

THE INFLUENCE OF PARENTAL BACKGROUND ON CHILDREN'S INVOLVEMENT IN CHILD LABOUR IN TANZANIA: A CASE OF KINONDONI AND KIGAMBONI MUNICIPALITIES IN DAR-ES- SALAAM

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Abstract

This study examines the influence of parental background on children's involvement in child labour in Tanzania. Its central argument is based on the ground that the parental background is one of the major social determinants associated with child labour in sand and gravel quarrying activities in Dar es Salaam, Tanzania. The study used a mixed method approach (pragmatism) guided by a descriptive research design. It involved a sample size of 92 people, to whom questionnaires were administered. In addition it involved 16 key informants. The sample included children, parents, social welfare officers and ward executive officers. The respondents were randomly selected while the key informants were purposively selected. Questionnaires and in-depth interviews were used to collect primary data while secondary data were collected from available written texts. The Statistical Package for Social Sciences (SPSS) was used to analyse quantitative data while qualitative data were analysed through thematic analysis. The major findings show that parents assign their children activities to earn a living. These children engage in sand and gravel quarrying, the same activities performed by their parents. The paper concludes that parental background directly influences child labour among children living in sand and gravel quarrying places in Tanzania. Therefore it is recommended that to get rid of the problem of child labour, the government should establish child labour programmes to compose, subscribe to and to educate the society about a body of ethical principles against child labour. If this is done, people would look for ways to assist child labour in Dar es Salaam. Further to that, various seminars and trainings should be conducted to raise public awareness about the problem. Furthermore, the NGOs should support poor households with Income Generating Activities (IGAs) NGOs by conducting advocacy and lobbying in change of policies and laws that encourage child labour.

Key-words: Parental background, Child Labour

INTRODUCTION

Child labour is one of the global challenges that affects both developed and developing countries. Waziri (2019) posits that child labour has a long-standing history in the world in both developed and developing countries. According to Acharya (2018), Europe's child labour is directly connected with the industrial revolution in the 19th century. Hindman (2009) provides evidence that in 1940 many children aged 5–14 years were seen working in Europe and United States of America (USA). These children worked in agriculture, home-based operations, factories, and mining. Some worked in night shifts lasting 12 hours. The International Labor Organisation (ILO) Convention defines child labour as all children below 18 years in harmful occupations or work activities in the labour market or their household; and all children undertaking in the child labour market or household interfering with their primary education. It should be clear that child labour is not defined by the activity only but also by the effect the activity has on the child.

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Currently, millions of children are forced into child labour (Elijah & Okoruwa, 2006). For example, in his study, Waziri (2019) indicates that 265 million children are working in different sectors across the globe. In the African setting, child labour is thought to have begun with the invasion of colonialists in the period lasting from 1881 to 1914 (Waziri, 2019). It was during this period that children were employed in risky jobs like small-scale mining, industrial activities, plantations and household activities (ILO, 2016). The colonialists forced children to work in plantations, mining and domestic industries (Waziri, 2019). This means that child labour was a new-fangled occurrence in the African region before the colonial invasion. Today, however, child labour is no longer a new phenomenon as the problem is growing making the African continent one of the most affected continents. Waziri (2019) points out that out of five children, one is working in hazardous environments in Africa which implies that the condition is worse in Africa than in the developed world.

From 2016, child labour in Africa has been including a large number of children working in commercial agriculture, fishing, military and commercial sex (child sexual exploitation). It also includes pornography, street vendors and hawking, construction activities, manufacturing, mining, and domestic services. Some children engage in illegal activities like drug trade and prostitution or other traumatic activities such as serving as soldiers and nowadays scavenging (ILO, 2016).

The United Republic of Tanzania (URT) is not exceptional as far as child labour is concerned. Literatures such as Akarro & Mtweve (2011) and Monogerwa (2015) show that child labour is one of the persistent social problems in Tanzania. For instance, children in Tanzania are involved in the worst forms of child labour such as mining, quarrying, and domestic work. Additionally, children also perform unsafe tasks in agriculture. It is not an oversight to state that child labour is one of the critical social problems in Tanzania (ILO, 2016; Tanzania Mainland National Child Labour Survey, 2014).

The National Child Labour Survey report (2016) indicated that 4.2 million children were working in exploitative environments. To address the problem, the government of the United Republic of Tanzania has adopted various intervention measures at global, regional and national levels. Globally, Tanzania is a member of the United Nations (UN) and the African Union (AU). As such it is bound to ratify and sign different conventions. For example, as a member of UN, Tanzania is a signatory to the Convention on the Rights of the Child (CRC) of 1989, and the African Charter on the Rights and Welfare of the Child (ACRWC) of 1990 just to mention a few.

Internally, Tanzania adopted different measures to address child labour. For instance, it developed the Child Development Policy (2008) and enacted the Law of the Child Act, No. 21 of 2009, which contains provisions that protect the welfare of children including child labourers. For example, section 77 (1-3) of the Child Act, prohibits employment of children below fourteen (14) years. Furthermore, Tanzania also enacted the Employment and Labour Relations Act (ELRA), No 6 of 2004, which forbids the employment of children under the age of 14 years. Additionally, various international agencies and Civil Society Organisations (CSOs) such as UNICEF, Save the Children, Plan International, *Kivulini*, and *Kuleana* have been on the front line in the fight against child labour all over the country (Waziri, 2019). Yet, despite the adoption of such measures, the situation has not improved (National Child Labour Survey, 2016 & Waziri, 2019). The study on which this paper is based was prompted by a quest to understand why child labour has persisted despite such efforts. The study used a case of child labour in sand quarrying areas in Kinondoni district, Dar es Salaam region.

In spite of the voluminous evidence on the existence of child labour, existing studies in Tanzania (Mahmood *et al.*, 2005; Akarro & Mtwewe, 2011; Monogerwa, 2015; Waziri, 2019) have overlooked the question of the influence of parental history of a child on children's involvement in child labour. For example, Mahmood *et al.* (2005) discovered some parental factors like socio-economic status, criminal tendency of parents, their physical health, parental pressure, age of the parents as well as social acceptance of the parents to be connected to child labour. The main objective of the study was to determine the characteristics of working children in automobile workshops and to bring out those associated factors leading to child labour in automobile workshops in Islamabad.

Akarro & Mtwewe (2011) focused on factors for child labour citing Njombe as one of the most predominant areas for child labour in Tanzania. A survey of 300 household heads that were randomly selected from the villages in Igima ward in Njombe district confirmed this phenomenon. Chi-square statistical analysis on the relationship between household poverty and child labour exposed that household poverty was the factor that forced children to be absorbed in economic activities. The major findings of the study by Mtwewe indicated that child labour is a reflection of poverty and, therefore, eradicating poverty would help to combat child labour. The study recommends that policies that ban child labour in rural areas could have an adverse effect as child labour decisions are more likely to be a response to poverty and subsistence requirements. Also, Waziri (2019) examined factors influencing persistence of child labour in Morogoro Rural District in Tanzania. The study employed a mixed method approach. The quantitative sample involved 228 respondents and 39 participants were involved in quantitative sample. Primary data was collected by using questionnaires, interviews, focus group discussions and field observation methods while secondary data was obtained through documentary review. The findings indicated a significant relationship between community awareness level and child labour. The relationship between cultural norms and child labour was also established. The study also revealed a significant relationship between parental income level and child labour. Child's relationship with the head of a household was also found to be significantly related to child labour. From the findings, it is clear that child labour persists because the existing poverty reduction strategies and awareness raising campaigns against child labour have failed to realize their objectives. The study by Waziri recommended awareness raising campaigns against child labour in rural areas. Social workers should aggressively advocate for scaling up the economic empowerment programmes in rural areas to reduce the income gap which forces young children to engage in employment.

Based on this ground, it is evident that child labour in sand and gravel quarrying areas in Tanzania remains one of the neglected areas although it is one of the hazardous aspects for children's welfare. This is one of the nagging facets that pushed the researcher to conduct a study examining the influence of parental background of children on child labour in sand and gravel quarrying areas in Dar es Salaam, Tanzania.

LITERATURE REVIEW

The Influence of Parental Background on Children's Involvement in Child Labour

Studies on child labour in Tanzania have been conducted by various researchers in relation to poverty, parental perception, illiteracy and education as the major push factors for children's involvement into child labour. For instance, in their study, Akarro and Mtwewe (2011) indicated that poverty was the main cause of child labour. Poor households were more likely to send their children to employing firms compared to well-off households. Other observed significant factors include gender, marital status of the household heads and family size.

In a comparative study of rural and urban areas in Ghana on parental perception, Adonteng-Kiss (2018) found that children are engaged in work to teach those work ethics because most parents consider work socialisation as beneficial for children and society. In addition, it was also revealed that the knowledge on human rights makes parents more committed to children's welfare. The study underscores that sensitivity to the economic and cultural context is important in understanding the issue of child labour. It also emphasizes on applying the United Nations Convention on the Rights of the Child (UNCRC) and implementing parenting policies and practices that are in the best interests of the child.

Zarif *et al.* (2013) focused on the illiteracy and education as a major push factor for parents to send their children into child labour. In their study, they realized that none of the parents were aware of the rights of their children and insisted that the nature of studies and the general environment of schools were not good for the wellbeing of children. Furthermore, the number of family members in the form of siblings called for more working hands to make the ends meet. Therefore, sending children to work was preferred by the parents to enable them get money that can facilitate their enrolment into primary education.

Theoretical Framework

This paper is informed by the Social Learning Theory (SLT) as developed by a psychologist, Albert Bandura, in 1977. The SLT emphasizes the societal context of socialisation rather than the individual mind. This theory assumes that an individual's identity is not a result of the unconscious mind, but is a result of modelling oneself in response to the expectations of others. Behaviours and attitudes develop in response to reinforcement and encouragement from the people around us (Bandura, 1977).

According to the Social Learning Theory, people can learn behaviour through observation. That is, if parents have a background of involvement in child labour and since parents are regarded as role models of children, there is a possibility for children to learn and adopt that behaviour. In general, this theory is directly linked with the argument in this paper which assumes that the decision of a child to engage in activities, i.e., child labour, can be a result of being observed, imitated or experienced from his or her surrounding environment including family members or neighbors. In this sense, the Social Learning Theory is relevant and was applied in this study to conceptualise the problem of child labour, analyse and interpret the key findings.

METHODOLOGY

This study adopted mixed methods approach (both quantitative and qualitative). Qualitative approach is used to explore a phenomenon and give explanation of why things happen in order to develop hypotheses for quantitative testing while quantitative approach measures the frequency of the respondents (Mabeyo, 2012). Once it is mixed method approach, each type of research will play a variety of roles and will be used in a mutually complementing manner (Kaplan, 2015). A cross-sectional descriptive design was used by involving two Municipalities, namely Kinondoni and Kigamboni in Dar es Salaam Region. The sample size for quantitative approach was 92 respondents from the children in Kinondoni and Kigamboni where sand and gravel quarrying activities are done. The determination of the sample size for quantitative data adopted the formula by Yamane (1967) as given below.

$$\text{Sample size, } n = \frac{N}{1+N(e)^2}$$

Where

n = sample size

N = population of the study which was 1084

e = margin of error and in this case, e = 10% (chosen by the researcher)

l = constant

A structured questionnaire was used to collect quantitative data from the 92 randomly selected respondents. In-depth interviews, on the other hand, were used to collect qualitative data from 16 participants. The sample size was determined by the principle of saturation point. The actual sample comprised of 8 parents, 4 Social Welfare Officers, and 4 Ward Executive officers (WEO). The chi-squared test was used for quantitative data to test the relationship between parental background and child labour. In addition, data were analysed using frequency tables and percentage computed by using Statistical Package for Social Sciences (SPSS) software version 20. As for qualitative data, the thematic analysis model as developed by Braun and Clarke (2006) was used. Inductive analysis and exploratory approach were also used during this process. Coding, sorting and organising data are essential parts of thematic analysis. The data was searched systematically for recurring words, which later became code words. These code words were then grouped to form themes.

Results and Discussion

This section presents the findings on the influence of parental background on children's involvement in child labour in Tanzania with specific attention to Kinondoni and Kigamboni Municipalities. The main objective of the study was to examine the influence of parental background on children's involvement in child labour in Tanzania. In the context of the study, various sub-questions were asked. The questions captured several themes such as the awareness of children about child labour, influence of parental background on child labour, the influence of family size on child labour, perceptions of parents about child labour and the effects of child labour. In response to these queries, both quantitative and qualitative data are presented side-by-side based on these thematic areas and finally conclusions are drawn from the findings.

Children's Awareness on Child Labour

The first theme of this study was to assess the level of understanding held by children about child labour. A total of 92 respondents replied to the question that asked "What do you understand by the term child labour? 18 (20%) of the respondents understood about child labour and 74 (80%) did not understand it as shown in Table 4.1. Their failure to understand it might be influenced by the level of education they have. Among 92 respondents, 19% are not educated, 51% have primary school education and 30% have secondary education (Research data, 2022). If the respondents are ignorant about the meaning of child labour, it means they are not aware of it and they can keep on practicing it out of ignorance. Table 4.1 provides results as collected from 92 respondents through questionnaires.

Table 4.1: Awareness about Child Labour (n=92)

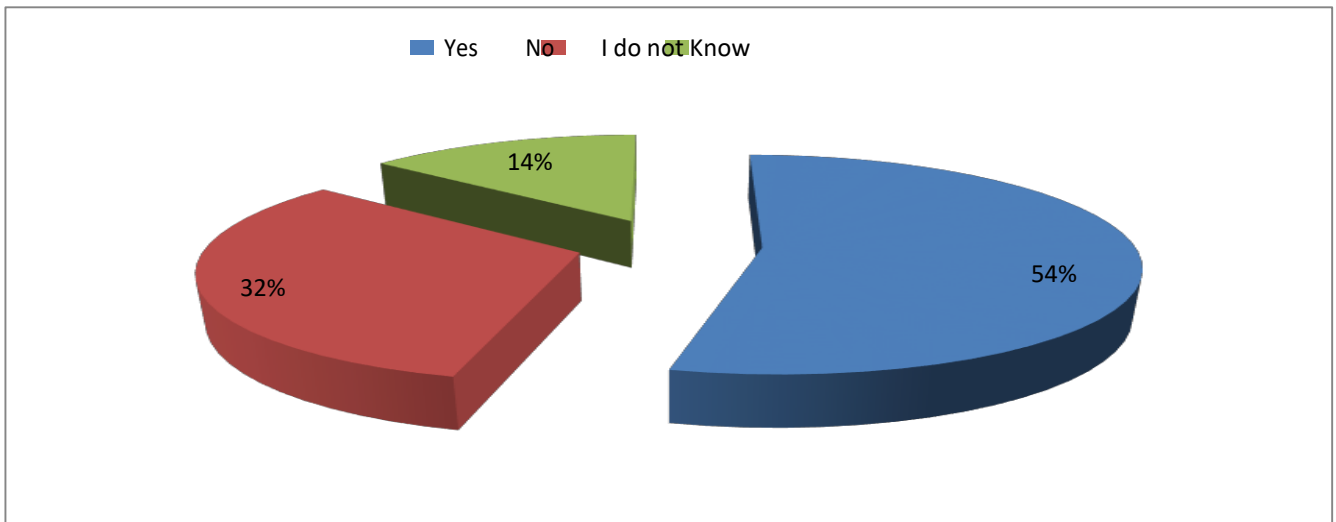
Response Percentage	Frequency	
Yes	18	
20%	74	
80%		
Total	92	100%

Source: Field Data (2022)

This implies that children who work in sand and gravel quarrying activities in Kinondoni and Kigamboni Municipal are not aware about child labour. This is shown in Table 4.1 where, out of 92 respondents, 74 children, which is equal to 80%, are not aware of child labour while only 18 children, which is equal to 20%, are aware. This means that their awareness on child labour put them on high risks of engaging themselves in it (Abdallah, 2014).

Influence of Parental Background on Child Labour A total of 92 respondents replied to the question that asked “does the parenting background contribute to the existence of child labour? The results indicate that 54% (50) of the respondents agreed that parental background has an influence on children’s involvement in child labour while 32% (29) disagreed. The remaining 14 % (13) of the respondents said that they don’t know. Figure 4.1 illustrates further the findings.

Figure 4: Influence of Parental Background on Children’s Involvement in Child Labour (n=92)



Source: Field Data (2022)

The foregoing result was also echoed in the qualitative data from the interviews as it was indicated that the background of the parents had a strong influence on children’s involvement in child labour. One of the government officials involved in this study pointed out that parental background contributes to child labour through the following words:

...yes, because parents have experience on that activity, so it is easy to pass on the skills and experience to their children to work since they (parents) used to do it before. Why not their children? (Interview, WEO, 2021).

This shows that parental background contributes to children’s engaging in child labour. Parents tend to involve and pass on their previous or current activities to their children. In our case, this parental behaviour of assigning their children sand and gravel quarrying activities justifies the Social Learning Theory. With this theory, a new partten of behaviour is acquired through direct experience or by observing the behaviour of others (Bandura, 1977). The parents in this case are models that are imitated by their children in terms of what they do. So, it is illustrated that, parental background has a contribution to existing child labour. To justify this idea, one of the parents had the following to say:

I grew up working in this activity to get my basic needs, so it’s not bad if my child wants to do the same activity I used to do (Interview, Parent, 2021).

Therefore, the children’s involvement in sand and gravel quarrying activities is not a problem since the activities help them to survive and take care of their families.

Influence of Family Size on Child Labour

The study sought to understand the aspect of family size of the respondents in their homes. The results are presented in Table 4.2 below.

Table 4.2: Size of the Family of the Respondents (n=92)

Size of Family at the Respondents’ Homes	Frequency	Percentage
1-3	11	12%
4-6	37	40%
More than 6	44	48%
Total	92	100%

Source: Research Data (2022)

As Table 4.2 above demonstrates that among 92 respondents, 11 (12%) were children with one to three siblings and 37 (40%) were children with four to six siblings. In fact, the findings show that children who engage in child labour in sand and gravel quarrying activities have big family size to take care of. This is justified by a huge percentage of 48% of respondents who said they have more than six siblings to take care of. This state of affair could be one of the reasons that encourage children to enter to the child labour to support their families. Family size has a contribution to existing child labour. In fact, one of the Social Workers, who were involved in this study commented the following in this respect.

Yes, family size has a direct contribution to child labour since many families that have a big number of siblings are the ones that suffer and mostly engage their children in child labour so as to access their basic needs. (Interview, Social Worker, 2020).

The Social Worker, as demonstrated above, considers family size as a key determinant that influences child labour in sand and gravel quarrying activities. It can further be argued that family size is an important determining factor for children’s labour activities and educational opportunities. This is because families with a larger number of children are more likely to allow their children to work in order to earn income for the family. In the present study, it is shown that the families of more than 6 siblings/children were more involved in child labour. The findings are in line with Similer *et al.* (2004) who reported that there is an association between household size and poverty. Similarly, Patrinos and

Psacharopolous (1997) reported that there is a positive relationship between large number of siblings and child development.

Perception Held by Parents on Child Labour

In conducting this study, another objective was to assess the perceptions of parents towards descriptions of child labour as provided in legal documents. In response to this, the findings indicate that parents concur with the legal documents because these documents show that child labour is bad and it may affect children's lives in several aspects, including their physical development. In this view, sand and gravel quarrying activities are harmful to their health and school development. This was illustrated by one of the parents aged 39 years from Kawe ward who said:

...child labour is bad and harmful to children especially to my boy but I am sick and poor. I have nothing to pass on to the my child than training him in sand and gravel quarrying activities so as to get something to eat for himself and for us as family. If my boy does not work and bring something here, we will have nothing to eat. I know that it is against children's rights s ... (Interview, Parent, 2020).

This shows that the parents really understand that child labour is harmful to children and it is prohibited by the United Republic of Tanzania. Parents also know that the Employment and Labour Relations Act (ELRA), No 6/2004 (Part II, Fundamental Rights and Protections, Sub Part A) and the international conventions governing children's rights and child labour forbid employment of children under 14 years old. The minimum age of employment is provided in the ELRA Section (15) and in LCA section (77) as 14 years, but only for *light work*. Despite these conditions and circumstances, children perform gravel quarrying activities because they are the only activities these children have knowledge, skills and experience in.

Similar findings were reported by Khan, (2003) that some children in Pakistan were forced to work to improve their household economy. ILO (2016) also reported that, in Mozambique, some children are forced to work by their families to get money for personal effect while others worked willingly. Fredrick (2012) in his study on child labour in tobacco farms in Uyui district in Tabora also revealed that 58% of children in the aforementioned area are employed in tobacco farms due to poverty.

Parents understanding on the Effects of Child Labour The paper sought to examine the understanding of parents on the effects of child labour. The participants in this study were asked the question; can you please describe the effects of child labour on your children? The results showed that parents understand that child labour has a negative impact on children but due to parental background and culture they never stop to recruit their children into child labour. The following is a quote from one of the parents during an in-depth interview.

...child labour is bad and harmful to children, both mentally and physically. My child is stunted because of these activities that he normally does with me. He cannot stop doing it because this is like our lifestyle, a kid must inherent his/her parent's activities ... (Interview, Parent, 2020).

This indicates that parents are aware of the danger behind children's involvement in child labour because it affects them physically and mentally. It is also rigorously forbidden by the United Republic of Tanzania.

Conclusions and Recommendations

From the research findings, it can be concluded that child labour in sand and gravel quarrying areas is a serious problem in Tanzania, particularly in Kinondoni and Kigamboni Municipalities due to the rapid growth of the city. As a result, there is an increase in demand for sand and gravels for construction activities. The current study has revealed that parental background contributes a lot to child labour among children in Kinondoni and Kigamboni municipalities. Parents recruit their children into economic activities regardless of their age simply because of raising the family income. The parents seem to have no alternative income generating activities where their children can learn skills and later on get employed in formal sectors.

To get rid of the problem, this paper recommends that the government should establish child labour programmes to compose, subscribe to and to educate the society about a body of ethical principles against child labour. If this is done, people will look for ways to assist child labourers in Dar es Salaam. Various seminars and training should also be conducted to the community so as to raise public awareness about the problem of child labour. Furthermore, NGOs should support poor households with Income Generating Activities (IGAs) and conduct advocacy as well as lobbying to change policies and laws that encourage child labour.

Ethical Considerations

In the process of conducting research, the researcher had to observe certain ethical principles. Alston and Bowles (2003), as cited by Waziri and Fundi (2020), affirm that ethics are a vital part of every research study. In this study, ethical issues were considered in several ways. First, the researcher asked respondents/informants' consent to participate in data collection process, including recording of the information. Second, the researchers guaranteed the respondents /informants confidentiality and anonymity and stated to them that the information collected will strictly be used for research purposes only. Finally, the researcher ensured that the identities of children, parents and key informants are not disclosed. Moreover, the children's right to participate in data collection during the study has been widely recognised by humanitarian actors. However, participation in such activities can expose children to risk. Tensions have been noted between the right to participate and other principles such as the imperative to 'do not harm'.

Limitation of the Study

This study has some limitations that might hamper the effectiveness of the research process. The major limitations of this study are that the study was conducted in Kinondoni and Kigamboni Municipalities only and the small sample size of respondents drawn from within a limited geographical area due to limited time and financial restrictions. The population and its resulting sample live in Kinondoni and Kigamboni Municipality. It does not present the population impacted by the situation of child labour in other Municipalities of Dar-es-Salaam city. For that reason, any generalisation of the study results should be limited to the population from which the sample was selected and remain specific to the study areas. Nevertheless, despite this limitation, it is expected that the results could benefit the government and organisations concerned with child development.

Area for Further Study

The study adopted mixed approach with small sample size of only 92 respondents and 16 key informants. The study was conducted in only a single region including children between the ages of 7-14. This means that the study is not representative of other regions with a similar situation. Therefore, further research should be conducted to study a bigger number with different approaches to cover more than one region with other age categories. Furthermore,

the study findings indicate that, there were 59 (64%) male and 33 (36%) female respondents in the study. This shows that there are many male children involved in child labour compared to female children. Therefore, further study may be conducted to probe why males are at high risk for child labour compared to females.

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