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Socio-Economic Analyses of Child Labor: An Empirical Study from Ghana

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Abstract:

The Millennium Development Goal (MDG) Four is purported to ensure the survival (During pregnancy and post-delivery) and uninterrupted growth of the child till adolescence. However, the surge in child labor is rendering attainment of this goal quiet cumbersome. This study focused on Socio-economic Analysis of Child-labor in the Kumasi Metropolis of Ghana. The study deployed a descriptive research design. Target populations were school going age children between 7-15 years. Purposive sampling technique was employed to select 100 of these children to share their plight. Secondary data were obtained from ILO reports, Seer cite and Google Scholar. Primary data were gathered with structured questionnaires. Data were analyzed with SPSS version 21 and Microsoft excel. The study revealed that the most prevalence forms of child-labor were child-trafficking and forced labor. The survey discovered that 49.0% of child labour is caused by parental illiteracy, 31.0% which is caused by unemployment of elders or fathers, 12.0% is caused by the death of child parents (orphan) and the least (8.0%) of child labour is caused by poverty. Respondent's monthly honorariums range from GHc 50-500 majority live in rented houses. These children are supposed to work averagely 10hours per day though others work longer. Supports do sometimes come from NGOs and Media. Chi-square fitness of good test revealed that there was a significant association between the ethnicity of the respondents and their nature of work (χ^2 -value = 65.09, df =8 p-value<0.05), moreover there was an association between the age of the respondents and their nature of work (χ^2 -value = 78.98, df =12 p-value<0.05). Also, there was an association between the gender of the respondents and their nature of work. (χ^2 -value = 24.8 df =4 p-value<0.05). Policy reinforcement is highly recommended.

Keywords: Child Labor, Socio-Economic, Prevalence, Analyses, MDGs, Ghana

1. Introduction

The Millennium Development Goal (MDG) Four (Reduce child mortality) is purported to ensure the survival and uninterrupted growth of the child till adolescence. However, efforts by Global Leaders and Philanthropist are been thwarted due to the upsurge in child labor. The relationships between child labor and education have also been reported to be negative (see Dagdemir & Acaroglu, 2010; Edmonds & Schady, 2011; Mahmud et al., 2016). Moreover, a connection had been established between MDG two (achieving universal basic education) and four (Reduce child mortality). According to International Labor Organization (ILO) Convention 182 worst of child labor include; all forms of slavery, trafficking of a child, debt bondage, forced or compulsory labor, commercial sexual exploitation of children, prostitution or production of pornography, using a child by adult to commission a crime and sale of a child (ILO, 2015).

The prevalence of child labor in the developing countries has been variously researched and yet commands further attention. In the work of Rena (2009) child labor in the developing countries were examined in relation to the challenge it pose on millennium development goals (MDGs). The author concluded that child labour and poverty alleviation still challenge the attainment of the MDGs hence legalization effort and public education are required in this direction. Dutta (2014) wrote on the children in Dickens' Novel after a whopping two hundred years and concluded that and indeed Dickens was a man who was much ahead of his times. This comes as Dutta tries to unearth the prediction made by Dickens regarding child labour.

Accordingly, Dagdemir & Acaroglu (2010) maintained that the child labor increases in the developing countries whose PCGDP levels are above 7 500 USD. The authors indicated that since the net effect of globalization is positive for the positive substitution effect is bigger than the negative income effect. Trade liberalization has also contributed immensely towards the spread of child labor. Edmonds & Pavcnik (2005) indicated that market integration has effect on child labor. The authors maintained that the use of export as a punitive trade sanction in the developing countries to reduce child labour will not achieve needed results. It is suggested that other feasible alternative approaches should be utilised to fight child labor. The relationship between poverty alleviation and child labor had been established.

Edmonds & Schady (2011) conducted a related study on the relationship between poverty alleviation and child labor and concluded as follows; child time allocation responses to a lottery in Ecuador where women with children were randomly assigned to receive \$15 per month through the Bono de Desarrollo Humano (BDH) program. The need for international labor standards to address the child labor has also been explored.

According to Palley (2002) the scourge of child labor had been widely recognised as unacceptable. Child labor is now widely recognized as an unacceptable scourge. The major concern is however with the policy to deal with the issue in the underdeveloped economies. Mahmud et al. (2016) in Malaysia studied child labor as a form of child abuse and found out that in Malaysia child labour is regarded as demand driven phenomena. As a result attention has been paid to supply size of it including poverty, family – income choice amongst others.

In Ghana all forms of child labor had been witnessed these include but not limited to all forms of slavery, trafficking of a child, debt bondage, forced or compulsory labor, commercial sexual exploitation of children, prostitution or production of pornography, using a child by adult to commission a crime and sale of a child. This paper was aimed to empirically conduct analyze socio-economic analysis of child labor in Kumasi metropolis of Ghana.

2. Literature Review

Several models and theories have been deployed to study child labor. Most frequently use theories in this regards include; social needs theory, basic needs approach, social cognitive theory and social learning theory among others. Related literature on the topic are presented below

Author (s) Year	Objectives	Major findings
Rena (2009)	The Child Labor in Developing Countries: A Challenge to Millennium Development Goals	Rena (2009) labour and poverty alleviation still challenge the attainment of the MDGs hence legalization effort and public education are required in this direction.
Dutta (2014)	Children in Dickens's Novels	Dutta (2014) concluded that and indeed Dickens was a man who was much ahead of his times. This comes as Dutta tries to unearth the prediction made by Dickens regarding child labour.
Dagdemiir & Acaroglu (2010)	The effects of globalization on child labor in developing countries	Dagdemiir & Acaroglu (2010) maintained that the child labor increases in the developing countries whose PCGDP levels are above 7 500 USD.
Edmonds & Pavcnik (2005)	The effect of trade liberalization on child labor.	Edmonds & Pavcnik (2005) indicated that market integration has effect on child labor. The authors maintained that the use of export as a punitive trade sanction in the developing countries to reduce child labour will not achieve needed results.
Edmonds & Schady (2011)	Poverty Alleviation and Child Labor	Edmonds & Schady (2011) conducted a related study on the relationship between poverty alleviation and child labor and concluded as follows; child time allocation responses to a lottery in Ecuador where women with children were randomly assigned to receive \$15 per month through the Bono de Desarrollo Humano (BDH) program.
Palley (2002)	The Child Labor Problem and the Need for International Labor Standards	Palley (2002) the scourge of child labor had been widely recognised as unacceptable. Child labor is now widely recognized as an unacceptable scourge.
Mahmod et al. (2016)	A Study on Child Labour as a Form of Child Abuse in Malaysia	Mahmod et al. (2016) found out that in Malaysia child labour is regarded as demand driven phenomena. As a result attention has been paid to supply size of it including poverty, family – income choice amongst others.

*Table 1: Summary Presentation of Related Literature
Source: Authors compilation, 2016*

3. Methodology

This study deployed a descriptive research design to conduct socio-economic analysis of child labor in the Kumasi metropolis of Ghana. The target populations were school going age children who were presently not in school including those who engage in all forms of sales on the street. Purposive sampling technique was employed to select 100 of these children to share their plight. Secondary data were obtained from appropriate data sources including ILO convection 182, Seer cite and Google Scholar. Primary data were gathered with structured questionnaires. Categorical scale was used to measure the constructs. Data were analyzed with SPSS version 21 and Microsoft excel. The results of the study were presented using frequencies, percentages and Chi-square Test.

4. Findings and Discussions

The study revealed males as the most dominant (n=61, 61%) sex group among the child labor population in the Kumasi metropolis. The females on the other hand recorded the least frequency of 39. This implies that the male are often deployed in illegal works than the females as evident from the survey. The survey results further revealed that majority (n=54, 54%) were aged between 13-15, moving on from the above, 23% were recorded respectively for age group 10-12 and below 10. This implies that children aged between 13-15 is the mostly affected in the child labor scourge. Regarding respondents nature of work, majority (n=41, 41.0%) were involved in hawking, 23.0% worked as assistants to commercial drivers (trotro mates), also 15.0% were working at auto workshop/garages, moreover 13.0% were engaged at construction sites with only 8.0% working at general stores. Based on respondents' ethnicity, the study revealed that 56.0% accounted for the majority are Akan's, 36.0% are from the north while the least (8.0%) represented Ewes.

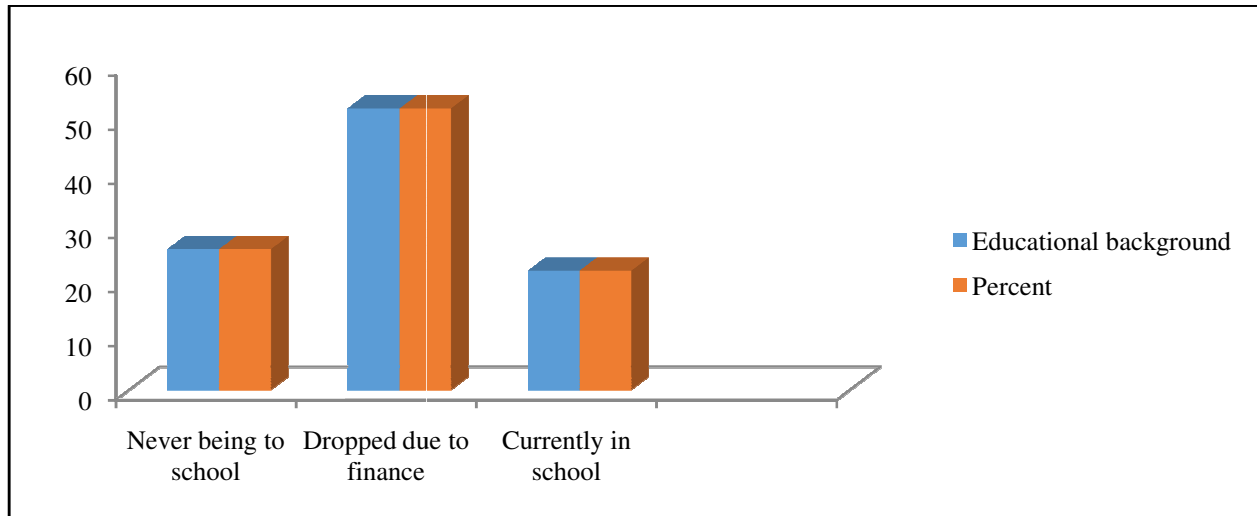


Figure 1: Educational background

Source: Field Statistics, 2016

Considering educational background, majority (n=52, 52.0%) were dropped out of school due to financial constraints, followed by 26.0% of respondents who never schooled and 22.0% were currently schooling.

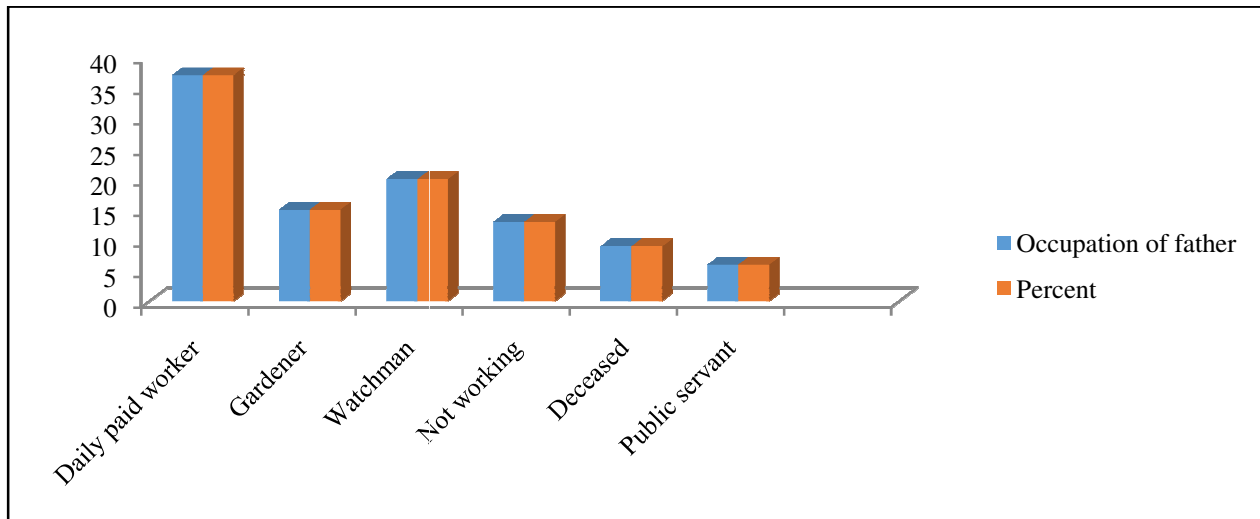


Figure 2: Occupation of father

Source: Field Statistics, 2016

The study explored occupation of respondents' fathers as follows; majority (n=37, 37.0%) were daily paid workers, 20.0% of the respondents were watchmen, more so 15.0% were gardeners while 13.0% were not involved in any activity (not working) and unfortunately 9.0% of the respondents fathers were deceased with 6.0% working as public servants.

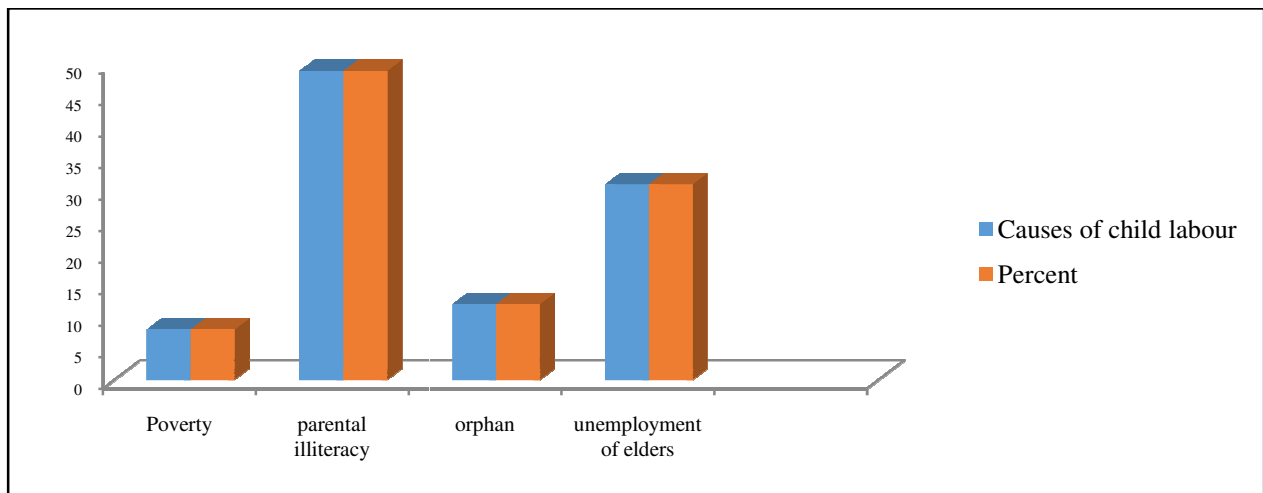


Figure 3: Causes of child labour
Source: Field Statistics, 2016

The survey discovered that 49.0% of child labour is caused by parental illiteracy, followed by 31.0% which is caused by unemployment of elders or fathers, moreover 12.0% is caused by the death of child parents (orphan) and the least (8.0%) of child labour is caused by poverty.

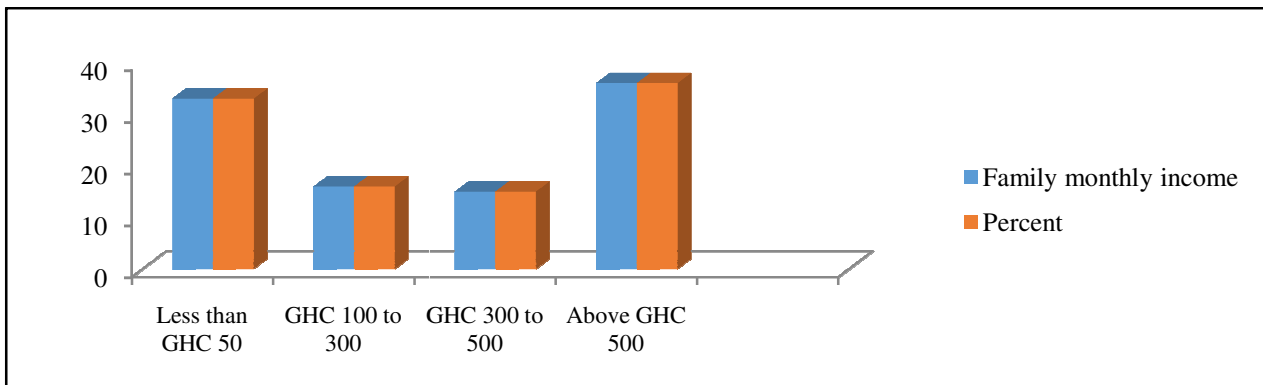


Figure 4: Family monthly income
Source: Field Statistics, 2016

Evaluating respondents' family monthly income, the study shows that a greater proportion (n=36, 36.0%) of respondents' family monthly income was above GH¢ 500, 33.0% have a family monthly income less than GH¢50, again 16.0% have a family monthly income between 100-300 and the least (15.0%) has incomes between 300-500.

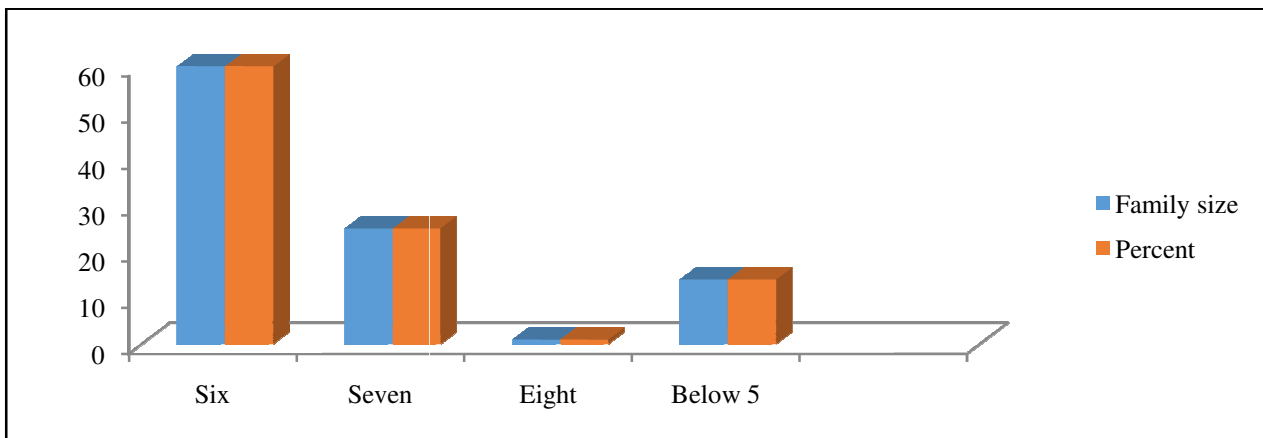


Figure 5: Family size
Source: Field Statistics, 2016

Relating to family size, the study found that 60.0% representing the majority have a family size of Six, followed by 25.0% who had family size of Seven, moving on 14.0% of the respondents had a family size less than Five and lastly but expectedly 1.0% had a family size of Eight.

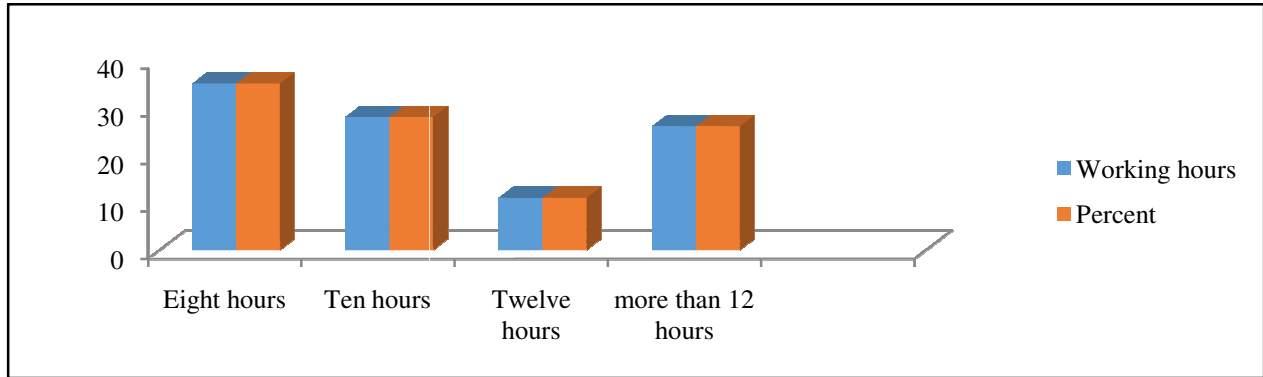


Figure 6: Working hours
Source: Field Statistics, 2016

On the basis of respondents' working hours, the study further revealed that majority (n=35, 35.0%) of respondents are likely to work for eight hours, followed by 28.0% who work for ten hours, 26.0% works for more than twelve hours and finally 11% works exactly twelve hours.

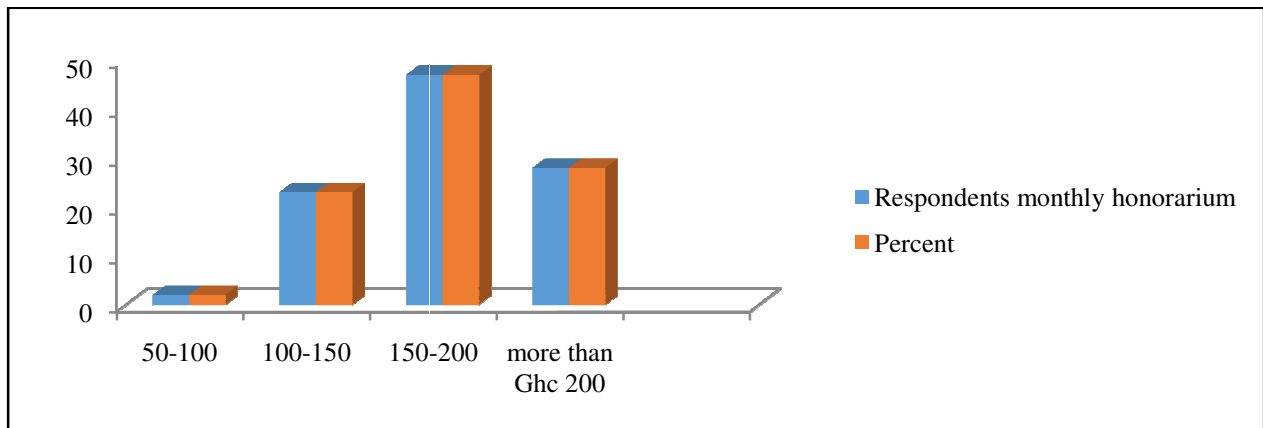


Figure 7: Respondent's monthly honorarium
Source: Field Statistics, 2016

Apropos respondents monthly honorarium, majority (n=47, 47.0%) received a monthly honorarium between GH¢150-200, 28% received more than GH¢200, 23.0% enjoys a monthly honorarium between GH¢100-150 with only 2.0% of respondents who have their monthly honorarium between GH¢50-100.

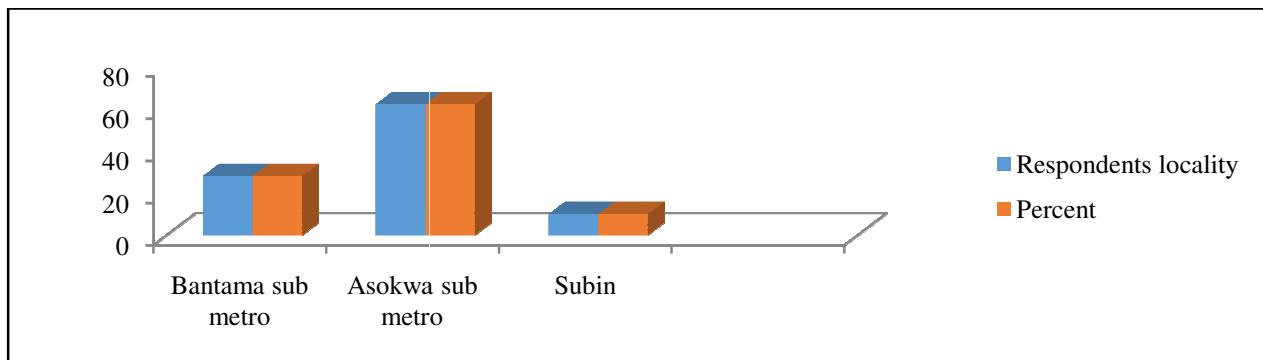


Figure 8: Respondents locality
Source: Field Statistics, 2016

The locality of respondents were explored and its findings presented as follows, a whopping majority (n=62, 62.0%) of the respondents resided at Asokwa sub metro, followed by 28.0% of the respondents who live at Bantama sub metro and lastly the least (10.0%) of the respondents are found at the Subin sub metro.

Statement		Respondents	Percent
	Reduce work chronic poverty through broad based economic and social dev.	27	27.0
	Rehabilitation	13	13.0s
	Provide basic training	15	15.0
	Child labor polity reform	10	10.0
	Media blitz	15	15.0
	Community leaders commitment	7	7.0
	The role of NGOs	13	13.0
	Total	100	100.0

Table 2: Measures to reduce child labour in the metropolis
Source: Field Statistics, 2016

In order to reduce child labour, 27.0% of the respondents posited that reducing work chronic poverty through broad based economic and social development is a good recipe to reduce child labour, 15.0% belief that providing apprenticeship reduces child labour with another 15.0% who said media blitz also reduces child labour. Again, 13.0% postulated that the role of NGOs reverses child labour and yet another 13.0% also belief that rehabilitation is good, with 10.0% reportedly affirmed that child labour reforms reduces child labour and lastly 7% of the respondents said commitment on the part of community leaders reduces child labour.

Items	Respondents nature of work					Total
	Auto workshop	hawking	General store	trotro mate	hotel attendant	
Male	15	20	6	15	12	61
Female	0	21	2	8	1	39
Pearson Chi-square			24.824 ^a			
Likelihood Ratio			31.167			
Linear-by-Linear Association			0.510			
P-value			0.000			
Degree of freedom			4			

Table 3: Cross-tabulation between respondents Gender and their nature of work
Source: Field Statistics, 2016

The Karl Pearson chi-square fitness of good test reveals that there is an association between the gender of the respondents and their nature of work. Chi-square calculated value (24.8) is greater than chi-square tabulated value (9.488). Hence the hull hypothesis is rejected. There is a significant association between gender and nature of work of the respondents.

Items	Respondents nature of work					Total
	Auto workshop	Hawking	General store	trotro mate	hotel attendant	
<10	0	11	0	6	6	23
10-12	0	6	1	9	7	23
13-15	15	24	7	8	0	54
Pearson			78.985 ^a			
Likelihood Ratio			95.467			
Linear-by-Linear Association			8.943			
P-value			0.000			
Degree of freedom			12			

Table 4: Cross-tabulation between respondents Age and Nature of work
Source: Field Statistics, 2016

Chi-square fitness of good test reveals that there is an association between the age of the respondents and their nature of work. Chi-square calculated value (78.985) is greater than chi-square tabulated value (21.026). Hence the hull hypothesis is rejected. There is a significant association between age and nature of work of the respondents.

Items	Respondents nature of work					Total
	Auto workshop	Hawking	General store	trotro mate	hotel attendant	
Akan	15	25	8	1	7	56
Northern	0	8	0	22	6	36
Ewe	0	8	0	0	0	8
Pearson Chi-square		65.096 ^a				
Likelihood Ratio		75.712				
Linear-by-Linear Association		6.491				
P-value		0.000				
Degree of freedom		8				

Table 5: Cross-tabulation between respondents Ethnicity and Nature of work

Source: Field Statistics, 2016

Chi-square fitness of good test reveals that there is an association between the ethnicity of the respondents and their nature of work. Chi-square calculated value (65.096) is greater than chi-square tabulated value (15.507). Hence the null hypothesis is rejected. There is a significant association between ethnicity and nature of work of the respondents.

5. Conclusions

The study had revealed that the most prevalence forms of child-labor were child-trafficking and forced labor. The survey discovered that 49.0% of child labour is caused by parental illiteracy, 31.0% which is caused by unemployment of elders or fathers, 12.0% is caused by the death of child parents (orphan) and the least (8.0%) of child labour is caused by poverty. Respondent's monthly honorariums range from GHc 50-500 majority live in rented houses. These children are supposed to work averagely 10hours per day though others work longer. Supports do sometimes come from NGOs and Media. Chi-square fitness of good test revealed that there was a significant association between the ethnicity of the respondents and their nature of work (χ^2 -value = 65.09, df =8 p-value<0.05), moreover there was an association between the age of the respondents and their nature of work (χ^2 -value = 78.98, df =12 p-value<0.05). Also, there was an association between the gender of the respondents and their nature of work. (χ^2 -value = 24.8 df =4 p-value<0.05). Policy reinforcement is highly recommended.

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