

Exterminating Child Labour on Children's Education and Health Status in Aowin Municipality in the Western North Region of Ghana

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Abstract

Exterminating Child Labour on Children's Education and Health Status in Aowin Municipality in the Western North Region of Ghana should be upheld by all the stakeholders in the municipality. The population for the study consists of five hundred (500) respondents selected from five different target groups, namely; teachers, head teachers, children, opinion leaders and parents/guardians for the study. Simple random, purposive, convenience and snowball sampling techniques were employed for the study. The main instruments for data collection were questionnaire, interview guides, focus group discussion and observation. Analyses of the data collected in this study were guided by both qualitative and quantitative techniques. The quantitative data were analysed by employing simple percentages, while the qualitative data were analysed by employing the interpretative techniques based on the themes arrived at in the data collection. The study revealed that, that child labour actually makes children absent themselves from school, report to school late, prevents them from doing their homework/ assignment and makes them perform poorly in examinations. It is recommended that, one of the most effective instruments to prevent children from taking up child labour is to enrol them in schools and ensure that they at least complete basic education.

Keywords

Child Labour, Education, Health Status, Aowin Municipality Western North Region, Ghana

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1. Introduction and Background

This paper presents the outcome of Child Labour on Children's Education and Health Status and how it can be exterminated in Aowin Municipality in the Western North Region of Ghana. The paper is structured into five (5) main sections namely; the Introduction and Background, Review of the Literature, Methodology, Findings and Discussion and the Conclusion. The first section introduces the structure of the paper, the context and aims, and objectives of the paper.

The literature review section reviews the relevant literature on issues pertaining to the child labour on children's education and health as well as its extermination. The methodology section presents a broad description of the methodology and procedures adopted in the conduct of the study on exterminating child labour on children's education and health status in Aowin Municipality in the Western North Region of Ghana. Findings resulting from the study are presented and discussed immediately after the methodology after which the conclusions, and recommendations follow. Child labour is a global canker [1]. Child labour is an

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important issue for economic analysts, governments and social groups. The awareness of the exploitation of children, in much of the developing world, has brought the issue of child labour to the forefront of debate within governments and social groups [2].

Child labour needs to be at the top of the agenda of the planning and finance ministries, as well as those of the traditional social ministries associated with children's welfare, so that measures to combat child labour have crucial political backing. Poor countries can show the seriousness of their commitments by allocating more resources to basic social services, which help protect children by mitigating the worst effects of poverty and giving them an opportunity to enroll and stay in school long enough to complete a basic education. Child labour condemns children to a harrowing present and hopeless future and is a throwback to some of the most shameful aspects of human behaviour. Like slavery, it can and must be consigned to history [3].

The healthy and educated child of today is the very foundation of a hopeful tomorrow of a country. In fact, children are the future of a nation and therefore, when we are saving the childhood, we are saving the future of the nation itself. Child labour, therefore is a social and economic evil, which damages the very foundation of the nation & economy. There is a growing concern over child labour as societies grow into becoming more and more modernized. Like any developing country, Ghana is concerned with the issue of child labour. While the phenomenon was taken for granted in the past, now with an overall aim to develop the modern industrial society, child labour among other issues is seen as an impediment to progress and total development of society. When the western Industrial model is adopted by our society, it does not only the changes in the economic system but also the social system. Child labour falls in both domains [4]. This is why the researchers are confident that all stakeholders, including government institutions, the social partners, civil society organizations, development partners, parents, teachers and children themselves will give their best push to this renewed effort to eliminate child labour in Ghana [1].

Child labour is a common phenomenon in the Aowin municipality of the Western North Region of Ghana. More than 260 children in the Aowin municipality are victims of child labour [5]. As a rural municipality and a predominantly cocoa producing area, most of the children are engaged in economic activities such as farming, hawking, carting of heavy loads among others. The lifelong damage to the children include, denying them basic literacy and vocational skills as well as psychological and physical trauma. It deprives the victims of a better future life. This results in a vicious cycle of poverty [6].

Even though children are engaged in economic activities in the municipality, no research seems to have been carried out in the district to provide baseline evidence on its impacts. Evidence from the Commission for Human Rights and Administrative Justice (CHRAJ), and the Department of Social Welfare in the municipality indicates that, most of the research conducted on children are mostly on child neglect and child maintenance [5]. It is in the light of filling this knowledge gap that made the researchers to investigate on the impact of Child Labour on Children's Education and Health Status and how it can be exterminated in Aowin Municipality in the Western North Region of Ghana. The study sought to answer these two (2) research questions- (1) How does child labour affect children's education and health status in the municipality? (2) How are the authorities in the municipality helping to solve the problem?

2. Review of the Literature

2.1. Effects of Child Labour on Children's Education and Health

Research has identified the inherent hazards and risks that children are exposed to when engaged in economic activities. Thus, one of the greatest changes in children's life in recent years has been the upsurge in the number of children who are engaged in part-time work and still attend school on regular basis. Even though education keeps many of today's youth from holding full jobs, it has not prevented them from working part-time while in school. Children can experience negative effects on their educational development and performance [7]. The International Labour Organisation (ILO) indicated that, when children are engaged in economic activities, school dropout and repetition rates tend to increase. Children who are engaged in child labour are less motivated to do good school work, (sometimes just because they are too tired) and the end results is often school failure. Child labour increases the likelihood of drop out and a lower likelihood of entering post-secondary education. It also has some emotional consequences on children which tend to affect their academic work. Thus, children go to school emotionally disturbed and hence affect their concentration and ability to learn properly [8]. They therefore tend to be worried about their plight and as such do not concentrate in the teaching and learning process which at the end affects their performance in classroom activities. Child labour deprives children of schooling or requires them to assume the multiple burdens of schooling and work. It further stated that, child labour deprives children of useful skills needed for the world of work. In another development, the mental health of the child is negatively affected [9]. Indeed, children engaged in hazardous economic activities have been observed to

suffer verbal abuse from their employers, consistent fear of job termination, low self-esteem, and a loss of imagination and future direction in life [10].

Notably, physical and health consequences of children participating in economic activities have been identified to include various diseases such as respiratory problems, injuries, rape and molestation, malnourishment, extortion of income, police harassment and participation in harmful or delinquent activities [8]. In the rural employment sector, where agricultural activities prevail, some children work on family farms, while others are employed on farms not owned by their families. In both cases, child labour has been found to have negative physical and health consequences for the children. The heavy and intensive labour that children endure in the fields may be accompanied by a lack of pay and lead to physical exhaustion, physical abuse, and exposure to toxic pesticides and herbicides [11].

2.2. Interventional Strategies to Address the Problem of Child Labour

It is widely held that the worldwide movement against child labour has its roots in national movements that emerged in the industrialised nations in the 19th century [11]. The international efforts against child labour led to the founding of the ILO in 1919 when it developed the first Minimum Age Convention regulating the age at which children were considered responsible [12]. The United Nations (UN) has made a number of attempts to end child labour. One among such attempts was the adoption of the Universal Declaration of Human Rights by the General Assembly in 1945. Thus, Article 26(1) of the Declaration indicates that everyone has the right to education and education shall be free and compulsory at least in the elementary and fundamental stages. The rationale behind this is that, it is assumed that by making education free and compulsory, the incidence of child labour will be abolished.

One of the most recent international treaties in protecting the rights of the child and also relevant to child labour is the UN Convention on the Rights of the Child (CRC) that was adopted in 1989 and entered into force on 2nd September 1990 [13]. This has enormously created awareness among many societies and children today are in better position if not the best. Through such documents, the crusade against child labour has become legitimate globally [14]. The CRC provides the strongest possible international legal language prohibiting child labour practices although it does not explicitly make child labour illegal as it only expresses the desire for a child labour free global society [15]. The CRC covers all aspects that lead to protecting children such as civil, political, economic, and social and their cultural rights. It has special emphasis on the issue with the regulation of

armed conflicts. ILO Programme on the Elimination of Child Labour (IPEC) was launched in 1992 with the overall goal of the progressive elimination of child labour in the world. This would be done by strengthening the capacity of countries to deal with the problem promoting world-wide movement to combat child labour [16].

The Ghanaian government has also made a lot of efforts to protect children from exploitative and hazardous work thereby combating the issue of child labour in the country since the 1990s. Thus, Ghana has a comparatively progressive child labour law. The Constitution of the Republic of Ghana prohibits slavery and forced labour (section 16) and states clearly that it is the right of any person 'to work under satisfactory, safe and healthy conditions' (section 24). Similarly, section 28 of this same constitution guarantees children 'the right to be protected from engaging in work that constitutes a threat to... (their) health, education or development' [17]. Also, in order to strengthen the legal protection of children, the government of Ghana passed the Ghana Children's Act (Act 560) in 1998. This Act prohibits exploitative child labour, defined as labour that deprives children of health, education, and development. Several international conventions relevant to the rights of children and their protection from worst forms of child labour such as the United Nations Convention on the right of the child and the ILO Convention on the Worst Forms of Child labour have been ratified by the Ghanaian government in 1990 and 2000 respectively [16].

The government of Ghana again in 2001, signed a Memorandum of Understanding with the ILO International Programme on the Elimination of Child Labour (IPEC) initiated in 1992 with the goal of eliminating child labour by strengthening national capacities for addressing the problem. It must be emphasized that the ILO/IPEC support to the national child labour elimination programme focuses on: law enforcement; mobilization of the public through awareness raising; strengthening the apprenticeship and skill training systems; expansion of the base by conducting studies and surveys and support of district and community- level structures for the monitoring of child labour [16].

Furthermore, the Ministry of Manpower Youth and Employment (MMYE) in 2008 drafted a National Plan of Action for the Elimination of (the worst forms of) Child Labour 2008-2015 with the overall goal of reducing the incidence of the worst forms of child labour to the barest minimum while laying a strong social, policy and institutional foundations for the elimination and prevention of other forms of child labour in the longer term [16]. Strategies to reduce general poverty and increase incomes are likely to have a positive effect on reducing child labour. The relationship between child labour and poverty differs largely depending on

local conditions, and should be examined at the country level, such that appropriate interventions can be designed. Improved income will reduce the pressure on all family members (including children) to be involved in low return, harmful, and time-consuming activities to meet household needs. Micro credit programmes may be an effective way to address this route of attack on child labour. The Non-Governmental Organisation (NGOs) in the municipality should provide financial assistance to both businessmen and women as well as farmers within the municipality to enable them expand their businesses or farms and also, education should be given on wealth creation strategies [18]

In another development, since 1995, the Ghanaian government has introduced and implemented the Free Compulsory Universal Basic Education (FCUBE) policy as guaranteed by the 1992 Republic Constitution of Ghana. The government Education for All programme aims at ensuring that all children have access to high quality basic education. Thus, in order to ensure that all children including those from poor household are enrolled in school, the Capitation Grant was also introduced in 2005. With this educational policy, pupils at public basic schools receive a small grant each to cover levies and textbooks previously paid for by parents [16]. Moreover, a number of Non-Governmental Organizations (NGO's) and Community Based Organizations have also embarked on several programmes and projects in attempt to eradicate the high incidence of child labour in Ghana. For instance, Children Research for Action and Development Agency (CRADA), a Ghanaian based NGO has embarked on a project entitled 'Integrated Community Response to Reduce Child Labour through Public Awareness and Education' within a time frame of 18 months in the Ashanti Region with a budget amount of \$43,712. The project's primary objective is to raise awareness of the importance of education for all children, and mobilize a wide array of actors to improve and expand education infrastructure. [19].

Thus, as a child development-oriented research-based local non-governmental non-profit organization, Children Research for Action and Development Agency (CRADA) has been working extensively in the country as a partner in development. CRADA's activities are geared towards improving the lives of people, especially children and women in underserved communities. CRADA is of the belief that a peaceful society does not necessarily only mean absence of conflict, but social justice and equality. CRADA acknowledges participatory approaches to development. Committed to improving the world for and with children, CRADA works with local government authorities, community-based organizations, the private sector, families, civil society organizations, NGOs, and individuals to ensure

that the ideals and principles of the UN Convention on the Rights of the Child become a reality. CRADA is working with communities and local groups to encourage appropriate local initiatives to address the phenomena of streetism, Child Sexual Abuse, Child Trafficking, Child Labour, Child Prostitution, Children Orphaned by HIV/AIDS, Violence against children and women. CRADA believes that children are also members of society and are thinking individuals who are capable of expressing themselves [19].

Similarly, Parent and Child Foundation (PACF), a non-governmental organization, has embarked on a project to rescue children who are engaged in worst forms of child labour in fishing communities. The organization has targeted about 1500 children whose education it will support in line with the national action to eliminate all forms of child labour by 2015. Thus, the Parent and Child Foundation (PACF) with support from the International Labour Organisation through the International Programme for Elimination of Child Labour, has identified and supported more than 700 children in the Dangme East District, with support from the Dangme East District Assembly [19].

3. Methodology

The research design adopted for this study was Case Study. The population for the study consists of five hundred (500) respondents selected from five different target groups, namely; teachers, head teachers, children, opinion leaders and parents/guardians. Simple random, purposive, convenience and snowball sampling techniques were employed for the study. The simple random technique - lottery type was used to select the thirty-five (35) parents or guardians of child labour victims for the study in order to ensure that every member of the sample frame had an equal chance of being selected for the study. The involvement of parents or guardians helped to gather relevant information on family background and the causes of child labour. Purposive sampling technique was used to select seven (7) communities and twenty-two (22) schools in the selected communities for the study. The seven (7) selected communities are those with high prevalent rate of child labour activities in the municipality. These communities are Enchi, Boinso, Serwum, Morcherkrom, Achimfo, Yakasi, and Jema. Convenience sampling technique was employed to select the seventy (70) teachers from the seven communities. With this sampling technique, the researchers had to talk to teachers who were available and ready to be talked to.

With the selection of children in school, because of lack of reliable data or sample frame on victims of child labour in the municipality, opinion leaders from the municipal education directorates, human rights advocates, chiefs, head

teachers and teachers were consulted. They helped in contacting children involved in child labour activities because they live with them. The researchers then contacted those child labour victims identified by the teachers, head teachers, the municipal education directorate and the opinion leaders as a point of reference to use the snowball sampling technique to reach one hundred and ninety-three (193) pupils. Purposive sampling technique was also used to select the 12 opinion leaders and the remaining 190 children who were out of school for the study.

The main instrument for data collection were questionnaire, interview guides, focus group discussion and observation. To enable the respondents, supply the needed data for the study, teachers and head teachers were tasked to answer questionnaires, while interviews were conducted for children, parents and opinion leaders. In order to obtain additional information about the children, observation and focus group discussion were also employed to supplement the questionnaire outcome. The observational research tool was employed to gather relevant information about the children. The use of observation was quite useful in getting a better understanding of context; crosschecking information and possible differences between what people do and what they say. In using questionnaires and interviews, it was necessary to supplement these sources with direct observation in order to establish the realities on the ground and to cross examine the people's responses. Interactions and observed behaviours included their engagement in economic activities, lateness to school and sleepiness during lesson delivery. Finally, focus group discussion of five groups of four was held with some identifiable parents within Enchi and Yakasi communities. This was done to gather unbiased and balance opinion from both sexes on child labour related issues.

Analyses of the data collected in this study were guided by both qualitative and quantitative techniques. The quantitative data were analysed by employing simple percentages, while the qualitative data were analysed by employing the interpretative techniques based on the themes arrived at in the data collection. The themes were related to the research questions and interpreted on the number of issues raised by respondents. These were based on questions on the semi-structured interviews, focus group discussions and the observation of children.

4. Findings and Discussions

4.1. Effects of Child Labour on Children's Education and Health in the District

Children's participation in their own family farm activities helps them learn valuable skills and contribute to the

generation of household income, which has a positive impact on their livelihoods. Such participation is important for children and builds their self-esteem [16]. However, children in Africa are unable to attend school because their families/households cannot afford to pay for their education. The household cannot afford to pay for their children's education if the cost of schooling is too high and the household income is too low [20]. Inability of households to meet the basic needs of children (education, food, shelter and clothes) in most cases forces children to engage in employment in their endeavour to improve their conditions and livelihood. The argument is that; poverty does not cause child labour but there is a strong relationship between the two [20]. Thus, child labour is often found in socially and economically marginalised communities. ILO also argues that, the vast numbers of children perform work that is damaging to their mental, physical and emotional development; its estimates indicate that "nearly three-quarters of working children are engaged in the worst forms of child labour which includes trafficking, armed conflict, slavery, sexual exploitation and hazardous work" [3].

4.1.1. Children's Responses on the Effects of Child Labour on Their Education

Child work begins to be described as child labour, when the work is likely to interfere with the child's education, health, physical, mental, spiritual, moral or social development; or expose the child to an environment not conducive to his/her development. In particular, this occurs, as the child is pushed into paid, often risky activities outside the household; making him/her vulnerable to verbal, physical or sexual abuse [16].

Table 1. Children's responses on the effects of child labour on their education.

Effects	Frequency	Percentage
Lateness to school	107	28.0
Absent from school	122	31.8
Inability to do homework/assignments	80	20.9
Poor performance in examinations	52	13.6
Others	22	5.7
Total	383	100.0

Source: Field Survey March, 2019.

Evidence from the survey as indicated in Table 1 shows that, 31.7 percent of the children interviewed attributed child labour as a reason for absenting themselves from school, 28.0 percent said it led to reporting late to school, 20.9 percent also claimed it prevented them from doing their homework/assignment. Those who said child labour makes them perform poorly in examination were 13.6 percent. The results presented shows that majority of the respondents were engaged in farming and other economic activities during the time they should have been in the classroom which further affect their education.

4.1.2. Children’s Responses on the Effects of Child Labour on Their Health

Table 2. Children’s responses on the effects of child labour on their health.

Effects	Frequency	Percentage
Physical exhaustion such as fatigue	292	76.2
Physical abuse such as exposure to dangerous animals, sleep deprivation, slapping, drowning and biting.	41	10.7
Exposure to toxic pesticides and herbicides such as weedicides	27	7.0
Exposure to sexually transmitted infections	16	4.2
Others	7	1.8
Total	383	100.0

Source: Field Survey March, 2019.

From Table 2 above, the children’s health dimension of child labour assessment, the study ascertained that 76.2 percent said working long hours for instance four to five hours on the average makes them physically exhausted and fatigue, 10.7 percent said they are usually abused physically in the form of exposure to dangerous animals, sleep deprivation, slapping and drowning whereas only 4.2 percent of the children interviewed have been exposed to sexually transmitted infections such as gonorrhoea, HIV/AIDS among others. The outcome of the study has indicated that children are made to do physical work through the activities they engage in on the farm which results in pain in the neck, back, shoulders, and arms. The types of injuries reported were strains and sprains of the back and upper and lower extremities. These are symptoms of fatigue consistent with work-related muscle skeletal ailments that could consequently result in acute muscle and skeletal injuries [21]

During cocoa and other farm crop production, children come into direct contact with pesticides when they served as

applicators and/or acted as assistants or helpers. They normally carry pesticide containers on top of their head without personal protective equipment to prevent exposure from spilling and leaking.

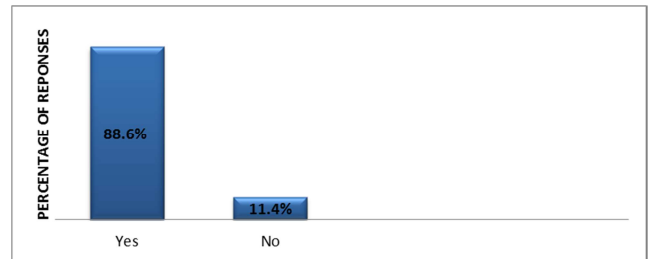


Figure 1. Parents /Guardians responses on whether the work their children do affect their education/health.

Source: Field Survey March, 2019.

From Figure 1, about 88.6 percent of the parents of the children who are engaged in child labour in the area are aware of the effects the social canker of child labour has on the children’s’ education and health while the remaining 11.4 percent said they are not aware.

The study as pointed out in Figure 2 reveals that, teachers had confirmed the adverse effects of child labour on children’s health condition mentioned by the children and parent respondents. The majority of them (teachers) constituting 80.0 percent stressed children suffer from physical exhaustion and fatigue as a result of performing activities subjecting them to child labour. According to the survey, teachers also identified that the main tasks in agriculture include working with machinery and agrochemicals, and picking and loading crops.

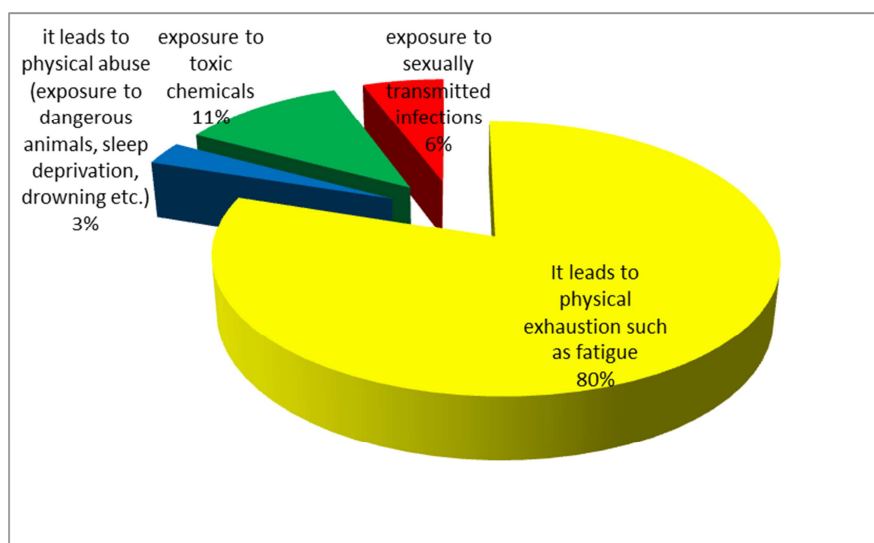


Figure 2. Teachers’ responses on the effects of child labour on children’s health.

Source: Field Survey March, 2019.

Table 3. Parents'/Guardians responses on the effects of child labour on children's school attendance and B.E.C.E results.

Effects	Frequency	Percentage
Absenteeism from school	15	42.9
Lateness to school	8	22.9
Prevention from doing homework / assignment	5	14.3
Poor performance in examinations	7	20.0
Total	35	100.0

Source: Field Survey March, 2019.

Teachers in the Aowin municipality hinted on the serious repercussions child labour have had on educational achievement. Studies by Non-Governmental Organizations (NGOs) and other individual researchers have shown that children involved in child labour are not only kept from attending school, but also hinders the learning ability of attendees. From Table 3, 42.9 percent of parents consulted on the effect child labour have on their children's school attendance and B.E.C.E results said it makes them absent themselves from school and 22.9 percent claimed it makes them go to school late. Only 14.3 percent of the parents were

of the view that, children are not able to do their homework/assignments given them in school because they are engaged in child labour. One of the parents in an interview granted by the researcher emphasized;

“Specifically, child labour directly impacts on the kids' mathematics achievements and reading skills orchestrated by chronic absenteeism, a likely consequence of sheer exhaustion or distracted interests. This is especially problematic, as education is crucial if individuals are to improve their quality of lives” (In-depth Interview, 2019)

Table 4. Teachers and their views on the severity of child labour effects on children's education and health.

Effects	Responses									
	Strongly agree		Agreed		Uncertain		Disagree		Strongly disagree	
	F	%	F	%	F	%	F	%	F	%
High school dropout rate	35	58	17	28	3	5	2	3	3	5
Absenteeism from school	33	55	19	32	2	3	6	10	0	0
Poor performance in examinations	24	40	27	45	3	5	2	3	4	7
Lateness to school	27	45	24	40	5	8	3	5	1	2
Non- performance of home work	16	26	28	47	4	7	7	12	5	8
Inactive participation in classroom activities	20	33	28	47	5	8	6	10	1	2
Physical exhaustion	17	28	26	43	7	12	10	17	0	0
Physical abuse	20	33	24	40	9	15	5	8	2	3
Exposure to toxic pesticides and herbicides	16	27	14	23	14	23	12	20	4	7
Exposure to diseases	18	30	22	37	8	13	6	10	6	10

Source: Field Survey March, 2019.

From Table 4, it can be observed that the highly prevalent education and health implications of child labour within the rural communities in the Aowin municipality include absenteeism from school (87 percent) and physical abuse (73 percent), high school dropout rate recorded (87 percent) in the education sector and physical exhaustion recorded (72 percent) in the health sector. Poor performance in examination recorded (85 percent); exposure to diseases formed (67 percent) and lateness to school recorded (85 percent). These were found to be the main educational and health threats affecting the majority of the people in the municipality. Absenteeism and physical abuse were identified to be the effects that occur most often in school and on the health of children though the statistics has shown that the other identified effects were equally highly prevalent. These factors become highly predominant during rainy season when farmers are expected to take advantage of their children for supply of labour to cultivate their crops for a higher yield.

4.2. Strategies Adopted by Authorities to Exterminate Child Labour in the Municipality

Generally, poverty reduction measures in agricultural areas are likely to mitigate some of the more serious forms of child labour because the incentives to push children out early are reduced. However, for the better-off farms, the alternative costs of schooling may increase, and some of the less harmful forms of child labour may increase [16]. Education is pivotal to eliminating and preventing child labour, to establishing a skilled workforce and to promoting development based on the principles of social justice and human rights. There has been progress in recent years in raising public consciousness of the problem of child labour, of its pervasive and tenacious nature and of the awful prospect that it is growing in some areas of the world, especially in parts of sub-Saharan Africa [16].

The study conducted in the Aowin municipality in the

Western North Region tried to find out from children who were victims of child labour what they think their parents should do to prevent and if possible relegate to the background the problem of child labour that they are facing. As portrayed in Table 5, majority of the children constituting 32.4 percent said parents should pay all their school fees, 27.2 percent said parents should provide all needed educational/learning materials such as textbooks, school

uniforms, stationery and the like, and 24.3 percent stressed that parents should stop engaging children in child labour. Whereas 5.5 per cent representing the minority said parents should provide pocket money for breakfast and lunch in school. The results show that the overall cause of child labour is poverty and therefore an attempt should be made by the government to empower parents economically to enable them meet the basic needs of their children.

Table 5. Children's responses on what parents should do to prevent child labour.

Responses	Frequency	Percentage
Pay their school fees	124	32.4
Provide all the needed educational materials	104	27.2
Provide pockets moneys for breakfast and lunch in school	21	5.5
Send and keep children in school	35	9.1
Not to engage children in child labour	93	24.3
Others	6	1.6
Total	383	100.0

Source: Field Survey March, 2019.

The survey also found out that, children expect the government to undertake certain policy reforms to resolve the menace of child labour in the municipality. Majority of the children interviewed representing 53.5 percent claimed the government should make education free by absorbing all fees, 16.4 percent also thinks government should enforce

public education on child labour through radio, newspapers and television broadcast, drama show, etc. and 12.5 percent said the government should provide all the needed educational materials such as textbooks, exercise books, pens, pencils etc. as shown in Table 6.

Table 6. Children's responses on what the government should do to solve the problem of child labour.

Responses	Frequency	Percentage
Make education free by absorbing all fees	205	53.5
Provide all the needed educational materials	48	12.5
Feed school children while in school	20	5.2
Supply school uniforms freely to all school children	9	2.3
Empower parents economically through education and also by granting them credit facilities	34	8.9
Public education on child labour through radio, newspapers and television broadcast, drama show, and P.T.A	63	16.4
Any others, specify	4	1.0
Total	383	100.0

Source: Field Survey March, 2019.

It is indeed true that basic education is free in Ghana, but the freeness of it does not cover all aspects of the costs involved. Most of the children had to provide textbooks, exercise books and other stationery and school uniforms themselves in the

area. The campaign calls on governments to be part of the solution and work on the principle that 'no child should work; every child must be in school' by ensuring absolutely free basic education.

Table 7. Parents'/Guardians views on what should be done to ensure that children go to school.

Responses	Yes (%)	No (%)	Total (%)
Providing financial assistance to parents	30 (85.7)	5 (14.3)	35 (100)
Making rules on child labour	20 (57.1)	15 (42.9)	35 (100)
Provision of educational needs of pupils	34 (97.1)	1 (2.9)	35 (100)
Awareness creation	28 (80.0)	7 (20.0)	35 (100)

Source: Field Survey March, 2019.

From Table 7, it can be observed that, 97.1 percent of parents interviewed said if children educational needs are provided, they could send their children to school and reduce child labour in the area. In the same vein, 85.7 percent said parents should be provided with financial assistance. Eighty percent mentioned awareness creation as the best remedy to the

menace of child labour in the district and 57.1 percent suggested there should be rules/laws made on child labour in the area. This implies that parents are faced with challenges of meeting the educational needs of their children and this compels them to stop their children from schooling. Therefore, in order for the children not to be seen loitering

about in the house, they have to accompany them to farm.

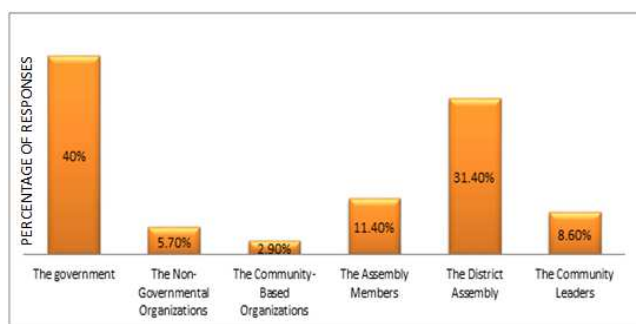


Figure 3. Parents /Guardians responses on whom they expect to mitigate child labour in the district.

Source: Field Survey March, 2019.

It was discovered from the survey conducted that, though parents of child labour victims in the area have their views on the ways to curb or reduce the menace in the area, they also expect other agencies and organizations to play a significant role in the provision of educational needs of pupils, providing

financial assistance to parents and the like. Forty percent said the Government, 31.4 percent said the District Assembly, and 11.4 percent said Assembly Members with 5.7 per cent and 2.9 per cent claiming NGOs and CBOs respectively as presented in Figure 3. It is thus impending on the government to ensure the formulation and implementation of policies on making education entirely free and laws against child labour where stringent punishments will be assigned to perpetrators of the act in the district. When this is done in strict consultation and collaboration with other agencies and organizations such as the local Government, CBOs and NGOs, it will go a long way to emancipate the social canker of child labour in the Aowin municipality. Schooling and education must remain the central policy instrument for overcoming child labour in the district. Unlike most other policy instruments, they work against both major forms of child labour. It is on this notion that teachers in the area enumerated some recommendations and policy directions that will help rescue children from child labour and improve educational status of children in the municipality.

Table 8. Teachers views on ways to curb child labour and improve upon education.

Responses	Strongly agree		Agreed		Uncertain		Disagree		Strongly disagreed	
	F	%	F	%	F	%	F	%	F	%
The teachers in the district's role in eradicating child labour										
Advising victims on the impact of child labour	34	57	19	32	2	3	4	7	1	2
Advising parents on the impact of child labour	43	72	14	23	3	5	0	0	0	0
Organizing awareness campaign	41	68	16	27	1	2	2	3	0	0
Reporting the perpetrator to the police	15	25	30	50	6	10	6	10	3	5
Reporting the perpetrator to the opinion leaders	9	15	37	62	5	8	8	13	1	2
The school's role in eradicating child labour										
Educating parents	35	58	18	30	4	7	3	5	0	0
Organizing debate on the problem	26	43	23	38	8	13	3	5.0	0	0
Organizing awareness campaign on the problem	32	53	22	37	4	7	2	3	0	0
Reporting the perpetrator to the police	12	20	24	40	11	18	9	15	4	7
Reporting the perpetrator to the opinion leaders	10	17	27	45	11	18	10	17	2	3
The District Assembly's role in eradicating child labour										
Enactment of bye-laws.	28	47	23	38	8	13	1	2	0	0
Organizing awareness campaign on the problem	21	35	28	47	6	10	0	0	1	2
Provision of educational needs of victims	32	53	17	28	8	13	3	5	3	5
Providing financial assistance to the parents	16	27	24	40	14	23	8	13	5	8
The NGOs in the district role in eliminating child labour										
Awareness creation	27	45	17	28	14	23	2	3	-	-
Providing financial assistance to the parents	13	22	25	42	13	22	3	5	4	7
Provision of educational needs of victims	18	30	25	42	12	20	3	5	2	3
Research into the problem of child labour	14	23	24	40	19	32	2	3	1	2
Opinion leaders role in eradicating child labour										
Making rules on child labour	32	53	23	38	3	5	2	3	0	0
Awareness creation	13	22	25	42	13	22	3	5	4	7
Supporting victims	22	37	24	40	11	18	2	3	1	2
Advise parents	35	58	20	33	4	7	1	2	0	0
Punishing perpetrators	18	30	19	32	9	15	11	18	3	5

Source: Field Survey March, 2019.

According to the survey as shown in Table 8, child labour issues in the municipality could be eradicated through the following ways; organizing awareness campaign (95 percent) and advising parents on the impact of child labour (95 percent), advising victims on the impact of child labour (88

percent), reporting the perpetrators to the police recorded the lowest of 75 percent in support of the idea whereas 15 percent thought otherwise. This informs us on the low level of child labour awareness and parents' ignorance probably due to lack of effective institutional regulations and laws in

the area.

It was also revealed that teachers believe schools in the municipality contribute to the eradication of child labour through the following; organizing awareness campaign on the problem (90 percent) and educating parents (88 percent). Those who said reporting the perpetrators to the police formed 60 percent with 22 percent thinking otherwise as shown in Table 8. It is very important that teachers and head teachers in the schools strengthen their efforts in their awareness creation exercise and in educating and sensitizing parents in the municipality to be able to arrest the situation holistically.

The study tried to find out what teachers as well as head teachers make of the efforts of the Aowin municipality Assembly in eliminating child labour in the municipality. It found out that 85 percent of teachers consulted affirmed that there is an enactment of bye-laws on child labour, 82 percent also mentioned provision of educational needs of victims, and 67 percent said providing financial assistance to parents. District Assemblies are local government agencies which perform governmental functions such as enactment of bye-laws at the local levels. Accordingly, peculiar issues of a particular local area prompt the content of a particular area's bye-laws and it is on this policy direction that the Municipal Assembly is under-taking to lessen the impact of child labour in the district.

Reducing poverty is a major policy aim for most Non-Governmental Organizations (NGOs) in the municipality. This contributes to the elimination of child labour in the municipality through provision of financial assistance to parents (63 percent), awareness creation (73 percent), Provision of educational needs of victims (72 percent) and Research into the problem of child labour (63 percent) as shown in Table 8. NGOs have worked to raise awareness about forced child labour in the cocoa industry. In addition, they are developing research and advocacy tools, and are lobbying governments and governmental agencies, to make child labour issues a priority. A study on Human Rights Issues of Child Labour and Economic Activities: The Way Forward, published in American Journal of Social Science Research postulated that there should be sustainable livelihood strategies like resourcing identified vulnerable families to carry out viable ventures that will help reduce poverty in the catchment zone [18].

From Table 8, it can be observed that opinion leaders such as chiefs, assembly members and religious leaders can help to eradicate child labour through enacting rules on child labour, and advising parents (92 percent each), supporting victims (77 percent) awareness creation (63 percent), and punishing perpetrators (62 percent). Not only farmers in the district view child labour as culturally acceptable. In general, it is

seen as a way for children to learn a skill, and to sustain a community's farming culture. Traditional Authorities of major communities as well as opinion leaders in the district have also instituted some customs against child labour in the area by making perpetrators of the act pay a fine and also sensitize parents.

5. Conclusions and Recommendations

The study revealed that, in assessing the effects of child labour on children's education and health in the municipality, it was brought to light that child labour actually makes children absent themselves from school, report to school late, prevents them from doing their homework/ assignment, makes them perform poorly in examinations among others. With respect to its effects on the health status of the children, the survey revealed that majority of the children said child labour makes them to be physically exhausted and fatigue. They further responded that, it exposes them to dangerous animals, sleep deprivation, exposure to toxic pesticides and herbicides such as weedicides and exposure to sexually transmitted infections such as gonorrhoea and HIV/AIDS as a result of them being sexually abused.

It is recommended that, government should set up Child Labour Monitoring and Inspection Team (CLMIT) at the municipality and community levels and empower them to go beyond the formal sector to identify and prevent children from being exploited and also ensure that prevailing practices related to child labour are in accordance with the Labour and Employment Act, 2003 (Act 651).

It is also recommended that, one of the most effective instruments to prevent children from taking up child labour is to enrol them in schools and ensure that they at least complete basic education. Studies worldwide have shown that 'children who are not obliged to attend school or who realistically do not have access to education have little alternative to working or falling into begging, delinquency or worse'. Even though basic education is free in Ghana, the freeness of it does not cover all aspects of the cost. There is the need for the full implementation of the Free Compulsory Universal Basic Education (FCUBE) system and the capitation grants to make education more accessible to children. Thus, since most children work towards the promotion or achievement of their education, the government should be committed to provide access to basic education by making it entirely free. The government again should be committed to provide quality basic education. This could be done by addressing the lapses in the educational system like lack of teachers, inadequate facilities and instructional resources.

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