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The Impact of Cultural Norms on Influencing Child Labour Practices in Tanzania: The Case Study of Small Scale Mining in Morogoro District, Tanzania

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Abstract:

This paper is endeavored to examine the influence of cultural norms in influencing child labour practices in Tanzania. It is inspired by the concern that numerous studies have been conducted about child labour practices in Tanzania. Disappointingly, the exiting studies overlooked the examination of the impact of cultural norms on in influencing child labour practices. Therefore, this paper is a modest attempt to bridge the existing gap of knowledge. The mixed methods approach combining both descriptive cross-sectional and phenomenology designs were employed. The target population for the study consisted of social welfare officers, community development officers, most vulnerable children committee's members, and community members. The ward executive officers, village executive officers, child labourers, primary school teachers and employers were also involved. Simple random sampling, stratified sampling, purposive and convenience sampling were used to select respondents while questionnaires, interviews, focus group discussions, observation and document analysis were tools used to collect data. The collected data were analysed using Statistical Package for Social Sciences (SPSS) to obtain descriptive statistics and inferential statistic while qualitative data were subjected to thematic analysis model. From the findings it can be concluded that there is an influence of cultural norms on child labour practices in Tanzania. It is hereby recommended that there is need of an increased awareness raising campaigns by the government and civil society organisations against child labour practices.

Keywords: Child labour, culture, Norms, artisanal and small scale mining, Morogoro and Tanzania

1. Introduction

Child labour is an immerse and has been a growing problem worldwide. The problem is more precarious in developing nations than developed nations. The International Labour Organization (ILO) Convention, defined child labour as all children below 18 in harmful occupations or work activities in the labour market or their own household; all children undertaking in the child labour market or household interfering with their primary education; all children under 15 in full time employment; and all children under 13 in part time work. Child labour is not defined by the activity only but also by the effect this activity has on the child. According to Munthali (2003) as cited by Ampomah and Gyan (2014) child labour is considered to have detrimental consequences on the cognitive, physical, psychological, social, emotional and intellectual development of the children hence depriving them of their childhood. Similarly, the international documents such as the Convention on the Rights of the Child (1989) and the ILO Convention No. 182 on the Worst Forms of Child Labour (1999) cogitate child labour as objectionable and injurious to children's total well-being. These documents therefore entreat all state parties to put in much effort towards the eradication of this act of human right abuse and address children's need for protection. Child labour has always been the subject of social work intervention because it involves violations of child rights which are also human rights. Historical analysis of the social work profession shows that the involvement of social work profession in child labour has been considered started during the early stages of the development of the profession. According to Kurevakwesu (2017) the social work profession's primary aim is to promote the dignity and worth of the people by ameliorating their problems. From the social work point of view the dignity and worth of children involved in child labour must be protected through various intervention measures simply because though social work is not absolute panacea to all problems facing the public, it has some answers to most of those problems. Nayer et al (2014) argued that social work work's historical commitment to human rights, social justice and vulnerable populations makes child labour an area of great concern to the problem. Child labour is one of the major social problems in developing countries. It is associated with school dropout and It is linked to perpetuation of poverty cycle for the children involved, their families and communities. Without education these children are likely to remain poor. By perpetuating poverty child labour undermines efforts by the government to reach sustainable development (FAO, 2018).

Worldwide, millions of children are forced into child labour (Elijah and Okoruwa, 2006; Liao and Sung Hong, 2011). Globally, around 265 million children are working in the world, Africa being the epicenter of the pandemic (The ILO World report (2013). According to Amu et al., (2014), in Africa 1 out of 5 children participates in child labour. The

rate of child labour in both Africa and Asia can be categorized as follows: 33 percent in East African, 24 percent in West Africa and 22 percent in middle Africa, followed by East Asia and South Asia with 20 and 14 percent respectively. Tanzania as part of the global village, is not immune to child labour since the phenomenon remains topical of discussion and is growing in different sectors of the economy. For example, the Child Labour Survey (2016) estimated that 4.2million children involved in child labour in 2014. With the increasing attention on child labour, Tanzania joined the global campaign against child through ratification of various conventions such as the Minimum Age Convention, 1973 (No. 138) and the ILO Convention No.182 (1999) on the Elimination of the Worst Forms of Child Labour. At national level Tanzania enacted the Employment and Labour Relation Act, No.6/2004, the Law of the Child Act, No 21/2009 and The National Action Plan for the Elimination of Child Labour (2009) and the introduction of the National Strategy for Growth and Reduction of Poverty (NSGRP I &II) to mention just a few.

It is interesting to note that, despite many efforts being put forth to combat child labour in Tanzania, child labour still continued to persist (National Child Labour Survey, 2016). However, according to the reviewed literatures, Mwami et al (2002), Sanga and Nyoni (2002), Munubi (2011), Akarro&Mtweve (2011) and Human Rights Watch (2013), it has been clearly seen that there are some attempts to investigate child labour in terms of the working conditions, causes, effects and extent of child labour in Tanzania. Even though it is a good start, there are still many issues that are not yet been discovered by previous researches. For instance the influence of cultural norms on influencing child labour practices has not been given much attention and empirically examined and documented. Apart from that most studies focused on child labour in agriculture and little is done with regards to child labour in mining. Against this background this paper aimed to fill the existing gap of knowledge by examining the impact of cultural norms on influencing child labour practices based on Artisanal and Small –scale Mining (ASM) in Morogoro District, Tanzania.

2. Theoretical Discussions

In this segment of the article, a review of one theory of Cultural Theory with regard to child labour practices. The paper relies on this theory to provide empirical support to its findings relating to why children engage in child labour. The definition of culture adopted by the United Nations, Education, Scientific and Cultural Organization (UNESCO) was based on the 1870 work of a British Anthropologist (Spencer-Oatey 2012), which defined culture as "...that complex whole which include knowledge, beliefs, arts, morals, customs and any other capabilities and habits acquired by (a human) as a member of society" (UNESCO, 2001, pg 1). Proponents of culture theory suggests that the attitudes, values, norms and beliefs of people of a particular group consist of certain underlying assumptions which are typically unconscious but which actually determine how group members perceive, think and feel (Spencer-Oatey, 2012, pg.3). With reference to child labour cultural context particularly cultural norms has influence on child labour. According to Basu (1999), the decision of whether or not to send one's child to work has, to some extent, something to do with cultural norms. A parent's decision to send a child to work makes that parent incur a social stigma cost. If the society or area of residence has lots of child labour, the stigma cost is smaller and it may even be advantageous to each parent to send their child to work. On the other hand, if a particular society frowns upon or consider it socially unacceptable for parents sending out their children to work, then most parents would find it embarrassing. This theory was adopted to examine the influence of cultural norms on child labour.

3. Methodology

The research on which this article is based adopted a mixed methods approach (both quantitative and qualitative). The cross-sectional descriptive design and phenomenology were used. Two villages (Kiwangwa and Rudevelo) were purposefully selected in Morogoro rural District. The sample size for quantitative approach was 228 respondents as determined by Krejcie and Morgan (1970) table for determining sample size from a given population. The structured questionnaire, was used to collect quantitative data from 228 respondents randomly selected. The categories included: 24 teachers, 27 community development officers, 10 social welfare officers and 24 MVCC members and 127 community members. The in-depth interviews on the other side collected data from eight (8) parents of working children, eight (8) non-working children, two (2) ward executive officers and two (2) village executive officers. Also data from the District social welfare officer, District community Development officer, District Labour Officer, and two (2) head teachers were captured using in-depth interviews. Focused group interviews were used to collect data from twelve (12) child labourers and two employers selected through convenience sampling.

Quantitative data were analysed using the Statistical Package for Social Sciences (SPSS) version 20. Descriptive statistics such as frequencies and percentages were used to describe the characteristics of the study sample. The chi-squared test was used to test relationships between parental income and child labour. The qualitative data analysis on the other side were subjected to thematic analysis model developed by Braun & Clarke (2006). Based on this model the researcher familiarised himself with data and then generated initial codes before researched for themes. The themes were also reviewed and defined. Finally the themes were named and at the end this report was produced.

4. Results and Discussions

The study was conducted in Morogoro Rural District in two wards namely Kibungo Juu and Tawa where by one village from each ward was selected (i.e. Kiwangwa A in Kibungo Juu and Rudevelo in Tawa ward. Out of these villages 228 respondents were selected. The main target groups were teachers, community development officers, social welfare officers, the most vulnerable children committee members and community members. The parents of working children and non-working children, ward executive officers, village executive officers. Also child labourers and employers formed

part of this study. The main objective of the study was to examine the impact of cultural norms on influencing child labour practices in Tanzania. In order to examine the influence of cultural norms on influencing child labour practices various sub-questions were asked. The questions based on influence of cultural norms on child labour and the extent to which cultural norms have impact on child labour practices.

5. Influence of Cultural Norms on Child Labour

The third objective of this study was to examine the influence of cultural norms on child labour. In order to establish the influence of cultural norms on child labour, respondents were asked to indicate their views on different statements concerning the influence of cultural norms on child labour in Morogoro District. The findings are as presented in Table 1.

Statement	Definitely True		True		Undecided		Not True		Definitely Not True		Total
	f	%	f	%	f	%	f	%	f	%	
The decision of whether or not to send one's child to work has to some extent something to do with cultural norms	142	62.3	0	0	19	8.3	46	20.2	21	9.2	228(100%)
Compliance and obeying cultural norms make children involved in child labour (norm of filial piety)	6	2.6	186	81.6	3	1.3	30	13.2	3	1.3	228 (100%)
If the society has lots of child labour the norm of social stigma (stigma cost) /disapproval is smaller	173	75.9	11	4.8	11	4.8	31	13.6	2	0.9	228 (100%)
Child labour is viewed as component of socialization rather than a form of exploitation	154	67.5	0	0	13	5.7	27	11.8	34	14.9	228 (100%)

Table 1: The Influence of Cultural Norms on Child Labour (N=228)

Source: Field Data (2016)

The data in Table 1 show that 81.6% indicated that compliance and obeying cultural norms ((norm of filial piety)) or respect for one's parents make children involved in child labour indicated that it was definitely. The findings also revealed that 75.9% of the respondents indicated that it was definitely true that if the society has lots of child labour it means that the norm of social stigma (stigma cost) /disapproval is smaller, 67.5% indicated that child labour is viewed as component of socialization rather than a form of exploitation, 62.3% indicated that the decision of whether or not to send one's child to work has to some extent something to do with cultural norms. These findings are supported by different participants who were interviewed. One of them is the District Social Welfare Officer who shared:

It is true that we have the problem of child labour in Morogoro District and other parts of Morogoro in general but according to my opinions the root cause might be not only the question of poverty but I think also some cultural values or norms have influence on child labour. Most communities think that if a child works its part of preparation for him or her to become an independent adult (Interview, DSWO, and June 2016).

Based on the quotation, it can be concluded that imply that apart from poverty in Morogoro District it is cultural norms that push children to work in mines. This conclusion is in tandem with Chamarbagawala and Tchernis (2006), who found that different social cultural norms have influence on child labour. For instance, norms of filial obligations or sometimes called obedience of parents play great role to encourage more children to get involved in child labour. In addition to that Shafiq (2010) revealed that cultural norms have influence on child labour in most societies and can explain why large number of children work in different sectors including the artisanal and small-scale mining. Moreover, Akarro, et al, (2011) in support of this argument said that the cultural aspect for household's head gives the adults authority over children. Therefore, from this perspective it is clear that parents may demand labour from any employing firms and individual employers like mining operators for example and send their children to work because they are regarded as innocent, passive and less troublesome. The results suggest that simply using legislative fiat to combat child labour, it would be more effective to invest energy towards awareness raising campaigns in rural areas where cultural norms are deep rooted.

6. Hypothesis Testing on Influence of Cultural Norms on Child Labour

The second objective of the study was to examine the influence of cultural norms on child labour. Therefore, subsection presents and discusses the findings of this objective of the study. To avoid type 1 error where we can reject H_0 when it is true, the chi square was used to test the hypothesis. Also chi square test was used in order to find out if there is a significant relationship. Therefore, two hypotheses were formed. These are the null hypothesis and the alternative hypothesis because in conducting tests of significance the researcher is attempting to disapprove the null rather than actually 'prove' the alternative (Alston and Bowles, 2003). The hypotheses are stated as follows.

- H_0 : There is no statistically significant relationship between cultural norms and child labour.
- H_{01} : There is statistically significant relationship between cultural norms and child labour.

	Value	df	Asymp. Sig. (2-sided)
Pearson Chi-Square	42.627 ^a	3	.000
Likelihood Ratio	48.047	3	.000
Linear-by-Linear Association	.142	1	.707
N of Valid Cases	228		

Table 2: Chi Square Test Results

Source:Field Data (2016)

a. 2 Cells (25.0%) Have Expected Count Less Than 5. the Minimum Expected Count Is 3.58

The data collected from questionnaires administered to respondents were used to calculate the Chi-square values for the relationship between cultural norms and child labour as shown in Table 2. The Chi-square Test Statistics value got from Table was 42.627 and its level of significance was .000. Since the p-value (.004) got from Table 4.10 was smaller than $\alpha=0.05$ level, then it was unlikely that cultural norms and child labour were independent. The findings did not agree with the null hypothesis (H₀). Therefore, the rejection of this null hypothesis implied that the alternative hypothesis was true. Hence, it was generalized that there was a significant relationship between cultural norms and child labour in ASM Morogoro District. These findings are consistent with the study by Responses from the interview with one of the parents of working children in Rudevelo village exclaimed:

In our culture it is our norm to let our children work for the benefits of the family because in our community working for children is considered as an orientation of a child into an independent adulthood. We don't think it is bad because even our forefathers in their days tried to socialize us in different activities that molded us to be independent mothers and fathers of today. So if we don't socialize them in work they would be lazy.

Underlining this view, another interviewee from Rudevelo Village articulated: In our community, children not only participate in mining activities in order to help their families but are also part of learning different skills that prepare them into adulthood. Children not only work in mines but also in other activities including farming. Children who disobey are regarded as deviants (Interview, WEO2, and June 2016). Generally, the majority of respondents interviewed purported that cultural values plays a critical role in persistence of child labour. The empirical findings are consistent with a study by UNICEF (1991) as cited by Nsohbono (2016) which found that: Many child labour practices are rooted in tradition, making their elimination all the more difficult Bringing about a change in the ethical climate in which such opinions flourished was, and in many case still is, the most difficult part of the long struggle for a more just society. Changing societal attitudes to fit today's ethical standards is a difficult task, for the simple fact that people are reluctant to any change, especially when the roots of what is being changed are deep.

Drawing from the extract, it is clear that combating child labour is a complicated task because the problem is intricately woven into cultural norms that are strongly held by the community and hence they encourage perpetuation of child labour. Furthering this argument, Hilson (2012) observed that child labor now is widespread in many of the region's small-scale mining communities is a product of cultural norms of the society. Child labour is also perpetuated by traditional perceptions of the family and the resultant obligations placed on members in that family. According to Okyre (2012), it is said that local rhetoric suggests that in the African context, a good child is one who obeys their parents and works hard to support themselves and their families (Obeng, 1998). Hence, there it is obvious that there exists a cultural predisposition and acceptance of children's involvement in many forms of work. For instance, in the past, having more children meant having more hands to help on the farm. Beyond tradition, economics also plays a significant role. People just do not have the financial capacity to pay for labour, thus further necessitating the burden placed on children to work for and with their parents. Moreover, some studies point out that view that child labour constitutes a mechanism of instilling in children the spirit of hard work (Bass, 2004). Throughout history, children in most part of the developing world especially Africa have contributed in the form of agricultural labour on farms and even at home to help provide household income. Besides, for parents in many societies, sharing working beliefs with children is a cultural duty to keep the children busy and to make them responsible adults (Delap, 2001). Therefore, the cultural norms is one of the reasons that allow parents to send their children in the labour market. Shafiq et al (2008), in a World Bank study, found that cultural norm is one of the main determinants of persistence of child labour. It was found that indigenous children are far more likely to work than non-indigenous children, regardless of income. These findings also are in agreement with Brusino (2001), who mentioned that traditional African cultural norms or beliefs to encourage the persistence of child labour as parents see children's involvement in any work as a form of preparation for their future occupations. Therefore, from these evidences, it can be concluded that child labour will continue to persist in Tanzania if communities will continue to strongly embrace some cultural norms that encourage child labour. This is true because as it has been documented that most children are encouraged to engage in child labour because of cultural norms, that working is part of preparing children into adulthood.

According to Lopez-Calva (2003) social norms and community factors play important role in influencing both the supply and demand side of child labour. Broadly speaking, they influence the institutional context in which child labour occurs; by making child labour either acceptable or non-acceptable. Societies can socially engineer themselves into different levels of child labour which, once in place, tend to persist. In support of this argument Najeeb et al (2008) said that child labour is mainly rooted in the traditional values and norms. Culturally it is believed that child labour is considered as a form of education through which children are instructed in the work and responsibilities of an adult.

ILO (2016) found that social and cultural norms influence the institutional context in which child labour occurs, by making child work either acceptable or unacceptable, does the lack of awareness within communities about its negative consequences. Children are often expected to follow in their parents' footsteps and are frequently summoned to help other members of the family. Krauss (2013) observed that, social norms can help to explain why children are involved in child labour. In the traditional societies children are being considered as social assets expected to assist and work with their parents in their household chores. Children have been put in apprenticeship to learn the trade of their ancestors and to keep family tradition alive. The cultural aspect for household's head gives the adults authority over children. Parents may demand labour from any employing firms and individual employers and send their children to work because they are considered as innocent, docile and less troublesome (Akkaro et al, 2011).

Many child labour practices are rooted in tradition, making their elimination all the more difficult. According to UNICEF (1991), bringing about a change in the ethical climate in which such opinions flourished was, and in many cases still is, the most difficult part of the long struggle for a more just society. Changing societal attitudes to fit today's ethical standards is a difficult task, for the simple fact that people are reluctant to any change especially when the roots of what is being changed are deep. First of all, traditional African beliefs encourage the persistence of child labour as parents see child work as a form of preparation for their future occupations (Bruscino, 2001). Generally, the findings concur with Cultural Theory based on the 1870 work of a British Anthropologist (Spencer-Oatey 2012), which suggests that the norms, values and beliefs of people of a particular group consist of certain underlying assumptions which are typically unconscious but which actually determine how group members perceive, think and feel (Spencer-Oatey, 2012, pg.3). With reference to child labour Basu and Kaushik (1999), confirms that the decision of whether or not to send one's child to work has, to some extent, something to do with social norms. Parent's decision to send a child to work makes that parent incur a social stigma cost. If the society or area of residence has lots of child labour, the stigma cost is smaller and it may even be advantageous to each parent to send their child to work. On the other hand, if a particular society frowns upon or consider it socially unacceptable for parents sending out their children to work, then most parents would find it embarrassing.

7. Limitations of the Study

This study has a limitation inherent that might hinder the effectiveness of the research process. The main limitations of this study is that it was conducted in Morogoro District only and the small sample size of respondents drawn from within a limited geographic area due to limited time and financial constraints. The population and resulting sample resides in Morogoro District and does not present the population impacted by child labour in other Districts of Morogoro Region. Therefore, any generalisations of the results obtained for this study made should be limited to the population from which the sample was selected and remain specific to the study areas. However, despite this limitation, it is expected that the results could benefit organizations in other Districts of Tanzania which are also working with children involved in ASM.

8. Conclusion and Recommendations

Drawing from the study findings it can be concluded that child labour persists in Tanzania because of some cultural norms that promote child labour. It is hereby recommended that the government through the Department of Social Welfare should conduct awareness raising campaigns against all forms of child labour. Also CSOs should upscale awareness raising programmes on the CRC, the ACRWC and the Law of the Child Act and advocate for change of negative cultural norms and values that affect the welfare of children.

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