

Impact of Mothers' Street Vending on Children's Socio-emotional and Language Development in Rusape Urban

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Abstract

This study explored the impact of mothers' street vending on their children's socio-emotional and language development in Rusape urban, Zimbabwe. Rusape urban is in the east of the country where street vending is highly prevalent. An interpretive paradigm guided the study. According to the paradigm, phenomena should be studied in natural settings in order to interpret the phenomena in the participants' view. A qualitative phenomenological research design was employed. Five child-mother dyads were purposefully selected for the study. Observations, face-to-face interviews and open-ended questionnaire were the data collection instruments. The study found that the social context of child development – streets, where mothers engaged in vending, provided a powerful negative force on children's socio-emotional and language development. Bad socio-emotional and language models with depraved and abusive language roamed the streets and public markets. It was also found that the children had challenges regarding school attendance as they helped their mothers sell paraphernalia in the streets. It was concluded that some parents do not understand the dangers of exposing their children to street life but blame the country's economic situation. It was recommended that all children in the streets should be afforded the opportunity to go to school for social justice. Intervention strategies are essential to minimize adverse effects faced by children in the streets. There is need for local authorities to collaborate with different stake holders in order to assuage negative consequences of mothers' street vending on their children's development.

Key words: impact, socio-emotional, language, development, mothers, street vending

Introduction

Lack of gainful employment coupled with poverty in towns and rural areas have pushed people out of their homes in search of a better existence. Street vending has become an occupation for mothers who need to fend for their families. In Zimbabwe there is high parental unemployment. Strained household resources have deteriorated the quality of home environments and limited access to proper care and nutrition for many children (Holingswork, 2012). As parents struggle to provide financially for their families, the stress they face may make it difficult for them to give their children proper care and attention needed. Rusape is a small town with no industries. Most unemployed mothers in the small town have resorted to street vending. Due to the economic melt-down most mothers cannot afford hiring maids to take care of their children. Hence, young children either accompany their mothers to street vending or go to pre-school. Some children who return home from school have no one to look after them at home leaving them vulnerable. This pathetic situation prompted the researchers to explore the impact of mothers' street vending on children's socio-emotional and language development in Rusape urban.

Children growing up in impoverished communities or homes face multiple social, emotional, economic and educational obstacles in their life (Morrow, 2010; UNICEF, 2015).

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Early childhood is a stage where children start thinking logically but are easily influenced by the environment around them (Okoli and Cree, 2012). Densely and Joss (2012) view that children exposed to street life are 'at risk' and vulnerable in their development. Hence, the study sought to establish the impact of mothers' street vending on children's socio-emotional and language development.

Street vending is usually characterised by verbal exchanges and aggression from buyers and fellow vendors. Children tend to imitate what they see and hear. This may have an impact on their socio-emotional and language development as they spend most of their time in the streets or alone at home without any proper mother care. The social learning theory (Nabavi, 2012) highlights the importance of modelling and communication (verbal and non-verbal) for children. Literature reveals that children often model behaviours of those around them (Vander Zanden, Crandell and Crandell, 2014). In a famous study by Albert Bandura in 1961, he studied children at the Stanford University Nursery School using a doll named "Bobo". During this study, children watched researchers acting aggressively towards the doll. When children were left alone with the doll, they modelled aggressive behaviour towards the doll and other toys (Nabavi, 2012). The Bobo doll study revealed the importance of children's experiences and how such experiences contribute to their socio-emotional development. Children whose mothers engage in street vending are likely to model the social etiquettes that they encounter in the streets with their mothers whether acceptable or unacceptable.

A research carried out by Timalsina (2011) in Kathmandu town, China, which sought to find out effects of rural urban migration on livelihood in the informal sector, revealed that more than 30 000 people in the town were involved in street vending. Most of these were women. The women had different reasons for being in the street including isolation by husband and divorce. Timalsina's study also sought to find out reasons why some women had resorted to street vending, downplaying what happens to the holistic development of their children. If most street vending mothers have difficulties in the streets as portrayed in Timalsina's (2011) study, it may mean that children will also be affected. Hence, this study sought to find out the impact of mothers' street vending on children's socio-emotional and language development.

A study carried out in Ghana by Madjitey on the socio-educational development of children of street vendors in 2014 revealed that most young children in Accra were in streets with their parents. This was necessitated by socio-economic problems such as economic stagnation, urbanisation and inadequate housing. Further findings revealed that children as young as five-year old were engaged in working. The situation is prevalent in Ghana and this often constrain the choices and freedom of children their rights and socio-economic welfare. Most of the children's parents were petty traders and street vendors. The children assisted their parents selling wares (Madjitey, 2014). The researchers, hence, sought to conduct this research to find out if such scenario was prevalent in Rusape urban' Zimbabwe and the impact that is presented to children's socio-emotional and language development as a result of children being exposed to street life.

Vygotsky believes that children are social beings from birth and that through interactions with people and the environment they acquire skills and concepts (McDevit and Ormrod, 2013). Piaget believes children can construct their mental structures, cognition and intelligence through a constant and active series of interactions with their environment (Grace, 2012). Vygotsky in Britto and Ulkuer, (2012) believes that a child's social environment and experiences are important in their development. Vygotsky also gives prominence to social interaction in the development of young children on the basis that it influences language and

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thought, and he argues that higher mental functions are a result of social interaction (Howe, 2013). Thus, as children accompany their parents to the streets, they are likely to have positive and negative effects of being in the streets. Thus, in terms of socio-emotional and language development the researchers decided to carry out this research to ascertain the impact of mothers' street vending to their children in Rusape urban.

The study was anchored on Bronfenbrenner's Ecological Theory. The theory views a child's development within the context of the system of relationships that form his or her environment. Bronfenbrenner's theory defines complex "layers" of environment, each influencing a child's development. This theory has recently been renamed "Bioecological Systems Theory" to emphasize that a child's own biology is a primary environment fuelling her development (Bronfenbrenner, 2001 in Madjitey, 2014). The interaction between factors in the child's maturing biology, his immediate family/community environment, and the societal landscape fuels and steers his development.

Purpose of the Study

The economic instability worsens the situation for street vending mothers because they cannot afford to have maids for their toddlers hence, the children are forced to accompany them into the streets. Children thrive in a stable and nurturing environment where they have a routine and know what to expect (Freeman, 2010). The environment is a powerful education force on itself and everything about it sends strong messages to the children (Fiore, 2012). For that matter, the street as an environment for the child has the potential to positively or negatively impact on the child's development. With this background, the researchers sought to find out the impact of mothers' street vending on children's socio-emotional and language development in Rusape urban.

Research question

This study sought to provide an answer to the following research question:

- How do mothers' street vending affect their children's socio-emotional and language development and what strategies can be put in place to assist the children?

Research design

The study adopted a constructivist/interpretative paradigm. It is a broad framework of assumptions about fundamental aspects of reality, which yield themselves to a world view (Creswell, 2012; Gcumeni and Reeler, 2015). Constructivists view reality as being socially constructed and hold that there are multiple realities (Patton, 2012). The objective of the researchers was to understand the world as street vending mothers and their children experience it. A qualitative phenomenological design was used to examine how mothers' street vending affect their children's socio-emotional and language development. Qualitative research is defined by Creswell (2012) as a research that use language rather than numbers, and an explanatory, natural approach. Kumar (2015) states that qualitative research involves broadly stated questions about human experiences and realities studied through sustained contact with people in their natural environments, generating rich and descriptive data. The qualitative phenomenological design allowed the researchers to gain an understanding of social phenomena from participants' perspectives in their natural settings (McMillan & Schumacher, 2010). In this study we examined mothers who were street vending with their children. The participants were given an opportunity to share their experiences regarding how street vending threaten the socio-emotional and language development of their young children.

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Sample and Sampling

The sample comprised five (5) purposively selected young children and their mothers who were street vendors. Purposive sampling was more realistic in terms of time, effort and cost needed in finding informants (Bernard, 2012). The purposive sample was a non-representative subset of some larger population of street vendors which served a specific purpose in this study (Guba and Lincoln 2014). Thus, the sample enabled the researchers to concentrate on characteristics of a population of street vending mother-child dyads and to answer the research question. We strategically worked with a sample of five (5) street vending mothers and their children.

Research Instruments

Data was collected through observations, face-to-face interviews and open-ended questionnaire. Observation is the systematic description of events, behaviours and artefacts in a social setting chosen for a study (Marsh, 2003 in Madijety, 2015). It is used systematically and subject to reliability and validity checks. Creswell (2013) argues that, capturing what people say in their own words is the most important contribution of qualitative research in order to understanding human behaviour and perceptions. The researchers opted for observation because it gave full insight on mothers' street vending and their children's socio-emotional and language development.

The advantages of using interviews in this study was to allow the researchers to adapt the questions as necessary, clarifying doubt and ensuring that the responses were properly understood by repeating or rephrasing the questions (Creswell, 2013). Another advantage of using face-to-face interviews lied in that the participants were able to seek further clarification on some of the responses through probing. Each interviewee's tone of voice and facial expression helped to provide information that could not be revealed by the questionnaire and other methods of collecting data. To allow collection of relevant information as possible, the interviews were not semi-structured. Relevant issues which were not included in the interview guide but arose during the process of conducting the interviews were explored and noted in impromptu supplementary questions (Yin, 2012). The flexibility of interview questions was valuable when the researchers were seeking information from children and their mothers (Coolican, 2014).

A questionnaire is a cheap way of gathering data and it saves time (Saunyama 2013). It could be given to many respondents at the same time. Questionnaires were quick and relatively cost-effective in soliciting information (Kumar 2015). Figure 2 below shows triangulation of research instruments as they were used in this study.

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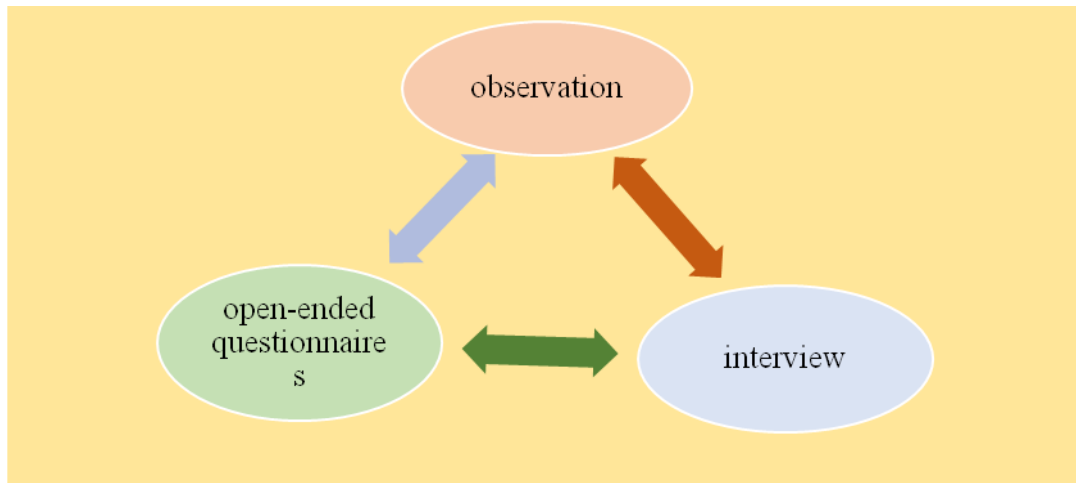


Figure 3: Triangulation of data collection methods

Data Processing and Analysis

The thematic content analysis was used. This process involved identifying, coding and categorising patterns in the data (Creswell, 2013). To identify themes and categories, the researchers applied Tesch's (2006) open coding method of data analysis. Tesch's method is a systemic process of examining, selecting, categorising, comparing, synthesising and interpreting data to unpack the major research question of the study (Yin, 2012; Coolican, 2014). According to Kumar (2015) data processing and analysis involve the organizing and scrutinizing the collected data. In this study, we used thematic form where the researchers came up with the major themes. Results were discussed in themes informed by the research questions.

Trustworthiness and Credibility

Miles (2010) propounds that a pilot study is a "pre-study" of a fuller study or a miniature version of a project. In this research the pilot was both a feasibility study and a pre-testing of instruments, trustworthiness of data was ascertained. Information was obtained from individuals in their respective interviews, cross-checking and verifying sources of information (Creswell, 2013). Credibility was concerned with the extent to which research findings are congruent with or approximate to 'reality' (Patton, 2012). In this study, credibility was achieved through the adoption of research methods that are well established; triangulation, member checks and thick description of the phenomenon under scrutiny and a review of related research findings.

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Ethical Considerations

The following ethical considerations shown in Figure 4 below were considered in the study.

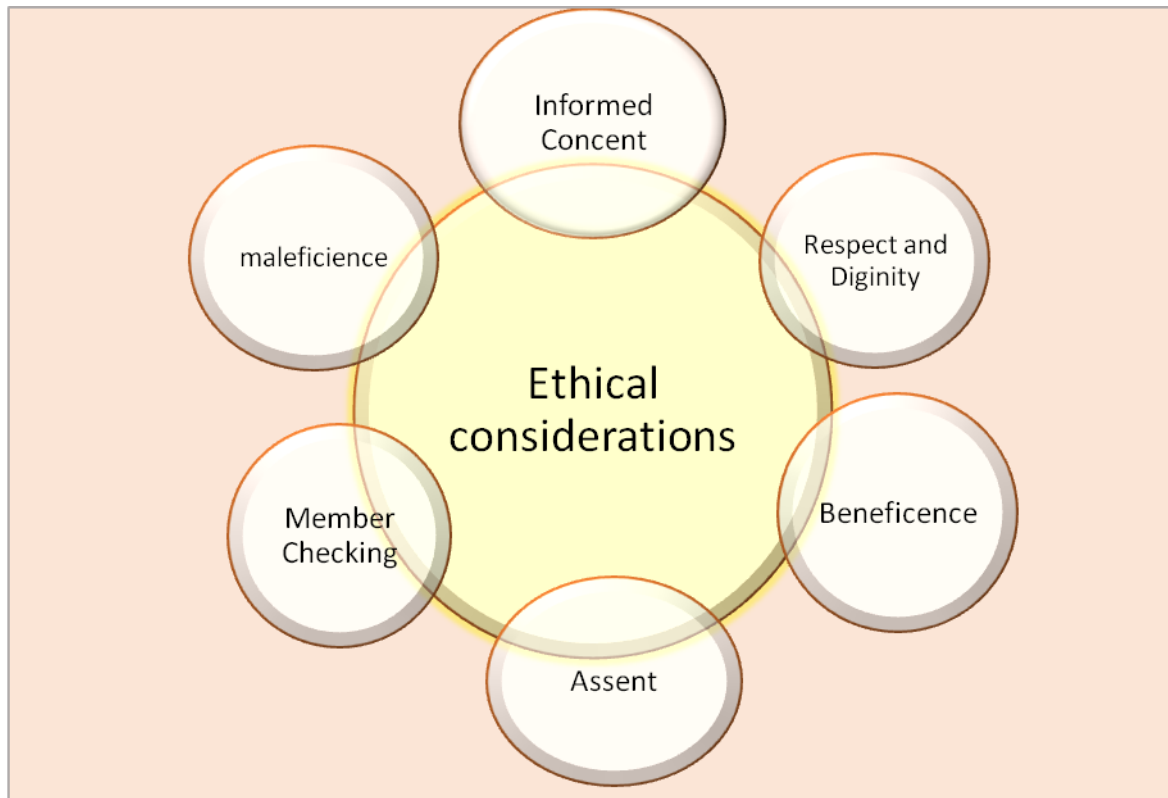


Figure 4: Ethical considerations.

Source: Designed by Authors

As shown in figure 4 above, when conducting a research, it was imperative for the researchers to uphold ethical considerations because people have lives and rights which need to be protected. Ethics informed the researchers what was proper and improper behaviour, moral duty and obligation (Polit and Beck, 2010). The selected children and their street vending mothers who participated in the study completed consent and assent forms to show their willingness to participate in the research. The participants were informed that their involvement in the study was voluntary and that they were free to withdraw at any stage of the data collection. Ethical principles of confidentiality, respect and dignity, beneficence, and maleficence were observed in this research.

Results and Discussion

This study sought to provide an answer to the impact of mothers' street vending on children's socio-emotional and language development as summarised in the themes in fig 1 below.

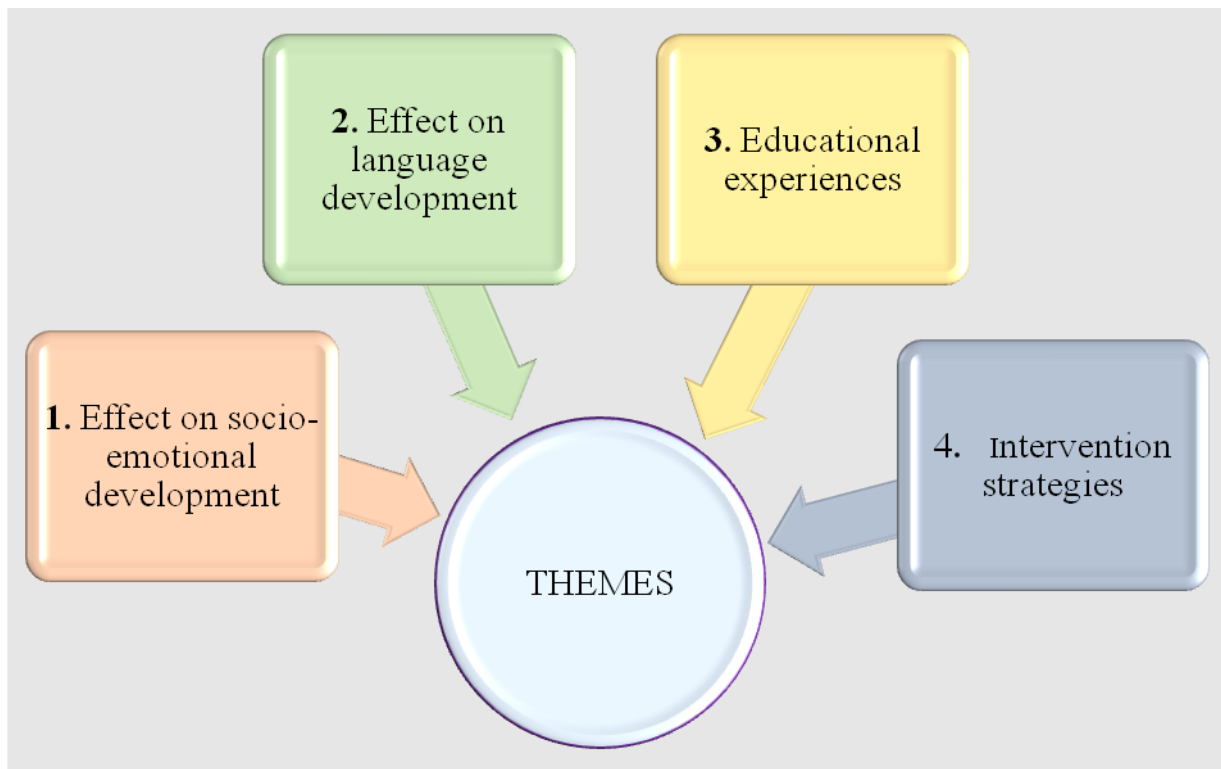


Figure 1: Emerging themes derived from the study

Source: Field data (2018)

The discussion of the findings was done in line with the major research question. Fig 1 above shows themes that were yielded by the empirical study as: effect on socio-emotional development, effect on language development, educational experiences, and intervention strategies.

Theme 1: Effects of mothers' street vending on children's socio-emotional development

The study established that effects of mothers' street vending on children's socio-emotional development were mostly negative. The children had no time to play freely as they were always confined to their mothers' stalls. The moment they wanted to initiate play they were called back by their parents in order to protect them from risks of the streets. Children had no same age peers to play with as most children in the streets were either infants, toddlers, or school learners. Data collected on the socio-emotional development of the children revealed that all the five parents admitted that street life was hectic for adults let alone for young children who were still growing. One participant stated that:

This type of life is difficult because you meet different situations that are frustrating, including quarrelling, fighting. The incidences emotionally disturb adults, what about our young children" (VM2).

Established issues from the data revealed that children alone did not like to be in the streets and wished they could be at home with other children where they would play freely and do what they want. The following statement was said by one of the children:

I want to go to school but my grandmother does not have money. I am not happy because I am missing what my friends are learning" (Fafa)

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From the data we also found out that most children were insecure due to the violent behaviours that rocked the streets most of the time. During interviews, a child participant said that:

People fight, at times they scold each other using vulgar language. Some break bottles to use them as weapons. A person was stabbed by a knife at this market and was rushed to hospital bleeding heavily (Tadi).

It was revealed that most of the children at the market come from single headed families. They tended to face emotional disturbances which in turn negatively affect their socio-emotional development. Being exposed to life in the streets further compounded their plight. It was also found that the parents of such children did not have enough time to interact with their children due to vending work commitments. One of the mothers submitted that:

There is no time to play with children here as we would be competing for customers' attention. I only make sure that the child does not go into the street or may be run over by a car (VM 3).

Such child rearing practices may deny the street vending mothers opportunities for emotional availability and developing attachment with their children for positive socio-emotional development.

Generally, the streets were manned by different people who provided a powerful negative force on children's socio-emotional development. Social-emotional development involves the growth of skills that allow children to interact successfully with others and to express their emotions (Santrock, 2012). Street vending was usually characterised by verbal exchanges and aggression from buyers and fellow vendors. Children of street vending mothers faced social-emotional challenges which arose from the socio-economic status of their parents and the negative encounters they experienced in the streets. A study by Morrow (2010) revealed that children growing up in impoverished communities or homes face multiple social, emotional, economic and educational obstacles in their life. Thus, children of street vendors were being deprived of their childhood, since they were limited to play, and their parents had little or no time to interact with them.

Social-emotional development is an important element in child development for it determines the future of the children. A growing body of scientific evidence tells us that emotional development begins early in life, that it is a critical aspect of the development of overall brain architecture, and that it has enormous consequences over the course of a lifetime (Lerner and Dombro, 2015). Socio-emotional development is facilitated when children have friends to play with and ample time and space to explore and experiment.

The data collected revealed that most of the street vending mothers were single. The virtue of the parents being single poses much concern to the socio-emotional development of the children. A study conducted by Malachi in (2017) on single parents revealed that single mothers without steady incomes might face economic hardships. This was found to coincide with emotional stress which may in turn hamper their ability to be supportive, culturally scaffold, emotionally available, sensitive and consistent with children. This is the scenario of our study participants whose caregivers were mostly single mothers. Thus, the status of the caregivers had a high probability that the children's socio-emotional development might be affected negatively.

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Play allows children to practice their competencies and acquire skills in a relaxed pleasurable way (Mutize, 2012). Thus, children in the streets lacked recreation and cultural life because they were restricted to life of the streets where there was a mixture of people of different cultures and moral behaviours. Research conducted by Rebecca Malachi in (2017) in Mom Junction Articles, found out that children from single parent homes are more likely to suffer deprivations and denials of some rights and opportunities in their early childhood years. Thus, play allows children to adopt social etiquettes that are necessary for survival in future and to be able to regulate their emotions. When children are deprived their right to play it means that the social justice principle of right to play is breached and may affect children's socio-emotional development. Social interaction serves as a vehicle to language development and cultural competences (Desai 2010). Social interactions are catharsis, encourage children to open up as a way of healing negative emotions they meet in life. The study revealed that the street vending mothers were appropriately attending to their children and so this directly affected the child's emotions. Ainsworth talks of a secure base where the child needs someone to confide in.

Challenges that the street vendors faced at their work place would hamper disturbances in their children's socio-emotional development. According to the United Nations Population Fund Report (2012) living in over-crowded areas affect children's socio-emotional and language development because the children will be exposed to unpleasant conditions which might affect their health, nutrition and safety. The streets are unpleasant places to live in, yet children spend most of their time there. This negatively affects the children's socio-emotional development.

Young children thrive in predictable settings with nurturing, responsive, and individualized care. From birth, children rapidly develop their abilities to experience and express different emotions. They develop capacity to cope with and manage a variety of feelings (Howes, 2013). The emotional health of young children is closely tied to the social and emotional characteristics of the environments in which they live (Boake-Boaten, 2010). Thus, emotional health of young children or the absence of it is closely tied to the social and emotional characteristics of the environments in which they live, which include not only their parents but also the broader context of their families and communities.

Street vendors are ranked among low income earning families (Njaya, 2014). Several studies estimate the effect of parental income on children's "internalising" symptoms and "externalising" symptoms. Internalising symptoms are signs of maladjustment that are manifested inwardly. These include dependence, unhappiness and anxiety. 'Externalising' symptoms are signs of maladjustment that are directed at others. These include disruptive behaviour, social problems, and aggressiveness (McDevit and Ormrod, 2013). From these studies it is revealed that parental income provides negative or positive experience on children. To street vendors' children the socio-emotional development is affected. The children tend lack needs to positively develop. This may affect their self-concept and can have long lasting damages in the future.

Nakisani and Ongori (2013) are of the view that virtually in all countries, children of low-income parents have poorer health than children of more affluent parents. They assert that parental income can be related to children's health because it affects the quality and quantity of health care that children get. It can also affect children's nutrition, the safety of their living environment, and their health practices.

Children's poor social-emotional outcomes may be the result of an inability to develop secure relationships with their caregivers. A study conducted by Howes and Hamilton (1992), found that the security of the caregiver-child attachment relationship among infants and

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toddlers in child care was affected when children experienced changes in their caregivers and inconsistent shift in the environments (Howes, 2013). Thus, children of street vendors are exposed to street life which may include violence. This in turn poses instability that would in turn affect the children's socio-emotional development negatively. For attachment issues to thrive, children should be provided with an environment that is safe. This empowers a child with confidence which generate the desire to effectively explore the environment (Follari, 2011). Children of vending mothers, hence, lack a secure attachment as they do not spend much time interacting with their parents

Theme 2: Effects of mothers' street vending on children's language development

The study found that children whose mothers were street vendors got exposed to bad and abusive language daily. The experience affected their language development. Some of the language children were exposed to was inappropriate leading to child poor vocabulary development.

It was also revealed that the mothers were concerned with the type of language that their children were exposed to, especially those who worked near the bus terminus where there were many 'touts'. Tadi's mother averred that:

The touts speak any kind of language which is vulgar and inappropriate to the young ones and the child end up imitating. '

The mothers reported that exposure to bad language was a major concern to them, but they did not have anything to do due to economic hardships where they were unable to do anything to remove the children from the streets. One of the mothers highlighted that:

The language that is used here is bad, but we cannot do anything as we are looking for a living (VM).

Children whose mothers are street vendors are exposed to bad and abusive languages. The research findings indicate that children's safety and wellbeing is compromised by the virtue of them being in the streets. Freeman (2010) is of the view that children thrive in a stable and nurturing environment where they have a routine and know what to expect. In the street's children are exposed to different forms of language behaviours and most of them are unacceptable.

The environment is a powerful education force in and of itself and everything about it sends strong messages to the children who live there (Fiore, 2012). Streets are manned by people of different characters who exhibit different behaviours and for that matter the street as an environment for the child has the potential to negatively impact the child especially the language that is used by touts and even the vending mothers.

Most parents in the study prophesied ignorance on the importance of language development in children. According to UNICEF, (2015), all children have physical, emotional, social and intellectual needs which must be met if they are to enjoy life, develop their full potential into participating and contributing adults, their childhood experiences play a big role in determining their future. Thus, language development is a vital developmental domain that needs to be upheld in order to maintain our cultural heritage of Unhu/ubuntu.

Children learn by imitation and observing what will be happening within their immediate environment. Densely and Joss (2012) indulge that children exposed to street life fall within the categories of children considered as 'at risk' and vulnerable in their development. This is because negative experiences are committed by people in the streets.

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Children develop best in a home environment where security is not compromised. Children tend to imitate what they see or hear hence, this may have an impact on their language development as they will spend much of their time in the streets or alone at home without any monitoring. In a famous study by Albert Bandura in 1961, he studied children at the Stanford University Nursery School using a doll named "Bobo". During this study, children watched researchers acting aggressively towards the doll then, when children were left alone with the doll, they modelled that behaviour and extended that aggression towards other toys (Syah, 2011). The research by Bandura clearly indicates that children learn through imitating and the results show that there are less interactions between the parents and the children, this will give rise to the children copying the unacceptable languages of passer-by's that they are continually exposed to.

Children are deprived of social interactions and play that improve their language development when they are in the streets with their parents. Vygotsky in Britto and Ulkuer, (2012) believes that a child's social environment and experiences are important in their development. He believes that children are social beings from birth and that through interactions with people and the environment they acquire skills and concepts (McDevit and Ormrod, 2013). The concepts that the children acquire at early stages in life makes them strive in the future. Vygotsky also gives prominence to social interaction in the development of young children on the basis that it influences language and thought and he argues that higher mental functions are a result of social interaction. Thus, street life does not enable children the opportunity to interact and attain the needed appropriate language. Hence, there is need for parents to be taught on the importance of early childhood and what they are supposed to do to support children's language development.

Montessori emphasises on period in children's development, the unconscious absorbent mind where children take in everything from the environment and the conscious absorbent when children make order out of acquired information (Lerner and Dombro, 2015). The conscious absorbent period is a sensitive time that requires children to be exposed to a warm, welcoming, nurturing environment. It is during this period that development takes a positive step, this then lacks for children of street vending mothers as they are exposed to harsh street environment where they assimilate unwanted behaviours and language. This adversely affects children's socio-emotional and language development due to conflicting forces of what they understand as correct and what they acquire in the streets.

Language is intrinsically related to culture. It performs the social function of communication of the group values, beliefs and customs, and fosters feelings of group identity (Bakhtin 1981 in Njaya, 2015). In other words, language is the medium through which groups preserve their innate cultures and keep their traditions alive (Shanahan and Lonigan, 2013). For this reason, it is important that people maintain their culture. Research shows that the loss of language means the loss of culture and identity (Mishra and Jain, 2015). Thus, the language development of children should be jealously safeguarded in order to preserve our future and culture. If authorities continue to look at the plight of children of street vendors without doing anything it then means we are not only killing the child but our cultural heritage.

Language and identity are inseparably associated with each other. While language is the medium used by individuals to negotiate a sense of self in different contexts (Pierce, 1995; Norton, 2000 in Lee, 2014), identity construction is a social and cultural process which is accomplished through discursive practices. Therefore, the ability to employ a language in a specific context influences the development of cultural identity. When children are exposed to street life, they then tend to lose their cultural identity due to the different languages they

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encounter when in streets. The bad language obtained in the streets will make the children of street vendors societal misfits which affect their socio-emotional development as well.

Due to the influence of poor language models, children observed uttered a bad language. Children ought to be accustomed to good acceptable language so that they grow morally upright with Unhu/Ubuntu upheld. The streets were crowded with people of different cultural backgrounds. Only two (2) of the mothers had time to interact with their children for a longer period and the other three (3) had had very little time to converse with their children besides giving them instructions to follow. This indicated that the parents were not communicating regularly with their children. The practice led to the children developing street language that is unaccepted in their context of development. Antisocial language tended to develop children who social misfit with delinquent tendencies. In the streets the children hear people speak different languages be it acceptable or unacceptable, this affects the children's language development. All the parents admitted that they had little time to interact with their children due to work commitment. Interacting more with the children will allow the children to learn new language and open in case of social disorders they would be experiencing in the streets.

Theme 3: Educational experiences of children of street vendors

Responses gathered on educational experiences of children whose mothers are street vendors revealed that the children had challenges when it came to schooling. During observations and interactions with the children we found out that two of the five children were not attending school though they are within the school going range. Thus, their right to education was deprived. This affected the children's development, since education is seen as facilitating socialisation, socio-emotional and language development. It was also revealed that the children do not attend school regularly as we came across 'Tana' on different school days selling doormats.

From the questionnaires we found out that most parents do not help their children with homework as highlighted by one mother who stated that:

We do not have time to help our children do homework here. The place is noisy and busy for one to concentrate. We also do not understand this 'new curriculum' (VM5)

The statement implies that regarding homework, the children were not receiving much help from their busy vending mothers. This would affect the children's school attainment. Lack of attainment at school would intern affect their socio-emotional development as they were likely to be reprimanded by teachers.

Children whose mothers are street vendors face educational problems which arise as a result of deprivation of their rights to education and play. Durkheim cited in Gwirayi (2010) believes that the main function of education is socialisation or cultural transmission. Shaffer and Kipp (2010) say socialisation is a process through which an individual becomes an acceptable member of his or her society by acquiring norms, values and beliefs that are considered desirable in that society. Children of street vendors are at times deprived of education and this socialisation aspect. These children, hence, lack homogeneity that they need to strive in the society due to the adverse effects of what they encounter in the streets.

The harsh economic hardship that the parents face makes it impossible for the parents to meet their children's educational needs. The Word Bank (2010) emphasises that "education is a basic human need". Zimbabwe embarrassed the education for all which was in line with

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the goals of the Jomtein Conference in 1990, where schools were then instructed to have ECD classes for the benefit of low-income earning families that could not afford private nursery centres.

According to the Education Act of 2006 "Education is a right of all children. From the study I found out that most of the parents' value education and school but the truth remains that some could not do anything about it due to economic hardships. Desai (2010) revealed that because parents have the authority to control and discipline their children, child abuse becomes institutionalised within the family as in the case of Tana who does not attend school regularly and sells doormats and Fafa who does not attend school. Desai claims that children's vulnerability stems from adult-child power imbalance, where children are obliged to obey the elders and have little say in or on decisions concerning them. Hence, it is indisputable that all child participants in this study suffer abuse of their rights to education because their ages indicate that they are all of school going age (see table 4.2). Low-income children and minorities transfer schools more often than their higher income and non-minority peers, and some evidence suggests that they experience more negative consequences of school mobility than other children (National Research Council and Institute of Medicine, 2010). Thus, from the study above it can be noted that the children of street vending mothers face a lot of challenges in their educational experiences which affect their socio-emotional and language development.

Education is seen as a means of increasing the quality of life of individuals and society and protects people from falling into destitution and poverty in future. The poor socio-economic and family background of the children in this study challenged regular school attendance and hence hinders educational development. Children of street vendors are at times sacked from school and the parents take advantages of this and compel their children to skip school to complement their income.

Findings from the Women's Employment Survey (WES) conducted post 1996 welfare reform suggest a link between low-income mothers' employment patterns and their young children's behaviour (Johnson, et al. 2010 in Ndhlovu, 2011). The survey tracked women who received cash assistance and their children over a seven-year span, starting when children were an average of four years old. Children whose mothers experienced employment instability characterized by involuntary job loss or quitting an unsatisfactory position followed by unemployment exhibited more internalizing behaviours (e.g., sadness, anxiety, and depression) and externalizing behaviours (e.g., bullying, impulsiveness, and disobedience), and a greater likelihood of school absenteeism than children whose mothers held stable jobs or voluntarily changed jobs. Research indicates that children whose parents experience a job loss are at an increased risk of negative academic outcomes, such as grade retention and lower educational attainment (Stevens and Schaller 2010 in Masonganye, 2010). Thus, as portrayed in this study some children were seen during school hours which mean that they will be absent from school in order to supplement the family income.

Most children take pride in things taught or assisted by a close person to them. By prophesying ignorance to the new curriculum, the parents will be killing the inner self of their children and hence socio-emotional development will be disrupted. The findings from Maditjety (2014)'s study on the socio-educational development of children of street vendors revealed that most of the parents in the study were not capable of helping their children's educational progress and to assist with homework due to workload and being ignorant. Another study by Okoli and Cree (2012) revealed that the percentage of children whose trading activities affect their academic performance is 84.2% and that whose trading activities do not affect their academic activities is 15.8%. This shows that street trading has adverse

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effect on the educational attainment of children. The study further revealed that 75.0% of the respondents believed trading activity has adverse effect on their participation in homework activities and schooling which affect development. This is the same situation of educational experiences that are faced by most children of street vendors from this study.

Although we did not visit the schools of the child participants, we could not establish their academic performances, attitudes but reactions of parents towards homework of the children leaves much to be desired. Hence, there was need for intervention strategies to curb the problems the children of street vendors encounter.

Theme 4: Intervention strategies

There are some intervention strategies that can be employed to enhance children of vending mother's socio-emotional and language development. Young children's development and learning results from a dynamic and continuous interaction of biological maturation and experiences (Howes, 2013). This means that there should be interplay between the growing child and the child's experiences. This should be constant in order to enable smooth development in children. The children of street vendor's daily schedule are not constant as each day provides a new and unique experience which may harbour positive child development. Hence, there is need for a law that prohibits school going children from roaming the street during school hours.

From the study it was revealed that the major challenge faced by the street vendors was being harassed by the municipal police because they will be operating in unauthorised areas. Madjitey (2014) says that vendors are continuously on the run due to constant harassment, assault and seizure of goods by the local government authorities or police in and other users of the city space. All these may disturb them emotionally and might hinder attachment issues with their children which then affect the future of their children. Women vending in Zimbabwe are subject to harassment by the police and the municipal authorities because they operate without operating licenses (Chirau, 2014). The women said they did not have the money to own a permanent stall due to economic hardships. There is need for the local authorities to subsidise the daily payments for a stall to enable children to be in a safe place when their parents engage in their trading activities.

Street vending mothers are taking advantage of the current economic meltdown to trade in self-proclaimed areas and forfeiting the designated areas and most disturbingly bringing children in these areas. This continuous availability of children to streets aggravate their exposure to dangers of the streets such as exploitation, violence, which hinder their development (Malachi, 2017). This, however, can be curbed if parents go to the designated trading areas that provide safety and protection to their children from the woes of the streets. There is need for stern measures to be taken so that the parents trading in unauthorised areas with children be fined a fee for child negligence. This will lower the number of parents trading in unauthorised areas and ensure the safety and development of their children since the children are the future of tomorrow and that our cultural ethics of Unhu/ubuntu be cherished.

Support from friends and families are crucial in the lives of street vendors and their children. Fiore (2012) says the extended families are important particularly for poor people, where social safety nets are incomplete or non-existent. Thus, in order to help children, achieve their developmental gains, the parents can make use of the extended family to remain with the children at home rather than exposing the children to street life. This can however be debatable as more abuse cases are arising from the extended families being the perpetrators.

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Play is a way for children to safely explore and learn new concepts. The study revealed that children had limited play time, yet play is children's work. Piaget 1973 cited in Hollingsworth (2012) states that play allows children to practice their competences and acquire in a relaxed and pleasurable way. He views play as a medium to help children advance their ability to learn to think properly. In this study the children of street vending mothers lose out on the benefits of play which in turn affects their language and socio-emotional development. The local government hence can have a play area or protected parks where the children of street vendors are awarded time to play for them to develop fully without being limited their play in the streets.

Most parents in the study need to be involved in awareness campaigns to be equipped with more information regarding early childhood development. This will enable them to cherish their children's wellbeing so that development will not be compromised.

Conclusion

From the findings of this study it was concluded that mothers' street vending affects their children's socio-emotional development. Being exposed to streets poses many dangers to children as there is no space for children to play and children face many exploitations. The streets are manned by different people who provide a powerful negative force on children's socio-emotional development. The challenges that the street vendors face at their work places cause disturbances in their children's socio-emotional development. The streets are unpleasant places to live in, yet children spend most of their time there and through all this it was concluded that exposing children to streets affects the children's socio-emotional development.

Mothers' street vending affects their children's language development in a negative way. Parents of the children do not have ample time to interact with their children due to work commitments. This affects the children's language development. In the streets, children are exposed to different forms of language behaviours and most of them are unacceptable. Children, hence, tend to imitate what they see or hear hence, this may have an impact on their language development as they will spend much of their time in the streets or alone at home without any monitoring. Since children of street vendors are exposed to bad and abusive languages and imitate what they hear, the study concluded that language development is adversely affected as they spend most of their time in the streets.

Children of street vendors experience many educational problems which arise as a result of deprivation of their rights to education and play. Child participants in this study suffer abuse of their rights to education because their ages indicate that they are all of school going age and yet they are seen in the streets during school days. Children of street vendors are at times sacked from school and the parents take advantages of this and compel their children to skip school to complement their income. From the findings it is also concluded that generally the children were not assisted to do their school work

Intervention strategies that can be employed include involving the parents in awareness campaigns to be equipped with more information regarding early childhood development. This will enable them to cherish their children's wellbeing and safety when they are in the streets.

The local government can have a play area or protected parks where the children of street vendors are awarded time to play for them to develop fully without being limited their play in the streets.

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Parents' should go to the designated trading areas that provide safety and protection to their children from the woes of the streets. There is need for stern measures to be taken so that the parents trading in unauthorised areas with children are fined a fee for child negligence. This will lower the number of parents trading in unauthorised areas and ensure the safety and development of their children since the children are the future of tomorrow and that our cultural ethics of unhu/ubuntu be cherished.

Recommendations

Based on the findings of this study, it is recommended that laws and legislation to target mothers who raise young children in streets and open markets. All school age going children from the streets and be incorporated in government-initiated programmes like BEAM.

Local authorities can assist by setting up Toy Libraries where mothers who vendors can take their children for recreation since the children do not have much space to play in when in the streets.

Market areas should be fenced to guarantee security of children whose mothers are vendors at open markets in towns. Bus terminus and the trading market should be in separate areas to ensure that children are not exposed to improper behaviours exhibited by some touts.

Street vending mothers need parent education to continually teach them on the importance of early childhood development for children's positive personality and language growth.

It is also important to educate both parents and children on the dangers involved in being exposed to street life.

Education is a paradoxical part of the solution. Mothers who little or no education are more likely to be street vendors. Adult and Continuing Education should empower women, enabling them to develop knowledge and skills that capacitate and empower them to enjoy sustainable livelihood for themselves and their children.

Finally, The Child Protection Act should make it an offence for a parent or guardian who sell wares with a school going age child in the street or open markets denying the child opportunity to attend school.

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