International Journal of Trend in Scientific Research and Development (IJTSRD)
Volume 3 Issue 5, August 2019 Available Online: www.ijtsrd.com e-ISSN: 2456 – 6470

Problem Solving Skills As Predictor of Success in Hawking Ventures of Child Workers in Fako Division of The South West Region of Cameroon

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How to cite this paper: Patrick Fonyuy Shey | Patrick Mbicho Monju "Problem Solving Skills As Predictor of Success in Hawking Ventures of Child Workers in Fako Division of The South West Region of Cameroon" Published in International Journal of Trend in Scientific Research and Development (ijtsrd), ISSN: 2456-6470, Volume-3 | Issue-5, August 2019, pp.611-617,
https://doi.org/10.31142/ijtsrd26421

IJTSRD26421

ABSTRACT

This study sought to examine the effect of problem solving skills on success in hawking ventures of child workers in Fako Division of the South West Region of Cameroon. The study adopted the convergent parallel design whereby data was collected using a questionnaire, observation and interview guides. The sample constituted 332child workers selected from five localities in Fako Division of the South West Region of Cameroon. Data was analysed descriptively by calculating frequencies and percentages. Inferential statistics were also employed using the Binary Logistic Regression (Omnibus Tests of Model Coefficient: $\chi 2$) and Explanatory/Predictive Power (Nagelkerke R2). Information from the observation and interview guides was grouped into themes which constituted the unit of analysis. The findings revealed that; problem solving skills have significant influence on child workers success in hawking ventures in Fako Division (Omnibus Tests of Model Coefficient: $\chi 2$=49.933 P=0.000; Nagelkerke R square =0.186). The study showed that child workers use a variety of problem solving strategies like planning, monitoring and setting goals in their working environment to succeed in hawking. The study has also indicated that problem solving skills are also essential cognitive enterprising skills that can be used by entrepreneurs to succeed in business ventures. It was therefore recommended that parents should assist and equally guide their children to engage into meaningful work that would enable them use meaningful problem solving techniques to succeed in their endeavours.

KEYWORDS: *Problem solving skills, predictor, success in hawking ventures and child work.*

INTRODUCTION

It is common to see children hawking in streets, car parks and markets in both rural and urban communities in Cameroon. They carry all sorts of merchandise to sell which enables them to carefully manage, account and communicate with clients to sell their ware. Yet public concerns are raised by Non-Governmental Organizations (NGOs), government agencies as well as the International Labour Organisation (ILO) in relation to the non-respect of the rights of these children as they get involved in work. Liebel (2004) pointed out that advocacy groups and some individuals think children are not given their fundamental rights as they are involved in economic activities rather than just schooling. Nsamenang (1992) however, averred that child work in Africa builds industry in a child and sets the pace for a responsible person in the future as work equips the child with social and responsible intelligence.

Mundy-Castle (1975) reiterates that African cultures socialise and train children through work activities for them to develop social and technological intelligence. Child workers succeed in their hawking ventures by employing a variety of cognitive enterprising skills. These skills are used by the children to improve on their hawking ventures as there is an increase in their communication, planning, marketing operations, management and increase in turnover. Serpell (1984) pointed out that African children develop social responsible intelligence through participation in work activities which is required in problem solving, decision making, and interpersonal relationships (networking).

Despite arguments that children should not be involved in economic activities, many children are still seen hawking different consumable products like snails, “boiled corn”, chips, cakes, “boiled eggs”, puddings and other edible delicacies in streets in Fako Division. Children involved in hawking use different cognitive enterprising skills to succeed in their hawking ventures in the streets as they market their wares. The researchers therefore investigated how problem solving skills as cognitive enterprising skill predict success in hawking ventures of child workers.

Conceptualising problem solving skills

When people get involve in different tasks or problem solving activities they use different cognitive abilities which are goal oriented such that they complete the task or challenge they are facing. Zelazo & Muller (2010) point out that executive function is a broad construct that is important for conscious control of thoughts and action and is reflected in an individual's ability to attend to tasks, inhibit responses, create and follow rules, and solve problems. It is also associated with proficiency in reading, mathematics (Blair & Razza, 2007), and social skills (Blakemore & Choudhury, 2006). As such when children engage in hawking ventures they make use of the executive function in carrying out the basic operations involved. Similarly, the working memory which is a part of the executive function enables the child to manipulate or act on the information that is provided.

Problem solving skills includes posing and solving problems, posing and accomplishing tasks, posing and answering questions, and posing and making decisions. People get better at problem solving through informal and formal education, and through reflective practice (Dunbar, 1998). However when people engage into various tasks and activities in their daily life they make use of their mental abilities to manipulate the world around them and accomplish tasks. Goldstein (2005) is of the opinion that problem solving is a process which requires an individual to employ a variety of mental skills that makes use of knowledge. Problem solving draws on all mental processes of perception, attention, decision making and memory (Newell & Simon, 1972). It is therefore imperative for individuals to come out with plan actions in other to attain their goals of problem solving. Newell & Simon (1972) also posit that planning to solve a problem enables mental map to the solution to be established which entails numerous paths that might be taken to reach the goal.

Child workers use three cognitive strategies of planning, monitoring, and evaluating to solve problems they encounter in the work environment. Schraw & Moshman, (1995) stated that planning includes the selection of appropriate strategies and the allocation of appropriate resources that affect performance in the work environment. Instances include making predictions before doing a task, sequencing strategies, and allocating time or thoughtfulness selectively before starting a specific task (Green & Gilhooly, 2005). Monitoring refers to one's regular awareness of comprehension and presentation of a task.

However, Schraw & Moshman (1995) indicated that monitoring ability develops quite slowly in children and even in adults. Green & Gilhooly (2005) view evaluation as the process of assessing the products and regulatory processes of learning or work activities. Also it is the outcome of assessing comprehension or completion of a task by assessing the outcome of comprehension or the learning processes after accomplishing a task. Thus child workers assess and conclude on their goals after a specific task is completed.

Swanson, Lussier & Orosco (2015) revealed that children acquire and use problem solving skills if a good strategy is employed that stimulates their working memory. Similarly, Adams, Alvarez, Puyo, Medina & Cruz (2018), found that older children equally used different problem solving techniques to manipulate and overcome tasks at hand. Again, Boonen, Van Wesel, Jolles & van der Schoot (2014) disclosed that children who make a visual representation of problems, those who produced an accurate visual-schematic representation increase their chances of solving a word problem correctly almost six times. Inaccurate visual-schematic and pictorial representations, on the other hand, decreased students' chances of problem solving success.

Özsoya & Ataman (2009) indicated that students' use of planning and monitoring strategies significantly improved in both mathematical problem solving achievement and metacognitive skills. Furthermore Aziz, Fletcher & Bayliss (2016) revealed that children with poor planning do not perform well in problem solving. Still a study carried out by van der Niet, Smith, Scherder, Oosterlaan, Hartman & Visscher (2014) indicated that more time spent in sedentary behaviour was related to worse inhibition ($r = -0.24$) and a higher total volume of physical activity was associated with better planning ability, as reflected by both a higher score on the Tower of London ($r = 0.24$) and a shorter total execution time ($r = -0.29$).

The concept of child work

The Africentric perspective sees a child as an active and integral part of society, who, along with peers, parents, family members and others makes a contribution to society with his or her daily actions (Lo-oh & Monju, 2018). Bourdillon (2000) further views childhood as a transitory stage of development in the human life cycle that ranges from a state of total disability and dependence of infants to the level of independence at adulthood and notes that children gradually acquire competencies as they grow and interact with others. It is interesting to note that the child's developing personality also affects their thinking.

According to Bourdillon (2009) child work is a socialisation process which provides children with new opportunities to acquire skills and knowledge in order to cope in their socio-cultural life. Child work provides education and training to the children as they learn through imitating and participating in work activities. Thorsen (2014) avers that work provide children with practical and social skills needed in growing up. Therefore, work trains children to adapt to their environment. Tchombe (2011) posits that children of the Bamilike land in Cameroon accompany their parents to farms and in the market places to acquire farm skills and market skills which are considered essential for child rearing among the Bamilike community of Cameroon.

Child work is not a new phenomenon in the world as Lieten (2003) opined that in pre-industrial period, it was common to see children helping out with agriculture and hunting, taking more and more responsibility as they grew older. Lieten (2009) also asserts that apprenticeship was the basic way children were educated in the pre-industrial time. Through work activities children were assigned to different tasks and they made use of their cognitive skills to arrive at possible solutions to the challenges they were facing. Also children were further found to work in factories during the industrial revolution, where children were used as labourers, especially in factories and mining. Fyfe (1989) confirms this by stating that industrialization did not invent child work but it instead intensified and transformed it. The use of children in factories indicates that children had

cognitive abilities to learn work processes and equally use the cognitive skills mastered to solve problems they were faced with in the work environment.

Child work has always been an integral part of the African society and Cameroon in particular from pre-historic time (Bass, 2004). Parents involved their children in their daily work routines in weaving of baskets, blacksmithing, trading, traditional medicine, hunting, building, carpentry, cattle rearing, tapping of palm wine, bee farming, and fishing. Serpell (1977) pointed out that, children in African communities make use of both technological and practical intelligence to carry out their daily errands. Thus children use their cognitive skills of problem solving, thinking, memory, attention, decision making, and critical thinking as they are faced with challenges within their environment.

Nsamenang (2011) opined that every African culture invests in children, not as an end state but in recognition that variation among today's adults is an outcome of diversity of experience in their childhood. He also sees children as buds of hope and uses the metaphor of virgin gardens to describe them. Similarly, Nsamemang (1992) points out that children growing up in Africa have age appropriate developmental tasks assigned to them within the family and community. This shows that children at an early age in African communities are trained to use their cognitive skills to perform different tasks within the families.

Street hawking as a business venture

Aiyehuro (2009) states that hawking is a system of trading whereby the trader carries his wares about. Thus street hawking according to this study refers to a wandering like movement in which an individual carries his or her goods with a tray on the head or by means of transportation such as wheel barrow, bicycle or trolley in search of customers. Street hawking (vending) is one of the most visible activities in the informal economy and is found everywhere in the world, both in developed and developing countries. Bhowmik (2005) sees street vendors as self-employed workers in the informal economy who are either stationary or mobile. He stated that a street vendor is a person trading from the street who offers goods for sale to the public without having a permanent built-up structure from which to sell. Thus street hawkers are individuals who are mobile and at times stationed in specific locations in the streets to sell their wares to customers.

Bromley (2000) outlined that the location of trade is the streets and other related public axes such as alleyways, avenues and boulevards. Similarly, Mitullah (2004) describes street trade as an activity which takes place outside enclosed premises or covered workspaces on street pavements, sidewalks, but also at bus stops and in other public places. Therefore, street hawking involves all the selling activities which people engage into in the streets as they move from one spot to another in search of clients or to market their products to different customers.

As hawkers engage in their selling venture they have as a primary purpose to make profit. This enables them to plan, set goals, think of how to get customers and equally manage the customers through their marketing strategies in order to sell all their products. Hills and LaForge (1992) stated that marketing activities and entrepreneurial activities have much in common and are equated to the ability to sell with entrepreneurial success. Child workers succeed in hawking as they manage resources and clients, protect products, make profit from sales and equally sell all the products as well as knowing how to account and protect for the money made. Thus success in hawking venture by child workers is evident as they make profit, sell all products, relate well with customers, manage their wares and money sold as well as stays discipline in the market environment.

Theoretically the study would benefited from the theory of mind of David Premack and Guy Woodruff (1978) and the social ontogenesis theory of Bame Nsamenang (1992), According to Premack & Woodruff (1978) the theory of mind refers to the everyday ability to attribute independent mental states (ideas, beliefs, desires conceptions, passions, wills, tendencies, knowledge) to self and others in order to predict and explain behaviour. It explains how we understand and explain our own and others' actions by reference to mental states, such as 'desiring', 'knowing' and 'believing'. The theory of mind explains how intentions, beliefs, perceptions, desires, knowledge and thoughts are used by child workers in problem solving as they make use of their mental states to interpret and predict events in the work environment.

Nsamenang (1992) in his social ontogenetic theory that throughout ontogeny, children are co-participants in social and cultural lives. The theory anchors human development as partly determined by the social ecology in which development occurs and by how the human being learns and develops. The social apprentice stage is characterised by the child's initiation into social roles, expected to recognize, cognize and rehearse social roles. The theory explains how African children are socialised to culturally acceptable practices which they acquire and use specific skills through developmental task assigned to them.

Methodology

The area of study was Fako Division of the South West Region of Cameroon and it is situated in the South WestRegion of Cameroon. Data was collected inurban and semi-urban settlements in Limbe, Buea, Mutengene, and Idenau and Tiko Localities. According to Fonjong (2004) these localities are growing urbanareas with population generally exceeding 5,000 inhabitants, whose dominant activity is farming and pettytrading. Culturally, most of the inhabitants of Fako are from diverse backgrounds who share the same beliefs ofproper and responsible upbringing of their children through work.

The study used the mixed method specifically the convergent parallel design to obtain a variety of information on the same issue and to usethe strengths of each method to overcome the deficiencies of the other on the phenomenon under investigation (Creswell and Plano Clark, 2011. The target population of the study consisted of 2000 school-going children (males and females) between the ages six (06) to twelve (12) years old in Fako Division. The purposive and incidental sampling technique was used to recruit child workers met in the streets, bars and motor parks.

A questionnaire was used to obtain quantitative data. The interview and observation guides were used to obtain qualitative data. The questionnaire was structured into sections based on the objectives of the study. It consisted

ofstatements rated on a four point Likert scale (Strongly agreed = 4, agreed = 3, disagreed = 2 and strongly disagreed = 1). The interview guide consisted of items to elicit information also based on the objectives of the study. Data was analysed descriptively by calculating frequencies and percentages of each indicator on a theme and inferentially by using Logistic Regression using the Omnibus test of model coefficient and Nagelkerke R-squared predictive power. Interview and observation data were grouped into themes which constituted the unit of analysis and the voices of the interviewees were further brought out.

Findings

Success in hawking ventures of child workers

Table 1: Child workers characterization of successes in hawking venture

Perceived successes in hawking ventures	Agreed		Disagreed	
	n	%	n	%
Always finish selling products	322	97.0	10	03.0
Sell products and rush back home to add.	324	97.6	08	02.4
Increased the goods sold everyday	323	97.3	09	02.7
Make profit after selling products	324	97.6	08	02.4
Gain from sales every day.	322	97.0	10	03.0
Save money every day from the profit made	320	96.4	12	03.6
Have a good relationship with customers	325	97.9	07	02.1
Know how to interact and talk with people in the market	326	98.2	06	01.8
Often assist friends to sell when my products are finished	320	96.4	12	03.6
Often create time in the market to rest	319	96.1	13	03.9
Prepare balance sheet statement after selling.	324	97.6	08	02.4
Manage and keep money with care after selling such that it cannot be missing	328	98.8	04	01.2
MRS	**3877**	**97.3**	**107**	**02.7**

The findings on table 1 above indicate that child workers are successful in their hawking ventures as they always finish selling products. They sell products and rush back home to take more. Also, the quantity of goods they sell increases every day. Furthermore, a majority of the child workers (97.3%) agreed they make profit after selling their goods. Likewise, a good number (97.6%) agreed that they gain from sales every day. This shows that child workers succeed in making profit daily from their sales. Similarly, the findings show that respondents succeed in managing resources as they get engaged in their hawking venture. That is they manage money, materials they handle and other people which indicate they are succeeding in their hawking venture. Correspondingly a greater majority of the respondents (97.6%) agreed that they prepare balance sheet statements after selling that is they take stock of how much they have sold and the quantity of goods left. Likewise, many respondents (98.8%) agreed that they manage and keep money with care after selling such that the money cannot be missing. The multiple responses set indicated that a majority of the respondents (97.3%) succeed in their hawking venture while very few (02.7%) disagreed.

Interviews and observations conducted further revealed that child workers succeed in their hawking ventures as they stated that they were succeeding in their selling activities. The child workers also stated that they were succeeding because they finish selling their goods on daily basis, make a profit from their sales, save money, and have increased the quantity of goods sold. They also said they do not mishandle the goods they sell but they handle them with care. According to them, they know how to interact freely with customers and peers as they are selling. One of the child workers stated "…I am succeeding in my selling activities because I finish my goods daily and I make profit and give my parents money to save." This shows that child workers succeed very well in their hawking ventures.

Problem solving skills and success in hawking ventures of child workers

Table 2: Child workers characterization of problem solving skills they used to succeed in hawking venture

Perceived problem solving skills	Agreed		Disagreed	
	n	%	n	%
Focus on selling details in the market	317	95.5	15	04.5
Follow steps in the market to sell	318	95.8	14	04.2
Do work in the market that will yield profit	322	97.0	10	03.0
Plan selling activities and follow them through in the market	322	97.0	10	03.0
Often persist to sell products as such look for customers	318	95.8	14	04.2
Like to work with others in the market to sell products	318	95.8	14	04.2
Like to always complete selling in the market	319	96.1	13	03.9
Always go to areas that have potential customers	319	96.1	13	03.9
Always count money to know the balance after selling	319	96.1	13	03.9
Always handle the goods sold with care.	317	95.5	15	04.5
Always do a balance sheet of what has been sold and the goods remaining in order to know the quantity sold.	316	95.2	16	04.8
Always reflect on particular styles that can be used to sell all products with ease.	320	96.4	12	03.6
Multiple responses set (MRS)	**3825**	**96.0**	**159**	**04.0**

The findings on table 2 above reveal that a majority (95.5%) of the child workers agreed that they focus on selling details in the market. Also, many of them (95.8%) agreed that they follow steps in the market to sell. Likewise, a great number (97.0%) agreed that they do work in the market that will yield profit. In the same way many indicated that they plan selling activities and follow them through in the market. Equally, respondents (96.1%) agreed that they always go to areas that have potential customers. Moreover, they always count money to know the balance after selling; handle the goods sold with care and do a balance sheet of what has been sold and the goods remaining in order to know the quantity sold. This shows that child workers use monitoring strategies as they engage in the hawking venture. Additionally, the multiple responses set indicate that a greater majority (96.0%) of the child workers agreed that they use problem solving skills to succeed in their hawking ventures.

Furthermore, interviews and observations carried out indicated that child workers use a variety of problem solving skills in hawking. The problem solving skills employed were planning, monitoring and goal setting strategies to get customers to buy their wares such that they can succeed in selling their goods. According to them, the strategies they use in selling include: look for customers to present the products they are selling, plan where to find customers particularly in parks, bar areas and in market areas, they call the attention of customers by shouting out the product which they are selling, move closer to customers to show them what they are selling and listen attentively to customers when talking and equally smiling with customers. One of the child workers pointed out that "…I always call the attention of customers by pronouncing what I sell; at times I look for customers and move towards the customers to show them what I am selling… I often listen attentively and smile with the customers all the times." Another stated that "…I always pronounce the product I am selling and I move towards customers for them to see what I am selling and I tell them that the good is nice …I tell them that I will add a bonus to what they buy." The effect of problem solving skills on child workers success in hawking ventures was appraised using Logistic Regression Model as found on table 3 below.

Table 3: Model fitting information and predictive power for the predictive component problem solving on success in hawking ventures of child workers

Likelihood Ratio test	Omnibus Tests of Model Coefficients	Explanatory/predictive power of the model (Pseudo R-Square) based on Nagelkerke R Square
χ2=46.701 df=12 P=0.000	χ2=49.933 df=12 P=0.000	0.186

*Dependent variable: success in hawking ventures.

The variability explained by this model was significant (Omnibus Test of Model Coefficient: χ2=49.933; df=12; P=0.000). This was supported by the Likelihood Ratio Test (P<0.05). This therefore implies that this problem solving significantly predicts success in hawking ventures of child workers with an Explanatory Power (EP) / Predictive Power of 18.6% (Nagelkerke R Square=0.186). Generally, if better problem solving skills are used by the child workers the success in hawking venture would greatly increase. To further ascertain the predictive power of problem solving skills the Wald statistics was used to determine the contributions of the individual predictors of problem solving skills as indicated on table 4 below.

Table 4: Predictive effect of individual predictors of problem solving skills on success in hawking ventures of child workers

Problem solving skills	B	S.E.	Wald	Df	Sig.
Focus on selling details in the market	-.813	.444	3.363	1	.067
Follow steps in the market to sell	-.415	.486	.727	1	.394
Do work in the market that will yield profit	.418	.425	.970	1	.325
Plan selling activities and follow them through in the market	.037	.391	.009	1	.925
Often persist to sell products as such look for customers	.018	.394	.002	1	.963
Like to work with others in the market to sell products	-.359	.407	.779	1	.377
Like to always complete selling in the market	-.319	.447	.509	1	.475
Always go to areas that have potential customers	1.191	.475	6.275	1	.012
Always count money to know the balance after selling	1.291	.433	8.875	1	.003
Always handle the goods sold with care.	.137	.451	.092	1	.762
Always do a balance sheet of what has been sold and the goods remaining in order to know the quantity sold.	.640	.443	2.086	1	.149
Always reflect on particular styles that can be used to sell all products with ease.	.769	.294	6.845	1	.009

The results from table 4 above indicate that out of the 12 predictors making out the predictive component 'problem solving skills', three significantly emerged as predictors of success in hawking ventures of child workers at significant levels (P<0.05). The predictors were child workers always go to areas that have potential customers. This shows that as child workers persist to look for customers, the more they succeed in their hawking ventures as the sales would increase. Secondly, child workers always count money to know the balance after selling. This shows that as child workers the more they persist on making more profit as such they tend to succeed in increasing their sales. Thirdly, child workers always reflect on particular styles that can be used to sell all products with ease. This shows that if more strategies are used by child workers to sell their products they tend to succeed in selling as such the success in hawking ventures would increase. All other predictors as shown in table 4 above had weak predictive powers on the success in hawking ventures of child workers at P < 0.05.

Discussion of findings

The findings revealed that problem solving skills have a significant effect on the success in hawking ventures of child workers in Fako Division. The findings also indicated that, child workers in Fako Division actively use different problem solving skills which include: focusing on details in the market when selling, following steps in the market to sell, doing work in the market that will give them profit, plan selling activities and follow the plan through, persist to sell products by looking for customers, work with others in the market to sell the products, always complete selling products, always visit areas they would find customers, always count money after selling to note the balance, handle goods they are selling with care, do a balance sheet of what they have sold to know goods remaining and check particular styles that can make them sell all their products.

More so, it was discovered that all the aforementioned problem solving skills used by child workers consisted of typical problem solving skills strategies which among others includes: of planning, monitoring and goals set to arrive at the solution. These are typical problem solving techniques which people mostly use in solving daily problems they encounter. The techniques employed are equally used by people to overcome and cope with difficulties that they face. This shows that child workers are also involved in a variety of problem solving skills and techniques to cope and succeed in their selling ventures.

Furthermore, observations carried out indicated that child workers pronounced and show the customers the products they were selling and when customers are passing without looking at the products, they make sounds to capture the attention of customer.

Interviews with child workers further indicated that they employed problem solving skills to succeed in their hawking ventures as they made used of planning, monitoring and goal setting strategies to get customers to buy their wares or goods. They indicated that they looked for customers to present the products, they plan where to find customers particularly in parks, bar areas and in market areas, they call the attention of customers by shouting out the product which they are selling, they also moved closer to customers to show them what they are selling. They further indicated that they always smile when approaching customers such that they can buy from them; they listen attentively to hear if customers were talking to them. Still they pointed out that they always hold their goods with care to prevent the goods from falling and getting bad. Again they stated that they count money carefully before giving customers the difference.

The findings are consistent with the findings of Swanson, Lussier, & Orosco (2015) who found that children acquire and use problem solving skills if a good strategy is employed to stimulate the working memory. This shows that the various problem solving skills used by child workers in the market are strategies they employ to keep their working memory active such that they can succeed in their hawking venture in the work environment.

Still the findings are in line with the findings of Adams, Alvarez, Puyo, Medina, & Cruz (2018) found that older children used different problem solving techniques to manipulate and overcome tasks at hand as the older children could employ different techniques to solve problems. This shows that through active engagement of child workers in planning, monitoring and setting goals in the work environment they device different strategies and techniques through their problem solving skills to succeed in their hawking venture in the streets, motor parks, bars and market corridors as they sell.

Also the findings are coherent with the findings of Boonen, Van Wesel, Jolles, & van der Schoot (2014), who found that, children with mental representation of a concept would succeed in problem solving. This shows that child workers conceive selling activities and plan how they would go about exploring and looking for customers to market their products to them. These mental representations employed by child workers enable them to use a variety of problem solving skills to succeed in their hawking ventures as they navigate the streets, motor parks and bars looking for customers.

In addition, the findings of this study are uniform to the findings of Aziz, Fletcher, & Bayliss (2016) who found out that, children with good planning are succeed in solving problems they encounter while children with poor planning are poor in problem solving. This shows that as child workers employ different problem solving skills strategies of planning, setting goals on how to meet customers and monitoring where to find customers they succeed in their hawking ventures as they finish selling their products, make profit, increase the quantity of goods they sell on daily basis and interact freely with customers and equally protect and keep their wares and money safe from missing in the market.

The findings are in line with the theory of mine of Premack and Woodruff (1978). This theory explains how intentions, beliefs, perceptions, desires, knowledge and thoughts are used by child workers to solve problems as they make use of their mental states to interpret and predict events in the work environment. This enables child workers to think of where to find customers, to approach customers and present their goods to them.

The findings are also similar to Nsamenang's (1992) social ontogenesis theory that explains how children engaged in age appropriate developmental tasks which require them to solve problems and engage in meaningful and responsible work activities and become successful as they engage in the tasks. This shows that child workers use problem solving skills to succeed in their tasks of selling in other to be recognized and celebrated within their families as hardworking children.

Concluding remarks

The study has proven that problem solving skills are used by child workers to succeed in their hawking ventures in Fako Division. This is evident as children observe, pay attention, symbolizes, reflect and regulate their behaviours in the hawking environment. Child workers outlined that they use effective planning, set goals and employ monitoring techniques which are good problem solving strategies to succeed in their hawking ventures. The findings have shown

that problem solving skill is a skill which child workers use to succeed in their hawking ventures in Fako Division of the South West Region of Cameroon as they plan, monitor, set goals and communicate effectively with customers. The study therefore shows that problem solving skills which are used by entrepreneurs and business people to succeed in business are equally employed by child workers to succeed in hawking ventures. It is therefore important to note that African parents through socialisation of their children and through different developmental tasks helps the children to use practical intelligence and social intelligence to engage in meaningful problem solving. Thus child work provides a platform for children to use cognitive enterprising skills.

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