Becky stated that "...selling helps pay bills and it keeps me busy rather than being idle and loitering about." John pointed that it is the place of every child to support his family in selling and that through the work children can go to school. In his words "... my elder brothers and sisters were selling with my parents and there was enough money for them to go to school and to the university and I don't see why children should not sell in order to support parents in order to become better people in future ..."

## Life skills acquired through work

These consisted of life skills developed through work as child workers were involved in selling activities.

### Cognitive skills

**Table 4: Showing cognitive life skill acquired through work**

Cognitive skills	Agreed		Disagreed		N	Wt Sum	Wt $\mu$	wt $\sigma$
	n	%	n	%				
Problem-solving	66	86.8	10	13.2	76	257	3.38	0.78
Self-discipline	71	93.4	05	06.6	76	259	3.41	0.66
Self-esteem	70	92.1	06	07.9	76	259	3.41	0.64
Decision-making	58	76.3	18	23.7	76	237	3.12	0.89
<b>Total</b>	<b>265</b>	<b>87.2</b>	<b>39</b>	<b>12.8</b>	<b>304</b>	<b>1012</b>	<b>3.33</b>	<b>0.74</b>

From table 4 above, majority (93.4%) of respondents agreed that they acquired self-discipline skills through selling whereas few (06.6%) disagreed. Moreover, majority (92.1%) of the respondents agreed that they have developed their self-esteem while few (07.9%) respondents disagreed. majority (86.8%) of the respondents agreed that they acquired problem-solving skills through work while some (13.2%) of respondents disagreed. Furthermore, majority (76.3%) of the respondents agreed that they have acquired decision making skills whereas some (23.7%) of the respondents disagreed. Besides, the average weighted mean for cognitive skills acquired through work was 3.33 which showed that majority (87.2%) of the respondents agreed they had acquired cognitive skills through work whereas some (12.8%) respondents disagreed. The findings further revealed that respondents acquired the following skills: problem-solving ( $\mu = 3.38$ ); self-discipline ( $\mu = 3.41$ ); self-esteem ( $\mu = 3.41$ ) and decision-making ( $\mu = 3.12$ ).

Interviews reported that child workers had acquired cognitive skills in the market which they listed as mathematical skills, problem solving skills, business skills, financial skills, understanding events and people and thinking skills. Edna pointed out that "... I have developed mathematical skills which I used in school and in the market ... I always think very well before I answer questions because I don't want to give wrong doubtful answers." Still, John emphasised that "... I used my initiative to solve problems encountered in the market and in school.... I understand what I have to do and always do it without being told." Becky further stated that "... I

understand people very well and I know how to talk to people in the market in order to avoid quarrels.”

### Social skills

These are skills which enable child workers to socialise and relate well with other people.

**Table 5: Showing interpersonal skills acquired through work**

Interpersonal skills	Agreed		Disagreed		N	Wt sum	Wt $\mu$	Wt $\sigma$
	n	%	n	%				
Negotiation	70	92.1	06	07.9	76	255	3.36	0.63
communication	72	94.7	04	05.3	76	261	3.43	0.60
Cooperation	74	97.4	02	02.6	76	271	3.57	0.55
Patience	66	86.8	10	13.2	76	250	3.29	0.77
<b>Total</b>	<b>282</b>	<b>92.8</b>	<b>22</b>	<b>07.8</b>	<b>304</b>	<b>1037</b>	<b>3.41</b>	<b>0.64</b>

From table 5 above, majority (97.4%) of the respondents agreed that they have cooperation skills while few respondents disagreed. Moreover, majority (94.7%) of respondents agreed that they had acquired communication skills whereas few (05.3%) disagreed. Furthermore, majority (92.1%) of respondents agreed that they had acquired negotiation skills whereas few (07.9%) respondents disagreed. Besides, majority (86.9%) of the respondents agreed that they had acquired skills to be patient whereas some (13.1%) of the respondents disagreed. Additionally on table 28, the average weighted mean ( $\mu$ ) of 3.41 showed that majority (92.7%) of respondents agreed they acquired interpersonal skills through selling whereas few (07.8%) disagreed. The social skills acquired by child workers included: negotiation skills ( $\mu = 3.36$ ); communication skills ( $\mu = 3.43$ ); cooperation skills ( $\mu = 3.57$ ) and patience ( $\mu = 3.29$ ).

Interviews conducted revealed that respondents acquired interpersonal skills through the buying and selling activity. John emphasised that “... I meet and work with new people all the times and so I feel very free interacting with people.” Moreover Divine pointed out that “...I negotiate very well even when I am discussing with my friends in school.” Furthermore, Edna iterated that “... I listen attentively to people and communicate fluently with my customers and also with friends in school.” Besides Becky stated that “... selling has helped me to learn how to talk with people and I feel free to answer questions courageously in class.” Also, Nancy reported that “...my parents treat me with respect and I have learnt to appreciate and respect other people for efforts they put into different activities.

### Emotional coping skills

**Table 6: Showing emotional coping skills acquired through work**

Emotional coping skills	Agreed		Disagreed		N	Wt sum	Wt $\mu$	Wt $\sigma$
	n	%	n	%				
Self-monitoring	68	89.5	08	10.5	76	259	3.41	0.68
Time management	71	93.4	05	06.6	76	265	3.49	0.62
Stress and anger management	60	78.9	16	21.1	76	247	3.25	0.79
Self-awareness	68	89.5	08	10.5	76	257	3.38	0.67
<b>Total</b>	<b>267</b>	<b>87.8</b>	<b>37</b>	<b>12.2</b>	<b>304</b>	<b>1028</b>	<b>3.38</b>	<b>0.69</b>

From table 6 above, majority (93.4%) of respondents agreed that they had acquired time management skills while few (06.6%) respondents disagreed. Moreover, majority (89.5%) of respondents agreed that they had acquired self-monitoring skills to take control of situations whereas few (10.5%) respondents disagreed. Furthermore, majority (89.5%) of respondents agreed that they had acquired self-awareness skills whereas some (10.5%) respondents disagreed. Also, majority (78.9%) of respondents agreed that they had acquired stress and anger management skills whereas some (21.1%) respondents disagreed. Still on table 29, the average weighted mean of 3.38 showed that majority (87.8%) of respondents acquired emotional skills through work while few (12.2%) disagreed. The emotional skills acquired through work by child workers included: self-monitoring skills ( $\mu = 3.41$ ); time management skills ( $\mu = 3.49$ ); anger and stress management skills ( $\mu = 3.25$ ) and self-awareness skills ( $\mu = 3.38$ ).

Additionally interviews conducted reported that child workers are calm in the market, they work in order to support parents and in running the home, they do not get angry easily and they had acquired planning and time management skills. Divine stated that “... I don’t get angry easily when annoyed because in the market one cannot spend one hour without being annoyed so I have learnt not to get angry easily.” Moreover, Edna emphasised that “... one cannot succeed in selling when she does not plan her time very well if not she will loss much money ... I have learnt to plan my activities and follow the time strictly.” Furthermore, Becky pointed out that “... I know my abilities very well ... when I am tired I cannot study or go to sell as such I always create time to rest.” Also, John revealed that “... I am very calm when I am in the market and it has helped me to stay calm in class even when there is no teacher.” Nancy further stated that “... selling has helped me to understand different people and I treat every person with respect without any discrimination.”

## Discussion of findings

The findings revealed that children get involved in work for economic reasons; socialisation process and for responsible behaviour within the family or community. The economic reasons for child work included to raise money for cloths, food, school needs and other basic necessities; support in the family business; raise money as everyone does in the family; poverty; pay debts and to save money. This means that child workers provide financial support and extra income to the family. Therefore child workers raise money which support their families economically and in tend carter for their schooling and basic needs. Similarly, Bronfenbrenner (1979) ecological theory explains that children engaged into different socio-cultural tasks which help them to adapt and cope with life in their environment. Equally Lo-oh (2014) pointed out that child domestic work was because of poverty, need for education, need to learn a trade, need for education and trade, need to develop and help one's family, rural-urban migration and school dropout.

In the same way, Wambiri (2014) found that work provided children with opportunities to pay for their schooling. As such without work some children would not survive as work provides them with food, shelter, and even money they need to pay for school needs. Correspondingly, Koffi (2014) in Cote d'Ivoire found that children work because of poverty and that work provided them with opportunities to be educated either in school or to learn a trade as they saved money from work in order to go to school. With respect to the economic reasons or push factors of work the findings of this study revealed that child workers were not working because of poverty as most of them reported they were not poor. This therefore means that children work for socialisation and because work is a responsible behaviour though they are economically active.

Furthermore child work can be explained by the fact that parents encouraged children to work in order to learn how to do business, to learn family business and to become responsible children. In the same way Bronfenbrenner (1979) ecological theory explains that children engage into cultural appropriate behaviours recommended by their parents such that they can adapt to the socio-cultural context. Moreover, child work is a process of socialisation which enabled child workers to learn how to do business; create opportunities for healthy life style; encouraged by parents to learn and adapt to family business and to learn how to communicate. Similarly, Lo-oh (2014) found that children engaged into work because they view work as an opportunity to be educated and to live a healthy life.

In the same way Koffi (2014) found that work provided opportunities for nannies to be socialised to acquire skills in order to be responsible mothers and house wives. Therefore work prepares and trains children to acquire skills in different roles they have to perform as adults. Contrarily Anker (2000) posits that children work because of low quality education provided in school whereas this findings revealed that there are teachers in schools and the children performance is good in school. Bronfenbrenner (1993) ecological theory explains that children are socialised with appropriate roles at different developmental stages to become responsible adults as they interact and grow with members of the family and community.

Similarly, Koffi (2014) found that nannies regarded their work as a process of being responsible as they acquire skills to be housewives and good mothers for children. Also Bourdillon (2014) found that child work is a responsible behaviour in African communities as children contribute to family welfare, provide for school needs, and for food in the family. Nsamenang (1992) posits that family and socio-cultural norms socialised children to become responsible through different activities assigned to them as they are growing up. The skills acquired enable the child worker to play roles of a miniature adult and eventually assume the role of a mother or father in future.

Additionally, emotional coping skills of self-monitoring; time management; stress and anger management; self-awareness and acceptance of individual differences were acquired through work. This means that child workers internalised and develop emotional skills which enable them to cope with stressful situations in their environment. In this case child workers develop emotional intelligence as they interact with people of various backgrounds within the work environment and also overcoming the challenges they face working and schooling.

## Recommendations

### Conclusion

Findings from this study revealed that child workers worked for economic, socialisation and responsible behaviour reasons; and also insinuated that through work life skills are acquired. The economic factors were both push and pull factors as children are attracted to work because of the presence of the market and they were push to work by their family needs. Moreover work as a socialisation process push child workers to work since work trains them to acquire life skills needed for daily life. Work being a responsible behaviour pulls child workers to be involved in work. The findings of the study have proven that irrespective of the direct financial benefits children gain as they work to support the family income, family welfare, provide for basic family needs, school fees and school needs; work in the African society is used to socialise children to acquire basic skills and be responsible persons within the family and community. It is therefore important to note that African parents train children through work to be responsible by socialising them practically to acquire cognitive skills, social skills

and emotional coping skills which are regarded as the fundamental life skills for well-adjusted persons.

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