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FACULTÉ DES ARTS, LETTRES ET
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DÉPARTEMENT
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FACULTY OF ARTS, LETTERS AND
SOCIAL SCIENCES

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POST GRADUATE SCHOOL FOR
SOCIAL AND EDUCATIONAL
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ANTHROPOLOGY

**CULTURE AND CHILDHOOD EMPLOYMENT IN YAOUNDE: A
CONTRIBUTION TO ANTHROPOLOGY OF DEVELOPMENT.**

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My

Dear Parents: Late **Mr. FRANCIS NDZI** and **Mrs. PATIENCE NYA**

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ABSTRACT

This study titled, **Culture and Childhood Employment in Yaounde: A Contribution to Anthropology of Development** sets out to explore the nature of childhood employment in Yaounde, to verify whether the nature of childhood employment in Yaounde is in such that children's fundamental rights are being violated, to understand the role culture plays on childhood employment in Yaounde, to discover what the local population of Yaounde perceive about the phenomenon and why they engage children in childhood employment and to find out how this phenomenon is practiced. The United Nations Convention on the Rights of a Child adopted in 1989 sets limits on what children can and cannot do. Despite the fact that Cameroon is a signatory of this convention, the rate of childhood employment in Yaounde is still on the rise (ILO 1999). Our research design was qualitative using methods and techniques. We made use of interviews as our data collection method applying multiple research techniques like documentary research, in-depth interviews, life histories and observation, carried out a one on one interview with people who had experience. A direct and indirect observation of the practice was carried out. More to that, internet websites were searched to collect information in relation to our study. We observed, recorded and produced transcripts, quoted the transcripts and analyzed them thematically. A manual analysis was conducted on the data. The thematic interpretation of this data enabled us to seek and identify the meanings of the emergent themes. The theories of Culture and Personality and Functionalism help us to interpret the data. The results of our exploration revealed that children are active labourers in the labour market in Yaounde irrespective of international resolutions that Cameroon has ratified, that Cameroonian households are comfortable with children working to earn an income. We also discovered that childhood employment is a cultural phenomenon in Yaounde. However, we realized that people in Yaounde have the feeling that childhood employment should have some limits. That is, the state and stakeholders require a holistic approach in the management of the nature of the phenomenon. This research is qualitative; therefore the analytical claim is qualitative and restricted to Yaounde. Therefore the analytical claims may be limited to what obtains in Yaounde and related towns. Research on a larger scale that considers using quantitative approach may be revealed of the childhood employment situation in Cameroon.

Key words: Culture, Childhood employment, Anthropology of Development, Yaounde.

Cette étude intitulée "Culture et emploi des enfants à Yaoundé : une contribution à l'anthropologie du développement" se propose d'explorer la nature de l'emploi des enfants à Yaoundé, de vérifier si la nature de l'emploi des enfants à Yaoundé est telle que les droits fondamentaux des enfants sont violés, de comprendre le rôle que joue la culture sur l'emploi des enfants à Yaoundé, de découvrir ce que la population locale de Yaoundé perçoit du phénomène et pourquoi elle engage les enfants dans l'emploi des enfants et de découvrir comment ce phénomène est pratiqué. La Convention des Nations Unies sur les droits de l'enfant adoptée en 1989 fixe des limites à ce que les enfants peuvent et ne peuvent pas faire. Malgré le fait que le Cameroun soit signataire de cette convention, le taux d'emploi des enfants à Yaoundé est très élevé (OIT 1999). Notre conception de la recherche a été qualitative en utilisant des méthodes et des techniques. Nous avons utilisé des entretiens comme méthode de collecte de données en appliquant plusieurs techniques de recherche comme la recherche documentaire, les entretiens approfondis, les histoires de vie et l'observation. Nous avons procédé à un entretien individuel avec des personnes qui avaient de l'expérience et nous avons fait une observation directe et indirecte de la pratique. Nous avons également effectué des recherches sur des sites Internet afin de recueillir des informations en rapport avec notre étude. Nous avons observé, enregistré et produit des transcriptions, cité ces transcriptions et procédé à une analyse thématique. Une analyse manuelle a été menée sur les données en utilisant des théories. L'interprétation thématique de ces données nous a permis de rechercher et d'identifier les significations des thèmes émergents. Les théories de la culture et de la personnalité et du fonctionnalisme nous aident à interpréter et à analyser les données. Les résultats de notre exploration ont révélé que les enfants sont des travailleurs actifs sur le marché du travail à Yaoundé indépendamment des résolutions internationales que le Cameroun a ratifiées, que les ménages camerounais sont à l'aise avec le fait que les enfants travaillent pour gagner un revenu. Nous avons également découvert que l'emploi des enfants est un phénomène culturel à Yaoundé. Cependant, nous avons réalisé que les gens à Yaoundé ont le sentiment que l'emploi des enfants devrait avoir certaines limites. C'est-à-dire que l'Etat et les parties prenantes ont besoin d'une approche holistique dans la gestion de la nature du phénomène. Cette recherche est qualitative ; par conséquent, la revendication analytique est qualitative et limitée à Yaoundé. Par conséquent, les revendications analytiques peuvent être limitées à ce qui se passe à Yaoundé et dans les villes connexes. Une recherche à plus grande échelle qui envisagerait d'utiliser une approche quantitative pourrait révéler la situation de l'emploi des enfants au Cameroun.

Mots clés : Culture, Emploi des enfants, Anthropologie du développement, Yaoundé.

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LIST OF ACRONYMS AND INITIALS

ACRONYMS

MINIDUB	: Ministry of Basic Education
SONARA	: National Oil Refinery
UNICEF	: United Nations International Children's Emergency Fund
UNESCO	: United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organisation.
CEF	: Child Evangelism Fellowship
AIDS	: Acquired Immune Deficiency Syndrome
GEPS	: Government English Practicing School
CAMSUCO	: Cameroon Sugar Company
WHO	: World Health Organisation
NAMM	: National Association of Music Merchants
SOCACAO	: Cameroon Cocoa Company
DAC	: Day of the African Child
MOLSS	: Ministry of Labour and Social Security
WASH	: Water, Sanitation and Hygiene

INITIALS

GDP	: Gross Domestic Product.
UNAID	: United States Agency For International Development.
USA	: United States of America.
SDGs	: Sustainable Development Goal.
CDC	: Cameroon Development Cooperation.
AAA	: American Anthropological Association.
PTO	: Paid Time Off.
PTA	: Parents Teachers Association.
GCE	: General Certificate of Education.
C.H.E	: Childhood Employment.
CNPS	: National Social Insurance Fund.
CRTV	: Cameroon Radio Television
IDPs	: Internally Displaced Persons.

CBCYSD : Cameroon Baptist Convention Youths and Students Department
HIV : Human Immune Virus.
GBV : Gender Based Violence.
STDs : Sexually Transmissible Diseases.

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GENERAL INTRODUCTION

This general introduction captures a global view of childhood and later on it narrows down to Yaounde and then ends with the research topic. From a global point of view, cultural, political, economic, social, environmental and religious differences have all unanimously positioned childhood at a certain level in the community. These levels vary from society to society and from nation to nation. Childhood employment, on the most part has not generally been appreciated by all societies. Unregulated childhood employment has faced serious condemnation from national and international bodies. Public and private opinions have also on the greater part seen childhood employment as a threat to the family, economic progress, pride of the nation, and worst a violation of children's right. Childhood employment when not regulated restricts the right of children to access and benefit from education and denies the fundamental opportunity to attend school and other benefits of childhood. Childhood employment, thus, prejudices children's education and adversely affects their health and safety. Its consequences are just too much on the child, family and the nation. Childhood (5 – 18 years) employment is of course a universal problem though experienced differently in different parts of the world. This stems from varying socio cultural, economic and political reasons. Looking at culture and childhood employment from a specific point of view, Cameroon and Yaounde in particular are an integral part of the world facing the same challenges, though in its own uniqueness. This needs to be investigated. That is why the study will be focused on Culture and Childhood Employment in Yaounde: A Contribution to Anthropology of Development.

0.1. Context.

This research was carried out in the field of anthropology, notably anthropology of development on “Culture and Childhood Employment in Yaounde: A Contribution to anthropology of development”. The review gathered from other authors below will better explain the context of this research.

Culture and childhood employment is not a new topic when one looks at it from a global perspective. That is, researchers have done much concerning childhood employment in the world, Africa and Cameroon in particular but few researchers have concentrated on my area of interest which is Yaounde. These research works on the most part are not done from the anthropological look nor are they contributing to Anthropology of Development in particular. To give this research

work credibility and uniqueness, the works of other researchers were reviewed and considered. To this effect, we have been able to go through or across multiple studies on Culture and Childhood employment which either directly or indirectly deals with the target area:-Yaounde, therefore providing us with enough literature review needed for this study.

The Cameroon labour code (1992) gives a clear demarcation of who should get employment and at what age. This Labour code also gives general provisions on contracts of employment, individual contracts of employment, wages, conditions of employment, hours of work, employment of women and children, just to name a few. In Chapter III – Employment of Women, Young persons and Children: Section 86:(1) states clearly that “no child shall be employed in an enterprise as an apprentice before the age of 14 (fourteen) years except as otherwise authorized by order of the minister in charge of labour, taking account of local conditions and the jobs which the children may be asked to do. This has given us the measuring tape and bases to determine childhood employment in Cameroon and Yaounde in particular, as well as determine what age is considered as under aged employment in Cameroon (age 5 to 18 years)

0.2. Justification.

According to A.P.A Dictionary of Psychology, Childhood is the period between the end of infancy (about 2 years of age) and the onset of puberty, marking the beginning of adolescence (10–12 years of age). This period is sometimes divided into (a) early childhood, from 2 years through the preschool age of 5 or 6 years; (b) middle childhood, from 6 to 8–10 years of age; and (c) late childhood or preadolescence, which is identified as the 2-year period before the onset of puberty. According to U.S. anthropologist Bogin (1950), Childhood is the period between 3 or 4 years of age and about 7 years of age. In this context, childhood represents the period after weaning and before children can fend for themselves. Childhood in this more technical sense is unique to humans; other mammals advance directly from infancy to juvenility. This period in human growth is very delicate to the future of the child, the family and the community as a whole. The employment of children under aged has adverse effects; ignoring these effects will not just be harmful to the child but the society as well. I will be justifying this work base on two premises as follows; scientific and personal justifications.

0.2.2. Personal Justification.

As a student and at the same time a teacher, I have witnessed cases of children not performing well in school. This partly due to the fact that they have to combine their studies and work at the same time. While moving along the streets in Yaounde, watching news on television especially the national TV, I equally observed that many children ages 5-18 years are involved in one area of employment or the other. My observations and understanding of the reports showed me that these children are employed illegally; which has consequences. For example I saw a girl child of about 10 years being sexually molested by someone old enough to be her father. This happened as she was hawking along the streets of Obili – Yaounde 6 about 6:45pm. I then imagined what could be happening to these children as a result of such engagements into work at an early age. Just observing her I noticed that she was bitter about the act but was completely helpless and fragile. I am and was greatly moved by these observations and reports to explore the nature of childhood employment in Yaounde.

I also believe that my research work will go to add more weight to other reports, observations, and research works. This research will be of great use in the management of the effects of childhood employment in Yaounde in particular and the world at large. Likewise regulate the activity in such a way that children's rights are fully respected.

0.2.1. Scientific Justification.

According to the 2019 reports on ‘The Worst Forms of Child Labour’ in Cameroon by the international Labour Organization (ILO), (1999) the following statistics exists in Cameroon concerning the employment of children age 5 to 18 years. 43.7% are working, 80% attending school, 42.4 combining school and work, and 64.5% completes primary school. 6 – 13 years work in agriculture, livestock and fishing, 3 to 15 years work in artisanal gold mines and gravel quarries, construction, etc., 7 to 16 years do domestic work, 8 – 16 work in restaurants and phone booths, etc. Cameroon by this report made a moderate advancement in efforts to eliminate the worst forms of child labour. These statistics from the ILO sets a good pace for this study giving a clear proof of an existing problem in Cameroon on a general basis.

According to Edward G. J. Stevenson and Carol M (2014), Worthman in a hand book titled child wellbeing: Anthropological perspectives; child well-being is addressed variedly across a wide range of cultures and settings. This broad perspective according to them is necessary because cultures vary widely both in care, practice and in definitions of child wellbeing. Anthropologists have derived models to explain variation in child development and well-being in relation to factors not only at the level of the caregiver or household, but also at the level of the broader environment (example political, economy and ecology). These models pay special attention to culture both as a determinant of resource distribution within societies and as a source of ideologies that inform and motivate actions, including patterns of child-rearing. Relevant anthropological models can be grouped into two classes: heuristic models to be applied within particular cultures and predictive models to be applied across time or across cultures. Looking at this review, one only sees reason why this study has to be carried out in Yaounde on Culture and Childhood employment indirectly linked to the review.

Having a critical look of the paragraphs above, we see that no research work has specifically covered our area and interest of study. The literature stands patchy with gaps, a perfect guarantee for our study. This study therefore stands out different in that it centers on Culture and Childhood Employment in Yaounde making it unique from the others. The approach of this studies is holistic (children and other age groups are to be fully investigated in this study). More so, this study seeks to explore the nature of childhood employment and it's practices in Yaounde despite all efforts made by the state and other partners involved directly or indirectly with children to contain the practice.

0.3. Research Problem.

More than a quarter of a century after the United Nations General Assembly adopted the Convention on the Rights of the Child in 1989, the global phenomenon of Childhood Employment remains the subject of significant political and media discussion (Boutin, 2012). This is due to the fact that the coercive legislative tools in place, as well as the incentives offered to eradicate or at least limit childhood employment or child labour have not so far been able to reduce its prevalence. Indeed, recent estimates have shown that around 121 million children age 5 to 14 (9.9%) are currently working around the world (Diallo et al, 2013). In Africa particularly south of the Sahara,

the situation is worrying because, according to the same authors, 21.7% of children within this age are working in this region. In Cameroon, for instance, the employment rate of children age 5 – 14 years has nearly doubled in less than 10 years, jumping from 14.3% in 2001 to 28.8% in 2007. Looking at the Cameroon Labour Code Section 86: (1) of 1992, the employment of children ages 5 to 14 years is prohibited. The case of Yaounde of recent can be disturbing due to the influx of families including children from the two restive regions of the North West and South West, seeking refuge and survival at all cost. Childhood employment deprive children of many of their basic rights, exposes them to all sorts of dangers, ranging from financial, sexual, and time exploitation to rape, child trafficking, and the list is long. It is also a big threat to the future of the family and the nation. The question is; what is really the nature of childhood employment in Yaounde? Considering national and international efforts in containing it and its consequences on the victims and the society at large. Not forgetting the fundamental rights of a child.

0.4. Statement of the Problem.

Childhood is a period of socialisation (primary socialisation in the family and secondary socialisation at school and in the society), elementary education, and dependence on parents or guardians for nutritional, health, and moral up-bringing. Children 5 to 18 years are to be well protected and their rights respected to guarantee a bright future for them and the society at large. Unfortunately in the world, Africa, Cameroon and Yaounde in particular, some children of ages 5 to 18 years do not have or enjoy these privileges mentioned afore. This current situation is disturbing as these children are found working or employed illegally, contrary to the Cameroon labour code.

Continuing with this disturbing situation does not only deprive these children of their rights (proper education, health care, feeding, shelter, protection, and more), but exposes them to all forms of dangers like child trafficking, rape, and criminal activities.

According to Reports from the Committee on the Rights of the Child under UNESCO, published on the 30th of March 2017, Marie-Therese Abena Ondo, Minister for the Promotion of the Woman and the Family of Cameroon said the following. The promotion and protection of children's rights were at the heart of national priorities and the vision of development contained in the Growth and Employment Strategy Paper. Key national and sectorial strategies addressed issues such as birth

registration, violence against children, child marriage, economic exploitation of children, education of children with disabilities and indigenous children, and early childhood development with an emphasis on nutrition during the first 1,000 days of life. Measures taken at the legal level included the criminalization in 2016 of female genital mutilation, breast ironing, school enrolment delay or refusal, child abuse and refusal to pay alimony. The same law n° 2016/007 provided for sentencing alternatives for juveniles.

Cameroon had also put in place the National Committee against Child Labour in 2014, and adopted the National Action Plan for the Promotion and Protection of Human Rights. Furthermore, the inclusive education curricula had been developed and the National Policy on the Protection of the Child had been drafted, which was focused on the integration of the protection of the child in all aspects of national life and the completion of the institutional framework for the protection of the child. Madam Abena Ondo drew the attention of the Committee to other examples of progress, namely the stepping up of the fight against child trafficking as attested by 35 court cases in 2016, the official launching of the African Union national campaign to put an end to child marriage, the full or partial exemption of children with disabilities or children born to parents with disabilities from paying school fees, and the training of 150 law enforcement officers for the protection of children against violence in the humanitarian context. In the area of health, children under the age of five had free access for severe malaria treatment, immunisation of new-borns had increased from 77 per cent in 2014 to 90 per cent in 2015, and efforts were being undertaken to promote breastfeeding and mobilize communities in favour of mother and child health. The National Committee for Child Protection had been re-established with the support of the United Nations Children's Fund and it was in the process of drafting the national child protection policy. In 2015, the national platform for the protection of the child, including the protection of children in emergencies, had been set up with the support of the United Nations Children's Fund

This proposed research aspires to explore the nature and options for additional knowledge in the understanding of childhood employment in Yaounde; taking into account a holistic approach and use it to propose appropriate policy interventions by stakeholders.

0.5. Research Questions.

This research is carried out using a primary and three secondary research questions which are seen below.

0.5.1. Primary Research Question.

- What is the nature of childhood employment in Yaounde?

0.5.2. Secondary Research Questions.

- What are the perceptions of childhood employment by people in Yaounde?
- Why do people in Yaounde engage children in employment?
- How do people in Yaounde engage children in employment?

0.6. Research Hypothesis.

A hypothesis is a tentative answer to a question before going to the field for confirmation or rejection. This research work has one general and three specific hypotheses as follows;

0.6.1. General Hypothesis.

The nature of childhood employment in Yaounde is in such that children's fundamental rights are being violated.

0.6.2. Specific Hypothesis.

- Some parents grow up experiencing childhood employment and think that it is a cultural practice
- The local populations of Yaounde think of childhood employment as normal because it is very common.
- Childhood employment is practiced in Yaounde without any limits as children are active labourers in the labour market.

0.7. Objectives.

A research objective in general is the description of our goal in relation to our study. This research study has one general and three specific research objectives.

0.7.1. General Objective.

The main objective of this research is to explore the nature of childhood employment in Yaounde.

0.7.2. Specific Objective.

- To understand the perceptions the people of Yaounde have about childhood employment.
- To explain why the people of Yaounde engage children in employment.
- To find out how childhood employment is practiced in Yaounde.

0.8. Methodology.

By methodology we mean the pattern and sum of techniques and tools used to carry out a study on a particular phenomenon, in my case childhood employment. In this study, we have used a research method which consists of research design and others as follows.

0.8.1. Research Design.

This research work is a qualitative research which consists of organizing special interviews with parents/guardians, the general public, children, experts in labour and childcare workers. Research participants were selected by a sample process known as probability sampling. Each of them had equal rights to be selected for the interview. Parents/guardians, the general public, labour experts and childcare workers were used for the research at their own convenience. Yaounde constitutes our general research zone while some few selected sub divisions made our case study. We mostly focused on observations, interviews, documentary research, and life histories to explore the nature of childhood employment in Yaounde.

0.8.1.2. Target Population.

It is not objective or scientific to carry out a research of this nature within an undefined population. This research has a target population. Children 05 to 18 years, parents/guardians of children, labour officials, the locals of Yaounde and child care experts. This target focuses only on people living in Yaounde and was aimed at getting useful information on the nature of childhood employment in Yaounde.

0.8.1.2. Setting.

According to Neuman, W.L. (2013) Research setting is the physical and social context within which a study takes place. The author emphasizes that understanding the setting is crucial for interpreting the results of a research accurately. It provides the backdrop against which the research is conducted and influences the behavior, experiences, and outcomes of participants. The setting can vary depending on the nature of the study, ranging from controlled laboratory settings to naturalistic field settings.

Yaounde for administrative reasons is divided into 10 divisions each headed by a Senior Divisional Officer. As concerns our research area, Mfoundi Division has seven (7) sub divisions named using figures from Yaounde 1 to Yaounde 7. Mfoundi is a department of Centre Region .The division covers an area of 297 km² and as of 2005 had a total population of 1,881,876. The department forms the Yaoundé capital and greater area. The Centre Region occupies 69,000 km² of the central plains of the Republic of Cameroon. It is bordered to the north by the Adamawa Region, to the south by the South Region, to the east by the East Region, and to the West by the Littoral and West Regions. It is the second largest of Cameroon's regions in land area.

This research is focused on stakeholders, cultural, political, and economic factors influencing the phenomenon, and children ages 5 to 18 years.

0.8.1.3. Sampling, Sampling technique, Sample procedure and Sample size.

Sampling in research simply means selecting a portion of people who will participate in a research. Those selected will represent the general population. We carried out our own sampling in the following ways

0.8.1.3.1. Sampling.

It is described as a process of selecting a group of people, objects and items from a larger or total population of an environment to participate in a given study and provide response that will be generalized for the entire locality concerned. During the collection of data in the field, non-probability sampling was used with techniques like purposive and snow ball.

0.8.1.3.1.1. Purposive Sampling.

Purposive sampling is a strategy in which particular or certain persons or events are selected deliberately in order to provide important information that cannot be obtained from other choices (Maxwell, 1996). In our work we used labour inspectors.

0.8.1.3.1.2. Snowball Sampling.

The non – probability sampling was used with a purpose to represent a location or type in relation to the criterion. Snowball technique uses key informants and / or documents to locate one or two people in a population and then you ask them to locate other people whom you might interview. This technique was used with prior description of key participants. Hence it aided us to select the criteria of informants needed for research and to identify those needed through reference from other informants.

0.8.1.3.1.3. Accidental Sampling.

This involves a sampling technique whereby we chose the sample present before us at the moment of research. This technique permitted us to discuss with certain informants and children actively working; who had useful information about the nature of childhood employment in Yaounde. 9+

0.8.1.3.3. Sampling Procedure.

In this research, the aim of doing sampling was to ensure that people who were selected for the research were capable enough to participate for the research. Here a single member of the target population (general public) was chosen by chance (simple random sampling technique). A systematic sampling technique was used especially dealing with stakeholders (labour officials/ childcare workers). As for clustered sampling, areas in Yaounde with large markets and plantations were targeted.

The totality of people who participated in the research is 45. These 45 participants were used for interviews and life history. The sampling technique we used was probability sampling which involved the random selection of participants from the general public and systematic sampling which involved the systematic selection of parents/guardians, labour officials and childcare workers. Everyone therefore had equal chances of being selected for the research.

0.8.1.3.2. Sample Size.

A sample is a subset of individuals, objects and items that are selected to participate for a given research. The sample of our research was made up of parents/guardians, the general public, labour experts, Children working and childcare workers.

0.8.1.4. Inclusion and Exclusion Criteria.

Concerning the inclusion criteria, people who were eligible for the research could only be:

People who could at least read, People 7 years plus, Physically active people, People who live in Yaounde and People, who could speak, see and hear,

On the part of the exclusion criteria, persons who were not eligible were: People who could not speak English, Pidgin or French, People with difficulties to hear, see and speak and Sick people and children less than 5years.

0.8.1.5. Ethical Consideration.

For this research work to be carried out successfully, the study was proposed to the Anthropology Department of the University of Yaounde 1. After a thorough examination, the department accepted the topic and granted us the permission to carry out the study under the coverage of the University of Yaounde 1.

More to that, a consent form was written and presented to the participants of our study. This consent form ensured that a participant was not coerced to participate in the study. The form was issued to all participants who could read before scheduling an interview. Those who could not read were being aided by us to understand fully the goal of the study before willingly engaging themselves.

We also gave full assurance to our participants that the information collected from them was not going to be used against them in any way, be it now or in the future. We reassured them that all information gotten from them was going to be shared only with the research team and University of Yaounde 1.

To be more ethical we also made sure we used respectful and polite language when approaching and interviewing all participants, dressed decently and respected time schedules (arrival, interview and departure time) for all participants.

A good research requires that both the researcher and participants are comfortable and this can only be achieved following laid down principles. For this research work, we had some guiding principles that enabled us set boundaries or limits on how we collected our data. These principles are:

Have our research topic approved by the University of Yaounde 1, have an authorization letter by the same school, have maximum respect for all participants, avoid deceiving the participants, avoid disrespecting respondents and their values, be accountable for my actions, reassure all participants of their safety, stay within the research boundaries and ethnocentric on the field.

0.8.1.6. Data Collection Methods.

In order to collect data from the field, we used the qualitative research method, its techniques and its tools. This helped us to get a better understanding of the nature of childhood employment in Yaounde since our research depends more on perception.

0.8.1.6.1. Secondary Data Collection Method.

Secondary data refers to data that is collected by someone other than the primary user. Example are information collected by government departments, organizational records and data that was originally collected for other research purposes. It is research data that has previously been gathered and can be accessed by researchers. In our research case, we reviewed research works on bride price and related topics done by different authors. Documentary review helped us in a very important way as it gave us a glimpse of the research work helping us equally to formulate our research hypothesis which were eventually tested in the Field.

0.8.1.6.2. Primary Data Collection.

Primary data is the type of data that is collected by researchers directly from main sources through interviews, surveys, experiments. It is data collected by the researcher himself for a specific purpose.

0.8.1.7. Data collection Techniques.

A research technique refers to the specific tools or procedures used to collect, analyze and interpret data in a research study. The procedure of data collection is the way through which we proceeded to gather portions of information which helped in the understanding of the subject matter. Data collection procedure is organized as such:

0.8.1.7.1. Systematic Literature Review

It consisted in assembling documents that concerned the nature of childhood employment and its practices. We elaborated a bibliography form in which all the documents in relation with our research topic were treated. These documents were drawn from Academic libraries, personal and through friends.

0.8.1.7.2. Snowball Literature Review

Here, from a key document handling what has to do with childhood employment. We consulted bibliographic reference which opened the door to other documents treating the same subject. Each time we consulted this document, we repeated the same exercise and so on. This technique was very important as it permitted us to have other documents from a particular document.

0.8.1.7.3. Direct Observation

Direct observation permitted us to observe the nature of childhood employment in Yaounde by visiting some of the suspected areas.

0.8.1.7.4. Indirect Observation

Indirect observation involves gathering information about a behavior through means other than direct observation. For example we conducted interviews with parents and teachers to gather information about childhood employment.. This was important as it paved the way for some casual but objective interactions with the informants where useful information was gotten. This was realized thanks to a notebook which permitted the taking down of notes with a blue pen to write.

0.8.1.8. Interviews

Interview is a commonly used technique in qualitative research. Here respondents are asked to give their own point of view or their own observation about a phenomenon under study. Interviews are composed of open-ended questions which enable participants to freely give their own views about a certain situation under study. This research made it a necessity to find out about the views of people about the nature of childhood employment in Yaounde. We had to interview a total of 45 participants resident in Yaounde. We used interview to get people's perception about the subject of study.

0.8.1.9. Life History.

This came from respondents who had once witnessed childhood employment directly or indirectly while growing up and could better share their views on the phenomenon. The life history put in place with the present situation enabled us to have a better understanding as to whether childhood employment is growing or decreasing in Yaounde, likewise come out discover whether there are adverse as well as positive effects as a result of the practice.

0.8.1.10. Observation.

‘Nothing has such power to broaden the mind as the ability to investigate systematically and truly all that comes under thy observation in life’ Marcus Aurelius. According to this famous proverb by Marcus Aurelius, Emperor of Rome (1701), what we observe gives us a valid foundation for a deeper understanding of facts than feeling and hearing. To that, observation is a basic step in research. For these reasons, the observation technique was chosen to enable us see for ourselves and explore the nature of childhood employment in Yaounde. While on the field of research in Yaounde, we kept our eyes opened on under aged employment.

0.8.1.11. Documentary Research.

Documentary research refers to the study of documents and collection of information relating to a research work. We studied articles, books, dissertations, and journals from the internet and libraries. We collected useful opinions of other writers in relation to our research topic. We did

documentary research to enrich ourselves with the works others have done, be able to contribute by filling a gap by this study and prevent us as well from doing work that was already done.

0.8.1.12. Data Collection Tools.

A mixed technique of data collection was used in order to properly collect data on the field. It was also necessary to use appropriate tools to collect data. A good number of these tools used were:

0.8.1.12.1. Interview Guide.

This is a piece of document containing questions relevant to a particular research topic. The use of the interview guide is to prevent us from forgetting relevant questions which were supposed to be asked to respondents. This interview guide was not shared to the respondents; rather we held it and asked questions from it. It equally helped us to stay focused on the field when faced with our respondents.

0.8.1.12.2. Tape Recorder.

We choose to use this tool in order to avoid missing out on anything the respondents told us, save time and get enough details about the research topic. This was done with the permission of the respondents.

0.8.1.12.3. Note book and Pen.

With these tools, we were able to write down key points that came up, write down new ideas and collect respondents' contacts for future research. We used a diary and a blue pen to carry out this task.

0.8.1.13. Data analysis and Interpretation.

This involves the decomposing of a whole into various elements it is made up of. Data is what will be collected from the field with the various tools and techniques of data collection. Data needs to be analyzed in order to bring out meaning out of it. This bringing out of meaning in scientific research can be made up of two types; Objective and Subjective meaning. After data is collected, we analyze and interpret.

0.8.1.13.1. Qualitative Data Analysis.

This method deals with the analyses of mostly documented information in the form of texts, media and, even physical items.. We carried out a manual transcription of the information we got. Simply, it was mostly consisted of analyzing texts and the analysis was done along the line of our work as need be for us to understand the information gotten better. We used qualitative data analysis given that our data collected was qualitative in nature. This helped us to do an in depth analysis of the results gotten from the field.

0.8.1.13.2. Iconic Data Analysis.

It is often said that a picture is worth a thousand words (anomalous). Iconographic data refers to data in the form of images, symbols and distinctive characteristics of pictures and posters that have meaning. We got information on icons that reflected our study and brought out the hidden meaning in them. In every image hides a message(s) and images gotten from the field served a good deal of information.

0.8.1.13.3. Data Interpretation.

Data collected was prepared and organized, transcripts printed out, our notes and documents gathered. Initial codes were created, reviewed and combined into themes and the emergent themes presented in a cohesive manner and finally the data was interpreted using theories. This led to our findings.

0.9. Benefits of the Research.

Undertaking this research work will benefit a lot. The people who will benefit are children, parents, the government, and the society at large. These benefits are seen below.

- This work will create massive awareness about the nature of childhood employment in Yaounde, the rights of a child and the consequences involved when such rights are violated. This will help safe guard children's rights.
- It will also help parents better know what is beneficial to their children and how to manage childhood.
- It will help the government intensify or adjust or add measures put in place to manage childhood employment in Yaounde and why not Cameroon and the world at large.

- This study will also fill a gap in the social sciences as far as childhood employment is concerned.
- It is a contribution to the anthropology of development by bringing additional knowledge particularly in the field of Anthropology.

0.9.1. Quality Assurance.

To ensure quality and minimize errors, this work was being checked by the supervisor and other lecturers/senior students and others to make sure the entire work was done properly. We also tested the interview guide to ensure that the respondents understood the questions and that these questions were appropriate to use.

0.9.2. Limitation of the Study.

With a good research work, it is important to understand what is necessary and what is not. In this like, our work had boundaries. Here we are talking about the frame and delimitation of our study in space and time, scene and specialization. The research was carried out in the administrative capital of Cameroon, Yaounde specifically on culture and childhood employment. The focus was on Anthropology of Development. We saw the political, economic, and social structure of some sub divisions of Yaounde. Our research was limited to the period of December 2022 to June 2023. We strictly limited ourselves to Yaounde 3, 4, 5, and 6; excluding other regions; focusing only on culture and childhood employment.

0. 9.3. Difficulties Faced.

Just like any other research, our study faced major setbacks as we went in to collect data for our work. We encountered some hardship along the line which made our work a little harder for us. One of the main difficulties we had was with the local population who were not willing to grant interview for us. Many even after reading the research authorization claimed we were secrete agents who want to investigate their lives and later come for a direct or indirect accusation and subsequent arrest. Some even consider that the research will not benefit them directly and therefore had no time for it. We solved this problem in two ways: Firstly, we assured them that it's a research work aimed to obtain a master's degree certificate no strings attached. Secondly, we moved on to look for other research participants who were willing.

Another nearly similar case was the continuous postponement of interview schedules by some informants. They actually accepted to grant the interview but kept rescheduling the time for the interview and some finally did not grant the interview by claiming they were very busy. This did not just delay the work but required that we spend a lot of money on the field as we had to keep knocking at some doors repeatedly.

More to that, some should have been informants demanded for a pay before they could grant an interview. We had to leave them alone since we did not have enough finances to sponsor such ventures.

Lastly but not all, it was difficult to get the pictures of children working especially in houses. Some we met on the street granted us an interview but refused the part of iconographic data. On the other hand, other children hawkers or workers just simply stayed away from participating.

0.9.4. Chapter Outline.

In order to better present our work for clarity reason, this work is divided into five chapters. Before the first chapter of the work, we had an introductory presentation of the entire work where we saw the background, the problem, the research questions, the hypothesis, the objectives and methodology which we used in carrying out the research. This work is made up of five (5) chapters principally whereby;

Chapter one is focused on the presentation of our field or area of study, and we observe the history of the place, climate, demography, economy, structure, culture, education, and more.

Chapter two presents the documents that were studied, defines concepts and brings out our theoretical framework. It presents who a child is, what childhood is all about, some perspectives on childhood, employment, development and more concepts. We also look at two theories which are Culture and Personality and Functionalism theories.

Chapter three is a presentation of Childhood employment in Yaounde taking into consideration family life, education, sensitization, government stand, childhood friendly jobs, climate change and international influence.

Chapter four on its part represents childhood employment in Yaounde: reasons for engaging them. It takes into consideration parenting, cultural influence, local perception, state incentives, a look into jobs acceptable for children, formal education, the role of the media, international organisations, religion and migration.

Chapter five which is the last chapter focuses on practice of childhood employment in Yaounde. It takes interest in a discourse on culture and expectations, duties of children and parents, causes, effects and elimination strategies of childhood employment as well as childhood employment and development.

Thus this research will be concluded by bringing out the problem, research question, objectives and the finding from the field of study. All these are done in relation to a way forward as far as the nature of childhood employment in Yaounde is concerned.

CHAPTER ONE
ETHNOGRAPHY OF YAOUNDE

Chapter one will focus on the geographical, socio-cultural and economic features of Yaounde. We shall pay attention on the different elements and activities which characterize Yaounde, the administrative or political capital of Cameroon. We will be looking at the history, culture, ethnic groups, geography, climate, settlement, language, education, climate, economy and other aspects along this chapter of our research.

1. Location.

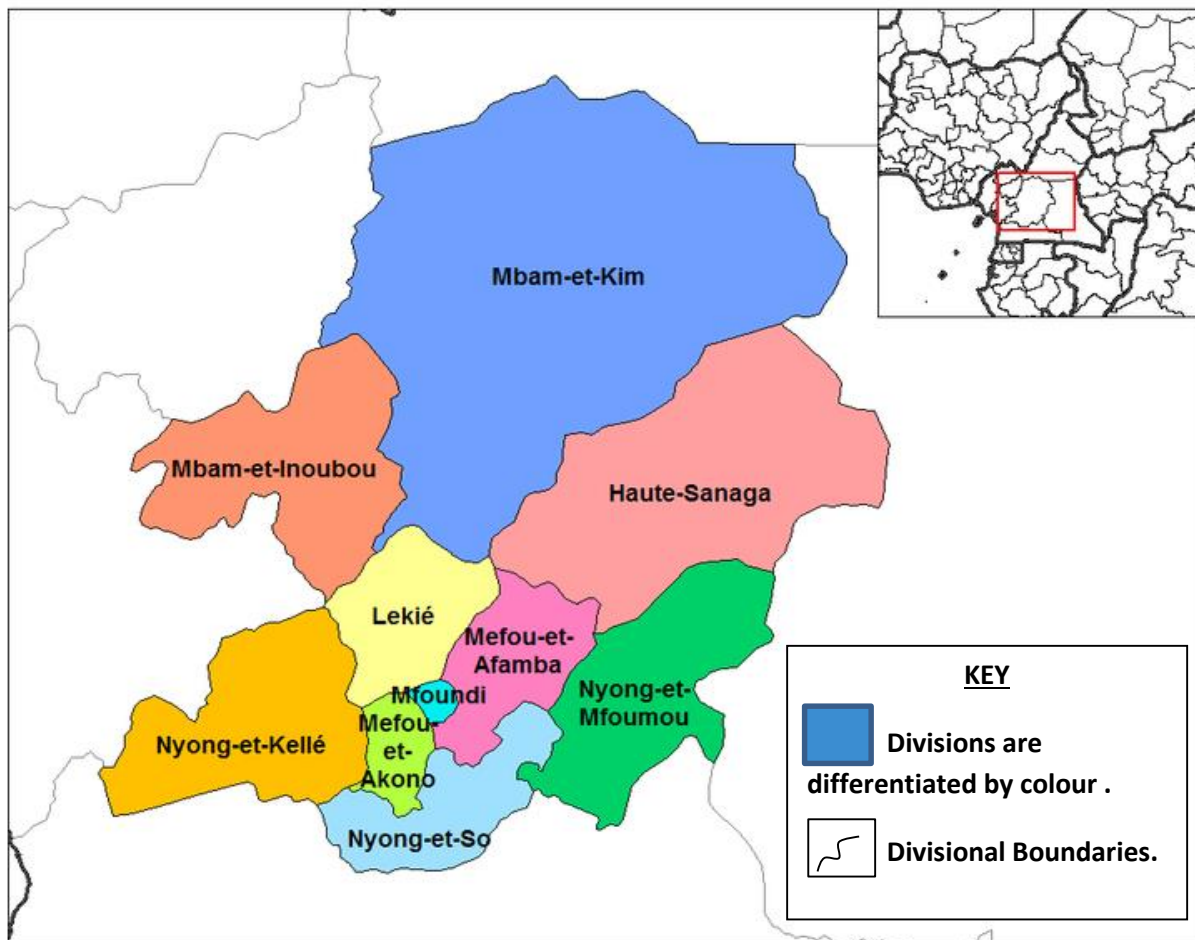
Map 1: Map Showing Cameroon showing the 10 Regions.



Source: Research gate: www.researchgate.net

This map above shows the entire nation of Cameroon with all its ten regions. It helps us better situate Yaounde and its environs. The map shows a general view of the whole Yaounde

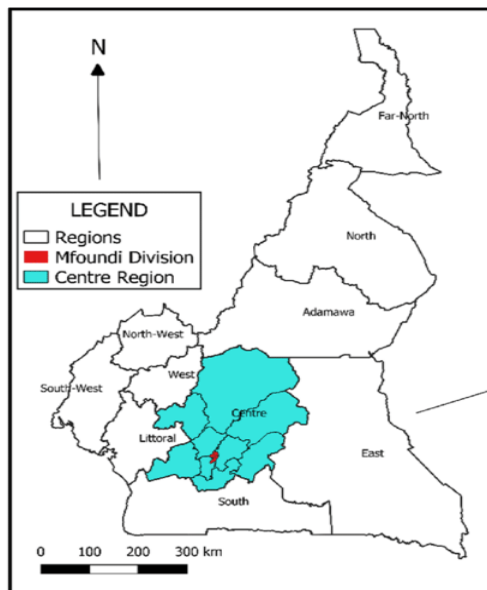
Map 2: Map showing the Centre region and Yaounde.



Source: Research gate: www.researchgate.net

The iconographic data above shows the Center Region with its ten Divisions. All these divisions. It is an extract from an African map as seen at the top right side of this entire map. This map is there to throw more light on our research area for better understanding.

Map 3: Map showing Cameroon and the Centre Region.



Source: Research gate: www.researchgate.net

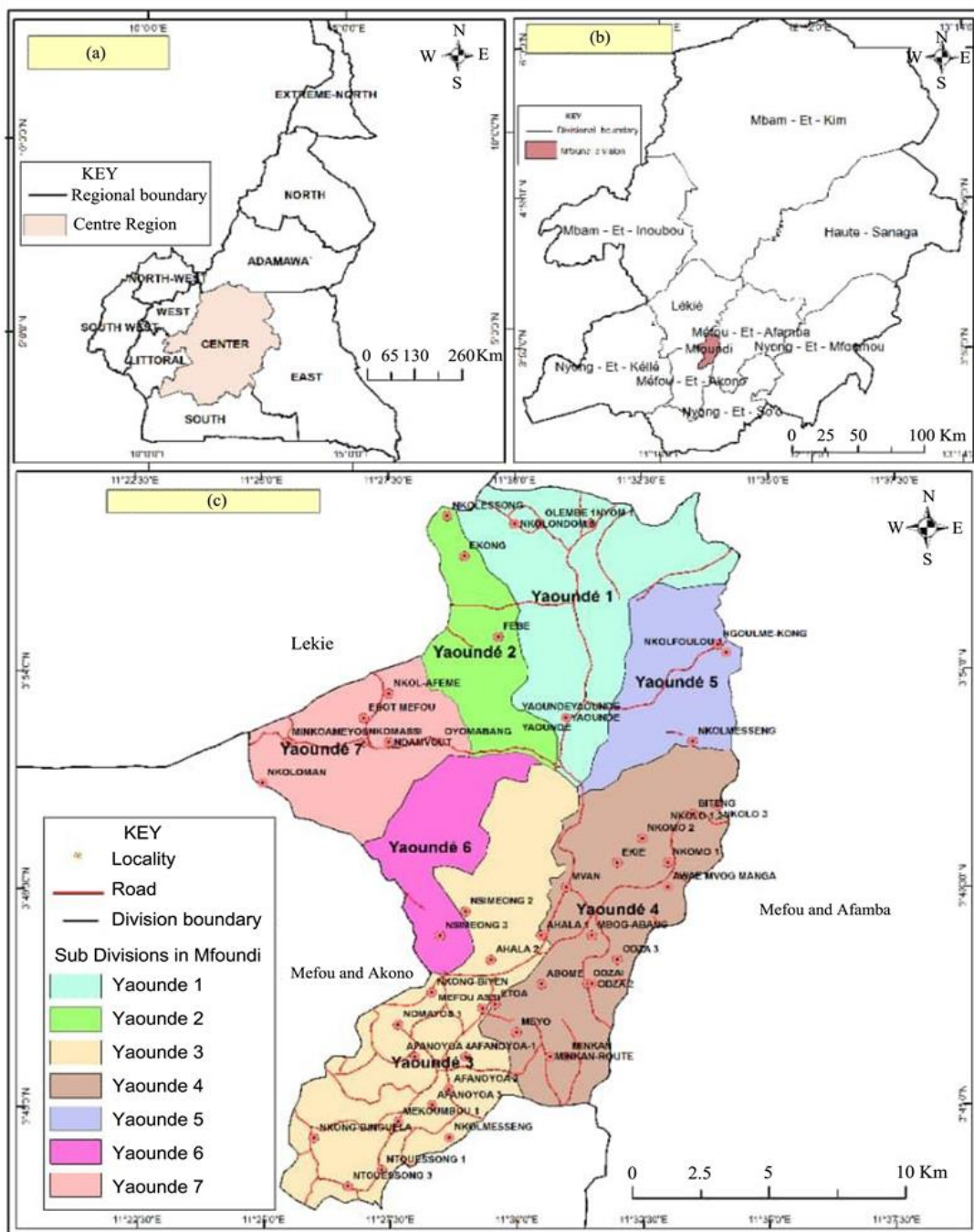
This map is made up of two in one. On your left is the Center Region, on the right is Mfoundi Division, our focal point in this research.

Map 4.1: Map showing Mfoundi Division and its 7 subdivisions



Source: Research gate: www.researchgate.net

Map 5: Map showing an extract of Mfoundi Division and its 7 sub divisions



Source: Research gate: www.researchgate.net.

Top left on this map is Cameroon's map showing the Center Region, to the right of it we the detail political map of Yaounde. Below these two maps is the map of Mfoundi with its seven sub divisions. These are the areas where our research was greatly focused.

Yaoundé, with a population of more than 2.8 million, is the second-largest city in the country after the port city Douala. It lies in the Centre Region of the nation at an elevation of about 750 meters (2,500 ft) above sea level. Yaounde is therefore characterized as follows:

1.11. Geography.

Yaounde is the capital of Cameroon in the Centre Region, located 200km from the Atlantic coast between 4° North latitude and 11° East longitude. The town of Yaounde is surrounded by many hills which determine the type of climate in the area at times called the city of 7 hills, referring to Fébé, Akok Ndoué, Mbog Ndum, Ebaminala, Minloa, Mbankolo and Messa hills. Yaounde is a forest region with 2 major seasons which are the rainy season and the dry season. It has many small water bodies that flow through different areas in the city like the Biyeme and Mefou river, Ékozoa and Mfoundo rivers with the municipal lake created in 1952. The town has numerous roads following the hills of Yaounde and on the marshy lands, agriculture is practiced.

1.2. History.

Yaounde, the capital of Cameroon and its second largest city after Douala, is often known as “the city with the seven hills” because of the hills surrounding it... but what does it really mean? Does its name refer to its hills? In Béti, Yaoundé is often called, Ongolo-Ewondo, or the Ewondos’ enclosure (la clôture des Ewondos). The city was born around 1889, when the German traders implanted a camp in the Ewondo region and called it Sono station after a local Ewondo chief Essono Ela who had offered them hospitality (the Germans had encountered a strong resistance in the Vouté and Eton regions). Hearing locals from the coast refer to it as Ya-Ewondo or Among the Ewondo (chez les Ewondos), the Germans called it ‘Jaunde’ and it later turned into ‘Yaunde’, and in French Yaounde. The station later turned into an administrative region under the leadership of the botanist Zenker who established a detailed map of the area in 1890. Upon its creation, it was first a scientific post (probably because of the botanist), and later in 1895 became a military and trading post for ivory and rubber

Yaoundé was not always the country’s capital. After the 1909 volcanic eruption of Mt Cameroon in Buéa (Gbéa) which was then the capital, and the humid climate of Douala, the Germans decided to move the capital to Yaoundé because of its central location and its milder

climate (and of course, no volcano). After Germany's defeat in World War I, Cameroon was placed under French (the eastern regions) and British protectorate (the western regions). Yaoundé consequently became the capital of French Cameroon, and continued as the capital of the Republic of Cameroon after independence (it was first the Federal Republic of Cameroon in 1961, then The United Republic of Cameroon in 1972, which then officially became the Republic of Cameroon in 1984). Yaoundé is today a vibrant city home to almost 2 million inhabitants.

1.3. Culture.

Cameroon has a rich and diverse culture made up of a mix of about 250 indigenous populations and just as many languages and customs. The country is nicknamed "Little Africa" as geographically, Cameroon consists of coastline, mountains, grass plains, forest, rainforest and desert, all of the geographical regions in Africa in one country. This also contributes to its cultural diversity as ways of life and traditional food dishes and traditions vary from geographical region to geographical region. Cameroon has 250-300 distinct groups, and an estimated 300+ languages. Cameroon is divided into ten regions, which are dominated by specific ethnic groups. Ethnic divisions often correspond to geography, which is also widely varied.

Partly through the influence of colonialism, there is a national culture, and two distinct regional cultures: the Anglophone and Francophone regions, which primarily speak English and French and use different legal systems. The national culture is established through public institutions such as school, the multiparty political system, shared history of colonialism and a national love of football.

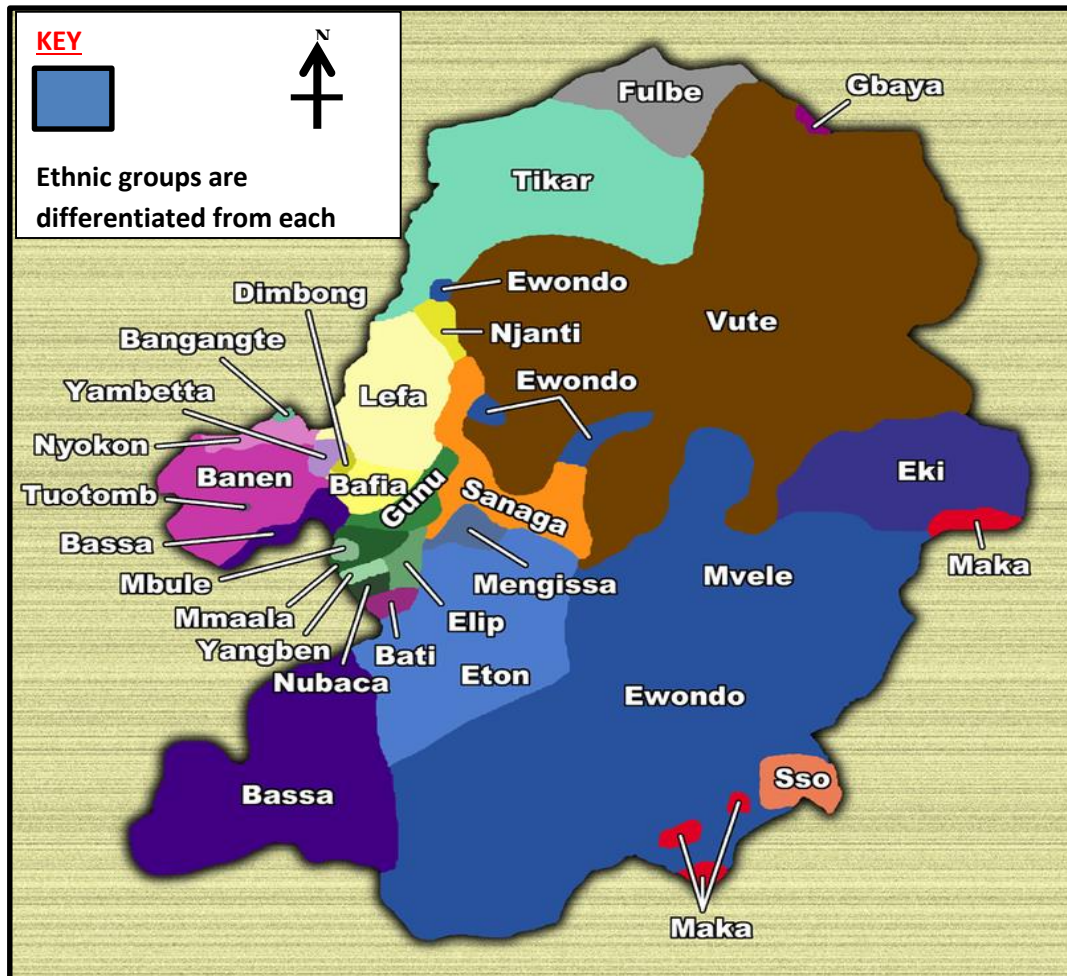
With the influx of almost if not all ethnic groups into Yaounde, it is bound to be described as a cosmopolitan city with all the cultures of Cameroon represented. That is why you see childhood employment common to almost all ethnic groups settled in Yaounde.

1.4. Ethnic Groups.

Cameroon is a country well known for its cultural diversity. The country has over 240 ethnic groups with 3 principal linguistic groups. They are, the Sudanic speaking from the north, the Bantu speaking from the south and the semi-bantu mostly situated in the West. Different ethnic groups find themselves all around the country and share different cultures. All the ethnic groups have

political organization and they are either centralized or decentralized. Yaounde being the political seat of Cameroon is a cosmopolitan city with almost, if not all ethnic groups of the nation represented. These ethnic groups include children as well.

Map 6: Ethnic groups in Yaounde



Source: Ethnologue Report of Cameroon. Ethnologue.com.

This map shows some ethnic groups that make up Yaounde. This map indicates that Yaounde is a cosmopolitan city with people from various tribes. This says why not only a particular tribe is being investigated in this research but all the tribes that we come across in our research work.

1.5. Religion and Place of Worship.

The places of worship in the city are predominantly Christian churches: Roman Catholic Archdiocese of Yaoundé (Catholic Church), Christian Missionary Fellowship International and Associated Churches (Pentecostal), Evangelical Church of Cameroon (World Communion of Reformed Churches), Presbyterian Church in Cameroon, Cameroon Baptist Convention and Full Gospel Mission Cameroon (Assemblies of God), just to name a few. The urban city of Yaounde since the past till today has noticed a great level of religious growth. As people move into the capital city, they try to find people who have same faith with them. They also create their own religious movements. The Christians are the greatest in population compared to other religions in the urban city, with the Catholics numbering practicing highest in worshipers. We also find Islam as a major religion in the area with their mosques spread in many parts of Yaounde, having their central mosque at Tsinga where a larger number of the Muslims in the city are found. There is also the practice of the African Traditional Religion where locals worship and carryout incantations in special shrines to commune with their ancestors and to pray for intercession on their behalf.

1.6. Settlement Patterns.

More than half of the population of Yaounde lives in slumps and swampy areas and the situation is rather complicated to resolve. It continues to persist due to the difficulty people have in affording better living areas. Many lands have no land titles and people do sell or buy land informally without consulting government organizations in charge of state and land affairs. Many of the houses built in these swampy areas are built out of mud and plank and the labor is cheap. It is mostly family members who contribute skills to build up houses. One can find more than 8 people living in one house and the living conditions are not always the best. Slumps have majority of mosquito which infects people with malaria. Water and food conservation in most slumps are always difficult and this causes health issues. Generally, there is a diversion in culture between the people of the north and those of the south. The northern savanna is occupied by the Sudanic and Arabs who live there and migrate frequently to search for grazing land for their pastoral activities. The Bantus occupy the forest and hill sides of the south for their agricultural endeavors. Those of the north are mostly Muslims while those of the south are Christians. The highest numbers of people live in cities like Douala, the country's main port where they search for jobs and better living. Yaounde the country's political capital has the largest population of the country.

1.7. Education.

Cameroon is a bilingual country, where English and French are both official languages; therefore in the city there is a coexistence of French educational system schools, where the certificate giving access to university is the Baccalaureate, and all the education is in French, and the English educational system schools, where the certificate giving access to university is the GCE Advanced level.

As it is often said, “education is the key to success”, the urban city of Yaounde has improved since independence in 1961. The city has all levels of school as it starts with the nursery, to primary, and secondary to the university. The government has made it possible for every citizen to have access to quality education by increasing the number of schools, employing more teachers and reducing tuition fees so low as compared to private national schools. There is the University of Yaounde I and that of Yaounde II with so many secondary and primary schools. There are also professional schools like polytechnic, school of public works, faculty of medicine and biomedical sciences, CITEC and several private professional schools. There is also informal education which is very much practice in Yaounde in the various spheres of human activities.

1.8. Hygiene and Sanitation.

We could not carry out our study without taking seriously the hygiene and sanitation of the research area. In a town of so many people with different cultures of practising hygiene, the town faces challenging sanitations. People throw dirt everywhere along the streets and even where there are trash cans; people still get rid of their waste in small water bodies. Most people who live around little streams tend to connect their latrines into the streams and during rains, they flush them creating water pollution. People urinate and excrete by road sides at late periods, plastic bags and containers are flooded all around gutters and road sides. In order to maintain a level of sanitation in the city of Yaounde, the city has put in place about fifty public toilets in public places. In order to increase the supply of these public toilets, the government delegation of sanitation has put up contracts with Japan for the provision of dry toilets in public places in the city of Yaounde like the University of Yaounde I, municipal road. In the university milieu, toilets are still difficult to access as only lecturers have access to the toilets made available. Hand wash centers are also not available so people come in contact with others after haven used the toilets without cleaning their hands. As

to what concerns solid wastes, the locals of Yaounde and the companies that exist therein produce over 20 tons of solid waste on daily bases. There is need to get rid of this dirt so as to permit the environment to be clean as most people throw this dirt close to roads. Two companies in Yaounde are responsible for the cleaning of dirt, these companies are HYSACAM and urban DNA, and these companies are in charge of keeping the environment clean. They have placed trash cans in many areas of Yaounde to ease their collection of waste for perfect handling. Never the less, their efforts still prove less effective and most trash collectors are always full to the extent where people throw the dirt on the ground instead of the waste bins. This poses a great threat to the population including children struggling to earn a living or to survive in the midst of the garbage or dirt

1.9. Stigma.

Stigma is a sign or mark of disgrace or discrimination against someone due to his distinctive characteristic. There are a good number of things and features that carry stigma in the urban city of Yaounde ranging from personal to general. Some of the things believed to carry a particular negative feeling include people with mental disorder, people with STDs people from a particular region or cultural background as well as street children/ under aged children struggling to survive. Socially, issues that carry stigma are the following; mental disorder is seen in a negative way by the people of Yaounde. It is associated either to a curse, drugs or bad behaviors with the consideration that it cannot get better. One who is mad or had been mad and has recovered still finds it difficult to associate with people and organizations. The fear of being round a mad man never goes away from people's minds. People with mental disorder are also considered shameful and less than normal human beings as such, people hardly want to be close to them. Another stigma carrier is STDs and many who have one of these; HIV, hepatitis, gonorrhoea are seen to be sexual pervers. People fear to relate with them for many reasons. People carrying SDTs are seen as good for death and people who associate with them stand the risk of getting contaminated with the disease. Organizations such as "Horizon Femme" have been contributing to the fight against HIV/AIDS. It is believed to some extend that some of these children working under aged may be indirect victims of STDs. Meaning they may have lost their parents as a results of STDs. Lacking the care they need has forced some of these children to go to hustle to survive whatever the stigma involved.

1.10. Communication and Media.

Communication is a very important tool in every society because it helps to promote the safety of members and also assist in letting them understand the trend of the community and situations that face it. In the city, there are several communication channels and media both private and government. In 2003, CRTV and Canal 2 were the only television channels in Yaounde but sooner many other cable signal provided emerged provided multitudes of communication channels. In Cameroon in general, the CRTV is the number 1 center of communication for the entire country. It passes its information to citizens in the morning and in the evening. In Yaounde there are radio houses that assist to pass information to the general public like CIN RADIO, TBC RADIO, RTS, Magic FM and CRTV radio. As to what concerns mobile and internet communications, the services of MTN and ORANGE are commonly used. Most residents of Yaounde especially the French speaking part use the orange a lot while the English speaking part deal with MTN. There are also services of Camtel Cameroon, Nextel and Yoomie mobile networks. When it comes to newspapers, we find newspapers like Cameroon tribune, le Massager, Mutations and the Guardian post. Most of these media houses have directly or indirectly condemned childhood employment in general. They also help sensitize the population of Yaounde and beyond on the rights of a child.

1.12. Climate.

Yaounde features a tropical wet and dry climate , with constant temperatures throughout the year. However, primarily due to the altitude, temperatures are not quite as hot as one would expect for a city located near the equator. Yaoundé features a lengthy wet season, covering a ten-month span between March and November. However, there is a noticeable decrease in precipitation within the wet season, seen during the months of July and August, almost giving the city the appearance of having two separate rainy seasons. It's primarily due to the relative lull in precipitation during these two months that Yaoundé features a tropical wet and dry climate, as opposed to a tropical monsoon climate. Like every part of the world, Cameroon has also witnessed the effects of global warming on its climate. Rain sometimes falls when not expected or ceases to fall when expected.

Table 1: Table showing the monthly climate data for Yaounde

Climate data for Yaoundé													
Month	Jan	Feb	Mar	Apr	May	Jun	Jul	Aug	Sep	Oct	Nov	Dec	Year
Record high °C (°F)	33 (91)	33 (91)	33 (91)	36 (97)	34 (93)	32 (90)	31 (88)	34 (93)	31 (88)	33 (91)	32 (90)	32 (90)	36 (97)
Average high °C (°F)	29.6 (85.3)	31.0 (87.8)	30.4 (86.7)	29.6 (85.3)	28.8 (83.8)	27.7 (81.9)	26.5 (79.7)	26.5 (79.7)	27.5 (81.5)	27.8 (82.0)	28.1 (82.6)	28.5 (83.3)	28.5 (83.3)
Daily mean °C (°F)	24.6 (76.3)	25.7 (78.3)	25.4 (77.7)	25.0 (77.0)	24.5 (76.1)	23.8 (74.8)	23.2 (73.8)	22.9 (73.2)	23.4 (74.1)	23.5 (74.3)	23.9 (75.0)	24.0 (75.2)	24.2 (75.6)
Average low °C (°F)	19.6 (67.3)	20.3 (68.5)	20.3 (68.5)	20.3 (68.5)	20.2 (68.4)	19.9 (67.8)	19.9 (67.8)	19.3 (66.7)	19.3 (66.7)	19.2 (66.6)	19.6 (67.3)	19.5 (67.1)	19.8 (67.6)
Record low °C (°F)	14 (57)	15 (59)	16 (61)	15 (59)	16 (61)	15 (59)	16 (61)	16 (61)	15 (59)	15 (59)	17 (63)	16 (61)	14 (57)
Average precipitation mm (inches)	19.0 (0.75)	42.8 (1.69)	124.9 (4.92)	171.3 (6.74)	199.3 (7.85)	157.1 (6.19)	74.2 (2.92)	113.7 (4.48)	232.3 (9.15)	293.6 (11.56)	94.3 (3.71)	18.6 (0.73)	1,541.1 (60.69)
Average precipitation days (≥ 0.1 mm)	3	4	12	14	17	14	11	12	20	23	11	3	144
Average relative humidity (%)	79.5	79.5	81.0	82.0	84.0	85.0	85.5	86.0	85.5	85.0	82.0	79.0	82.8
Mean monthly sunshine hours	172.0	179.0	169.9	164.5	166.2	126.0	96.1	86.2	102.4	130.2	167.1	181.4	1,741

Source: world Meteorological Organisation

1.13. Tourism.

Yaounde is the second largest city in Cameroon with a colorful open air, street markets, hospitals, international embassies and full of arts and culture. It is an urban area made up of many hotels, museums, restaurants, zoos and super markets. The Poste Central round point that link seven roads and the 20th May boulevard that stretches down to where we have the ministry of secondary education and the famous Hilton hotel.

1.13.1. Tourist Attraction Sites.

While in Yaounde, there are numerous places one can visit ranging from sleeping places, eating and site seeing.

For places where one can relax, we have;

Eco park, The Mefou National park (Mefou Primate Sanctuary, Yaounde), National Museum of Yaounde (quartier du lac), The Reunification Monument (opposite French Embassy), The Benedict Museum of Mount-Febe, Mvog Betsi Zoo, For places to get rest, one can visit, Hilton hotel (20th May Boulevard), Hotel la Falaise (Avenue Marechal Foch Warda, Yaounde 1430 Cameroon), Central hotel and many others. For places to eat, we have , La Salsa (Bastos), Platinum

café (Bastos, Road Mballa Eloumden) 37, Restaurant le bacchus (Etoa Meki Road 1048), Safoutier (20th May Boulevard) and so forth.

Image 1: Image of a Camel at Eco park – Yaounde 3



Source: Field work (July 2022)

1.14. Economy.

Most of Yaoundé's economy is centered on the administrative structure of the civil service and the diplomatic services. Owing to these high-profile central structures, Yaounde has a higher standard of living and security than the rest of Cameroon.

Major industries in Yaoundé include tobacco, dairy products, beer, clay, glass goods and timber. It is also a regional distribution center for coffee, cocoa, copra, sugar cane and rubber. Local residents engage in urban agriculture. The city is estimated to have "50,000 pigs and over a million chickens."

Despite the security issues and humanitarian crises that have plagued the central African nation, Cameroon, Yaoundé's economy remains stable. In fact, there is diversification of its productive economic activities, with the services sector contributing about half of the total domestic production. However, like many African countries, Cameroon has long suffered from insufficient supply of locally made goods, which dominates almost all the sectors, particularly in the capital city. Food, household articles, shelter, clothing, oil, and medical care services have witnessed a

sharp increase in prices especially with the advent of the war between Ukraine and Russia. This has brought about global economic crises, Yaounde inclusive. This has greatly affected the nature of childhood employment in Yaounde.

1.15. Markets.

As markets serve the population who purchase goods they need, others use the selling of items as an employment for them. In Yaounde municipality, there are many markets where one can find basically all types of products ranging from household, school, medical and religious items. The Yaounde central market is probably one of the biggest markets in Mfoundi and it is constructed in a kind of circular shape with 5 stairs at the center of the city where a lot of items like clothing items, books, house equipment are sold, the market is large and counts over a thousand people active everyday besides the central market, Yaounde still has big and busy markets such as Mokolo market, Acacia, Melen, Mendong, Nsam market. While some focus more on food items like the Nsam and Nvog betsi markets, other concentrate more on cosmetics. This markets serve the local population of Yaounde who buy wholesales and also at the retail levels. Emphasis is not laid on who sells what in the markets or along the streets of these markets in terms of age or gender. This favours a lot of childhood employment, perpetuating the practice and making its eradication a difficult task.

1.16. Employment.

Employment in Cameroun is a major challenge same as in the urban city of Yaounde. Many people come from the ends of Cameroon and different regions to seek for greener pastures in the capital city of the nation but never the less, it is not an easy task. The saturated nature of the population of job seekers makes it difficult to find a job in Yaounde. Many job seeker lack qualifications in major trades and for this reason, some become self-employed and integrate trades like tailoring, car mechanics, bike riders, housemaids, private teachers and ambulant businessmen. The percentage of unemployed people in Yaounde keeps increasing daily as more and more people come in. Children 5- 18 are also part of the labour market in Yaounde.

1.17. Transportation.

In Yaounde, we have land, rail and air transport. Water transport is not possible because there are no major rivers, seas, or even oceans in Yaounde. Yaounde is a very mobile town whereby people move in and out and around town to places like schools, churches, job sites, hospitals, meetings and farms. People use bikes for faster internal movement so as to avoid traffic congestion which delays time. Though tariffs on motorbikes are often more expensive than taxis, people still prefer them. Taxis belonging to Cameroonians are painted in yellow while Nigerians have theirs painted green and white. Collective taxis are somehow cheap and permits people to move to some areas whereby bikes are restricted from passing like Post Central. There are also buses that transport people in and out of Yaounde such as Guarantee Express, Amour Mezam, Finex, etc. They are located in different areas of Yaounde like Mvan, Biyamassi, Tongolo. These buses transport people to Douala, Bafoussam, Bamenda, Buea, kribi and other towns in Cameroon. Most of their prizes range depending on the destination. There are also train stations where people move to Douala, Ngaoundere from Yaounde. In the part of international traveling, Yaounde has the Nsimalen airport that permits individuals to travel in and out of Cameroun through Yaounde. These transport means have facilitated all forms of migration in Yaounde. It also accounts for the large number of people including children that we see in the town of Yaounde. It is in some of these travelling agencies that you find some under aged children employed in one activity or the other.

1.18. Administrative Organisation of Yaounde.

For better administration and decentralization process, some administrative adjustments needed to be made. According to law N^o 87/015. Of 15, July 1987, Yaounde was transformed into “the urban community of Yaounde” which abolished the function of a mayor and favored government delegation appointed by the presidency. Of recent we have a City Council Mayor elected by grand councilors.

The Center Region is divided into ten Divisions with their headquarters as follows.

Lekié, with its capital at Monatélé, is northwest of Yaoundé, Haute-Sanaga (Upper Sanaga), with its capital Nanga Eboko, in the west and center of the Region, Mbam-et-Inoubou (Mbam and Inoubou), with its capital at Bafia, Mbam-et-Kim (Mbam and Kim), with its capital at Ntui, is the largest, occupying almost the entire northern half of the Region, Méfou-et-Afamba (Méfou and

Afamba), with its capital at Mfou, is the area east and south of Yaoundé., Méfou-et-Akono (Méfou and Akono), with its capital at Ngoumou., Mfoundi consists entirely of the Yaoundé capital and greater area, Nyong-et-Kélé (Nyong and Kélé), with its capital at Eséka, occupies the southwest corner of the Region, Nyong-et-Mfoumou (Nyong and Mfoumou) is opposite this at the southeast, governed from Akonolinga, Nyong-et-So'o (Nyong and So'o), with Mbalmayo as its capital, is on the central border with the South Region.

Each of these divisions or departments is headed by a presidentially appointed prefect, also called a senior divisional officer. The governor, also a presidential appointee, has his offices in Yaoundé. Several of the Centre's native peoples have at least some form of political Organisation predating the colonial period. However, the province's majority, the various Beti peoples, has no strong traditions in this sector. Instead, a patriarch traditionally heads a clan of related families. These individuals can still be found today, though their positions are largely honorary.

The Tikar, on the other hand, have strong political traditions. Each Tikar group is headed by a fon (foyn), who serves as the head of administration, religion, and ritualistic affairs. Below him are various nobles and lords who handle administrative tasks in smaller divisions of territory.

Among the Banen, some sub-tribal groups are headed by a chief. Such individuals are rare, but they rule with absolute authority where they occur. Most Banen are merely loose connections of family groups, however. The Bafia and Yambassa have a similar structure with clans of family groups. The heads of the joint-families are the most important individuals in this traditional hierarchy

This chapter of our work permitted us to see the physical, social, demographic, cultural and several other aspects that qualify the locality of Yaounde and its inhabitants. We were able to look at how the place came into existence, what the people do and how they interact with their environment. The importance of this chapter is to give us a clear background understanding of the people we want to carry out our research on and get a better base for a valid interpretation of our data gotten from the field. Cameroon had over 900,000 internally displaced people, 51% of whom were children up on the streets of cities like Yaounde and Douala

CHAPTER TWO

**LITERATURE REVIEW, THEORETICAL
FRAMEWORK AND DEFINITION OF
CONCEPTS**

Chapter two is a presentation of our literature review, theoretical framework, and definition of concepts. It will also elaborate on the works of renowned authors who have directly or indirectly contributed to this study based on Culture and Childhood Employment in Yaounde: A Contribution to Anthropology of Development. We are also going to bring out some views of other researchers relating aspects of our research, some of which are culture, childhood employment, child labour, labour laws, anthropology of development, and much more. Understanding what others have written in relation to our work is very pivotal in that it will add more knowledge to our research, avoid plagiarism, avoid doing research on what others have already researched on, and bring out clearly our contribution to the research world by filling this gap. This part of our research focuses on what others have put in place in the form of books, journals, articles, internet, audio/videos, and conference proceedings. In addition, this chapter handles our theoretical framework which centers on elaborating theories which will guide us through our work.

2.1. Literature Review.

By literature review we mean the study of books, articles, journals to understand what others have written in relation to our research topic. In the course of our research we came across these writings which we reviewed to boost our research work. We opted for a thematic literature review as articulated below.

2.1.2. Childhood Employment.

Childhood employment in Africa is generally defined based on two factors: type of work and minimum appropriate age of the work. If a child is involved in an activity that is harmful to his/her physical and mental development, he/she is generally considered as a child labourer. Nurul (2020). That is, any work that is mentally, physically, socially or morally dangerous and harmful to children, and interferes with their schooling by depriving them of the opportunity to attend school or requiring them to attempt to combine school attendance with excessively long and heavy work. Appropriate minimum age for each work depends on the effects of the work on the physical health and mental development of children. ILO Convention No. 138 suggests the following minimum age for admission to employment under which, if a child works, he/she is considered as a child laborer: 18 years old for hazardous works (Any work that jeopardizes children's physical, mental or moral health), and 13–15 years old for light works (any work that does not threaten

children's health and safety, or prevent them from schooling or vocational orientation and training), although 12–14 years old may be permitted for light works under strict conditions in very poor countries. Another definition proposed by ILO's Statistical Information and Monitoring Program on Child Labor (SIMPOC) defines a child as a child labourer if he/she is involved in an economic activity, and is under 12 years old and works one or more hours per week, or is 14 years old or under and works at least 14 hours per week, or is 14 years old or under and works at least one hour per week in activities that are hazardous, or is 17 or under and works in an "unconditional worst form of child labor" (prostitution, children in bondage or forced labor, armed conflict, trafficked children, pornography, and other illicit activities).

Africa has the world's highest incidence rates of child labour. A report by the United Nations' International Labour Organization reveals that in 2016 nearly 1 out of every 5 children partakes in child labor. The problem is severe in Sub-Saharan Africa where more than 40% of all children aged 5–14 labour for survival, or about 48 million children.

Although poverty is generally considered as the primary cause of child labour in Africa,¹ recent studies show that the relationship between child labour and poverty is not as simple as a downward linear relationship. A study published in 2016 "Understanding child labour beyond the standard economic assumption of monetary poverty" illustrates that a broad range of factors – on the demand- and supply-side and at the micro and macro levels – can affect child labour; it argues that structural, geographic, demographic, cultural, seasonal and school-supply factors can also simultaneously influence whether children work or not, questioning thereby the common assumption that monetary poverty is always the most important cause.¹ In another study, Oryoie, Alwang, and Tideman (2017) show that child labour generally decreases as per capita land holding (as an indicator of a household's wealth in rural areas) increases, but there can be an upward bump in the relationship between child labour and landholding near the middle of the range of land per capita. In addition to poverty, Lack of resources, together with other factors such as credit constraints, income shocks, school quality, and parental attitudes toward education are all associated with child labour.

The International Labour Organization estimates that agriculture is the largest employer of child labour in Africa. Vast majority are unpaid family workers.

The United Nations declared 2021 as the International Year for the Elimination of Child Labour.

2.1.3. Childhood Employment in Africa.

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2.1.4. Childhood Employment in Cameroon.

In 2021, Cameroon made moderate advancement in efforts to eliminate the worst forms of child labor. The government launched the "Zero Children in Gold Mines" program to address child labor in the gold mining sector. The government also convened meetings at the level of the technical secretariat for the Inter-Ministerial Committee on Trafficking in Persons, where it adopted an Operational Action Plan to Combat Trafficking in Persons and Smuggling of Migrants. However, children in Cameroon are subjected to the worst forms of child labor, including in commercial sexual exploitation, sometimes as a result of human trafficking, and in the recruitment by non-state armed groups for use in conflict. Children also perform dangerous tasks in cocoa production and gold mining. In addition, the government has not addressed gaps in Cameroon's legal framework regarding the prohibition of use of children in illicit activities, including in the production and trafficking of drugs, and the prohibition of the recruitment of children under age 18 by non-state armed groups . UNESCO (2022)

According the 2021 Findings on the Worst Forms of Child Labour, in 2018, the Government of Cameroon drafted a National Action Plan for the Elimination of the Worst Forms of Childhood employment in Cameroon, 2018–2025. Although the government has yet to formally adopt this

plan, in 2021, various government ministries began to deliberate and allocate funding to implement the plan's activities. Cameroon is a member of the Alliance 8.7 program, an inclusive global partnership committed to achieving Target 8.7 of the 2030 Sustainable Development Goals. Target 8.7 seeks, among other objectives, to secure the prohibition and elimination of the worst forms of child labor. In 2021, the government funded and participated in programs that may contribute to preventing child labor. However, gaps exist in these social programs, including the inadequacy of programs to address the full scope of the problem

2.1.5. Childhood Employment according to UNICEF.

Looking at the I.L.O. Convention No 138 of 1973, population growth, recurring crises, extreme poverty and inadequate social protection measures have led to an additional 17 million girls and boys engaging in childhood employment in sub-Saharan Africa over the past four years. African countries are home to most of the world's 160 million working children. The International Labor Organization estimates that more than 72 million children in sub-Saharan Africa nearly one in five are affected by child labor. Experts estimate that millions more are at risk due to the coronavirus pandemic. According to UNICEF (2019), this marks the first time in 20 years that progress toward ending child labor has stalled.

It was against this backdrop that experts and child welfare activists met for the 5th World Conference on the Elimination of Child Labor in Durban, South Africa, last month, to discuss stricter measures for the protection of children.

As part of the United Nations' Sustainable Development Goals (adopted in September 2015), all 193 member states have pledged to take effective action to eliminate childhood employment, forced labor, modern slavery, human trafficking and the worst forms of child labor including child soldiers by 2025. But controls to stop the employment of minors are rare, according to children's rights organization Plan International.

According to [frontlinethehindu.com](https://www.frontlinethehindu.com) of May 17, 2022 a children's rights activist in Nigeria Lucy Yunana said "It is our responsibility as parents to take care of our children, not our children taking care of us,"

Yunana called on the government to crack down on the menace with strict penalties.

She said any child caught peddling or begging should be arrested, including parents allowing their daughters to work as domestic help. Parents would then have to pay the fines.

Back in Cameroon, an extensive program called "useful vacations" was launched at the Center for the Advancement of Women and Families in Nkoldongo to keep children occupied.

But with little encouragement, some parents prefer to boost the family income by having their children work.

According to the 2016 Global Estimates of Modern Slavery, there are about 4.3 million children involved in work. Africa has the highest number of working children. According to the International Labor Organization, 41% of children on the continent are economically active (africa24tv.com of 23 May 2022). A situation caused by poverty, limited access to basic social services, natural disasters, poor governance, among others. In order to effectively combat child labour, the African Union intends to strengthen social protection, access to education and vocational training. The general rule is that a young person under school leaving age (16) can get a part-time job from the age of 14. However, they can only be employed in what is considered 'light work'. This means that they cannot do any job that may affect their health and safety or interfere with their education.

Childhood employment is a global issue that prevents children from fulfilling their potential. Childhood employment is a violation of children's rights the work can harm them mentally or physically, expose them to hazardous situations or stop them from going to school.

Not all work done by children is classed as child labour. There is not an issue when a child is working to progress their life skills without compromising their health, their well-being or their education. Often older children may do chores for their parents or small jobs to earn pocket money or gain work experience. This work prepares them for their adult working life.

But around the world, millions of children do work in child labour. They work in fields, in factories, down mines, as servants or maids, or selling goods in the street or at markets. Girls are more likely than boys to do domestic work, such as cleaning, making food and serving. Allais (2009), Bonke (2010).

The work that children can be forced to do might also be illegal – such as working with drug gangs or in prostitution. Many children may get no money for the work they do but they will get food and a place to sleep. If they become sick or injured, most children will not get any money for missing work.

All these forms of Childhood employment can prevent a child from going to school and limit their opportunity to fulfill their potential. Many child labourers never go to school or drop out.

Education is a proven strategy for reducing Childhood employment. Lack of access to education keeps the cycle of exploitation, illiteracy and poverty going – limiting future options and forcing children to accept low-wage work as adults and to raise their own children in poverty. Children who have access to education can break the cycle of poverty at the root of Childhood employment.

2.1.5.1. Childhood Employment is not always Illegal

In many countries a child working under the age of 14 is an illegal act. Families and employers often hide what they are doing because they worry they will be taken to court or sent to prison for having child labourers. For example Section 86 :(1) of the labour code forbids the employment of children below 14 years.

2.1.5.2. Estimated Number of Children working.

The International Labour Organization showed in 2017 that about 152 million children aged from 5 to 17; 88 million of them being girls are engaged in childhood employment.

Many of them never go to school or drop out of school because they are required to work to earn a living for their families or have to work to survive themselves. The ILO said 70% work in agriculture, 17% in the services sector and 12% in industry. About 12 million children are regarded as being trapped in modern slavery (www.antislavery.org 2022)

2.1.6. The Notion of a Child.

The United Nations Convention on the Rights of the Child defines a child as a human being below the age of 18 years. This definition by the UNCRC stands best for our studies and that is the context under which our studies will be carried out

From a general point of view, there is no standard definition of a child. A child can only be well defined contextually to better boost the understanding of a particular concept. The period between the end of infancy (about 2 years of age) and the onset of puberty, marking the beginning of adolescence (10–12 years of age). This period is sometimes divided into (a) early childhood, from 2 years through the preschool age of 5 or 6 years; (b) middle childhood, from 6 to 8–10 years

of age; and (c) late childhood or preadolescence, which is identified as the 2-year period before the onset of puberty.

Child may also describe a relationship with a parent (such as sons and daughters of any age)¹or, metaphorically, an authority figure, or signify group membership in a clan, tribe, or religion; it can also signify being strongly affected by a specific time, place, or circumstance, as in "a child of nature" or "a child of the Sixties. (Wikipedia.org)

2.1.7. The Notion of Childhood.

According to Bornstein (2006), Sigmund Freud (1856–1939) and psychotherapists who have followed Freud, such as Alice Miller, childhood was of key significance in the adjustment of the individual to mature well-being. Freud developed his theories of the sub-conscious partly through considering the reasons early childhood memory becomes lost. Since childhood was regarded as the key stage in the successful, or unsuccessful, development of ego, psychological well-being in adult life hinged on this period of time and healing might be effected through the recall of repressed childhood experience. This view about the experiences of childhood from Freud makes us understand that the dangers of childhood employment can play a big role in present and future of a child.

In her book titled *Pricing the Priceless child: the changing social value of children* (1986), the social historian Viviana Zelizer has described what she terms a "sacralization" (investing objects with religious or sentimental meaning) of childhood that occurred at this time, creating a transition in the way children were regarded, from a position of economic value to one of emotional pricelessness. Thus, the notion of the economically useful child began to be replaced by the notion of the incalculable emotional value of each child. Such a theoretical development was essential for the generation of a consensus around legally sanctioned compulsory education.

Children and childhood are familiar terms to us and we cannot fully grasp the nature of childhood employment in Yaounde without looking deeply at the Anthropological, Sociological and Cultural perspective of childhood. We all have been through the age when we were called 'children' and have experienced the phase called 'childhood'. Not only childhood but also we have passed through the stages of adolescence with varied experiences, some of these experiences still affecting

us today either positively or negatively as adults. The word childhood means the state of being a child. Till the end of the twentieth century the idea of childhood as a separate social category had been paid very little attention. According to cultural norms and expectations, the definition of childhood also varies. As adults, we see children in the same manner and not as unique individuals who have varied experiences, interests, styles of learning, and knowledge. We often force them to be the way we want them to be, which deeply influences children's development.

More to that childhood refers to the stage of being a child. It is the period between infancy and adolescence. It is the second phase of human development and marks the end of infancy and the onset of adolescence. There is no universal definition of childhood and different personalities have tried defining childhood in different ways. Childhood is generally considered to be either a natural biological stage of development or a modern idea or invention. Theories of childhood are concerned with what a child is, the nature of childhood, the purpose or function of childhood, and how the notion of the child or childhood is used in society.

Childhood is generally considered to be either a natural biological stage of development or a modern idea or invention. Theories of childhood are concerned with what a child is, the nature of childhood, the purpose or function of childhood, and how the notion of the child or childhood is used in society. The concept of childhood, like any invention, was forged from a potent relationship between ideas and technologies within a frame of social, political, and economic needs. Theories of childhood as a concept are often highly colored or emotive, that is to say, they deal with stark contrasts revealing the development over time of the psychological or emotional significance of childhood as viewed from the state of adulthood. Up until the 1990s, theories of childhood tended to be determined in a "top-down" approach which some have described as "imperialistic." This is true of theories about the medieval child as much as the modern child. Children themselves while the focus of theory, have not generally been considered as having a legitimate voice in influencing its production. However, the UN Convention on the Rights of the Child (1989) created a climate for reconsidering this tendency and a subsequent focus on listening to the views of the child and children's rights of expression in general. This has led some scholars to explore allowing children themselves to reflect upon their own experience of childhood, resulting in the use of inclusive research methodologies and more democratic frameworks for dissemination.

Ever since Johann Amos Comenius (1592–1670) published his *Didactica Magna* (1649) and John Locke (1632–1704) produced his treatise *Some Thoughts Concerning Education* (1693), observers of children have been occupied with attempting to understand, document, and comment on what it is and what it means to be a child. The significance of a state of being after the end of infancy, experienced by all humans in all societies, has produced sometimes contradictory theories from philosophical, religious, and scientific schools of thought as well as from the later established disciplines of psychology, anthropology, sociology, and cultural studies. Throughout history, theorists have been fascinated with the distinctive character of human development, unique as compared with other mammals in having evolved a lengthy period of dependency known as childhood

The theoretical boundaries drawn between the relative states of childhood and adulthood have historically been highly significant across a range of cultures for social, political, religious, and legal purposes. Jenks & Chris (1996). The status of child awarded protection and acknowledged distinct limitations of personal responsibility within a context of parental or community belonging. A child has been defined as any person below a notional age of majority, but this has been variously interpreted and there have been many differences throughout history in the ways that societies have come to recognize the exact beginning and end of childhood. The United Nations Children's Fund (UNICEF) has for its purposes identified childhood as that stage of life experienced by any person between birth and fifteen years. Article 1 of the 1989 United Nations Convention on the Rights of the Child states that a child is any person under the age of eighteen.

Childhood has thus been branded as a stage of life, (encyclopedia.org) associated with chronological age, located between infancy and youth, and including adolescence. The word child has been used in many societies to indicate a kin relationship but also to indicate a state of servitude. But biological determinants have not always been paramount in indicating childhood. Children in the past often lived with and belonged to households rather than their biological parents. The beginning of childhood has been considered variously to occur at birth or at the end of breast-feeding, which lasted sometimes until the age of three in medieval Europe or in pre industrialized societies of modern times. The Qur'an, for example, indicates thirty months as the usual period. Medieval European society considered infancy to end at around seven years,

coinciding with the beginning of a young person's competency at performing certain domestic or industrial tasks. At that time, the educational framework which modern societies have come to draw upon in distinguishing stages of infancy and childhood was yet to be invented. The eighteenth-century philosopher Jean-Jacques Rousseau (1712–1778), in constructing an ideal childhood, described what he termed the "age of nature" as occurring between birth and twelve years. For the Austrian-born philosopher Rudolf Steiner (1861–1925), childhood was a state of physical and spiritual being roughly between the ages of seven and fourteen years, indicated initially by certain physiological changes such as the loss of the milk teeth.

Biological-anthropologists, taking a bio cultural perspective, regard childhood as a stage in development unique to humans, the function of which is the preparation for adulthood. Kail & Zolner (2025). However, advocates of a new sociology of childhood such as sociologist Alison James have pointed out that chronological age is sometimes of little use when comparing childhood across very different cultures and societies. A ten year old may be a school child in one society, the head of a household in another. As such, the new sociology of childhood prefers to identify a "plurality of childhoods" rather than one structural conditional term. This plurality, it has been argued, is partly reflected through the prism of children's own definition of themselves.

Legal definitions of childhood have emerged gradually over time and during this long evolution the law can be seen to have reflected changing understandings of the meaning, span, and significance of childhood. Medieval English common law indicated, through its recognition of ages of majority, that a child was considered incapable or lacking sufficient means of carrying out a range of adult practices. The capacity of the individual to know and reflect upon the moral status of their actions has come to signify the capacity of belonging and contributing to civil society. The age at which a person can be considered capable of moral reflection upon their actions has altered over time according to changes in the understanding of childhood. Thus, for example, according to nineteenth-century English common law, it became established that children should be exempted from criminal liability under the age of seven. This was raised to age eight in 1933 and to ten in 1963.(Crime and Disorder Act 1998)

The necessity of formulating a precise legal definition of childhood grew out of demographic, economic, and related social and attitudinal changes in the industrialized world that together forged

a new recognition of the significance of childhood at the end of the nineteenth century and the beginning of the twentieth. Before this time, children had been defined in strict relation to their status as the biological offspring of fathers who also were considered by law to own any of the child's possessions and to whom they were obliged to offer their services. The lowly status of children was reflected in the fact that child theft was not acknowledged by English law before 1814. Ariès & Philippe (1962). By the end of the nineteenth century, there was a growing concern among the newly formed middle classes with the moral condition of childhood and the domestic responsibility of parents. Accompanying this was a notion of childhood innocence and vulnerability which was employed to argue for a new definition of childhood—one which associated it less with the world of industry and more with the world of education. Notions of protection and welfare developed strongly in parts of the world which were experiencing for the first time reductions in infant and child mortality

2.1.7.1. The Significance of Childhood.

What was childhood for? Two broad theoretical positions have emerged on this question. One argues that childhood is a characteristic of human evolution designed to ensure the survival and development of the species. The other suggests that the state of childhood or how childhood is viewed is significant in itself as an indicator of the evolution or development of societies and cultures toward notions of civility or modernity. The former, which encompasses the biosocial and evolutionary approaches, argues that childhood, as a stage of growth and development, has evolved in human society to provide the conditions for optimizing the prospects of maturity. In particular, this perspective has suggested that the distinctively rapid growth of the brain and the immaturity of dentition and digestive tracts characteristic of the early stages of human life have evolved over time to sustain human society. Such a view is consistent with an essentialist or universal view of childhood (that prioritizes biology over environment in explaining childhood) but has also recognized that social conditions and ecology play a part in constructing the social and cultural response to childhood. Somewhat related to bio-social theories, the perspective of evolutionary psychology came to regard childhood as directly linked to the evolution of what has been called a psychology of parenting. This theory suggests that certain universal characteristics of infants and young children, such as relatively large heads and eyes in small bodies, act to trigger

instinctive emotions and responses in adults, thus securing development toward maturity. Encyclopedia.com of May 2018.

From this perspective, childhood can be seen as a relationship and therefore can be understood in generational terms. The principle relationship of childhood is with adulthood, but more specifically with parenthood. The development or evolution of conscious parenting is the focus of a school of thought known as psychohistory, which has developed since the 1970s following the work of Lloyd deMause (1974). DeMause and his associates have developed a distinctive and controversial theory of childhood. This position establishes from empirical evidence that childhood, while seemingly held by society to be a time of freedom and innocence, has been for the majority of children a time of oppression and abuse. DeMause has argued that the parental response to the infant or child has evolved over time from one which was generally abusive and cruel to one which became nurturing and affectionate. Such a development, according to this theory, not only reflected social, technological, and cultural change but indeed generated those changes.

2.1.7.2. Perspectives of Childhood.

Here we begin with the developmental and Social-Constructionist perspective of childhood. Before the second half of the twentieth century, physiological, psychological, and cognitive mapping of development was the dominant theoretical model for the study of childhood. However research and theory which emerged from the disciplines of history, anthropology, and sociology came to strongly question the developmental model, shifting the focus from the child itself to the socially and culturally constructed view of childhood specific to time and place. Since the eighteenth century, the dominant paradigm in Western cultures has viewed childhood as a stage of life characterized by dependency, learning, growth, and development. The notion that in the medieval world there was no concept of childhood was first introduced by the French scholar Philippe Ariès. in his *Centuries of Childhood* (1962), which focused mainly on France. Ariès believed that the evidence drawn from European paintings and texts of the time revealed that children seemed to be viewed as miniature adults. They had no special clothing, food, social space, or time which amounted to a childhood culture. It was only in the seventeenth and eighteenth centuries that the demarcation between the adult world and the world of childhood slowly began to be drawn. In other words, the social and cultural world of childhood was instituted as a key part

of the institution of a new kind of adult, the adult of the bourgeoisie. In spite of regional, cultural, and social differences in the experience of being a child and in how childhood is understood, the social-constructionist view of childhood has become the dominant conceptual model.

The early twentieth century saw the development of the discipline of psychology and associated with it, within the context of compulsory mass schooling, educational psychology. For the first time, large numbers of children were brought together institutionally with the object of transforming them into literate and numerate citizens. This material fact encouraged the development of learning theory with particular reference to childhood, and a developmental model, drawn from scientific observation and experimentation, came to characterize the understanding of the child as learner. Stage theory, usually associated with the work of Jean Piaget (1896–1980), assumes that the child, regardless of social or cultural context, has a certain universal nature which predisposes it to develop in identifiable stages. This understanding had profound effects on the organization of knowledge and pedagogy in the modern school.

During the 1920s anthropologist Margaret Mead (1901–1978) challenged Piaget's theory of stages of development. Her research sought to show that children brought up in different cultures did not exhibit a replica of the animistic stage that Piaget thought to be universal. Mead studied important differences in child and adolescent experiences according to environmental factors and while the results were controversial, the contextual debate continued throughout the rest of the twentieth century, reflecting a weakening of confidence in the universal view of childhood.

According to Cahan et al (1993) in *The Elusive Historical Child*, historians, sociologists, and anthropologists have suggested that there is no single and universal experience or understanding of what childhood is. Likewise where it begins and ends but that this has altered according to time and place. Social-constructionist theory seeks to illustrate that there are many possible answers to the questions "What is a child?" or "What is childhood?" While factors such as body weight might be measured scientifically, producing the same answer in any time or place, childhood itself, the social and cultural expectations of the child, and its roles and responsibilities or stages of legitimacy can be understood very differently according to any contextual worldview. Social-constructionist theory argues that a notion of childhood is generated by successive generations out of a mix of tradition, social inter-course, and technological development. The context is cultural,

and the key generating force is discourse. A discourse on childhood is the mediation of an interrelated set of ideas which are communicated through predominantly cultural outlets that generate and consolidate a particular worldview.

That children have and actively generate their own cultural worlds is recognized within another social-constructionist approach which has been termed the tribal child perspective. Iona and Peter Opie's work in the 1950s and 1960s on children's culture as expressed through play and organized games in United Kingdom streets and playgrounds encouraged this understanding of the child operating within and determining its own cultural world. Another variation on the social-constructionist approach is a political theory of childhood, which views children as a minority group. Within this perspective, children are viewed as people who are afforded little status in society but who are capable of becoming the agents of their own destiny. Within this framework, the physical and cognitive characteristics of childhood are subsumed within an approach which questions a key political function of the ideology of childhood, that which denies a voice to the child.

Secondly we have the Cultural perspective of childhood. Variations in our images of childhood can be found not only by going back over time but also by travelling through the different cultures in the world. In different cultures there is a variation in children's social position and roles. These variations are seen between rural and urban areas, among different communities, and among different countries.

From this perspective, according to Qvortrup & Jens (1994) in *Childhood Matters*, child rearing practices are important in shaping the personality of children. Even today there are variations in our images of childhood when we compare different parts of the world with different cultural traditions. What is normal in one society may not be acceptable in another. These differences are due to the rearing practices as how children are talked to, held or played with. Thus we may say that each society sets out to produce children with personality characteristics that fit in with its own values. The social and cultural contexts in which children grow up exert influences in making sense of the social world of the child. Thus, you may say that there is no single universal definition of childhood. Childhood differs across time, place and culture.

On a specific note, Yaounde is a cosmopolitan city with a juxtaposition of cultures as almost, if not all the more than 200 tribes of Cameroon are found in Yaounde explaining why this research work had to be carried out considering the concept of childhood from the various perspectives as seen above.

On a global view, Considerations of age and physical maturity are not the only factors by which childhood has been characterized. The association of childhood with notions of a spiritual world, or in modern times, a fantasy world, have shaped both the experience and expectation of childhood. Goldman (1964) & Wilber (1966). In medieval times in Europe and into modern times through much of the rest of the world, childhood has been considered a condition with a special closeness to nature and to things spiritual. Marina Warner has shown how across cultures adult society has universally recognized this attribute by means of its songs, stories, and fairy tales, rituals and iconography. In preliterate or predominantly oral cultures ideas about childhood were and still are transmitted through stories, songs, and rituals. Such traditional media carried meanings, communicated moral codes, instructed on the care and protection of the young, and marked the important transition from childhood to adulthood. The end of childhood is a universally recognized stage of transition characterized by physiological changes which indicate sexual maturity. All societies and cultures have variously recognized this important mark of entry into the adult community. In the pre modern world, the relative position of the young within the community and the wider cosmos was articulated as clearly to contemporaries through the collective recognition of rites of passage as is the case in the modern world. What came to transform this consideration into what we identify as theory was the development and spread of literacy.

Neil Postman in *The Disappearance of Childhood* (1982) has suggested that in Western Europe at least, it was the spread of literacy through the invention of the printing press that was the principal force in generating a widely held and understood consensus around the meaning of childhood. In this sense, childhood was recognized as a stage of life essentially separated from the world of adults and adult knowledge by a lack of literacy. Knowledge and skill with the written word became a sign of maturity toward which the young could be trained. Postman has suggested that the information and communications revolution at the turn of the twenty-first century has delivered the end of. Childhood, since the relational distance between the adult and the child has been

terminally altered by the spread and crucial adoption by children of information and communications technologies.

The notion of the disappearance of childhood expresses a sense of loss communicated at an earlier period in history. Postman; the *Disappearance of Childhood* (1982). The Romantic poets of late-eighteenth- and early-nineteenth-century Europe employed the notion of a lost childhood in their responses to an emergent industrial world. As Hugh Cunningham has put it, the child was the "other" for which one yearned. From the end of the eighteenth century, particularly through the philosophy of Jean-Jacques Rousseau and the poetry of William Blake and William Wordsworth, childhood began to be associated strongly in the European mind with a state of nature and as a symbol of humanity, a signifier of development, and the root of progress. This was accompanied by a romantic turn against the impact of new forms of industrial organization and production. Blake's *Songs of Innocence and Experience* (1794) deployed the notion of a universal, natural childhood as a symbol of the humanity that Blake and his contemporaries feared would be destroyed through the oppressive effects of industrialization.

In Blake's *Songs of Innocence and Experience* (1794), the dominant cultural product that emerged from the end of the eighteenth century was the image of the child as a symbol of innocence and purity, particularly the white Anglo-Saxon child. Within a racial framework, the evolutionary notion of childhood was found to be useful when deployed by the European colonial powers in justifying their "civilizing" domination of Africa. Those to be colonized were, according to the theory of recapitulation, likened to children in their behavior and evolutionary stage of development. In cultural and religious terms, the modern theory of childhood came to be identified with notions of innocence and absence of sin or corruption. Innocence was associated more often than not with the female child in the adult mind and it has been argued indicates an awareness of its opposite state. These are essentially adult concerns and not natural attributes, but the inevitable confusion has been exploited, not always in the interests of children themselves. Literary historian James Kincaid has argued that the notion of childhood innocence has been adopted by the adult world in order to imply the potential of violation and as such contains within it the potential of its opposite meaning. As such, theories of childhood communicate reflections on the state of human nature and the dominating anxieties of adult life at particular historical junctures.

The experience of being a child and the conceptualization of childhood are of course related, but Jens Qvortrup and colleagues have suggested that the idea of childhood developed as a structural form irrespective of children themselves. Theoretical notions of childhood can be seen to reflect adult anxieties, concerns, and needs while at the same time functioning to teach children themselves what it is to be a child and to provide a marker against which any child can be measured and compared. Childhood viewed at a distance, through a historical perspective, is revealing of patterns or what are sometimes called landscapes—general conditions of how children appeared to themselves and to their adult contemporaries at any one time. Historian John Somerville has adopted the term standardization in this context. According to this theory, a consensus is arrived at, usually in accord with a hegemonic ordering of the values and standards of the more prosperous in society, through which a normal or ideal vision of childhood is arrived at. Theorist Henri A. Giroux has argued that the generation of cultural definitions of childhood needs to be understood historically, since the contextual site or framework within which childhood becomes defined alters over time. In modern times this occurs predominantly through commercial or market forces; a dominant site of cultural definition is the media and associated leisure and entertainment industries. For Giroux, the "politics of culture" provide the conceptual space in which childhood is constructed, experienced, and struggled over. For most of the twentieth century the school served as the principal site of cultural production, but in the twenty-first century the media and leisure industries have become at least as significant in the cultural definition of childhood. In a similar vein, childhood has been characterized as spontaneous desire by historian of childhood Gary Cross, who has focused on the changing form of children's toys over the course of the twentieth century. He traces these changes to the construction of the child as consumer within the context of a view of parenting which emphasizes the importance of fulfilling those desires for healthy cognitive and social development.

In continuation we have the Anthropological perspective of childhood. While examining the anthropological viewpoint, you could see that there are no chronological limits of childhood or biological boundaries. From anthropological viewpoint, childhood can be perceived from five angles:

Firstly, children are socialized to learn and perpetuate a set of norms and customs. According to this view, we may treat children as small adults in the making, molded by parents and adults in a community to sustain the culture of a society.

Secondly, children's personalities are understood as natural reactions of the anxieties and cultural aspects in which they grow up with. The emphasis is on how the cultural patterns are internalized and in turn are reproduced in society.

Thirdly, childhood socialization is a process by which norms, attitudes, ways of thinking and values of society are acquired by children to enter the next stage of development. This view suggests that child rearing practices are influenced by the geography, history and ecology of a community, which, in turn, shape the personality of a child.

Fourthly, childhood is viewed in terms of 'developmental niche'. The 'developmental niche' stands for the framework for examining the cultural structuring of the micro-environment of the child. It also tries to explain the environment in terms of child's viewpoint and to understand the process of development and acquisition of culture. The child is seen as bringing its own temperament, as well as species-specific potentials, to the developmental niche provided by its culture. The developmental function is divided into three components as given below:

The physical and social settings in which the child lives (for example, type of house or living space the child has)

The customs of child care and child rearing (for example, scheduling of activities such as sending children to play or showing them TV programs)

The psychology of the caretakers (for example, do the care takers believe that a regular sleep schedule is necessary for healthy development). These three components function together in shaping the developmental experience of a child within the larger culture.

Finally, according to Philippe in *Centuries of childhood* (1962) some anthropologists view childhood itself as a cultural construction shaped by forces within as well as outside a single cultural community. Children experience culture within a family through their daily routine of life. Here daily routine consists of going to school, religious practices, play, mealtimes and family

visits. Generally, culture enters into the mind of a child through various growing up experiences. The experiences children had in childhood might have impacted their adult life. Here we have to remember that child rearing practices vary from culture to culture and represent an adaptation to different environments. The ways in which children assign meaning to their everyday environments, be they city, rural, suburban or discomfort zones and how they involve in these environments play a major part in shaping children's lives.

Looking at childhood from the sociological perspective, we understood that there exist variety and diversity in experiences of children across times and societies. Further, there are different conceptions about child and childhood across time, societies and contexts. These are so different that it is difficult to have one idea for child or childhood. Yet, in general as adults, we envision childhood as one category. Such a vision is more of a creation or construction, which is not based on an empathetic understanding of experiences of children. It is shaped by a uniform and narrow vision of society, which may have a deep implication on lives of children. This way of looking at children seems to be adults' construction of childhood. We may agree with Mayall's (1991) argument that 'children's lives are lived through childhoods constructed for them by adults' understanding of childhood and what children are and should be'. Childhood as a Social Construction A social construction can be defined as 'a theoretical perspective that explores the ways in which "reality" is negotiated in everyday life through people's interactions and through sets of discourses' James & James, (2008). It focuses on culture and context in understanding what happens in society and in constructing knowledge based on those understandings. When we examine the idea of social construction, we have to highlight the following points:

All ways of understanding are culturally and historically relative. Our knowledge about the world is constructed through our daily interactions; and there are many possible constructions of the world.

You may notice that when developmental psychologists differentiate children from adults on the basis of ability in a range of domains, social constructionists argue that childhood has more to do with how people define it; thus making childhood a social construction. Our attitude towards childhood is influenced by the dominant belief systems of the society in which we live, and so it may vary across time and culture. We can only begin to understand our views of childhood if we

take account of our own position in a particular social, political and cultural context. The constructed nature of childhood becomes more apparent when we contrast the concepts of childhood that prevailed at different historical periods or in different cultures.

According to the postmodernist views of childhood, David Elkind (1950) the idea of a universal state of childhood was challenged towards the turn of the twenty-first century through an increasingly globalized perspective which accompanied scholarly questioning through ethnographic, cultural, and anthropological studies. The shift toward a recognition and acceptance of children's voices in determining their own world-view brought about a fragmented view which questioned the structural norm of childhood and brought about a theoretical position about pluralities of childhoods. For such theorists as Chris Jenks and Jens Qvortrup, it is more accurate and helpful to talk of many childhoods or a plurality of experience both across cultures and within them. Diversity of experience according to class, ethnicity, gender, culture, place of residence, health, or disability rather than one common childhood is emphasised, in spite of growing recognition of the universalizing effects of globalization.

Popular writing and scholarship on childhood in the last decades of the twentieth century reflected on a changed state of being. The traditional Western notion of childhood, which had held from about the 1850s to the 1950s, was implied in its absence by notions such as the disappearance of childhood or David Elkind's the hurried child. The emerging consensus was that notions of childhood innocence and dependency on adults could no longer be sustained in the context of children's access to and use of new media technologies. The notion of childhood as an apprenticeship period for adulthood was fundamentally challenged by the use of such technologies, particularly in the home. Such a material change, coupled with an intensification of child-focused popular entertainment (sometimes called kinderculture) that began in the second half of the twentieth century, came to place strains on existing contemporary theories of childhood. What has been called by Shirley Steinberg and Joe Kincheloe "the dilemma of postmodern childhood" was characterized by democratization in family life which placed the expectations of children and the concept of childhood itself in conflict with many of its established institutions such as the traditional family or the authoritarian school. This has also been accompanied by a new vision of children's rights apart from and even in opposition to their parents. Encyclopedia.com of May 2022 (Theories of Childhood)

2.2. Theoretical Framework.

A theory according to Merriam Webster dictionary is a “plausible or scientifically acceptable general principle or body of principles offered to explain phenomena” by plausible, we mean reasonable or rational principle that has gain acceptance in the explanation of social, cultural economic and religious phenomenon. All along our work, we will use two theories two theories for the interpretation and analysis of our work. These theories are those of Culture and Personality and Structural Functionalism.

2.2.1. Culture and Personality Theory.

The Culture and Personality movement was at the core of anthropology in the first half of the 20th century. It examined the interaction between psychological and cultural forces at work on the human experience. Culture and Personality was too divided to really be considered a “school of thought.” It had no orthodox viewpoint, centralized leadership, or coherent training program (LeVine 2001); however, there were also some basic ideas with which most practitioners would agree. At a minimum, these would include:

Adult behavior is “culturally patterned,” childhood experiences influence the individual’s personality as an adult, and adult personality characteristics are reflected in the cultural beliefs and social institutions, such as religion (LeVine 2001).

Most prominent culture-and-personality theorists argued that socialization practices directly shape personality patterns. The socialization process molds a person’s emotions, thoughts, behaviors, cultural values and norms, allowing the person, should the process work, to fit into and function as productive members in the surrounding human society. The study of culture and personality examined how different socialization practices resulted in different personality types.

Like the Functionalist schools of Radcliffe-Brown and Malinowski, Culture and Personality was one of the reactions against 19th century social evolutionism and diffusionism. Franz Boas and many of his students (such as Ruth Benedict) argued against the views of the early evolutionists, such as Louis Henry Morgan and Edward Tylor, who believe each culture goes through the same hierarchical evolutionary sequence.

There is some debate on exactly how the field of Culture and Personality emerged. Some believe it developed from an interaction between anthropology and Freud's psychoanalysis (Singer 1961). Robert A. LeVine (2001) puts its beginnings with the publication in 1918 of W.I. Thomas and Florian Znaniecki's "The Polish Peasant in Europe and America." Thomas and Zaniecki (1918) stated that "when viewed as a factor of social evolution the human personality is a ground of the causal explanation of social happenings; when viewed as a product of social evolution it is causally explicable by social happenings."

The field developed more with later work by Margaret Mead and Ruth Benedict. Mead's *Coming of Age in Samoa* (1928) provided "the first sustained consideration of the relation between personality and culture" (Winthrop 1991:214). Culture and Personality reached a peak during the 1930s and 1940s and began to lose support in the 1950s. It was viewed as being unscholarly, and the few remaining practitioners changed the name of their approach to psychological anthropology to avoid the stigma (LeVine 2001), but also to widen its scope. Modern psychological anthropology, among other pursuits, attempts to bridge the gap between anthropology and psychology by examining the "cross-cultural study of social, political, and cultural-historical constitution of the self" (Lindholm 2001).

Looking this theory, whatever interference in the life of a child has a long term effects on the life of a child. This may be positive or negative impacts as the child will grow up already tamed to act in a particular way. We also see that adult behavior is culturally tailored or patterned. Linking this particular idea to our research work you will see that the practice as well as the fight against childhood employment in Yaounde is highly influenced by the cultural stand points of the individuals involved in either ways.

2.2.2. Functionalism Theory.

Functionalism has been considered one of the prominent schools of thoughts in order to understand various aspects of culture and society. Functionalism arose as a reaction to evolutionism and diffusionism in the early twentieth century. Functionalism looks for the function or part that is played by several aspects of culture in order to maintain a social system. It is a framework that considers society as a system whose parts work together to promote solidarity and stability.

From this point of view childhood is a period that every system must join together to maintain the various privileges given to every child at childhood. This theory helps us to understand that there is a function for every member of the community including the child. Each should play their part well and we will have a stable society but when one; especially parent/guardian plays a different role or causes another to play a different role, there is bound to be a dysfunction. The child of course is usually the immediate victim but the family and the society at large are either immediate or future victims.

This approach of theoretical orientation looks at both social structure and social function. It describes the inter-relationship between several parts of any society. Study.com (2020). These parts or the constituent elements of a society could be named as norms, traditions, customs, institutions like economy, kinship, religion etc. These parts are interrelated and interdependent. Functionalism was mainly led by Bronislaw Malinowski and A.R. Radcliffe Brown. Both were purely functionalists but their approach slightly differed as Malinowski is known as functionalist but Radcliffe-Brown is mainly known as Structural Functionalist. Malinowski suggested that individuals have physiological needs (reproduction, food, shelter) and these needs are fulfilled by the social institutions. He talked about four basic "instrumental needs" (economics, social control, education, and political organization), that require institutional devices to get fulfilled. While Radcliffe-Brown focused on social structure rather than biological needs. He considered society as a system. He looked at institutions as orderly sets of relationships whose function is to maintain the society as a system. Radcliffe-Brown was inspired by August Comte who was also a functionalist.

Functionalism makes us see that every individual requires both psychological and social needs provided for by social institutions and social structures respectively. This is to keep the system moving in the right rhythm for stability. We see that there must be a holistic approach to the way childhood is handled by all actors involved; parents/guardians, the government, N.G.Os, the entire civil society and even the children themselves. Functionalism is letting us understand that childhood employment keeps proliferating as a result of a dysfunction in the community of Yaounde. One aspect of the social structure is not playing its part that is why the mechanisms put in the system cannot yield its expected results.

2.3. Definition of Concepts.

In this section of our research we are going to bring out some related concepts like childhood employment, culture, development, anthropology of development, employment, childhood employment, child labour, child trafficking, child abuse and more. All these shall fall under a sub heading as seen below.

2.3.1. The Concept of Culture.

Etymologically, the modern term "culture" is based on a term used by the Ancient Roman orator Cicero in his *Tusculanae Disputationes*, where he wrote of a cultivation of the soul or "cultura animi" using an agricultural metaphor for the development of a philosophical soul, understood teleological as the highest possible ideal for human development. Samuel Pufendorf took over this metaphor in a modern context, meaning something similar, but no longer assuming that philosophy was man's natural perfection. His use, and that of many writers after him, "refers to all the ways in which human beings overcome their original barbarism, and through artifice, become fully human."

Philosopher Edward S. Casey (1986) describes: "The very word culture meant 'place tilled' in Middle English, and the same word goes back to Latin *colere*, 'to inhabit, care for, till, worship' and *cultus*, 'A cult, especially a religious one.' To be cultural, to have a culture, is to inhabit a place sufficiently intensive to cultivate it to be responsible for it, to respond to it, to attend to it caringly.

Culture described by Velkley (2022), originally meant the cultivation of the soul or mind, acquires most of its later modern meaning in the writings of the 18th-century German thinkers, who were on various levels developing Rousseau's criticism of "modern liberalism and Enlightenment". Thus a contrast between "culture" and "civilization" is usually implied in these authors, even when not expressed as such.

In the words of anthropologist E.B. Tylor (1871), culture is "that complex whole which includes knowledge, belief, art, morals, law, custom and any other capabilities and habits acquired by man as a member of society." Alternatively, in a contemporary variant, "Culture is defined as a social domain that emphasizes the practices, discourses and material expressions, which, over time, express the continuities and discontinuities of social meaning of a life held in common. Looking

at the various definition of culture gave us a clearer view on how to explore the nature of childhood employment in Yaounde. This made our research work to be more holistic, to avoid looking at the phenomenon from a particular stand point.

The culture of Cameroon and Yaounde in particular is so rich in variety and this variety goes a long way to influence the way people raise their children as well. (www.wikipedia.com 2019) Cameroon has a rich and diverse culture made up of a mix of about 250 indigenous populations and just as many languages and customs. The country is nicknamed "Little Africa" as geographically, Cameroon consists of coastline, mountains, grass plains, forest, rainforest and desert, all of the geographical regions in Africa in one country. This also contributes to its cultural diversity as ways of life and traditional food dishes and traditions vary from geographical region to geographical region Cameroon has 250-300 distinct groups, and an estimated 300+ languages. These languages include the Akoose language, the Gbaya languages, the Fula language, the Gyele language, the Koonzime language, the Mundang language, the Ngiemboon language, and the Vengo language. Others include Ewondo, Bassa, Bamileke, Duala and Arabic in the North and Far-North regions.

Cameroon is divided into several regions, which are dominated by specific ethnic or religious groups. Ethnic divisions often correspond to geography, which is also widely varied. Religious differences often correspond to colonial or other historical influence.

Partly through the influence of colonialism, there is a national culture, and two distinct regional cultures: the Anglophone and Francophone regions, which primarily speak English and French and use different legal systems. The national culture is established through public institutions such as school, the multiparty political system, shared history of colonialism and a national love of football. Theatre of Cameroon is also another important aspect of local culture. In this review we had to present a brief general culture of Cameroon because almost all these ethnic groups as seen above have members of their communities resident in Yaounde. This of course have something to do with the nature of childhood employment in Yaounde.

2.3.2. Culture of Poverty.

The term "subculture of poverty" (later shortened to "culture of poverty" made its first prominent appearance in the ethnography *Five Families: Mexican Case Studies in the Culture of Poverty* by anthropologist Oscar Lewis. Lewis (1959) struggled to render "the poor" as legitimate subjects whose lives were transformed by poverty. He argued that although the burdens of poverty were systemic and therefore imposed upon these members of society, they led to the formation of an autonomous subculture as children were socialized into behaviors and attitudes that perpetuated their inability to escape the underclass.

2.3.3. The concept of Anthropology.

Anthropology according Richard Harvey (1593), as put by APA seeks to uncover principles of behavior that apply to all human communities. To an anthropologist, diversity itself seen in body shapes and sizes, customs, clothing, speech, religion, and worldview provides a frame of reference for understanding any single aspect of life in any given community. That is, Anthropology is the scientific study of humanity, concerned with human behavior, human biology, cultures and societies, in both the present and past, including past human species. Anthropology specializes in cultural, linguistic, biological or physical, archaeological, developmental, medical, economic, etc. studies or rather branches. Michael Brian Schiffer says "anthropology is the only discipline that can access evidence about the entire human experience on this planet"

2.3.4. The Concept of Development.

According to Society for International Development (2021), a multiple of meaning is attached to the idea of development. The term is complex, contested, ambiguous, and elusive. However, in the simplest terms, development can be defined as bringing about social change that allows people to achieve their human potential. It is good to note that development is a process rather than an outcome; it is dynamic in that it involves a change from one state or from condition to another.

2.3.5. Anthropology of Development.

Anthropology of Development refers is the application of anthropological perspectives to the multidisciplinary branch of development studies. Anthropology of Development examines

economic, political, social and cultural development around the world using the local perspective of ethnography. Gynn C (1971)

2.3.6. The Concept of Employment.

According to the 11th Edition of the Oxford English Dictionary (2019), employment is the act of giving work to someone or a person's profession. This is done with the aim of exchanging services for some sort of payment.

2.3.6.1. Self-employment.

According to Maya Dollarhide (2022) Self-employment is the state of working for oneself rather than an employer. Tax authorities will generally view a person as self-employed if the person chooses to be recognized as such or if the person is generating income for which a tax return needs to be filed. In the real world, the critical issue for the tax authorities is not whether a person is engaged in a business activity (called "trading" even when it's a service) but whether the activity is profitable and therefore potentially taxable. In other words, the activity of trading is likely to be ignored if no profit is present, so occasional and hobby- or enthusiast-based economic activity is generally ignored by the tax authorities. Self-employed people are usually classified as a sole proprietor (or sole trader), independent contractor, or as a member of a partnership.

Self-employed people generally find their own work rather than being provided with work by an employer and instead earn income from a profession, a trade, or a business that they operate. Some children who practice childhood employment practically fall under self-employment as they try to do one job or the other in order to earn an income for diverse reasons.

2.3.7. Childhood Employment.

Childhood employment signifies the number of under-aged children at work. That is children considered of ages 5 to 18 years.. Childhood employment therefore refers to jobs given to children ages 5 to 18 years in different sectors of the job market (plantations, queries, markets, bars, restaurants, homes, and more in return for money or other form of negotiations.

2.3.8. Child Labour.

This is just one of the many challenges of childhood, which of course is practiced in Yaounde. According to I.L.O, not all work done by children should be classified as child labor that is to be

targeted for elimination. The participation of children or adolescents above the minimum age for admission to employment in work that does not affect their health and personal development or interfere with their schooling, is generally regarded as being something positive. This includes activities such as assisting in a family business or earning pocket money outside school hours and during school holidays. These kinds of activities contribute to children's development and to the welfare of their families; they provide them with skills and experience, and help to prepare them to be productive members of society during their adult life. The term "child labour" is often defined as work that deprives children of their childhood, their potential and their dignity, and that is harmful to physical and mental development. It refers to work that: Is mentally, physically, socially or morally dangerous and harmful to children; and/or: Interferes with their schooling by: depriving them of the opportunity to attend school; obliging them to leave school prematurely; or requiring them to attempt to combine school attendance with excessively long and heavy work.

Whether or not particular forms of "work" can be called "child labor" depends on the child's age, the type and hours of work performed, the conditions under which it is performed and the objectives pursued by individual countries. The answer varies from country to country, as well as among sectors within countries.

2.3.9. Child Trafficking.

Trafficking of children is defined by the United Nations as the "recruitment, transportation, transfer, harboring, and/or receipt" kidnapping of a child for the purpose of slavery, forced labour and exploitation. This definition is substantially wider than the same document's definition of "trafficking in persons". Children may also be trafficked for the purpose of adoption.

Though statistics regarding the magnitude of child trafficking are difficult to obtain, the International Labour Organization (ILO) estimates that 10,000 children are trafficked each year. In 2012, the United Nations Office on Drugs and Crime (UNODC) reported the percentage of child victims had risen in a 3-year span from 20 percent to 27 percent. Every year 300,000 children are taken from all around the world and sold by human traffickers as slaves. 28% of the 17,000 people brought to the United States are children—about 13 children per day. In 2014, research conducted by the anti-human trafficking organization Thorn reported that internet sites

like Craigslist are often used as tools for conducting business within the industry and that 70 percent of child sex trafficking survivors surveyed were at some point sold online. The trafficking of children has been internationally recognized as a serious crime that exists in every region of the world and which often has human rights implications. Yet, it is only within the past decade that the prevalence and ramifications of this practice have risen to international prominence, due to a dramatic increase in research and public action. Limited research has not yet identified all causes of child trafficking; however, it appears that poverty, humanitarian crisis, and lack of education contribute to high rates. A variety of potential solutions have accordingly been suggested and implemented, which can be categorized as four types of action: broad protection, prevention, law enforcement, and victim assistance. Child trafficking according to this definition has a lot to do with childhood employment and its effects, a great motive why we carried out this research to explore the nature of the phenomenon in Yaounde.

2.3.10. Child Abuse.

Child abuse or child maltreatment, is physical, sexual, and/or psychological maltreatment or neglect of a child or children, especially by a parent or a caregiver. Child abuse may include any act or failure to act by a parent or a caregiver that results in actual or potential harm to a child and can occur in a child's home, or in the organizations, schools, or communities the child interacts with.

The terms child abuse and child maltreatment are often used interchangeably, although some researchers make a distinction between them, treating child maltreatment as an umbrella term covering neglect, exploitation, and trafficking

CHAPTER THREE
REPRESENTATION OF CHILDHOOD
EMPLOYMENT IN YAOUNDE

In chapter three, we shall be looking what childhood employment represents to the people of Yaounde and some general elements that relate childhood employment in Yaounde. More to that, this chapter permits our understanding of cultural influence and local representation of culture and childhood employment in Yaounde, what it is all about, the role of various elements and responsibilities. In this chapter, we will also be examining the influence of religion, international organisations and migration on the phenomenon. We will also see why the practice operates and what the state, local population and opinion holders think about the phenomenon of childhood employment in Yaounde.

3.1. Culture and Parental Practices (Parenting).

Culture in a lay man term and the locals of Yaounde simply means the way of life of a people. That is all their practices put together, this includes feeding, dressing, greeting style, child upbringing, marriage, music, and the list is long. Parenting means taking care of a child by a biological, adopted parent or guardian until the child reaches the age of independence which is relatively determined by every cultural setting. In Yaounde parenting and its practices is highly affected by the culture of the parents or guardian themselves. This cultural influence plays a very significant role as it determines how the life of the family looks like. It plays a very big role in the choices the parents make when it comes to; work for their children, dressing, socialization, education, religion and even peer groups. A parent told our research team this:

All my children must pass through a Christian institution at the primary level. I know the value of the moral lesson they get every day from these institutions. I believe that it will be difficult for somebody to just change my child's behaviour in a blink because the moral foundation laid in the child is firm and solid. Many ignore the moral aspect of education and concentrate on only mathematics and English. For me I am looking at the future not just good grades

Ngala: Etoug – Ebe (May 12, 2022) 3pm.

From this statement we see clearly that the culture a parent brings out in a child has both short and long term effects. Live your child loose, the child may be socialized negatively and the consequences might just be enormous. Parenting in Yaounde goes beyond providing food, providing shelter, paying school fees, and teaching the children to include serious protection and monitoring measures in and out of home. This is because Yaounde despite all the security officers

around is a host of all forms of criminals and their activities perpetuated on children and adults alike.

More to that, some parents have grown up experiencing and practising childhood employment and therefore do not seem to see anything wrong with the practice. They easily allow their children carry out income yielding activities without minding the consequences that might bring on the child. Some even see childhood employment as a form of training to the children who will in future be able to take care of themselves and the family. A respondent told me this:

Most people from the west region of Cameroon resident in Yaounde allow their children to sell or hawk on the street with all the risk involved as a form of training into real business. For them it's a cultural practice and they, especially the Bamelikes see nothing wrong with it. I am very sure even the government cannot stop this practice. The people love to do business a lot and their children as well like to sell.

Julius: Obili. (August 10, 2022) 5pm.

This statement shows us that childhood employment to some parents of Yaounde represents a cultural practice and therefore for them it's a normal thing to do. Childhood employment represents a future for them in terms of upholding the family business. These children for them are leaders of their own future. On the other hand, we see that childhood employment is about the gains with little calculation on the risk involved.

3.2. Cultural Influence on Children.

People from different cultures have different relationships with their children. For example, some cultures expect children to be quiet and always respect their elders, while other cultures encourage children to speak up and be independent. This typically explains the saying that abnormality is relative and at the same time universal. Cultural influence on childhood is relative in that; different communities, tribes and families have their unique way of child rearing. On a universal scale, all cultures of the world see childhood as a period of dependence, protection and care. This is the same case in Yaounde. This universal scale only varies at the level of age, care and protection and even religious believes. Cultural influence on children and childhood employment in Yaounde as we found out from our research is represented in two ways:

Children who come from homes where childhood employment is seen as a taboo, are restricted by their parents or guardian and only what is necessary for them is or are allowed. For example; education, doing household activities that are not harmful, learning the mother tongue, learning how to relate with others in the family, at school, in their place of worship, during outings, and so forth.

On the other hand, children who come from homes where childhood employment is considered a common, lucrative and an acceptable practice either combine all that is needed in child upbringing with work on their children or ignore a large number of child raising practices and then put the children to work for obvious reasons.

In our culture male children age between 7 and 12 are usually grouped to go and work on the farm as training for future responsibility and also for monetary reasons. Girls on their part carry various items and sell. When we come to Yaounde some think it's a normal practice while others do it because of poverty. Our culture back at home encourages children to work. It is not same here in Yaounde. Many parents here consider the risk. Some don't just have a choice.

Amadou: Acacia (September 15, 2022) 8am.

This informant makes us understand that what parents do to their children is very much related to their culture. Other factors like poverty may also play a big role in addition to culture. Therefore childhood employment represent no threat to these parents but some form of training.

According to the National Library of Medicine, (Published online 2013 October 4.) "In its most general instrumental sense, parenting consists of care of the young in preparing them to manage the tasks of life. Parents provide childhood experiences and populate the environments that guide children's development and so contribute to child mental health. Parenting is expressed in cognitions and practices. However, parents do not parent, and children do not grow up, in isolation, but in multiple contexts, and one notable context of parenting and child mental health is culture. Every culture is characterized, and distinguished from other cultures, by deep-rooted and widely acknowledged ideas about how one needs to feel, think, and act as an adequately functioning member of the culture. Insofar as parents subscribe to particular conventions of a culture, they likely follow prevailing "cultural scripts" in childrearing. Broadening our definition, it is therefore the continuing task of parents also to enculturate children by preparing them for the physical, psychosocial, and educational situations that are characteristic of their specific culture. Cross-cultural comparisons show that virtually all aspects of parenting children are informed by culture: culture influences when and how parents care for children, what parents expect of children, and which behaviors parents appreciate, emphasize and reward or

discourage and punish. Thus, cultural norms become manifest in the mental health of children through parenting. Furthermore, variations in what is normative in different cultures challenge our assumptions about what is universal and inform our understanding of how parent-child relationships unfold in ways both culturally universal and specific”

This publication above help us understand more the representation of childhood employment in Yaounde as it gives us a general and specific view of cultural influence on parenting. It comes to confirm the fact that culture plays a major role on parenting on a universal as well as relative perspective.

3.3. Cultural Influence on the Local Population.

If childhood employment is perpetuating in Yaounde it is also thanks to the role played by the local population in employing these children, supporting them, and directly or indirectly promoting the practice. Many Yaounde dwellers do see childhood employment as a bad practice but somehow acceptable. They claim it’s the situation of the nation, financial hardship.

The way things are hard in Yaounde what do you expect poor people to do? You cannot blame anyone who is struggling to survive. Which one will you prefer? Stealing, prostitution, criminal acts or childhood employment? I know it is risky but the risk is far less than for someone to start stealing. I won’t advice any one to practice childhood employment likewise I can’t blame those who practice it due to the hardship we face here in town with our large families.

Blaise: Anguissa (August 20, 2022) 6pm.

This informant clearly states that childhood employment in Yaounde is a common practice. It is understood by all as a means of survival and therefore a necessary evil brought about by economic hardship. The phenomenon according to him is most preferable compared to other criminal and risky activities carried out illegally in Yaounde.

The nature of childhood employment in Yaounde is in such a way that the local population see it on a regular bases making it look as if it is an acceptable practice. It is practiced even right in front of law enforcement officers and nobody seems to make any persistent move to regulate it. The local population see this way of life as the best means to survive for the families and the children practising childhood employment.

3.4. Representation by Gender and Culture.

Since the 1990s with the law of freedom of association, we still notice the absence of women in urban governance in the locality of Yaounde. Till today, women come mostly in the place of Deputy and secretaries. Most big government positions are still handled by men. Women who occupy about 40% of the workforce in Cameroon as compared to men who occupy 32% are engaged in activities like sewing, hair dressing, restaurant business and the men hold the major positions in the urban city. In the Cameroonian context, women are the main teachers of children at home and play a major role in bringing up children the right way. They are seen taking kids to and back from school while men concentrate the greater part of their time on work. This train is also seen in childhood employment and practices in Yaounde where the girls are more vulnerable than boys.

I am talking as a women and a mother. Women and girls are vulnerable. They are the most exploited in Yaounde than boys. They due to many reasons like ignorance about the rights of a child are really abused than boys. You will see especially men abuse them emotionally, verbally and even sexually in broad day light and people instead laugh and joke about that.

Constance: Mendong (August 25, 2022) 3pm

From this statement we see that gender inequality exists as far as childhood employment in Yaounde is concerned. The female gender according to her and many others is more vulnerable to the effects of childhood employment than her male counterpart.

In addition to childhood employment and gender, domestic work is highly peopled by female children than males ones. They do all the laundry, cook and take care of their employer's children and even elderly persons. They carry children to and from school, run errands and buy food stuffs from the market. The males on the other hand are mostly seen on the streets and markets hawking, in construction sites doing one activity or the other. The number of female children employed on the streets/ markets of Yaounde are fewer compared to the males. The reverse is true when it comes to domestic work by male children.

Majority of the IDPs and others working in houses as house helps are young girls. Many of them work under very unclear contracts and the working conditions are very poor. They are being exploited and maltreated by their masters or employer which for me is not good because children like that are supposed to be in school or learn a trade that can help them in the future.

Mercy: Rondpoint Express (August 2022)

This statement above clearly shows that girls are involved in domestic work in Yaounde more than boys. They do so under all forms of abuses. Unfortunately, they are helpless.

A lot of reports, stories and news about missing children cannot just be ignored. The consequences of childhood employment in Yaounde do not differ according to gender even though many think and believe that female children face more consequences than their male counterparts. They are easily exposed to domestic violence, torture, rape and all forms of exploitation and humiliation. A child evangelist said this:

We counsel many of them who have faced various forms of child abuses from their employers or hosts while struggling to earn a living by working for them. Many of them are too small for the task they do and this alone brings a lot of trauma to these very young innocent children. Girls are the highest victims among those we council. They go through cases of rape, physical torture in homes of their masters and on the streets.

Lydai: Biyem Assi (August 12, 2022) 4pm

This statement above continues to support the fact that childhood employment represents danger to many Yaounde dwellers. All the children involved are susceptible to danger but the female ones are more vulnerable.

Image 2: Child hawking vegetables on the street.



Source: Legideo.org. Child abuse surges in Cameroon

This picture shows confirms a girl child hawking vegetables on the street. This shows they are not just used as domestic workers but carry out other income generating activities out of the home. As you can see for yourself the girl is still very young and carrying a very heavy load.

3.5. Representation According to Labour Laws and Culture.

In Cameroon, as in many developing countries, the economic utilization of children is solicited in agricultural activities in the rural areas and the urban areas being meant for informal activities and domestic work. But the phenomenon has become urban in the country (UNDP, 1998), forcing many families to consider new strategies of survival, one of the best being the introduction of child labour (Amin, 1993) and to add childhood employment. Though poverty has been accompanied by other factors such as the development of the informal economy, it has also enabled the development of child-oriented and autonomous strategies for the child's contribution to the family budget. The labour code at some point regulates or completely forbids the phenomenon in Cameroon. Despite all that, many Yaounde dwellers completely ignore what the law says or are rather unaware of its presence and eminent implementation; why not effects of disobeying.

3.4.6. Local Representation of Childhood.

Here we are looking at representation of the rights and duties of a child, and representation of the duties of parents in Yaounde.

3.6.1. Representation According to the Rights of a Child.

Talking with participants in our research, they all gave the following as the rights of a child: The right to a name, the right to shelter, the right to medical care, the right to rest, the right to freedom of speech, the right to eat and the right to quality education

3.6.2. Representation of the Duties of a Child.

Children are to assist in carrying out house chores like washing dishes, doing laundry, running errands and cleaning the compound and house. Children are to respect and obey their parents. Children are to study hard in school. Those who are apprentices are to work hard and children are to treat visitors well.

3.6.3. Representation of the Duties of Parents.

On the other hand, parents who are the custodians of the family and everything that comes with it are to: Ensure the proper upbringing of their children in all aspects. Ensure that there is food, security, shelter, and healthy leaving. Pay all the bills and fees of children and provide clothing and school needs, and more.

From these few points we see that many are aware of the responsibilities of childhood. They differ at the level of what type of house chores the children should do. Some think the work should be given according to ages while some just see it as a general duty for children. None of them however spoke about the right stay out of work until the child get mature. We can see that the probability of children to join childhood employment depends very much on the culture of the family the children come from. This goes in line with the culture and personality theory which the child's personality will in the future be determined by how he or she was brought up by the family. There is a common saying that knowledge is power. This saying will be more useful if it's put this way; "Knowledge is power if it is consistently and properly put into practice' Ndzi M. Derick (2022)

I say this because many people, officials, law enforcers and world wishers are aware of what is right to do to eliminate many problems affecting this nation but are adamant at the level of implementation. Many don't raise an alarm about what is wrong nor do they strive to even practice the right thing. It is a culture that is bad and we need to be aware and play our part at our own little corner. I will end this section with this; "Someone somewhere is doing what he is not supposed to do to a child; and someone somewhere is not doing anything about it" Derick (2022). Many see childhood employment practiced in front of them, they grumble, complain, and are bitter but yet do very little or nothing about it.

3.7. Local Representation on Employment Age.

In most families in Yaounde, childhood employment increases with age. Each additional year increases the propensity of children to work. Thus, the more the child grows, the more he is fit to work increasingly since the work carried out by children requires physical effort which is often lacking at very young age. The growing relation of child labour with age is strengthened by the analysis of the rank of the child in the family. It is shown that the eldest children of the family are

many times more exposed to work than their younger brothers and sisters. The first-born or eldest children are the first victims of household work because of their position in the family. They always begin their work by domestic activities, and then continue as house helps before moving to various economic activities of childhood employment in urban areas.

3.8. Local Representation on State Incentives.

Many who live in Yaounde are fully aware that the state has put in place certain measures to ease the lives of families. For example free education, family allowances for all workers registered under CNPS. Recently these allowances were raised to make life more comfortable for Cameroonian families. Likewise make retirement benefits better than before. As concerns job creation, thousands of jobs are being created every blessed year by the government of Cameroon as well as by the private sector. All these efforts are towards the eradication of poverty and its multiplier effects which one of them is childhood employment; our subject of exploration. Despite all these efforts, unemployment is still a serious problem in Cameroon. In Yaounde precisely many are unskilled and therefore cannot create jobs for themselves or get reasonably employed. To aggravate an already aggravated situation, the cost of training for a skill in Cameroon is very high. For example an average professional school, center or workshop in Yaounde does not cost less than 100,000 frs per year. The cost of living is also another hard nut to crack. All these coupled together leave some people in Yaounde with no choice but engage children into money making ventures without counting the risk.

Many are not capable of paying for the cost of living and education in Yaounde. Families live from hand to mouth. They can take any opportunity that shows up. That is why you see many children doing one thing or the other to earn an income. What the state pays as well as the private sector in terms of salary cannot cover living cost for us here in Yaounde.

Mercy: Rond Point Express (August 2, 2022) 9am.

According to the statements above and below this paragraph, the locals of Yaounde see these incentives and efforts by the state as not being enough. They think even the salaries of the civil servant is small compared to the cost of living in recent days.

Let the government increase the salaries of civil servant the effects will run across to majority of the citizens and many will see reasons to fight childhood employment. If

salaries are the way they are, we will continue to see more and more children on our streets. We don't have many options here.

Nfor: Anguissa (August 20, 2022) 5pm

3.9. Local Representation of Family Life.

The family in Cameroon and Yaounde to be precise is seen by locals as a place of comfort, love, peace, security and all that is required for the wellbeing of every of its members including especially children. This ideal situation has for the years seen a great twist as many socio economic, cultural and even political reasons have greatly brought about child abuse practices by the supposed family members.

Tsafack and Ntamack (2005). For children, the fact of not residing with any of his parents multiplies by at least 33.25 times, the risks to get involved in the labour market very early, as compared to their fellow children who live harmoniously with their two parents. In general, in African societies or elsewhere, the legitimate child is naturally privileged to the detriment of "adopted" children (i.e. children of parents or acquaintances whose custody is extracted). This reaction is normal because each parent shall strive as much as possible to offer what is best for his child. Non-legitimate children shall thus pay the price for this affection. They are thus compelled to carry out all the domestic chores, and this situation obliges them to rise up early in the morning to wash the dishes, carry water, carry out housework work, cook, and prepare the "legitimate" children for classes and go to bed late at night. When they are not subjected to housework, they are compelled to work out of the house because they need to have their daily bread and sometimes that of the adoptive family. The great presence of these children in host families is often due to separation in their respective families of origin due to divorce or the death of one of the parents, but also as a result of financial difficulties in large families. Of recent families have been greatly affected and a lot of displacement felt by children as a result of the Anglophone crises in Cameroon. It is thus necessary to sensitize the families on the harmony of couples, the utility of a well brought-up child irrespective of whether he/she is legitimate or not and on the need for creating up a harmony between the number of children and the income of the households.

Children are a gift from God and therefore should be treated with care and love irrespective of their situation, gender, or whatever. Treating them poorly will be

disobeying the commands of God and the consequences here on earth and the life after will not be good. We should treat every child in front of us as our own

Vali: Chateaux (July 11, 2022)4pm.

This above text makes us understand that children are to be treated equally. This should not depend on whether it is your child or not. By doing this the challenges of childhood employment will be reduced to minimum.

3.10. Representation of Acceptable Jobs for Children in Yaounde.

Childhood employment is morally unacceptable especially if not well regulated. There are actually jobs that children can carry out without hampering their lives or their future. To better understand jobs children can do, let us look at some sections of the Cameroon labour code of 1992:

Section 82(2) of the labour code states; Night work in industries shall be prohibited for women and children

Section 86 : (1) No child shall be employed in an enterprise even as an apprentice before the age of 14 (fourteen) years, except as otherwise authorized by order of the minister in charge of labour, taking account of local conditions and the jobs which the children may be asked to do.

(2) An order of the minister in charge of labour shall determine the conditions for the hiring, employment and supervision of the employment of young persons on board ship, provided :

(a) that a young person under 18 (eighteen) years of age may in no case be employed on board ship as a trimmer or stocker, and

(b) that when children and young persons under 18 (eighteen) years of age are to be embarked on ships other than those on which only members of the same family are employed, they shall be medically examined to ascertain their fitness for work on board ship and a medical certificate shall be made out attesting fitness for such work and signed by an approved medical practitioner.

(3) An order of the minister in charge of labour shall specify the types of work and categories of enterprises in which young people shall not be employed, and the age-limit to which the prohibition shall apply.

(4) The orders referred to in the above sub-sections shall be issued after consultation with the National Commission on Industrial Hygiene and Safety.

Section 87 : (1) The Inspector of Labour of the area may order women and children to be examined by an approved medical practitioner in order to ascertain that the work allotted to them is not beyond their strength. Such order shall be automatic if requested by the woman or child.

(2) A woman or child shall not be kept on any job which has been so found to be beyond their strength and shall be transferred to more suitable work. If this is impossible, the contract shall be terminated without notice and without either party being responsible.

From these sections and subsections of the labour code parents who wish have their children assist them to work must seek permission from the Labour inspectors or be considered as violating the law and worse the rights of the child. The law makes it clear that there are jobs children can do as long as is not above their strength; nothing more, nothing less.

3.11. Representation of Formal Education and Childhood Employment.

In Cameroon, Presidential Decree No. 2001/041 establishes the right to free education. That in practice we see additional school fees and the cost of books and uniforms which becomes prohibitive for many families. These are seen as the main reason for many who engage their children into work at an early age. Basic education in Cameroon is free but at the level of buying school needs it's not free. In all public schools in Yaounde city, the population is very high due to the cheap school fees but many of the children in these public schools cannot afford all the materials like good uniforms, texts / work books, food to eat during break and so forth. In all these public schools, there is the payment of PTA levy which varies according to the needs of the school. For example in GEPS Etoug – Ebe the PTA levy for the year 2021/2022 school year cost 6, 000 frs cfa per child. This might vary depending the projects of the PTA for that school year.

Here you still find children especially the many IDPs we have serving as domestic workers, not very regular in school because their host families want them to function in a particular way. They claim they are helping these IDP children but for me I don't really see the help. I see exploitation of these children by their host families here in Yaounde

Taka: Etoug - Ebe (August 7, 2022) 10am

This statement indicates that the impact of free education is not felt by most families in Yaounde. This explains partly why they still involved children in work. It also indicates that the cost of education in Yaounde is still very high and cannot be afforded with ease by many.

The Worker member of Cameroon considered that the Government's efforts to combat and eliminate the worst forms of child labour were slow to bear fruit. The social fabric had begun to unravel, exposing workers to dire poverty, and that had fostered another multidimensional form of exploitation of children in domestic work, agricultural and forestry undertakings, fishing and sex work. Despite public primary education being proclaimed as free of charge, a number of snags remained, including the requirement to pay the fees of the parent's association, which represented an obstacle for many parents. He made it clear that in private education those rates were even higher, in some cases forcing parents to choose which of their children should enjoy the benefits of education. In such cases, boys were more likely to be given preference than girls. He noted that, despite the commendable efforts of the Government, the school enrolment rate in Cameroon remained relatively low. Enrolment rates in primary education varied by region.

Worst Forms of Child Labour Convention, 1999

This excerpt from the Convention on the Worst Forms of Child Labour Cameroon shows that effects of free education in Cameroon are yet to be felt. Many families can't understand its full meaning as they still have a huge cost enroll their kids in school for an academic year. We can also see from the excerpt that the social fabric of Cameroon is not in good shape leading to financial hardship to many families. We see children seriously affected as they are being exploited from every direction as a result of poverty.

On Sunday 21st of August 2022, Njie Mbonde Albert asked the MINIDUB minister (Minister Laurent Serge Etoundi Ngoa) the following question on CRTV national radio during a program called "Cameroon Calling"

Question " Mr. Minister, according to the constitution of Cameroon, education in all public schools is free. Is it really free?"

Answer "Yes, but not totally free. In terms of school fees children pay nothing at all for the basic education. In the university they register 50,000 frs only. The government cannot afford to pay everything that is needed for a child to properly study in a public school in Cameroon. The cost is really high that is why education can only be free at the level of school fees"

CRTV (Radio) – Cameroon Calling (August 21, 2022)

This brief except from the interview confirms that there is actually no free education that is why many parents still engage children in childhood employment. More to that, parents still have a very large part to cover as far as the education of their children is concerned. We see that a school fee is not even the major cost of education in public schools. Books, uniforms, food, transportation, and others are left out of the government free education policy.

Image 3: School children and a child hawker on the street.



Source: Social Media anonymous images

The iconographic data above shows a child hawking early in the morning on the street while his peers are herding for school. Situations like this are very seen on a daily bases in Yaounde as many cannot afford the price of education. The child hawking looks at his peers with a regrettable face. He admires them and may wish to be like them, but faces a different reality.

3.12. Media Representation of Childhood Employment in Yaounde.

Communication (the exchange of information in lay man term) is a very imperative tool in every society because it helps to encourage the safety of members and also assist in letting them understand the development of the community and situations that face it. In the city, there are several communication channels and media both private and government.

In Cameroon in general, the CRTV is the number 1 center of communication for the entire country. It passes its information to citizens in the morning and in the evening. In Yaounde there are radio houses that assist to pass information to the general public like CIN RADIO, TBC RADIO, RTS,

Magic FM and CRTV radio. When it comes to newspapers, we find newspapers like Cameroon tribune, le Massager, Mutations and the Guardian post. We can also talk of social media platforms like Facebook, What Sapp, Twitter, Instagram, YouTube and so forth. All these means of communication are used from time to time to sensitize the public on the rights of children and the consequences inherent in the practice of childhood employment. These media platforms as observed usually report issues about children only during specific events or occasions. For example CRTV, The Guardian Post and a host of other did a lot of sensitization between the 15th and 18th of March 2022. This was due to the celebration of The Day of the African Child which is celebrated every 16th of March all over Africa. This sporadic sensitization makes the eradication of childhood employment very slow and farfetched.

Not being consistent with our sensitization strategies will make the fight against childhood employment to be very difficult and farfetched. It will be better achieved if the government set up intentional sensitization campaigns, programs and empower actors on the field to handle everything around it

Charlse: Mokolo (August 11, 2022) 3pm

This statement from an informant shows that the sensitization against childhood employment is irregular . this does not keep many alert about the dangers or the regulation of the practice. The sensitization is scanty across some programs on these media houses. More is needed according to this informant if we desire success.

3.13. Sensitisation Campaigns and Childhood Employment.

Looking at this extraction from a report on the Worst Forms of Child Labour Convention, (1999) (No. 182) - Cameroon (Ratification: 2002) a Cameroonian Government representative said that child labour was a priority issue and that it held a central place within society. That was the reason why Cameroon had ratified Convention No. 182. The objective of the Government was to remove children from labour, particularly in the agricultural sector, in order to teach them the skills for a job or to enroll them in school. He added that Act No. 2005/015 of 29 December 2005 to combat the trafficking and smuggling of children had been adopted and that the scope of application of this Act had been broadened in 2011 in order to also cover child smuggling. He emphasized that his country had adopted a national plan of action to eradicate child labour . To that end, the Committee to Combat Child Labour had been set up in April 2015. He insisted that Cameroon was

resolutely determined to eradicate child labour. In that regard, he referred to the International Day for the Protection of Children, held on 2 June 2015, when UNICEF had ranked Cameroon among the 25 countries that had adopted policies on child protection, and had commended the adoption by Cameroon of Act No. 2005/015. In conclusion, he indicated that his country had established the objective of eradicating child labour by 2017. Looking at this declaration from a government official leaves us wandering as to why the employment of children is rather on the rise in recent times.

The Employer members present at the discussion indicated that 56 per cent of children under the age of 14, which was the minimum age for work, were currently engaged in work, and up to 40 per cent of them (1.6 million children or 8 per cent of the entire population) were engaged in the worst forms of child labour. According to a study partially prepared by the Government in 2012, between 600,000 and 3 million children were victims of human trafficking, which accounted for up to 15 per cent of the entire population. Children were engaged in domestic work, forced street begging, industrial work and commercial sexual exploitation, including child pornography, both within and outside of the country

The Worker members said that they welcomed the Government's announcements concerning legislation and the targets set. It was important, however, to emphasize the urgent nature of the issue of child labour, and particularly its worst forms. The Government's reference to pressure exerted on certain individuals to collect statistical data on child labour only served to weaken its arguments. In that regard, they observed that an alarming number of children, representing almost half the population of Cameroon, suffered economic exploitation through the worst forms of child labour, which were themselves perpetuated by the lack of an effective Government response. The labour legislation set the minimum age for admission to employment at 14 years. It was estimated that the number of children under 14 engaged in work was at least 1.5 million, or around 28 per cent of children in that age group. Around 164,000 children aged between 14 and 17 were engaged in dangerous activities. Moreover, Cameroon had not reviewed its list of hazardous occupations, as required by Act No. 17 of 1969. In fact, Act No. 17 did not prohibit underwater work or work at dangerous heights, as in the case of children employed in fishing or to harvest bananas. According to UNAIDS, there were currently some 510,000 HIV/AIDS orphans (based on our research we can add to this orphans from the two restive regions of Cameroon) in Cameroon that

were particularly vulnerable to the worst forms of child labour. Part of this statistics also includes Yaounde. Often deprived of adequate family support, these children had no choice but to resort to economic activity to meet their needs. Many sectors of the economy were heavily reliant on child labour, including domestic service, street vendors, mining, agriculture, transport and construction

Here we are in 2022 and there are proves that the eradication of childhood employment by the state as per the discussion above is farfetched. These reports, discussions and efforts by the government, stake holders both national and international mostly end up in offices. The masses out there do not actually know what is happening or that the practices they see and involve themselves with every day in Yaounde as far as under aged employment is concerned; constitute crimes against children.

3.14. Representation of labour Inspectors.

Labour inspectors are trained workers who serve under the Ministry of Labour and Social Security. They carryout checks on labour related issues in enterprises, companies, and every labour related activity under their jurisdiction. According to this ministry, when labour inspectors come across under aged employment or any labour related offense in any enterprise they ensure that they stop the practice and bring the perpetrators to book. However, no specific statistics were given as to how many of such cases have been handled already especially in Yaounde to be precise. Labour experts admit that the fight against childhood employment or child labour is very difficult because the number of inspectors is not enough; the fight is not involving all its parties as the case should have been. For example many people are ignorant of what they can do to stop the practice in Yaounde since they think those in charge are not doing anything serious about it. More to that many people hardly report when face with challenges that concerns labour for fear of losing the job or other unknown reasons.

I may not have any specific cases but when we go out for inspection and notice that children are illegally employed, we ensure that the matter is taken seriously and the child or children freed from such contracts. It is really difficult but something is being done

Elvis: Central Town (July 14, 2022) 1pm.

The labour inspector's words show that many who exploit children go scot free or are not given serious punishment by the powers that be. Somehow many see no need to even blow an alarm when they find the practice. So therefore, the practice keeps progressing.

3.15. Representation of the Role of Law Enforcement Officials.

Law enforcement officers. They are responsible for investigating offences, collecting evidence, identifying offenders and accomplices, and bringing them before the legal department. Public trust in the state law enforcement authorities is being undermined as they are not succeeding in fighting corruption or creating a secure environment. Insufficient cooperation between the police and the public means that the state has little capacity to control crime, as reflected in high crime rates but low clearance rates. This has not just affected the fight against childhood employment negatively but has created a culture of "no confidence in the judiciary" by the locals of Yaounde. Many believe the police and the court will do nothing about many cases reported to them. Some believe childhood employment in all its forms is practiced with ease everyday right in front of the police and other law enforcement officers. "There is a lot of 'laissez faire' in Cameroon; who cares?" one commented as we interviewed him.

3.16. Representation of The role of UNICEF in Cameroon.

United Nations International Children Emergency Fund - UNICEF's Humanitarian Action for Children appeal helps support the agency's work as it provides conflict- and disaster-affected children with access to water, sanitation, nutrition, education, and health and protection services. According to UNICEF Appeal funding 2022, (titled: Cameroon Appeal). Humanitarian Action For Children, the following are highlighted.

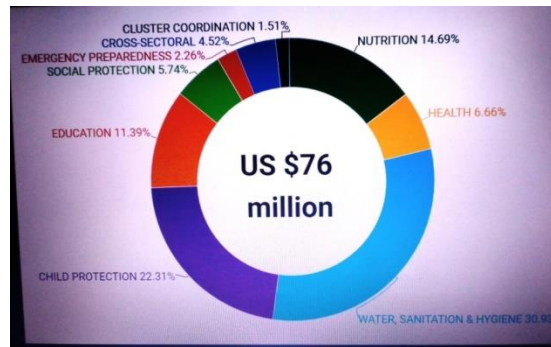
In Cameroon, 3.9 million people, including 2.1 million children, 969,000 women and 587,000 persons with disabilities, urgently need humanitarian assistance. Needs are driven by armed conflict, inter-communal violence, an influx of refugees from neighboring countries, disease outbreaks, including cholera and measles, and seasonal flooding. The ongoing COVID-19 pandemic compounds these challenges and COVID-19 vaccination coverage remains low.

UNICEF will tackle new and protracted humanitarian needs by investing in emergency preparedness, scaling up field presence, and strengthening localization and accountability to

affected populations. UNICEF programmes will integrate gender equality, the prevention of sexual exploitation and abuse, and gender-based violence (GBV) in emergencies. UNICEF and partners will apply a targeted, multi-sectorial approach across interventions.

UNICEF requires US\$76 million to provide life-saving humanitarian assistance. Water, sanitation and hygiene (WASH), child protection and nutrition sectors constitute the greatest funding needs..

Image 4: Chart showing UNICEF’s income requirement for Cameroon 2022



Source: UNICEF grants request for Cameroon 2022.

Looking at this pie chart, out of the US\$76 Million, 5.74% goes to social protection, 11.39 to education, and 22.31 is allocated to child protection. This indicates UNICEF’s active presence and partnership with the state and other stakeholders for the good of children. However, the impact according to the local population is yet to be felt as the rate of child abuse and childhood employment to be specific is rising by the day. Many think that it requires beyond providing basic needs to these children for childhood employment to be reduced to the barest minimum.

The people of Cameroon need to see and hear that the police has arrested and punish people practicing childhood employment and other forms of child abuses. This requires a strict implementation of the laws governing employment in Cameroon. It’s time the forces of law and order begin to cease these goods from the children, have their parents/employer warned and if confirmed stubborn punish them for involving the children in such activities

Elvis: Central Town (July 14, 2022) 2pm.

This state shows that there is lack of information about the involvement of the forces of law and order in the practice of childhood employment. The people hardly know or feel the presence of incentives be it negative for those practicing or positive for those denouncing,

3.17. Representation of Religion and Childhood Employment in Yaounde.

In the Holy Bible, the Book of Proverbs 22:6 says, “train up a child the way he should go so that when he is old he shall not depart from it”. This verse from the Bible clearly states the stand by Christians who make up the greater part of Yaounde. It is very much linked to the culture and personality theory. The urban city of Yaounde since the past till date has noticed a great level of religious growth. As people move into the capital city, they try to find people who have same faith with them. They also create their own religious movements. The Christians are the greatest in population compared to other religions in the urban city, with the Catholics numbering the highest in worshipers. We also find Islam as a major religion in the area with their mosques spread in many parts of Yaounde with their central mosque found in Tsinga where a larger number of the Muslim in the city are found.

Looking at the situation of childhood employment in Yaounde, the number of children seen working come from all religious backgrounds. Both Christians and Muslim children are seen practising childhood employment in all its forms. For example most Muslim children sell patched corn mixed with groundnuts, dresses, locally made concoctions (drinks) known by Yaounde dwellers to be medicinal. These children are commonly addressed as “northese” meaning children from the Adamawa, Garoua and Maroua. They are also known for their long distance trekking as they hawk with these items.

The Bible is very clear about the upbringing of children by parents or guardians. This responsibility goes beyond physical training to spiritual. Parents are to take charge of their children so that they can be good citizens of Cameroon, the world and heaven. Ignoring childhood training by parents means the church, the society and the nation is at risk for one cannot tell what happens to these children when they are exposed at an early age to the world in the name of employment. The training the church talks about goes beyond church affairs to include all that a child need to be useful to him and others and be a good citizen

Njeba: Chateaux (August 11, 2022) 4pm.

This statement by the priest holds for believers of the Bible. Majority of the population in Yaounde are Christians therefore showing that the efforts of the church on child up-bringing should still needs to be doubled. This is because both Christians and non-Christians children are seen in the practice.

3.18. The Role of Migration and Internally Displaced Persons(IDPs).

Migration is simply the movement of people from one place to another for various reasons which could fall under push or pull factors. Yaounde being the seat of government is a host of many offices, businesses, enterprises, small and large farms, small and large scales trading/markets. Because of her political importance to the nation, Yaounde as of the moment is the most secured region in Cameroon. All types of security forces are found in Yaounde to ensure peace and security in the area. This socio economic and political stability serves as a pull factor to many who seek for safety from Boko haram terrorist activities, conflicts in Central Africa, Chad and of recent the Anglophone crises. Internally Displaced Persons (IDPs) which of recent have become very popular make up the highest number of migrants to Yaounde in recent years; that is from 2016 to present. Employment in Cameroun is a major challenge as people come in to seek for greener pastures in the capital city of the nation but never the less, it is not an easy task. The flooded nature of the population of unqualified and qualified job seekers makes it difficult to secure a job in Yaounde. Many people come from the every parts of Cameroon and many among them lack qualifications in major trades and for this cause, some become self-employed and integrate trades like tailoring, car mechanics, bike riders, housemaids, private teachers and businessmen. The percentage of unemployed people in Yaounde keeps increasing daily as more and more people come in. Those who stay in Yaounde say recent migration has given employers and landlords and landladies the strength unfortunately to exploit these migrants to the fullest for their own interest. Children in this case are the most exploited in all its forms due to their innocence and vulnerability.

Many of these children who come from the villages are taken advantage of as domestic workers, sales girls, waiters, hawkers. They are usually very much exploited since they don't have much knowledge about labour laws nor are they sure to survive if they don't do what they are asked to do

Vibu: Nfoundi Market (September 3, 2022) 3pm

Here we see frustrated I.D.Ps at the mercy of their host families in Yaounde. They are left with no choice but to do what their master tells them to do. This has led many to the employment market at the detriment of their wellbeing.

CHAPTER FOUR

REASONS FOR ENGAGING CHILDREN IN CHILDHOOD EMPLOYMENT:

In chapter four, we shall be looking at some cultural and general elements that relate childhood employment in Yaounde. We shall also consider local perception of the phenomenon. This chapter shows an inside view and permits us to know what C.H.E is like, and some practical realities we can find around it in Yaounde. It shows family life and childhood, the notion of employment in Yaounde, government's stand on childhood employment, the role of N.G.Os and finally childhood friendly jobs practiced in Yaounde.

4.1. Family Life and Childhood employment.

In our research we realized that one cannot keep family life aside if he wants to fully explore the nature of childhood employment in Yaounde. Someone said, 'life is about the family'. This saying makes us in our research work to fully underline the notion of family life and its place properly given due consideration. The family commonly known as the basic unit of the society is defined by the Concise Oxford Dictionary as a group consisting of two parents and their children living together as a unit or a group of people related by blood or marriage or all the descendants of a common ancestor. More to that, Family (from Latin: familia) is a group of people related either by consanguinity (by recognized birth) or affinity (by marriage or other relationship). The purpose of the family is to maintain the well-being of its members and of society. Ideally, families offer predictability, structure, and safety as members mature and learn to participate in the community.

Historically, most human societies use family as the primary locus of attachment, nurturance, and socialization. Anthropologists classify most family organizations as matrifocal (a mother and her children), patrifocal (a father and his children), conjugal (a wife, her husband, and children, also called the nuclear family), avuncular (a man, his sister, and her children), or extended (in addition to parents and children, may include grandparents, aunts, uncles, or cousins). The word "families" can be used metaphorically to create more inclusive categories such as community, nationhood, and global village. The most common family type was one in which grandparents, parents, and children lived together as a single unit. For example, the household might include the owners of a farm, one (or more) of their adult children, the adult child's spouse, and the adult child's own children

Here we observe that one of the primary functions of the family involves providing a framework for the production and reproduction of persons biologically and socially. This can occur through

the sharing of material substances (such as food); the giving and receiving of care and nurture; jural rights and obligations; and moral and sentimental ties. Thus, one's experience and responsibility of one's family shifts over time. From the perspective of children, the family is a "place of orientation": the family serves to locate children socially and plays a major role in their enculturation and socialization. From the point of view of the parent(s) and Yaounde dwellers, the family is a "family of procreation", the goal of which is to produce, enculturate and socialize children. However, producing children is not the only function of the family; in societies with a sexual division of labour, marriage, and the resulting relationship between two people, it is necessary for the formation of an economically productive household.

It is partly with this formation of an economically productive household that the phenomenon of childhood employment is very visible in the city of Yaounde. According Rachel's field notes on Gender Roles in Cameroon; there are three different types of families in Cameroon – polygamous family, traditional family and modern family. Polygamous family usually means a man having more than one wife. A traditional family in Cameroon means a couple having at least eight children. A modern family in Cameroon means a couple having about six children or less. While in the traditional and polygamous family in Cameroon, women and girls normally do all the house chores, in the modern family, men and boys also do the housework. Families in Cameroon are generally large, consisting of a husband, one or more wives, and children. In Yaounde in particular, a lot of factors have come in to affect the family; for example the size of family members in most families in Yaounde is highly regulated due to the high cost of hosting. The sizes differ depending to a greater extend on the financial capability of the each family. However, many cases do exist where the well to do have very few family members and the poor are a host of a many family members.

To fully take care of a family in Yaounde especially children requires those in charge to be able to pay bills, fees, provide clothing, food, shelter, security, health care and ensure a proper socialization by members of the said family. This task as many dwellers of Yaounde will comment is not easy and will really take beyond financial ability to include other socio-cultural factors such as religion and morals.

Of recent, family responsibilities became very challenging to those who host IDPs from the two restive regions of Cameroon. Many of these IDPs are children and unable to support themselves in a strange environment. Before the crises, these children depended on their parents who depended on their jobs which depended on the social stability of the entire nation. But unfortunately with the advent of the crises in March 2016, many in the affected areas lost their jobs and even lives, there was and there is mass migration of families including children to safer places like Bafoussam, Douala and Yaounde. These recent developments have brought about a lot of economic challenges to the pull cities mentioned afore. This has of course some drastic consequences on 'Culture and Childhood Employment in Yaounde'. That is, from our findings many of these children who come to seek refuge are either forced by circumstances around them to join the work force or by their host families. In the course of these struggles cultural values of many families on child upbringing are either just ignored or eliminated.

4.2. Local Perception on Childhood Employment and Education.

In our research work, the intersection between childhood employment and education be it formal or informal education in Cameroon and Yaounde in particular is given serious considerations. Children in Yaounde below 18 years largely fall under primary and secondary education and this age range is the atom of our research. One of the common childhood practices in Yaounde is education. As the academic year goes on you find a lot of children going to school every morning and afternoon for those who have shifts. The strange thing is that some children are rather seen doing one thing or the other to earn money instead of being in school. The educational system in Cameroon is divided into primary (six years, compulsive) the Nursery not left out, secondary (five years), high school (two years), and tertiary (University). The academic year runs from September to June, at which time, end-of-year-examinations are always written. The Government Common Entrance and the FSLC exams are written at the end of a primary school course in Primary six. These two exams ushers these children into the secondary school and certifies them as well. There are two separate secondary schooling systems, depending on whether the French or British colonial models apply. In broad terms though, the secondary phase comprises a lower (middle school) and an upper level (high school). For the majority of young people this distinction remains academic, because their parents are unable to afford secondary school fees at all. Students who graduate from a five-year secondary school program have to sit for the GCE Ordinary Level,

and those who graduate from a two year high school program have to sit for the GCE Advanced Level. So far, the GCE advanced level and the Baccalaureate (the French equivalent of academic attainment) are the two main entrance qualifications into institutions of higher learning. After secondary school, there is the possibility of undertaking "vocational studies," courses aimed to unemployed people under the responsibility of the Ministry of employment.

Image 5: picture of the ministry of Secondary and Basic Education in Yaounde – Cameroon.



Source: Journal du Cameroon

This building above hosts the ministries of Basic and Secondary education in Cameroon. This is where decision concerning basic and secondary education are taken. The actions taken in the ministries have a great impact as far as childhood employment is concerned.

In Cameroon, two separate systems of education is being used after independence: East Cameroon's system was based on the French model, West Cameroon's on the British model. Uniting the two systems was deemed a symbol of national integration between West and East Cameroon. The two systems were merged by 1976, but studies suggest that they didn't blend well. Shortly after independence, French was considered the main language of the country, but with the rising of English as first commercial language in the world, the balance switched to the latter. Christian mission schools have been an important part of the education system, but most children cannot afford them and are forced to choose state-run schools. Education became compulsory up to the age of 12 years, when 6 years of primary schooling are complete. Education was free but uniforms and books and more were provided by parents and, tertiary level students received money monthly back in the days of President Amadou Ahidjo and, for the first few years of President Paul Biya. Primary school education is free (since 2000), but families must pay for uniforms, book fees, and sometimes even anti-malaria prophylaxis for pupils. The

Constitution affirms that "the State shall guarantee the child's right to education [and that] primary education shall be compulsory",. Tuition fees at the secondary school level are high, and therefore unaffordable for many families. After secondary school, there is the possibility of undertaking "vocational studies," courses aimed to unemployed people under the responsibility of the Ministry of employment. The country has institutions for teacher training and technical education. In Yaounde while a majority of the children are fully enrolled in public or private schools, you still see children of school going age totally involved in various employment activities or partly they divide their time between school and work.

Image 6: Children during assemble at Etoug – Ebe Baptist School Yaounde.



Source: Field work: September 5th 2022.

This image above shows school children of a private school dressed in green and white uniform with black shoes and white socks; a formal way of bringing up children to be apt and obedient and learn to maintain group rules or social regulations, something lacking to those not in school.

This school like many others in Yaounde is enclosed in a fence to ensure maximum security throughout the day. Most school children in Yaounde are identified by their uniforms and while in school children are expected to study in order to create jobs or get employed in the future. A change of attitude is therefore expected from these children in terms of academic performance,

moral behaviour, and socialization to the world around them. From the primary to university, various skills are instilled in the learners and certain attitudes are expected of them.

On the other hand, while other children are attending school, others are seen doing one activity or the other to earn money for the family or for themselves. Some of these ones as we find out from them, love to go to school but have no means due to varying reasons and therefore are bound to take the option of being employed. We see here that while other children are being prepared formally in school or a skill formation center, others are looking for money under all sorts of conditions and are very much exposed to danger. 90% of the informants we made claim that there is no way they can encourage childhood employment because they think it's dangerous and unacceptable. Culture and personality theory which says childhood practices can affect the personality of the child in future, make us understand that children who carryout acceptable childhood practices like quality education and more, are better placed for the future than those on the contrary.

4.3. Childhood Employment and Socialisation.

We could not undermine the role of socialisation in our exploration of childhood employment. Yaounde being a cosmopolitan city with a mixture of different cultural backgrounds is a host of so many avenues for socialisation. In sociology, socialisation is the process of internalizing the norms and ideologies of society. Socialization encompasses both learning and teaching and is thus "the means by which social and cultural continuity are attained". Humans need social experiences to learn their culture and to survive. Socialization essentially represents the whole process of learning throughout the life course and is a central influence on the behavior, beliefs, and actions of adults as well as of children. Macionis, John J (2013). This socialisation starts from the home, (primary socialisation) to school (secondary socialisation), worship places, village meetings, sports events, bars, markets, and to be more precise to our work, they also socialise on the arena of employment (secondary socialisation). Children within this age range are seen socialising in the family, the church, mosque, cultural festivals, sports events, in markets, on the streets, in bars, at school, and much more. The effects of their socialisation depend who they interact with.

Ian Robertson in his book “Sociology” (1977) has mentioned four types of socialization. Primary socialisation, Anticipatory socialisation, Developmental socialisation and Re-socialisation. According to him, the socialization that a person undergoes in the course of his lifetime may be one or more of four different types as explained below.

4.3.1. Primary Socialisation.

This is the most essential and basic type of socialization. It takes place in the early years of life of the newborn individual. It concentrates on the teaching of language and cogitative skills, the internalization of cultural norms and values, establishment of emotional ties, and the appreciation of other roles and perspectives.

4.3.2. Anticipatory Socialisation.

People not only learn the culture of the group of which they are immediate members. They may also learn culture of groups of which they are immediate members. They may also learn the culture of groups to which they do not belong. Such a process whereby men socialize themselves into the culture of a group with the anticipation of joining the groups, it referred to ‘anticipatory socialisation’.

4.3.3. Developmental Socialisation.

This kind of learning is based on the achievements of primary socialization. “It’s builds on already acquired skills and knowledge as the adult progresses through new situations such as marriage or new job. These require new expectations, obligations, and roles. New learning is added to and blended with old in relatively smooth and continuous process of development”

4,3.4. Re-socialization.

Not only do individual change roles within groups, but they also change membership-groups. In some instances, ‘re-socialization’-“the stripping away of learned patterns and substitution of new one of them”-must occur. Such re-socialization takes place mostly when a social role is radically changed. It may also happen in periods of rapid social mobility

4.3.5. Group Socialization.

In the capital city of Cameroon, children are seen moving in pairs or groups while working or selling items. Group socialization is the theory that an individual's peer groups, rather than parental figures, are the primary influence of personality and behavior in adulthood. Parental behavior and the home environment has either no effect on the social development of children, or the effect varies significantly between children. Adolescents spend more time with peers than with parents. Therefore, peer groups have stronger correlations with personality development than parental figures do. For example, twin brothers, whose genetic makeup are identical, will differ in personality because they have different groups of friends, not necessarily because their parents raised them differently. Behavioral genetics suggest that up to fifty percent of the variance in adult personality is due to genetic differences

Image 7: Children hawking on the streets



Source: Child Labour, Cameroon post line

This picture shows a group of children struggling to sell to car owners on the street. This practice is very common where cars have to wait for traffic light signals. The group competition here is stiff and dangerous and can lead to accidents.

4.3.6. Negative socialization.

Negative socialization occurs when others use punishment, harsh criticisms, or anger to try to "teach us a lesson"; and often we come to dislike both negative socialization and the people who impose it on us. In Yaounde, this type of socialization is commonly seen with house helps or

domestics workers especially under aged children. There are all types of mixes of positive and negative socialization, and the more positive social learning experiences we have, the happier we tend to be especially if we are able to learn useful information that helps us cope well with the challenges of life. A high ratio of negative to positive socialization can make a person unhappy, leading to defeated or pessimistic feelings about life.

Many parents in collaboration with the government and N.G.Os in Yaounde strives to make sure that the child is rightfully integrated into the society in a way that it will benefit both the child, the family and the society at large. The fear is that some of these parents either ignorantly or intentionally engage their children in money making activities. The reasons for doing so vary from family to family. This may cause them to be socialised negatively. Some of the children are seen carrying out various employment activities even right in bars, and other places considered not safe for children. The form of socialization in this place can be detrimental.

4.4. How Employment is perceived in Yaounde.

Employment is an agreement between an employer and an employee that the employee will provide certain services. In return, the employee is paid a salary or hourly wage. Although employees can negotiate certain items in an employment agreement, the terms and conditions are primarily determined by the employer. Both parties may also terminate the agreement. An employment agreement for an individual employee can be a verbal exchange, written email, or job offer letter. The offer of employment can be implied in an interview or written in a formal, official employment contract. As we went out on the field, the contract of employing children in Yaounde is mostly determined by the employer and hence too much exploitation and abuse.

Image 8: Girl child washing dressing at home.



Source: Global Press Journal. Cameroon Steps up fight against Child labour / trafficking.

The image above shows a child employed as a house help. Many children who do such jobs in Yaounde are not legally employed. Not formal or legal documents signed by the employer nor the employee. This area of childhood employment is very common in Yaounde.

4.4.1. Employment in the Public Service.

To be called a civil servant, it means you are working with and paid by the government of Cameroon. In Cameroon employment is highly guided by the law and the state fully implements these laws in her employment offers. All public recruitment opportunities have age limits at the extremes. The age limitation usually varies according to the type or category of service and according to government policy at the time of recruitment. The state does not give allowance for the recruitment of children into the public service. Cameroon does not have under aged civil servants.

4.4.2. Employment in the private Sector.

Yaounde being the administrative or political seat of Cameroon is not the major economic hub of the nation. It hosts more of administrative and educational facilities. Despite this, a lot of economic activities go on in Yaounde in the hands of the private sector. These activities are highly regulated by the state and the Yaounde City Council. The private sector employs the highest number of people employed in Yaounde compared to the public sector. We can go further to see that in the private sector many are employed by others while others create employment for themselves. For example super markets, schools, hospitals, Big shops, Bakeries, Churches, Mosques, N.G.Os, enterprises, garages, restaurants, travel agencies, farms, domestic work, and many others do offer employment opportunities. On the other hand, we have petit traders, hawkers, bike riders, taxi drivers, barbers, “buyan-sellam”, call box, etc. who create jobs for themselves in Yaounde at various locations. Employment in the private sector in Yaounde is usually in many cases verbal arrangements without any proper contract. Exception is seen only with big businesses and private companies and institutions. As far as childhood employment is concerned in Yaounde, many of these under aged are either employed by individuals or are employers of themselves.

I did not sign any document to start working in the restaurant. They just told me I will be paid 20 000 frs per month. I worked there and left and nothing was ever signed as a

contract. I did not know that I was supposed to sign any contract with my madam. I only wanted work.

Nadage: Obili (July 22, 2022) 10am.

The state of Cameroon indicates through the ministry of labour and social security that the minimum working aged authorized in Cameroon is 14 years. Cameroon adopted a law authorizing the President of the Republic to ratify International Labour Organisation, ILO Convention No. 138 on the Minimum Age for Admission to Employment on 14th April 1998. In line with the legislation, 14 years was considers the minimum age for admission to employment or work. The children working in Yaounde usually work for long hours than they should. Many are usually seen under the rain, the sun and worst at night struggling to compete with mature adults to survive. The common places for them are the streets, construction sites, restaurants, markets, road-sides, houses (house helps), petrol stations, motor parks and agencies, gates or entrances to big institutions like schools, churches, mosques, and more.

Image 9: child Selling Vegetables on the streets



Source: Field Work: July 2022.

This image shows an about 8years old child selling vegetables on the road. We took this image at Mendong along the road to Mbalngong or Etokos or simply put it, Yaounde – Douala high way. We took this image at 7:15 am Cameroon time. This child is exposed to serious danger selling on

the road, worst before the gutters. First he is not wearing a pullover, he is kneeling down not sitting, and therefore can catch a cold. This is just a typical example of what is happening in the city of Yaounde. At his age he should focus on studies, socialization and other childhood acceptable activities not selling directly on the high way. This act is a complete contrary to functionalism which expects that every part of the society should play their part for a proper functioning of the society. Selling on the road is first of all illegal in Cameroon. Many times the various municipalities especially the city council goes out to cease goods from people who sell by the road side. This is because such businesses create a lot of traffic, makes accidents inevitable, and therefore very risky. But unfortunately, locals in Yaounde only focus on the monetary aspects of life with considering the danger involved especially with children like the one you see on the image above. Many in Yaounde see childhood employment as unusual but acceptable, that is why they will buy from these children without any issue. If the children are selling it means the buyers are buying from them.

4.4.3. Local Perception on Childhood Employment and Benefits.

Employment or employee benefits are any benefits provided to employees in addition to their base salaries and wages. A complete employee benefits package may include health insurance, life insurance, paid time off (PTO), profit sharing, retirement benefits, and more. In Cameroon, only the state and well established companies or businesses do offer some of these benefits and pay a steady and acceptable salary. Their committed workers are sure to work until retirement, resignation or death as may be the case. On the other hand in the individual run businesses is usually characterized by very low wages, poor working conditions, exploitation, and job insecurity. If this is the case of adults in Yaounde then one can imagine what becomes of under aged children. Just what they do tells you how those who engaged them in such jobs can treat them. However, there are few among who strive to take care of their workers. We found out from some children workers that their payment is not worth the work they do.

I roast fish, wash dishes and cook in a restaurant from Monday to Friday. At the end of the month I am paid 10,000 frs. I use the money to study in an evening school. I don't really know what my salary should be because I am just a child.

Calson: TKC (Field work, June 18, 2022) 2pm

This discussion between the researcher and child worker tells you how much these children who work are being exploited. They are very immature to even determine the price for the work they do. He said he is just a child bearing a smile on his face showing that he is not even aware that he is being seriously exploited by the restaurant owner. Children work for very long hours at their tender ages and worse doing functions meant for adults. This is just one of the many reasons why childhood employment should be discouraged at all cost. So some employers of these children in Yaounde see the venture as profitable and therefore are making good use of it for their bank account.

4.4.4. Some Employment Avenues for Children in Yaounde.

Apart from civil servants, no particular area can be sited generally as a host to a particular type of employment. Various categories are seen scattered all over the city's vast land. Employment opportunities are offered in:

4.4.4.1. Markets.

A market is a regular gathering of people for the purchase and sale of provisions, livestock, and other commodities. Cameroon is blessed with so many of such markets and Yaounde not left out. Some of these popular markets in Yaounde includes the Mokolo, Mfoundi, Mvock bi, Etoudi, Mendong, Mvock Beti, Odza, etc markets. In these markets, people are employed to work under different categories. In Yaounde, some children spend their childhood life doing one income yielding activity in these markets or the other. You find them going to and fro across the roads in these markets with all sorts of items some weighing beyond their carrying capacities. This is done as long as the markets are opened and the activity is usually not coordinated by anybody but the children have to defend, protect and provide for themselves as they compete under high risk;

Image 10: Child hawking in the market.



Source: Alamy Limited; www.alamy.com.

This iconographic data above confirms that the market place in Yaounde is a very lucrative area for childhood employment. Many children are seen selling various items from one part of the market to another. The image also shows that the market population is very comfortable with the practice. That is; childhood employment is not a new thing. It is therefore acceptable in markets.

According to a report by Moki Edwin Kindzeka on www.voanews.com of January 7 2016, “some armed youths (about 100) attacked the police in Mokolo market in Yaounde. One person was killed and several others injured”. Our issue with this report is that children are always at high risk when such happens. The children are often seen struggling to sell one thing or the other in Mokolo one of the largest markets in Cameroon. This report clearly indicates that the market is an unsafe place for children as a dysfunction can occur any time and the life of children will be put in danger. Despite all the dangers involved, in Yaounde the children sell in markets all sorts of items. They are seen in markets like Mfoundi Market, Acacia Market, Mokolo Market, Mvock bi Market, and the list is long; selling alongside with other adult traders.

4.4.4.2. Road side Vendors / Hawking.

A road side vendor is a person who sells something along the street, either from a stall or van or with their goods laid out on the sidewalk. Hawking on the other side is an occupation taken up by some people to sale household items, vegetables or cooked food on streets for a living. This activity is very popular in the street of Yaounde and specifically speaking children are very much engaged. These hawkers usually gather at street corners, near traffic lights to target car owners and users, you see them at police check points as well in bars, restaurants, events, and so on.

Image 11: Child selling boiled cassava and plums along the road at Carrefour Etoug- Ebe.



Source: Field work July 2022.

This iconographic above shows a child hawking with boiled plums and cassava at Carrefour Etoug-Ebe in Yaounde. While this child and others were selling, the researcher observed that the children are under aged, are being joked with left and right by motor cycle riders. The boiled plums and cassava were uncovered and so therefore were exposed to flyers and any available dirt particles. We see here that no one tried to stop these children from selling uncovered food nor did any one see a problem with the fact that these kids are too young to be selling on the streets. Somehow the phenomenon of childhood employment is relatively accepted by many in Yaounde for unspecified reasons like; things are hard.

4.4.4.3. Farms.

Farming or agriculture, or cultivation, or husbandry, or land management is the activity of growing crops or keeping animals on a farm. This can be to sell or for family use. Depending upon the geographical conditions, demand of produce, labour and level of technology, farming can be classified into two main types. These are subsistence farming and commercial farming. All these two are common in Cameroon and Yaounde in particular. The main crops grown are cocoa, coffee, palm trees, pineapple, papaya, banana plantain, beans, maize, cassava, yams, fruits of various kinds. Agriculture in Cameroon is still very much with the use of crude tools and requires a lot of human labour; that is where childhood employment steps in to play. To supply the ever growing population of the city with the present farming techniques have been difficult making demand to always exceed supply when it comes to food stuffs. Farmers don't only lack farm inputs, tools, land, finances, etc but labourers as well. Their low income allows some of them with no choice but to employ children in their practices.

4.4.4.4. Restaurants.

A place where people pay to sit and eat meals that are cooked and served on the premises is called a restaurant. Other services may also be provided depending on the nature of the restaurant. Restaurants in this city are of various kinds and sizes. You have V.I.P restaurants and you have the common types. Examples of some restaurants in Yaounde are . La Salsa (Bastos), Plantinium café (Bastos, 2 road mballa eloumden) 37. Restaurant le bacchus (etoa meki road 1048), Le Safoutier (20 may boulevard), etc. The price of the food served depends on the type of food and restaurant. The same food with the same quantity may be sold differently in differently restaurants

across Yaounde. Bush meat for instance is very expensive compared to cow meet and fish. Employment to work in a restaurant is done depending on the owner's discretion. In the city of Yaounde, there exist several food items with the presence of different ethnic groups. Rice is most consumed in the town considering that it is cheaper compared to plantains and yams. Most students and jobless people consume bread either loaded with butter, chocolate and meat. In some restaurants, under aged children are seen washing plates, cleaning the floor, roasting fish and chicken and even stirring corn fufu and water fufu.

4.4.4.5. Industries.

Industrial zone refers to land that permits the manufacturing of industrial products, factories, power plants, warehouses, and other uses that are important to that area's economy. This includes spaces that create, store or distribute products, or produce or refine energy or fuel

Manufacturing contributes 17.3% of Cameroon's GDP (2008). The main manufacturing activities are in petroleum production and refining, aluminum production, food processing, light consumer goods, textiles and ship repair. Douala is the largest manufacturing center. Alucam, the aluminium smelting subsidiary of Rio Tinto Alcan, dominates aluminium production, while state-owned Societe Nationale de Raffinage (SONARA) leads oil refinery and production. The Cameroon Development Corporation (CDC), a major player in the agro-processing sector, exports semi-finished rubber and processed palm oil.

During our field work we found out that children in Yaounde mostly do internship in industries because most of these industries follow the labour code in their employment plan. We see that childhood employment in Yaounde is less concentrated in industries and totally absent in the public service.

4.4.4.6. Domestic Work.

Domestic workers are those workers who perform work in or for a private household or households. They provide direct and indirect care services, and as such are key members of the care economy. In Yaounde, many families usually require the services of domestic workers. This is because most of the parents or guardians of such families are workers and cannot fully take care of work and family as they desire. These workers are employed to work under various working

conditions depending on their contract with the employer. In Yaounde the majority of those involved in domestic work are women or girls. Men and boys are fewer. Domestic workers are usually required to cook, clean the house, wash and iron dresses, take children to and from school, watch over the house and its content, take care of children and their belongings, and so forth.

Some domestic workers in Yaounde live within their employer's household. In some cases, the contribution and skill of servants whose work encompassed complex management tasks in large households have been highly valued. However, for the most part, domestic work tends to be demanding and is commonly considered to be undervalued, despite often being necessary. Although legislation protecting domestic workers is in place in many countries, it is often not extensively enforced. In many jurisdictions, domestic work is poorly regulated and domestic workers are subject to serious abuses, including slavery. ILO estimates in 2015, based on national surveys and/or censuses of 232 countries and territories, place the number of domestic workers at around 67.1 million. But the ILO itself states that "experts say that due to the fact that this kind of work is often hidden and unregistered, the total number of domestic workers could be as high as 100 million". Children face a number of risks that are common in domestic work service. The International Programme on the Elimination of Child Labour identified that these risks include: long and tiring working days; use of toxic chemicals; carrying heavy loads; handling dangerous items such as knives, axes and hot pans; insufficient or inadequate food and accommodation, and humiliating or degrading treatment including physical and verbal violence, and sexual abuse. With the advent of the Anglophone crises, the influx of people into Yaounde has made employment opportunities to become very scarce leading many into desperate employees including children.

4.4.4.7. Bars / Night clubs.

One very popular business in Yaounde is the selling of drinks of very types in Bars, wine shops and night clubs. In some parts of Yaounde one cannot move 500 meters without noticing a bar or drinking spot. This business is very lucrative since many Cameroonians have a large appetite for drinking especially alcohol. Some of the popular brewery industries in Cameroon that supplies drinks to Yaounde are GUINNESS CAMEROON, and LES BRAZARIES DU CAMEROON. Added to these is the importation of wine from western and other African countries like France, Italy, Equatorial Guinea, Congo, and Nigeria just to name a few.

What is unfortunate about this brewery business in Yaounde is that children are not prohibited from buying or selling these drinks, be it alcoholic or nonalcoholic. Other kinds of popular locally made drinks are “bili bili” mostly drunk by those from the northern regions of Adamawa, North and Far North, “shaa” or corn beer mostly drunk by the Anglophone community from the North West Region residing in Yaounde. We equally have palm wine not just used for drinking but for cultural purposes. For example during traditional weddings palm wine in most cases must be present. Same for funerals and other cultural festivals carried out in Yaounde and beyond. The selling of these various drinks in Yaounde has not just attracted adults to bars but children as well. That is where danger steps in because bars and drinking spots are subjectively considered by many as risky for minors. Many drink and get drunk, some smoke openly and is a common place for obscene language and abuse of all sorts. Children involved directly or indirectly with any activity linked to these places above are usually exposed to all the dangers that go on there.

A child hawking in bars or night clubs can be abused easily. I cannot let my child do that even if I am as poor as what! I prefer to beg by myself or suffer than let my child work instead of being regular in school. I know the dangers involved.

Timothy: Chateaux (June 30, 2022) 1pm.

This parent like many others expresses fear of what could happen to children selling in bars or working at an early age. He sees childhood employment as real threat to his family.

4.5. Childhood Employment by Gender.

Looking through the various employment opportunities offered by Yaounde, both genders are participants, be it in the formal or informal sector. Most energy demanding jobs like building construction, motor mechanics, carpentry, car wash, plumbing, etc are mostly done by men while jobs like teaching, health services, administration, sports, farming, hair dressing, restaurants business, retailing, etc have both genders involved at almost equal percentages. In terms of gender, many female workers and children are involved in domestic work and petit trading as compared to the males. Comparatively, the highest number of unemployed people in Yaounde are women. Men in Yaounde have more advantages in jobs that women mostly shy from due to stigma and the culture of the land. For example jobs like taxi driving, bike riding, brick laying, carpentry, motor mechanics, loading and unloading of heavy duty trucks just to name a few are mostly peopled by men.

4.6. Government Position on Childhood Employment in Cameroon.

According to The Guardian Newspaper No 2480 Friday of June 17th 2022, The Minister of Social Affairs, Pauline Irene Nguene has decried some socio-cultural practices endangering children's development and fulfillment. This excerpt from her address below clearly points out government's position on childhood employment in Cameroon and Yaounde to be specific.

She was speaking during a press declaration in Yaounde on June 16 to mark the commemoration of the 2022 edition of the Day of the African Child. The day which was in its 32nd edition, was placed under the theme: "Elimination of harmful practices affecting children: Progress on policy and practices since 2013" In her declaration, the minister pointed out that some sociocultural practices stand as danger for the harmonious development and fulfillment of the child. She cited socio-cultural practices like child labour, violence, and early and forced marriages. "For early and premature marriages, the fragile body is submitted to the harsh reality of the life of housewife, the exigency of maternity and the pressure of community life. All these can affect the person physically, physiologically or psychologically. While advising parents not to expose children to harmful socio-cultural practices, the MINAS boss called on Cameroonian children to assume their responsibilities. She urged them to resist to be lured to easy success, bad companies, appeals of social networks with unknown contents, use of violence as the only solution to handle problems and to shun imported and imposed models from abroad. Child social protection, Biya's social justice policy priority The minister in her declaration further indicated that one of government's priorities in the social justice systems is child social protection. " ...the inclusion and social justice policy so dear to the President of the Republic, His Excellency Paul Biya, Cameroon has always been placed the social protection of the child as a major priority, " she said. Lessons from history recalling that the Day of the African Child stems from the massacre of hundreds of children in Soweto, South Africa by the Apartheid Regime for claiming their right to quality education, the minister said the day should not be an occasion to renew the pain in the hearts of parents. "This is rather an ideal occasion for African states to discuss about the well-being of their children, the future of the continent, pause to assess one or many situations relating to the failure to comply with the rights of the child in order that appropriate measures be taken to tackle them and further ensure the social protection, harmonious development, fulfillment and the well-being of our children," the MINAS boss underscored. This excerpt from the minister's speech states clearly that

the government does not support any activity that will tamper with the life and future of any child be it in Yaounde or elsewhere in Cameroon.

Image 12: Celebration of the 2022 Day of the African child by the Minister of Social Affairs.



Source: The Guardian Post Newspaper No 2480 Friday of June 17th 2022

4.7. International Views on Childhood Employment in Yaounde.

All forms of childhood employment are defined in the ILO Convention No. 182 which is supplemented by the ILO Recommendation No. 190. Cameroon ratified the ILO Convention 138 on forced labour in 2002. The ILO Convention No. 138 sets the age at which children may be legally employed to prevent child labour, and this Convention is supplemented by the ILO Minimum Age Recommendation No. 146. The ILO Forced Labour Convention No. 29 aims at the suppression of the use of forced or compulsory labour in all its forms within the shortest possible period. The ILO Convention No. 105 aims at suppressing and not making use of any form of forced or compulsory labour. Moreover, these ILO standards are covered and reinforced by the ILO Declaration on Fundamental Principles and Rights at Work and it's Follow-up to provide the framework for action to combat child labour.

With regards to the prohibition of child labour or childhood employment in Cameroon, it is necessary to mention the Labour Code that sets the minimum age for work at 14. Generally, it prohibits forced labor. According to the Labour Code, forced labour refers to: any labor or service

demanded of an individual under threat of penalty, being a labour or service which the individual has not freely offered to perform.”

The Minister of Labour may make exemptions to the minimum age for apprentices after taking into consideration the local conditions and the types of work children may perform. The minimum age for hazardous work of children is at 18. It prohibits children from working underground, in restaurants, hotels, or bars, or in any job that exceeds their physical capacity or is longer than 8 hours a day in the industrial sector.

It is important to note that the law does not protect children working in non-contractual and non-industrial undertakings, such as agriculture, domestic service, and street vending, even though many children are known to work in these sectors. In addition, the Government lacks a mechanism for protecting children engaged in child labour in unregistered enterprises.

Another legislative effort made by the government of Cameroon to combat childhood employment is compulsory primary education. Children are required to attend school until the age of 12. The defect of this legislation is that it makes children aged 12 to 14 particularly vulnerable to the worst forms of child labour, as they are not required to be in school and are sometimes below the minimum age for work. Also, Presidential Decree No. 2001/041 establishes the right to a free education. It can be submitted that these laws indirectly prohibit forced labour taking into consideration the fact that education prevents forced labour. The justification for this is that most of the children who are subjected to childhood employment in Yaounde are those who do not go to school.

The Constitution prohibits slavery and servitude .The Penal Code prohibits forced labour, slavery and pawning, prostitution of children, child abuse, the corruption of youth, and kidnapping. The Penal Code Prohibits commercial sexual exploitation of children. The law on cyber security and cybercrime in Cameroon prohibits electronic forms of child pornography; the Penal Code prohibits obscene publications.

The law also prohibits the recruitment of children in the military. Military service is not compulsory, and the minimum age for voluntary recruitment is 18. Children younger than 18 can

participate in military service with parental consent. The Government ratified the Optional Protocol on the Involvement of Children in Armed Conflict in 2012.

The omission in the laws protecting childhood employment in Cameroon is that the government has not criminalized the use of children for illicit activities, which is a documented worst form of child labour in Cameroon.

4.8. Ministry of Labour and Social Security.

The main role of the Ministry of Labour and Social Security (MOLSS) in Combating child labour is leadership to enforce child labour laws, in collaboration with other government bodies, like the Ministries of Social Affairs, Justice, Women's Empowerment and the Family, and Employment.

Childhood employment complaints may be initiated by the victim, a third party, or officials from the MOLSS, and may be reported to a local MOLSS representative or law enforcement officer. Once a complaint is filed, an investigation is conducted by the MOLSS. Minor offenses are usually settled at the ministerial level; serious offenses are handled by the prosecutor's office. Labour inspectors conduct routine and targeted inspections and send their reports on labour rules violations to the regional officer. Labour violations are later addressed at the administrative level or are sent to the prosecutor's office for judicial action.

The problem with the MOLSS in implementing the laws on childhood employment stems from the fact that there are no official comprehensive statistics on the number of child labor violations, of penalties or citations issued, or of children removed and assisted as a result of the inspections. Also, The ILO Committee of Experts has expressed concern that inspectors are not sufficiently familiar with the labor laws

4.9. Ministry of Women Empowerment and the Family.

When we talk childhood we talk family life. In Cameroon there is a ministry responsible for the empowerment of women and the family. In exploring the nature of childhood employment in Yaounde we stumbled on this except from the ministry which goes a long way to add more knowledge about the nature of childhood employment in Yaounde.

On the 30th of May 2017, Marie-Therese Abena Ondo, Minister for the Promotion of the Woman and the Family of Cameroon, said that key national and sectorial strategies addressed issues of birth registration, violence against children, child marriage, economic exploitation of children, education of children with disabilities and indigenous children, and early childhood development with an emphasis on nutrition during the first 1,000 days of life. In 2016, Cameroon criminalized female genital mutilation, breast ironing, child abuse, delay or refusal to enroll a child in school, and refusal to pay alimony. Furthermore, an inclusive education curriculum was developed, the draft national policy on child protection focused on the completion of the institutional framework for child protection, and the African Union (A.U) national campaign to put an end to child marriage was launched. New schools had been established, especially in priority education zones, and 1,000 primary and secondary school teachers had been recruited for public service. In the regions threatened by insecurity, the school infrastructure had been improved and teachers redeployed to welcome refugee and internally displaced children.

Despite all these policies and efforts by the government, childhood employment still persists in Yaounde the capital city of Cameroon right in front of the minister's nose. Children are seen selling right at the central town with ease.

4.10. Non-Governmental Organisations and Childhood Employment in Yaounde.

The role of Non-Governmental Organisations and groups in combating societal ills like diseases, child abuse, trafficking, childhood employment and so forth cannot be under estimated. There are many types in Yaounde doing all their best to ensure that the rights of children are not being violated.

Image 13: Celebration of the 2022 Day of the African child in Yaounde



Source: The Guardian Post Newspaper No 2480 Friday of June 17th 2022

The Guardian Post Newspaper No 2480 Friday of June 17th 2022, helps us to understand that international nongovernmental organisations are warning that the objectives of the United Nations Sustainable Development Goals, SDGs cannot be attained without the development of the African child. They sounded the warning during celebrations to mark the 2022 edition of the Day of the African Child, observed on June 16 2022. They opined that the choice by the African Committee of Experts on the Rights and Welfare of the Child, on the theme: “Eliminating Harmful Practices Affecting Children: Progress on Policy & Practice since 2013” , is timely and instructive and in line with Articles 32 and 33 of the African Charter on the Rights and Welfare of the Child. They stated that the African Committee recognizes the importance of the Day of the African Child, DAC as an advocacy tool for enhancing the visibility of the Charter as well as promoting children’s rights and welfare issues. “The DAC is one of the standing promotional activities of the Committee. It traces its roots to the 1976 uprising in Soweto, South Africa. The day is celebrated every year on June 16; the celebrations are based on themes identified and agreed upon by the Committee after consultations with children organized by partner organizations” , the groups said. Adding that DAC was instituted in 1991 by the Assembly of Heads of State and Government of the then OAU instituted in memory of the 16th June 1976 student uprising in Soweto, South Africa. Since then, the OAU and its successor, the AU, have used the DAC to remember these children, to celebrate children in Africa as well as to inspire a sober reflection and action towards addressing the plethora of challenges that children in Africa face on a daily basis. The focus however has continued to change. This year, the goal is to call attention to the linkages between the Sustainable Development Goals and the African Children’s Charter. The overall objective is to inspire states to accelerate efforts towards realizing all children’s rights as provided by the African Charter on the Rights and Welfare of Children, as a contribution towards accelerating the promotion and protection of all children’s rights in Africa. The accent is also to set out the relevance of the 2030 agenda for sustainable development for children in all countries on the African continent, but providing a platform to reflect on the African continent’s flagship development agenda – Agenda 2063, the Committee’s Agenda 2040 and how they apply to children in Africa today. This effort by N.G.Os is occasionally seen in Yaounde and is carried out often amidst children involved in childhood employment.

4.11. Friendly Jobs For Children in Yaounde.

This involves jobs that children can do without violating their fundamental rights as children. In other words, these jobs are easily tract and monitored by parents and stakeholders and have also been evaluated by child care expert to be acceptable for children to do. These jobs include theatre arts, music, dancing, family business, and many more as seen below.

4.11.1. Theatre Arts.

Theatre, also spelled theater, in dramatic arts, an art concerned almost exclusively with live performances in which the action is precisely planned to create a coherent and significant sense of drama. There is no age limit when it comes to child actors which means there is no specific age when kids should start acting. It's never too early for your kid to start acting or start attending acting classes. Kids can become actors as babies and under the age of 4. These days, Cameroonian kids have been the topic of many gatherings as they seem to have stolen the limelight of most of their elders whom they look up to. In this countdown, we bring to you the countdown of Cameroon's most talented kid celebrities who have risen to fame with their talents. While some have gained awards and endorsement deals already, others have released projects and made the most headlines.

4.11.2. Music.

According to an article published by Bright Horizon on February 25th 2022, a 2016 study at the University of Southern California's Brain and Creativity Institute found that musical experiences in childhood can actually accelerate brain development, particularly in the areas of language acquisition and reading skills. According to the National Association of Music Merchants (NAMM Foundation), learning to play an instrument can improve mathematical learning and even increase performance. But academic achievement isn't the only benefit of music education and exposure. Music ignites all areas of child development and skills for school readiness, including intellectual, social-emotional, motor, language, and overall literacy. It helps the body and the mind work together. Exposing children to music during early development helps them learn the sounds and meanings of words. Dancing to music helps children build motor skills

while allowing them to practice self-expression. For children and adults, music helps strengthen memory skills.

Image 14: Child singing in her video album.



Source: Music Album titled: “Taking me higher by Janis Mofor.

This picture is extracted from a music album by Janis Mofor a 7 years old child. Talking with her teacher in school we found out that Janis is not in any way affected in her education by being a musician at her age. According to the family, though much income has not yet been raised from her album as she is still growing in the music industry. She has performed more than 10 events already, participated on C.R.T.V programs and many more and all these has never affected her behaviour or her education in any way. Linking this to culture and personality theory, we can say that the music life of this child at an early age is well regulated by the family in order to ensure that her future will not be affected negatively by her early involvement in music. We can see that childhood employment at this level is to be encouraged

In addition to the developmental benefits, music brings us joy. Just think about listening to a good song in the car with the window down on a beautiful day. From this report we notice that music to a child is harmless. In Yaounde a number of children are involved in secular and gospel music. Like the example above of Janis Mofor a primary 3 pupils of Etoug – Ebe Baptist School Yaounde. She is a popular gospel singer with many followers on social media and according to the family her music does not just make her smart, but raises income for her and the family and in any way does not disturb her proper upbringing.

4.11.3. Dancing.

Dancing is a branch of theatre and arts and it is also a very comfortable activity for children to do as long as decency and modesty in appearance are respected. Dancing enhances the motor skills of children, serves as a source of income when hired for a performance by musicians or for events. This activity is very common in Yaounde as well. An example can be Patmos Dancers that specializes in training children and youths to become professional dancers as well as to perform to earn a living.

Dancing does not just keep the children healthy; it can serve as a source of income for them. For example when children in Patmos Dancers perform and are paid they take the money to their family. Many parents have appreciated me for that and many children are joining us. We have all the skills needed to train any age group to dance in a safe way. We don't let a child do something beyond their limit. We are experts. Dancing is good for children as long as they are thought to do so by an expert. This also avoid abuse and immorality.

Samuel: INJS (September 2, 2022) 3pm

This informant indicates that there are activities children can do for health and monetary reasons. Dancing is one of them. We can also see that if the training and practice is done under the guide of an expert, there will be no effect, but if it is done without expertise knowledge there might be health dangers. Children might also be introduced to indecent dressing, pornography and sexual harassment if they are not under the care of an expert.

4.11.3. Engagement of Children in Family Business.

A family business is a commercial organization in which decision-making is influenced by multiple generations of a family, related by blood or marriage or adoption, who has both the ability to influence the vision of the business and the willingness to use this ability to pursue distinctive goals. Family businesses constitute a particular category of enterprises since their main characteristic is that they belong and are managed by the members of a family. Due to the involvement of the family members in the operation and ownership of capital, family businesses are generally successful; they do not aim only at profits, but also respect human dignity (Alvarez, 2002; Astrachan et al., 2002; Smyrniotis and Walker, 2003; Leenders and Waarts, 2003).

Some parents are business inclined and will want their children to grow up in like manner, as a result they carry them along in the business' That is why it is difficult for them to see any wrong thing in the practice.

Ebenazar: Simbock (August 31, 2022) 10am

Every family business is characterized by introversion and the desire of the family to keep the ownership of the business or the largest part of it (Astrachan et al., 2002; Smyrnios and Walker, 2003; Sharma and Rao, 2000). Due to introversion and the desire to enable succession, factors such as the involvement of the family children in the business at a young age, the selection of successors among the members of the family for the management of the business, and the interest of the children for the market and the products of the family business, are considered of paramount importance (Birley et al., 1999; Lussier and Sonfield, 2003a; Lussier and Sonfield, 2003b). In previous studies, it has been found that on average three family members were occupied in the family business, usually two males and one female. Also, it was common that one of the employees was one young member of the family who was trained to be the successor of this family business (Astrachan et al., 2002; Smyrnios and Walker, 2003). In Yaounde, many shop owners and owners of various businesses including agriculture carry their children along as to run the business. It is worth nothing that these children are not allowed to carry out activities in the business that are beyond their ages. They are seen for example assisting their parents to sell in a provision store or running errands to look for change. In some cases, children work in restaurants of their parents to wash dishes and serve customers.

4.12. Child Protection and Childhood Employment.

Looking at the United Nations Economic and Social Council (2008), UNICEF Child Protection Strategy, child protection is the safeguarding of children from violence, exploitation, abuse, and neglect. Article 19 of the UN Convention on the Rights of the Child provides for the protection of children in and out of the home. One of the ways to ensure this is by giving them quality education, the fourth of the United Nations Sustainable Development Goals, in addition to other child protection systems.

Child protection systems are a set of usually government-run services designed to protect children and young people who are underage and to encourage family stability. UNICEF defines a 'child protection system' as:

the set of laws, policies, regulations and services needed across all social sectors – especially social welfare, education, health, security and justice – to support prevention and response to protection-related risks. These systems are part of social protection, and extend beyond it. At the level of prevention, their aim includes supporting and strengthening families to reduce social exclusion, and to lower the risk of separation, violence and exploitation. Responsibilities are often spread across government agencies, with services delivered by local authorities, non-State providers, and community groups, making coordination between sectors and levels, including routine referral systems etc., a necessary component of effective child protection systems.

Image 15: Campaign against child abuse by IHRC.



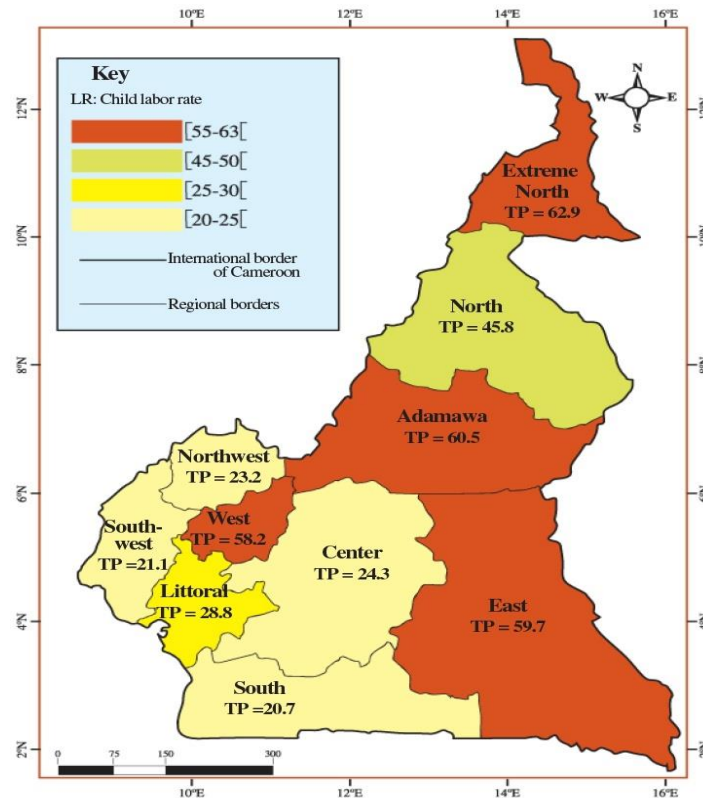
Source: www.ihrcq.org.

This iconic data indicates that the protection of children from abuse is considered an important contemporary goal. This includes protecting children from exploitation such as child labor, child trafficking and child selling, child sexual abuse, including child prostitution and child pornography, military use of children, and child laundering in illegal adoptions. There exist several international instruments for these purposes, such as:

Worst Forms of Child Labour Convention, Minimum Age Convention, 1973, Optional Protocol on the Sale of Children, Child Prostitution and Child Pornography, Council of Europe Convention on the Protection of Children against Sexual Exploitation and Sexual Abuse, Optional Protocol on the Involvement of Children in Armed Conflict and the Hague Adoption Convention.

We can see that the international community is doing and has done much to eliminate problems affecting children, but unfortunately the impact is yet to be felt in Yaounde. We see that there is a dysfunction as children who are supposed to play a different role are seen playing parental role as they hustle here and there for money.

Image 16: Spartial Distribution of Child labour rate for children aged 5 – 14 years in Cameroon (2017)



Source: Olivier Ewondo Mbebi (2018,) Determinants of child labor in Cameroon: The role of area of residence and gender

This iconographic data indicates that childhood employment is common in all regions of Cameroon including Yaounde. The center region is seen having 24.3 % still trapped in Child labour. Reason why all stake holders in the fight and regulation of the phenomenon should put in more efforts.

4.13. Climate Change and Childhood Employment in Yaounde.

Children are more vulnerable to the effects of climate change than adults. The World Health Organization (WHO) estimated that 88% of the existing global burden of disease is linked to

climate change affecting children. The Lancet review on health and climate change lists children as the worst-affected category by climate change. Children are also 14–44 percent more likely to die from environmental factors; again leaving them the most vulnerable. Those in urban areas will be affected by lower air quality and overcrowding, and will struggle the most to better their situation.

Children are physically more vulnerable to climate change in all its forms. Climate change affects the physical health of a child and their well-being. Prevailing inequalities, between and within countries, determines how climate change impacts children. Children have no voice or attention in terms of global responses to climate change.

People living in low-income countries suffer from a higher burden of disease and are less capable of facing climate change threats. Nearly every child in the world is at risk from climate change and pollution. Almost half are at extreme risk.

The case in Yaounde is in such that these children get all the sun, the cold, and even the polluted air as they go out every day for money making activities. In short, most of the children employed in Yaounde do not even mind weather conditions. This is seen in the way they dress. Their dressing most of the times does not tie with the weather conditions and therefore they are likely to be victims of climate change.

CHAPTER FIVE

THE PRACTICE OF CHILDHOOD EMPLOYMENT IN YAOUNDE

In Chapter five which is the last, we shall look at a discourse on culture and childhood expectations; we shall also be examining and explaining the nature of childhood employment in Yaounde. That is, how and why the phenomenon unfolds. This chapter will also consider the rights and duties of children and other family members. More to that, we shall also seek to bring out meaning from the data collected from the field by examining the causes and effects of childhood employment. This chapter shall see the unveiling of facts gotten from the field. This chapter five shall also look at some ways childhood employment can be managed in Yaounde.

5.1. A Discourse on Culture and Childhood Expectations.

Childhood is the state or period of being a child. This period varies according to culture, social statues, context, and even religion. That goes same for expectations. About 192 member countries of the United Nations agree with the definition of child as set by the international law. According to the international law, a child is defined as any person below 18 years of age. However, each of the member countries has its own modifications of the definition; and expectations. For instance, the international law and international child conventional loosely consider the age of 18 years as the upper limit of childhood, as they provide a room for countries in which the age of majority may be attained earlier than 18 years. For instance, Sharia and Islamic laws want children aged 7 years and above held responsible for their actions and subjected to corporal punishment if found guilty of criminal offenses. On the other hand, the international law and international child convention prohibit corporal punishment of children regardless of their age. This already set a pace for us to know that childhood is a universal concept but its demarcations and expectations are relative with some cutting across cultures and some unique to particular cultures. What is seen as a problem somewhere in the world may be no issue in another. Even within a certain culture the expectations of childhood can still be very uneven because the world view of each family in that culture always has a pin on how they want their children to grow up.

Many children from my village sell on the streets. My parents told me that if I want to grow up and be a successful person in business I must learn how to get and manage money. When I sell, they help me keep and manage the small business that I do. I love to earn money to support my family. Some of my brothers did it so I want to copy their example.

Genesis: Nsam Market (April 13, 2022) 4pm

This statement explains why some families practice childhood employment in Yaounde. They see it as a means of raising up the child to be a business man or woman. So they see the phenomenon as a common practice and a way of preparing the children for the future. We also see that the children are comfortable doing what they do. They see it as an opportunity to get rich in the future.

Our research area Yaounde being the capital city of a country with more than 250 tribes and languages juxtaposed together obviously will perceive childhood expectation differently. In terms of religion, families in Yaounde incline themselves to the African traditional religion, Christianity and Islam. This is very important to know because religious believes plays a very big role in the lives of many families here in Yaounde. Each one will want to bring up their child according to the teachings of their religion. It is worth noting that the experiences children have early in life play a crucial role in the development of the brain. Exposure to positive factors, especially stable and responsive relationships with parents and other adults, and safe and supportive environments promote positive development. In the family, there are certain roles and obligations which are bequeathed by norms, humanity and culture to each and every member of the family. These roles cannot perfect the family or be perfected while being performed in isolation. In other words, in order to achieve a homely family, society and nation each and every member of the member is required to play certain roles which are culturally, morally, religiously, socially or otherwise assigned. The roles of children in the family is a very vital one of which when the demand is not met, may and in most cases does in fact affect the atmosphere and the expected homely nature of a family and the world at large. Let us look at some duties generally acceptable for children in the family.

5.2. Practices by Children in Yaounde.

Parents, guardians, the state, the society and children as well have some duties to carry out. This will make the society to function well. We are going to be seeing the duties of children in a family setting in Yaounde.

5.2.1. Regulated House Keeping.

In Yaounde like many part of Cameroon and the world at large, it is a culture in most families for children to learn and practice taking care of the house. Cleaning the house and compound, laundry, running errands, washing dishes, and making sure that things are properly placed in the house are

some housekeeping exercises common in Yaounde. This very role of housekeeping has a positive contribution to the psychological and social adaptation of children as they keep growing into the existing world. They from the practice, learn the maintenance and managerial skill. They also learn neatness which is a personal and social skill. Aside the fact that housekeeping shapes children into humanity, it remains a generally acceptable role of children in the family.

5.2.2. Duty to Uphold and Keep the Family Image protected.

It is the role of the children to protect and uphold the image of the family. Ordinarily, every home desires a peaceful atmosphere and an honourable representation. There is no family that enjoys being tagged or associated with negativity. When the parents must have set an operational standard of the family, it behooves of the children to uphold and protect it. It behooves on them to protect the image of the family by the character they exhibit within the home, in the society and in their relationship with other people. The children are expected to be loving, obedient, respectful and Godly. In fact, the children of the family are actually the benchmark for ascertaining the goodness of a family. This is a whole lot of responsibility for the children. It is simply suggesting that the image or reputation of the family should be considered by children in their every decision.

5.2.3. Duty to Live up to Expectation.

This duty is directly linked with the duty to protect and uphold the family image because when children live up to expectation, they by so doing uphold the image of the family. Specifically in this case the children are expected to deliver. They are expected to grow in certain aspects of life.

In Cameroon and Yaounde to be precise for instance, a child is not to be heard rejecting to go for a basic formal education whereas there is a willing sponsor. And upon such a willing sponsor, the children are expected to have a good representation in school. They have the role to acquire good grades. By so doing, they are living up to the expectation. Children who do not live up to the reasonable expectation of a growing child can be said to be underperforming. This would of course not be a thing the family would be proud of.

I had a child in my class whose results were never the best. He was always found sleeping during lessons and I use to let him sleep because I thought that may be the only opportunity he had to rest

Lydia: Etoug - Ebe (July 12, 2022) 5pm

This statement comes from a pedagogue after noticing that a child will always be sleeping during lessons decided to find out why so. She discovered that this child works in a restaurant. He roasts chicken, fish and washes dishes before coming to do evening classes. Though this child managed to write and pass the First School Living Certificate, according to the teacher, the child's expectations were not fully made due to the fact that he had to join adult work and school at a time.

The issue in all these is not just the work but the fact that most families and people who practice childhood employment look or consider only the present benefits to them not the child. They don't take time to reflect on the long term effects on the child, the family and the society at large. Many families want their children to be something else in future but they are training them on something else in the present. Children are their parents' investment. Investment involves spending money, time and energy on something usually for future benefit. It is the role of the parents to make way for their children, lead them through, empower them and invest on their career and future.

Many want their children to study well in school or in a particular trade (skill) in order to gain full employment in future but unfortunately the goals of those that tolerate childhood employment do not look into all that. They are often out to reap as much benefits as possible from these defenseless children.

To continue, children serve as a motivation to their parents' hard work. Motivation is simply a drive which triggers and sustains one's willingness to perform an act or function. It is an undisputable responsibility of the parents to cater for the children. When there are children in the family, their presence or their anticipated existence adds some extra motivation to the economic consciousness of the parents. This role is better manifested when the children are performing up to the expected standard. A child will hardly meet up with his expectations if he or she is not given the rightful place of childhood.

On the other hand, it is the role of the children to become an investment unto their parents. Becoming an investment here suggests that they undertake to be beneficial, parallel to the money consumed on their developing and future. Children are demanded to be productive, and as they become productive eventually, it is their role and responsibility to look after their parents after on

and at old age. This role is a very significant one. Therefore, there are consequences when the right thing is being done by the wrong people, under unpleasant circumstances. Childhood employment becomes a problem here because most of the work the children do does not always go in line with the future plan of the child. Those jobs often serve as obstacles to a child's proper education, socialization and sometime moral upbringing. In doing these jobs many have been socialized negatively. For example those who hawk on the streets sell in bars, parks and markets are sometimes victims of sexual harassment, rape, inhaling smoke from cigarettes and more. Some even join peer groups to become smokers, thieves, rapists, prostitutes thanks to unregulated early exposure to money making ventures.

I am a leader of an organization that deals with women and girl children. We have many cases of rape, and other terrible things going on out there with these children you see working in people's houses or selling on the street. For instance a girl child selling things and passing in front of someone's house, he will say, 'please come in let me buy' and when she comes in to the house, she is raped. For me if you can't take care of a child please don't take the child from the village to your house or better practice birth control. Child upbringing nowadays is very expensive and people must be aware that.

Constance: Central Town-Yaounde (March 15, 2022) 1:30pm

Her statement indicates that the practice is partly caused by the fact that people bring children from the village to stay with them for exploitative reasons. These children in the course of doing all these activities face all sorts of risk.

5.2.4. Duty to Take Care of Siblings.

Children have this responsibility of taking care of their siblings, especially the younger ones. This is the level at which children learn the act of kindness in their relations with other people in the society, and of course nurtures love and peaceful coexistence amongst the family. This duty is used by some parents or guardians to perpetuate childhood employment. They think the bigger siblings should go out there hustle and come and take care of the young ones. But when we perceive care from a family perspective we see that it goes beyond finance to involve things like watching over someone, teaching someone, advising, protecting, and ensuring good hygienic conditions. From this sense allowing the child to work deprived the younger ones of these privileges that were supposed to be given by the one that is working.

5.2.5. Duty to learn or Acquire Knowledge and Skills.

This is another key role of children in the family. Children are required to keep learning as they develop. They are to be teachable and open to corrections. Children are expected to be keen to learning from their enrolled academic institution, and also learn the strategies of life adaptation; learn certain soft and hard skills especially those which can be acquired from within the family. A child's family and caregivers want the best for each child, for all children to grow and learn, to be ready for school or a trade, and to be safe.

This duty cannot be fully exploited when the child becomes the father or the mother of the house or of his or her self. There is time for everything as the Bible will put it that is why there are laws contextually directing what man can or cannot do. Under aged employment is one of the acts generally forbidden by more than 170 countries in the world despite the cultural differences. Let children do only what they are required to do and their future is will secured.

5.2.6. Duty to Obey.

This is a very critical duty because it acts both as a favourable and unfavourable factor to childhood employment. Favourable in that so many children who do these jobs have no choice but to obey what their elders tell them. Unfavourable because many children who are willing to practice childhood employment because of various reasons are advised not to do so by those they listen to and they obey and stay.

5.3. Children's Rights and the Practice of Childhood Employment in Yaounde.

Looking at the nature of childhood employment in Yaounde, the fundamental rights of many children are being violated. In the course of the research we sorted to if the local population really knows clearly the rights of children. We notice that they only talk about the right to education and food. Reason why we see it necessary to bring out the right of the child in this analyses.

The rights of the child are specific rights to protect all young people under 18. Children are entitled to these rights to protect their more vulnerable position in society and to give their position special attention. A person younger than 18 years old is protected by human rights and children's rights. The rights of the child were adopted through the United Nations Convention on the Rights of the

Child (UNCRC) in 1989 and recognize the economic, social and cultural rights of children. It is an international treaty, which has been signed by all countries in the world, except for the USA and South-Sudan. There are four general principles that easily summarizes the rights of a child as seen below.

5.3.1. Non-discrimination

This means that all children have the same right to develop their potential in all situations and at all times. For example, every child should have equal access to education regardless of the child's gender, race, ethnicity, nationality, religion, disability, parentage, sexual orientation or other status.

5.3.2. The Best Interests of the Child.

This must be a key consideration in all actions and decisions concerning a child, and must be used to resolve conflicts between different rights. For example, when making national budgetary decisions affecting children, Government must consider how cuts will impact on the best interests of the child. In Cameroon in example some give birth just to get family allowance and in the end they can take care of all those children because the allowance is not enough and hence under aged employment steps in. More to that when the family is deciding the activities of the child they should consider the future of the child..

5.3.3. The Right to Survival and Development.

This point underscores the vital importance of ensuring access to basic services and to equality of opportunity for children to achieve their full development. For example, a child with a disability should have effective access to education and health care to achieve their full potential; likewise under privileged children. With the financial challenges in a city like Yaounde, this right is highly violated; reason why many children are victims of childhood employment. Access to education for example is still a very big problem to many households in Yaounde creating a fertile ground for under aged employment and other forms of child abuse.

5.3.4. The Views of the Child

This means that the voice of the child must be heard and respected in all matters concerning his or her rights. For example, those in power should consult with children before making decisions that

will affect them. This has not been the case as far as childhood employment in Yaounde is concerned. Majority of the children who work for people wish not to but their voices are usually ignored or simply silent. This according to many informants is one of the highest rights that are being violated. For example a child is brought from the village, all communications between the child and his or her parents is cut off, and access to speak with the employer is highly forbidden. Only instructions are passed to them and they have to obey without questioning no matter their situation.

For instance during our research we hardly got a testimony of a child who earns or earned up to the minimum wage of 36, 270 FRS as specified in the 30th of July 2014 labour code of Cameroon. This law applies to all sectors of the economy. That tells us that the opinion on salary negotiation rests in the hands of those who employ these children. This is considered as serious exploitation of children coupled with the fact that the employment of children is illegal in the first place. What a double crime we must say!

5.4. Duties of Parents or Guardians Towards Children.

In Cameroon children generally depend on their parents or family even where beyond the 18 years set forth by the U.N.O. Most parents in Yaounde do seek the best for the good of their children and as well understand their responsibilities towards their children. That does not happen without the odds of some being negligent or even irresponsible. Below are some duties of parents. Parents should provide a safe, abuse-free environment:

5.4.1. Where the Child Feels Protected.

A certain environment is supposed to be provided for the child to be safe and sound as seen below.

5.4.1.1. Shelter.

The house should be security proof to prevent harm from sharp objects or glass, bad company, and all forms of danger. The parents should make sure that the neighborhood is child-friendly and not dangerous. Many parents in Yaounde build or rent houses taking into consideration the security of their children and the family at large. Even the school they choose for their children is not just based on good performance but on how secure the environment is. With all these we see that the city is not a safe place for loose children and it is dangerous when children are not under control.

Reason why many parents in Yaounde say they will never allow their children to work one of the reasons being the unsecure atmosphere of the city.

I will never allow my child to work under no circumstance. It is dangerous and risky. The child can be kidnapped, raped or even join bad gangs and become a problem to me in the house. I will never do that

Julius: Etoug –Ebe (July 11, 2022) 6pm

This statement shows that some Yaounde dwellers see childhood employment as a dangerous practice and therefore will not for any reason involved their children. We clearly see that there are negative consequences.

5.4.1.2. Food.

Parents need to provide nourishment for their children – healthy meals like fruits, vegetables, and greens. They need to make sure their children have access to clean and pure drinking water. Keep alcohol and other non-ingestible products away from the children. On the field we found out that some families in Yaounde can afford to do this but a majority manages the one they see. This point on nutrition is very pertinent because an informant told us that some children accept to sell things along the streets or hawk just because they want to benefit and eat part of the things they sell. We on our research work even saw one selling groundnut and he was also eating as well. Therefore the love for food can cause some children to be attracted to go out there and work making the phenomenon to continue in Yaounde.

5.4.1.3. Clothing.

Another basic need for children is clothing. This does not mean parents have to always buy very expensive clothes. But make sure your children have proper and decent garments to represent themselves well.

5.4.1.4. Hygiene.

The parents must teach their children the importance of hygiene. Make them have a bath daily, brush their teeth, clean themselves, and change their clothes regularly. Teach them washroom habits, how to wash their clothes, put trash in the bin, and keep things clean. While on the field of research some say this skill in most of the homes of the people who employ under aged children

are left in the hands of these illegal employees. They do all these while their own children relax and recreate around. The effects is that most children from these types of home are rated or tagged as lazy, and unable to take care of themselves in the future. This consequence goes to those who do not teach their children hygiene but leave it in the hands of house helps.

5.4.2. Support.

This support can be seen in various aspects as seen in the paragraphs below.

5.4.2.1. Financial And Educational Support.

Parents need to provide financial support for the education of their children. This could also include extracurricular activities such as sports, clubs, and other interests. They have to enroll their children in school and bear the cost until they finish their college education. This is not the case with parents who give out or send out their children to work for money. The duty or function here is reversed making the proper development of the child difficult and sometimes interrupted by some problems as the children go about working instead of being supported.

5.4.2.2. Emotional Support.

Parents need to be there for their children emotionally. They need to inspire them to do better and support their hobbies. Show them ways to manage their emotions and treat others with kindness and respect. Encourage your child to participate in extracurricular activities and show up when your child is performing somewhere. Give them words of encouragement and do not belittle their hopes and dreams. Asking many in Yaounde they say this virtue is really lacking in most homes as parents are too busy looking for money to be able to take care of the family. Childhood employment does not give most of its victims the chance to emotional support. They are rather stigmatized, humiliated by the employer or others, traumatize as a result of doing work beyond their strength.

The other day I went to a restaurant to see the owner and a young boy was seriously humiliated in front of everyone. I felt sorry for him. He was confused and really felt bad but had no choice but work

Lydia: Buiscuiterie (August 12, 2022) 9am

This informant helps us to understand that childhood employment acts as a source of stress to many children. They are abused without respect in public. So at their little ages they already face emotional torture from their employers. This is bad for child up-bringing. According to the theory of culture and personality, these children may have behavioural problems in future because of poor up-bringing.

5.4.2.3. Medical Support.

Parents must provide medical care to their children. They need to take them for regular checkups and support them financially for treatments or medication. This duty is very primordial but very much absent on the side of the kids involved in childhood employment. Think of a child who gets up very early in the morning and goes to sell on the street, in the bar or do other jobs for survival under all forms of weather conditions. The child is exposed to all forms of health problems. What is not interesting is that the money these children raise from the sells cannot even handle the high hospital bills in Yaounde if in case they fall sick.

5.4.3. Teach Moral Values.

It is important to inculcate moral values in children from a young age. They need to know how to interact with others and behave in the right way. Parents need to teach their kids compassion, respect, kindness, patience, and honesty. Children should be educated properly so they do not harm other children or animals. The popular saying as we went out on the field is that, many children who are involved in childhood employment end up being initiated into bad practices by their adult peers. Out there they learn attitudes that are not welcoming to the family and the society like drug abuse, stealing and the list goes on. Some even just became stubborn even to the parents who sent them out to work for the family.

5.4.4. Protect the Child.

Your children need to know who they can talk to and whom they cannot. They must know they cannot speak to strangers or take candy from them. Parents must teach their children what inappropriate touching is. They need to build a safe atmosphere so that the children can be open about all issues. If you have a regular babysitter or nanny, check up on your children to protect them from harm or abuse.

5.4.5. Respect the Child.

Do not talk to your child like they are dumb. Children are smart, and they understand things better than we give them credit for. You have to earn your child's respect, and they have to earn yours. Listen to your child when they try to tell you something. Never belittle their opinions. How you treat your child is what they remember about you, and in turn, will treat others the same way. The unfortunate thing here is that many who give out their children don't always take time to even understand whether what they are doing is what the children really want. Even children who want to work themselves cannot not determine at their young ages their real needs except if otherwise guided. When children are molested sexually, emotionally, psychologically, and even physically because he or she is trying to work money real disrespect.

5.4.6. Teach Them Discipline.

When you discipline your child, make sure not to abuse them physically, verbally, or emotionally. Do not hit your child or yell obscenities at them. Do not make fun of your child for crying and being emotional. Instead, you can do the following : Talk to your child firmly, letting them know that they have done something wrong, Punishments can be taking away TV time or grounding them to their room, Discuss with your child why they are punished and also hear them out and Always be level-headed when talking to your child. Do not let your emotions drive you. How you behave with your child is how they will behave with others. This virtue is farfetched for most children who get so early into money making. All sorts of abuse are experienced by these children and little or nothing is done. They swallow the spits and stay, some are dying in silence.

When we council many children as we go out on our outreach to children many reveal cases of rape that they have faced while working as house girls in people's houses. Many are dying in silence and only serious sensitization can make them speak out

Lilian: Central Town-Yaounde (March 15, 2022) 1:30pm

According to this afore quote, children and others need to report any form of child abuse in order to deal with the practice in Yaounde. Leaving in fear will not solve the problem but will only help to promote it. Great sensitisation is needed for victims to be able to talk out.

5.4.7. Spend Time Together.

Your child needs to have you present in their lives. Entertaining your child with materialistic things or letting them go working for money at an early age does not indicate you love them. It rather make them sometime become too money minded and in the future may seem to see money as the only goal in life. This can make some to also wanting to get money at all cost leading them to stealing because of early introduction to money. There is this saying in the Bible that the love for money is the root to all evil. Imagine a child who grows up this way. Being there for them in every circumstance shows a parent's love.

Take children out once in a while and do something they love. Build a hobby with them. Your child needs to realize that they can always come to you for help, support, or advice whatever they are going through.

5.5. Causes of Childhood Employment Practice in Yaounde.

Childhood employment is not just undoubtedly practiced in Yaounde, but it is common. Of recent the phenomenon has seen an increase as a result of the crises plaguing the two English speaking regions of Cameroon. Yaounde being a safe and sound town is a host to many children and some among them are victims of childhood employment for the reasons we see below. These reasons fall either under push or pull factors.

5.5.1. The Role of Poverty

The quality or state of being poor or the lack of money was highly pointed out by almost all the informants as the main cause of childhood employment in Yaounde. Many who live in this city face financial challenges of all sorts due to meager salaries; few industries to employ, an education system that fails to develop alongside shifting labour needs, corruption, large family sizes and more. This situation is made worst by the large population scrambling over the few available resources. Many household in Yaounde barely eat three square meals a day due to their inability to get the food. According to World Bank Statistics last upgraded April 19 2022, it is estimated that the crises increased the extreme poverty rate from 24.5% in 2019 to 25.3% in 2021. 40% of

Cameroon's population lives below the poverty line; that is the \$3.30 a day poverty line a day as stipulated by the World Bank.

It is worth noting that despite the high cost of living in Yaounde, basic needs like water, food, clothing and shelter are not being subsidized but rather they are acquired at very high prices. Beside the basic needs, other needs are very expensive for an average income earner. For example the price for education and health care is a call for concern in this city. All these have given room for childhood employment not just to be practiced, but to flourish with ease as many find no reason even stopping the practice as they hang on the poverty factor. Some people in Yaounde are then pushed by poverty to let their children work in order for them to meet up with the needs of their family. Income from parents alone cannot support the family constantly.

5.5.2. The Role of Culture on Childhood Employment.

The way of life of a people has powerful effects on the nature of childhood employment in Yaounde. Some families in Yaounde are business inclined and they want their children to grow up in like manner. For that reason they send their children out at an early age to start learning how to work and even manage money. For example when on the field many quoted the Bamilekes as a common example of such a practice. Their children are highly seen selling items like bitter cola, cola nuts, electronic devices, and more. To them this is a form of training for the children not just because these parents can't afford to take care of their families.

Another reason under culture is that many parents grow up practising childhood employment and therefore doing it with other children today is not a big deal but a cultural practice. They see it that if others succeeded in the past why not the ones of today? In another sense some see it as a common practice in Yaounde and many other cities of Cameroon like Doula, Bafoussam, and more. Thus they see it as acceptable and therefore practice it.

We use to move around and do a lot of odd jobs when we were just 14years of age. We could clear a farm, fetch water, and carry bricks, in order to earn money. We had us no problem with that. Our parents guided and supported us. They help us keep the money. At the end we still succeeded with our school work. But I will not like to do such to my children; it is a bit different nowadays. There is much danger outside.

Vibu: Central Town (July 2022) 4pm.

The data shows that parents who took part in childhood employment are likely to involve their children in the practice. Some of them are aware that the world has changed and there are a lot of dangers involved in the practice. However, this parental history varies from family to family, some seeing no problem with the practice, while others see a lot of problems.

5.5.3. Irresponsibility and Negligence from Parents.

Irresponsibility is the lack of or freedom from responsibility while negligence on the other hand is the breach of a duty of care. The failure to exercise a standard of care that a reasonable person would have in a similar situation. These two are some of the reasons why some children are seen working in Yaounde.

Irresponsible and negligent parents are those who live their families loose and the children do whatever they like. They also do not care telling their children to get involve in under aged employment. They are never at home; they spend carelessly without minding the effects on the family. They don't even care to verify the things they see with their children not purchased by them as parents. When irresponsibility and negligence is common in a home, the children become unguided and they can get involved in any activity or practice including the quest for money to meet their needs. An informant told us that some of these children you see working is as a result of abandonment by their parents. They are neglected may be because of divorce or other family problems.

5.5.4. The Role of Peer Group.

This is a group of people who are approximately the same age and status especially if they have the same interests. Peers, particularly group members become important social referents. Peer groups also influence individual member's attitude and behaviours on many cultural and social issues, such as: drug use, violence, academic achievement, expression of prejudice, and why not involve in work at an early age. In Yaounde some children just join the search for money because they have seen their peers doing it or simply because their peers asked them to join. Since they want to belong they join the line and hence the tally for under aged employment is added.

5.5.5. The Role of Lawlessness.

To be lawless according to the Concise Oxford English Dictionary (11th Edition) means not governed by or obedient to the law. Lawlessness in this context therefore is defined as the defiance of the law or a lack of law and order. This lawlessness is not the absence of a law binding the phenomenon but the fact that many defile the law with impunity. The Cameroon labour code has very beautiful articles concerning children as well as employment. It forbids the employment of children but that is not the case in Yaounde. Many are not even aware of an existing law against childhood employment. The ones who are aware do it without any fear because there are little or no examples of negative rewards because of the practice. Of the many informants we met on the field, none, even labour inspectors could cite a specific case where someone was arrested not to talk of even locked up in jail for practising childhood employment. “Some of these children even sell in front of government offices and nobody does anything about it”, and informant told us. With this kind of atmosphere in Yaounde, many are not going to think twice before sending their children to search for money for the family.

5.5.6. The Role of Ignorance by the local population.

Ignorance is the condition of being uninformed or uneducated or the lack of knowledge or information about a practice or on something or simply unawareness. This goes for those who allow their children to work, those who employ these children and even the children as well. They are ignorant about the rights of a child, what the law says concerning the employment of children and more severely they are ignorant about the many consequences that go with childhood employment. They don't see the dangers involved in the practice. This ignorance may be because of little sensitization or as a result of lack of interest in knowing what is necessary to children. The consequences of ignorance especially about doing the right thing can be very long lasting especially when one considers it from the Culture and personality theory.

5.6.7. The Role of Frustration and Childhood Employment.

Frustration is the state of contract that allows a party to back away from its original obligations due to unforeseen changes to the nature of the thing a party has been obligated to. In other words

when someone comes to a point where he no longer upholds his or her core principles because of extreme difficulties. When people are frustrated they become desperate and can do anything.

Some in the North West and south west become desperate when they hear cases of children being killed here and there. They prefer to send the child to go and suffer in the hands on someone in a safe town than have them killed. If it is you, will you prefer your child to be alive or killed because you don't want the child to work"

Lilian: Buiscuiterie (August 12, 2022) 9am

This statement above indicates that frustration as a result of war has contributed greatly to the phenomenon in Yaounde.

5.5.8. Socio Political Instability and Childhood Employment.

When a country is socially and politically peaceful there is bound to be economic growth, employment opportunities, peace, reduction in poverty, and the list continues. On the other hand when the country is not stable there is bound to be a lot of difficulties. For example the terrorist group boko haram, the crises in Central Africa, and of recent the Anglophone crises brought a lot of challenges to the economy of Cameroon, pushing many to escape from these restive areas for their safety to other stable towns. Yaounde is just one example of such receiving towns. Many who have migrated to Yaounde for safety are jobless, and can't easily get a job. Some have very large families and therefore are having it hard to cope with the high cost of living. The efforts made by the state to manage the situation are not yielding the desired results. This explains why in the course of our research we found out that majority of these children serving in restaurants, houses and other places are victims of the crises. They are doing this because they have no choice but to and as a result many are exposed to all forms of abuses.

This issue of children working was gradually reducing in Yaounde but with the issue of the Anglophone crises, the rate is high. People were looking for house helps and were not seeing but now they are being even forced to just take them that is why they can do anything to these children

Lilian: Buiscuiterie (August 12, 2022) 9am

5.5.9. Moral Decadence.

This is a state of moral decline in the society. In Yaounde some people practice childhood employment because of bad fate. They are generally not morally good. A morally upright person will know that certain jobs are not good for children as a result of its long lasting effects on their lives. While aware of this some still go ahead and involve children in such practices for personal interests and not for the good of the children.

They know the right thing to do but they are not doing it because the state of their mind is bad. They lack moral upbringing and character. Their ways are not good at all. They see children as a medium for exploitation for their selfish aims. Some even go ahead and abuse these kids physically, emotionally and so on. My friend! Bad people are bad people.

Vali: Chateaux (July 11, 2022)

This clearly shows that some people are morally handicapped and so put children through childhood employment. They have no conscience when dealing with the children. they are just after what they will gain without minding what will happen to the children they are engaging into work. Money making and other reasons are their objective. Whatever happens to the child is known of their business. They lack ethics when it comes to children's rights and obligations.

5.5.10. Cheap labour and Childhood Employment.

Where there is cheap labour, there is maximization of profit by the employer of any business or in any contract. While on the field many attest that many employ children because they will hardly pay them the required wages due them. They intend to exploit these children as much as possible since they are desperate, ignorant and unable to bargain for the right wages for the work done. For instance an informant told us that she worked in a restaurant in Yaounde as a girl child and she was being paid 12,500 frs monthly and that whenever she ate food 2,500 frs was cut off her salary and she was given just 10,000 frs at the end of the month. She had to be at work every working day. This salary is three times less than what the labour code specifies as the minimum wage in Cameroon. More to that a mature person in his or her right senses will not accept such a salary for a month. From this we see that the owner of this restaurant saw an opportunity for profit maximization because the labour was being supplied by a minor who could not bargain for the right payment.

At 15years I was paid 12,500 frs per month. I worked from Monday to Saturday. It was really difficult for me but I had no choice since my parents could not afford to send me to school, I needed to go to school. I accepted everything that could help me pay my evening school fees.

Lilian: Buiscuiterie (August 12, 2022) 9am

The testimony from a lady who has once experienced childhood employment makes us see that cheap labour gave her a job at a very young age. If she had tried to ask for higher pay she would have automatically lost the jog. The restaurant owner exploited her cheap labour.

5.5.11. The Lack of Proper Sensitisation about Childhood Employment.

The process of making something well known and sensitive to the public is called sensitization. This process is not enough in Yaounde as far as the employment of under aged children is concerned. The much talk about childhood employment has been relegated to events; for instance The Day of the African Child. The media will report with all forms of statistics about child abuse and after that period the concept gradually dies out of the media. If the police could for instance could arrest someone for employing children or for sending children to work for money, make it known to the public, the activity could be reduced. But they rather just report child trafficking cases without going to details about the rout causes.

Adequate sensitization will mean that the public should be made to know the fundamental rights of children and the consequences of violating them. It will also require that some statistics showing those who have been punished for violating children's rights be made known to all. More to that sensitization should involve schools, places of worship, posters, social media platforms, and even parliamentary sessions just to name a few. We end here by saying that sensitization should be consistent in order for desired results to be achieved.

5.5.12. Summer Holidays and Childhood Employment.

Holidays especially the summer holiday has been noted as being a very fertile moment for childhood employment in cities in Cameroon including Yaounde. While some do holiday classes, some stay at home, some visit their relatives in other places and others simply learn a skill. Another category are those who do one thing or the other to earn a living for themselves and their families. Holidays in its self is not a problem but a moment of rest for children but it indirectly causes a rise

in the number of children working. This extract from the Guardian Daily News Paper will say more.

Unlike in the past when children followed their parents to the farms every day during the holidays, today, the story is different.

It's the summer holidays in the country and many children have taken to the streets to fend for themselves. Some are have engaging in small business ventures to help their parents to prepare for the next school year. At the Nsam market in Yaounde, we found children everywhere hawking on the streets for survival.

Though it is very dangerous for them as we often hear stories of children being kidnapped, raped or being victims of accidents, staying at home is not an option for most of them.

During a conversation with one of the children on the streets of Nsam, 13-year-old Ali, who is a watermelon vendor said

" I don't sell the watermelon for my mother or anybody but for myself". He went on to explain that his mother buys the watermelon in bulk for him at the Mfoundi market in Yaounde. He said he does the business every holidays stating that "this year, I started on June 15 and I will be ending on August 31..."

From the determination of this little boy, it is obvious that by the end of the day, he will be able to gather something that can help his parents prepare for the forthcoming school year. The young form two boy says he sells two watermelons every day and when there are leftovers "I keep them with my mother who is a roadside vendor at the Nsam neighborhood". Another child hawker, whose name we got as Ariane, a form one student in the Damas neighborhood says she sells pineapple around the Nsam market.

She said she sells at least four pineapples in a day. She sells a slice for 100FCFA or 50FCFA depending on the size. She says her mother gave her capital but the profit remains hers. Since there's so much sun, she preserves it by putting ice in between the pineapples so it remains fresh and cold. "When it is kept in the fridge, the taste changes the next day and so it can't be sold again, thus we eat it" the little girl told us. She also says the business yields a comfortable profit though she didn't mention any amount

The Guardian Newspaper (July 2021)

This extract from the Guardian Newspaper confirms the fact that many children are involved in work. They do this with the support of their family as well as themselves. They are aware of their age and the risks involved, but are ready to bare any consequences since they have the support of their parents. The holidays which are a period meant for rest for school children is seen as a big

opportunity for some families in Yaounde. We can see then that holidays is a very good contributing factor to childhood employment in Yaounde.

5.6. Effects of Childhood Employment.

Upon arrival or departure from nearly any travelling agency or motor park in Cameroon; for example: Buea mile 17 motor park, Mutengene Roundabout, Hospital roundabout Bamenda, Douala, Yaounde and other towns in Cameroon the things that catch your attention immediately are the shabbily dressed under-aged children, adults and women hawking various kinds of goods. One can always hear their usual outcry as “bread bread, boiled eggs boiled eggs, bitter cola bitter cola bobolo bobolo”. These are hawkers; they range from children to adults, male and female. There are of course consequences which are negative as well as positive.

According to the I.L.O reports in (2006), children are exposed to accidental and other injuries at work. They should thus be protected to prevent social, economic and physical harm, which persist to affect them during their lifetime. Such injuries include: general child injuries and abuses like cuts, burns and lacerations, fractures, tiredness and dizziness, excessive fears and nightmares. UNICEF for every child, (9 June 2021) on its part says Economic hardship exacts a toll on millions of families worldwide – and in some places, it comes at the price of a child’s safety. Roughly 160 million children were subjected to child labour at the beginning of 2020, with 9 million additional children at risk due to the impact of COVID-19.

This accounts for nearly 1 in 10 children worldwide. Almost half of them are in hazardous work that directly endangers their health and moral development.

Children may be driven into work for various reasons. Most often, child labour occurs when families face financial challenges or uncertainty – whether due to poverty, sudden illness of a caregiver, or job loss of a primary wage earner.

The consequences are staggering. Child labour can result in extreme bodily and mental harm, and even death. It can lead to slavery and sexual or economic exploitation. And in nearly every case, it cuts children off from schooling and health care, restricting their fundamental rights and threatening their futures.

These effects are just many as we confirmed from the informants we met on the field of research.

5.6.1. Sexual Abuse.

Sexual abuse, particularly sexual exploitation of girls by adults, rape, prostitution, early and unwanted pregnancy, abortion, Sexually Transmitted Diseases (STDs) and HIV/AIDS, drugs and alcoholism. When children are sent out to work they face such consequences and Yaounde is not left out.

A child in the cause of working might join bad gangs who might introduce the child to drugs, alcohol, prostitution or the child might even be stolen, kidnapped and trafficked. employment is dangerous Childhood and should be avoided

Elvis: Central Town-Yaounde (March 15, 2022) 1:30pm

This informant helps us to understand that there is bound at some point to be child abuse as a result of childhood employment. According to him, the practice is to be avoided at all cost to give children their due rights and as well keep them away from abuse.

Sexual abuse is one of the common challenges a child notably girls, faces while working. This is because in addition to the stress of working and trying to cope with school or family matters, she is also exposed to all forms of abuse while on the street, bandits take advantage of her situation to rape and assault them, this could lead to unwanted pregnancies and contracting of sexually transmitted diseases and even emotional torture. For example, the case in Eseka in the center region of Cameroon where an eleven-year old girl was raped by a motor bike rider on the 15th July 2018 in broad daylight. This child happens to be hawking what is locally called “fulerri”.

There are laws in place that should protect children from this practice but the problem is that the law is not usually enforced. Parents and guardians are even unaware of the dangers they expose their children to and the fact that they are breaking the law by doing such. There are little or no sensitization orientations to this effect. The government's approach to this menace is uninspiring and these children are left to the mercy of their fate

(Cameroonhowto.com) 2021

Here above we see Cameroonhowto.com clearly bringing out the dangers brought about by childhood employment. According to them this practice is unsafe for children.

5.6.2. Physical Abuse.

Physical abuse here involves corporal punishment, emotional maltreatment such as blaming, belittling, verbal attacks, rejection, humiliation, stigmatization and bad remarks. Most of these children who work are hardly respected by their employers.

5.6.3. Emotional Neglect.

Emotional neglect such as deprivation of family love and affection, resulting in loneliness, and hopelessness. According to the theory of culture and personality, these children may grow up and develop all form forms of emotionally related health issues as a result of their childhood experiences.

5.6.4. Physical Neglect.

Physical neglect like lack of adequate provision of food, clothing, shelter and medical treatment. A child is supposed to feed properly but the case of those for instance who hustle for money is usually different. For example some hawk on the street from morning to evening without a proper meal because what they are paid is not even enough to provide good food, medical care and all the like for the child.

5.6.5. No Schooling.

Lack of schooling results in missing the right educational qualifications and higher skills; thus perpetuating their life in poverty. It is worth noting that there are educational facilities that can train children in various aspects of life including business. When then they miss this opportunities and they are diverted along the way, the productivity in the future even if they succeed might not be as better as it would have been had it been they hard time to learn the business or the field well. This means that fighting poverty starts with what we do with our children as they grow. If we replace their study time with work or join the two, there are consequences.

5.6.6. law Wages and Salaries.

Competition of children with adult workers leads to depressing wages and salaries. May Yaounde petit business have agreed and complain that the children who sell or even work do it at a very

cheap rate as per the expected price. They sell their labour very cheap, as well as their products for those who hawk on the streets since they are exempted from taxes. Shop owners and adults business men see these children as a threat to their dividends and wages respectively.

5.6.7. Slows Development.

In terms of development to the nation, lack of opportunity for higher education for children deprives the nation of developing higher skills and technological capabilities that are required for economic development/transformation to attain higher income and better standards of living. Cameroon hopes to become an emerging nation by the year 2035, some of these children trapped today in childhood employment might just be the engineers needed to make this big goal happen.

5.7. Effects of Hawking by Children in Yaounde

Here we are going to be presenting both the negative and positive effects of hawking on a general bases.

5.7.1. Negative Effects

These are the effects that bring harm to the child, the society and the nation. They are as follows.

5.7.1.1. Traffic Congestion

The risks attached to street trading are quite high. The person that is hawking on the road is exposed to danger of being hit by a moving vehicle. Also, street hawking poses a risk to other road users. A driver may end up hitting another vehicle in the process of avoiding hawkers running after a moving vehicle to catch up with a customer. It is very common to see these children moving between vehicles or and even crossing the roads to sell without respecting traffic rules. Drivers and road users are therefore sometimes forced to stop and deal with each new case as these unregulated hawkers bring them forth.

Image 17: Child hawker selling boiled Cassava with Plum in Yaounde at a petrol station.



Source: Field work (July 2022)

5.7.1.2. Sale of bad or Expired Goods

The business of hawking is hardly regulated as a result a lot of stolen, bad and expired products are being sold in traffic and road sides. Even if the customer discovers, it must have been too late. It is difficult to trace hawkers to any specific address. Therefore, customers are always at the risk of buying fake goods losing their money and the product at the same time. Many people are fun of buying without checking the expiring date of products and worse, some of these products can cause long term health challenges to the buyers and users.

5.7.1.3. Fall in Tax revenue to the Government

The main source of most government revenue is taxes. If you look at the number of children hawking in Yaounde and Cameroon at large you realized that their combination can form so many supermarkets which could be tasked by the government. Unfortunately childhood hawking as well as employment is first of all not acceptable by the law before being a taxable activity. Moving from one street to another trading is an informal sector of an economy. Generally, hawkers don't pay taxes. It is very difficult for the Government to track hawkers to tax them in their business activities since they do not have any specific point where they set up their business. Most of them too are living hand to mouth so they don't account somewhere that the Government can track them.

5.7.2. Positive Effects

Even though the disadvantages of hawking are so alarming especially the girl child and generally on all hawkers, that may even need to be regularize by the state, there are equally some advantages as far as hawking business is a concern which cannot be underestimated. These will be discuss below

5.7.2.1. It is Less Costly to start any Hawking Business

According to Kakdeu Louis –Marie et al (2012) For ten years, Cameroon has under its framework of the Cameroon Business Forum (CBF), undertaken several reforms to improve its business environment. The country aims to attract the local and foreign direct investment necessary for its economic growth, job creation, and living conditions of its populations. However, there are many bottlenecks to improving the business environment in Cameroon to promote business creation. The ranking in Doing Business is a serious reminder of those obstacles each year.

The government of Cameroon encourages entrepreneurship to be done the right way, by the right age group, but unfortunately our youths who are willing to start a business find it difficult to raise the initial capital. The cost of renting a shop alone is so high that an average budding entrepreneur cannot afford to rent one. Some documents needed to be formalized before starting which took a lot of time. The issue is further made difficult when it comes to ages under 18 which in Cameroon still depend very much on their parents or others for survival. Children who may even want to start a child friendly business cannot afford to fund its expenses. As a result, instead of doing nothing as a lack of funds as the reason for not doing anything, some of these children consider hawking as an option. This has worked for many of them. As many in Yaounde will always say “some of the shop owners today started their businesses through street hawking. Had it been they didn’t start at all, they wouldn’t have been where they are today”. The money they would have tied down in renting a shop and not being able to buy goods were used for the purchase of low cost goods. Since these people enjoy quick turn-over, it is easy for street hawkers to quickly sell, make profit and replenish their stocks. With street hawking, it is easy to start with little capital and with little inventory. Reason why many families involved in Childhood employment have little challenges considering to send their child to the streets of Yaounde to hustle.

5.7.2.8. Street Hawking Equips Focused Children with Entrepreneurship Skills:

If you want to see how some children hustle to earn their living, just go to towns like Yaounde, Douala, Bafoussam, Bamenda, Buea and other towns of Cameroon at main roads / street, markets and bars. You will see how young boys and girls are running after vehicles to make a sale, they learn and know how to strategically position themselves in a place where they can easily make sales. Also, they know their target customers. When you see a person selling bread, before you know what is happening, another person selling drinks will approach you. At their young age, they know how to manage working capital so that they will not just remain in the business; they make savings that will help them secure their own shops.

5.7.2.9. Street Hawking Reduces Crimes:

The fact that these young men and women are engaged in productive activities, they are less susceptible to crimes especially those highly monitored and disciplined. As the saying goes, an idle mind is the devil's workshop. So, somehow "a busy mind is God's workshop". I believe this includes children. With the current level of unemployment in the country, families may need to do whatever they can to encourage, profit making for the family, entrepreneurship and reduce crime..

5.7.2.10. Street Hawking Reduces Inflation

Hawking may seem insignificant when compared with the level of activities that take place within our economy, they still influence the pricing of some consumer goods. With street trading, you don't have any costs to pass to the customers. Therefore, street traders can afford to sell their merchandise at cheap prices. This provides options for customers. The fact that sellers in the markets are aware of these street sellers, they are forced to bring down their prices so that customers will not turn to buying from street hawkers. You can virtually buy almost everything while on traffic on your way home from work or while travelling. A young boy told us this when we asked him why their products are sold at a very cheap rate.

We are not taxed like those who have permanent places to sell theirs. We just move and sell and there is no day we are asked to pay taxes, so no need selling at expensive price. We sellam cheap and gain still dey. Even though sometimes we are being disturb by the council police. We always find our way out and continue in our usual business.

Mbuli: Biyem Assi (August 17, 2022) 7pm.

According to this child hawker interviewed by us on the field, they hustle to take advantage of a tax free business. This brings them gain even if they sell the product at a cheap rate.

5.7.2.11. Violence and even Killing of Employer's Children by Housemaids may occur.

According to Cameroon Concord News (2016), “a housemaid killed the son of her master in Yaounde September 2016. The bloody act occurred just after two weeks of Tina's recruitment as house maid at the Ndonko's and at a time where the children just resumed schools from holidays. As a result of this, the forces of law and order are calling on parents to keep a close watch at the house maids they employ to serve their households”. Beside this reports, many informants, write ups, audio visuals and more on social media have shown many of these children and women employment as housemaids maltreating the children of their employers. This just show that childhood employment does not just put those employed at risk but even the employer as well. Discouraging and regulating the phenomenon in Yaounde and beyond will therefore keep everyone safe.

5.8. Childhood Employment and Development.

Childhood employment being an economic activity legally or illegally sure has its short and long term effects on the development of the nation. It is common said that children are the leaders of tomorrow. This indicates that whatever happens during childhood and youthful age has an impact on the future of the nation.

If the child goes out there and he is chanced to succeed the family and the society will enjoy but if he comes back with bad attitudes; then the future is in danger. We will not like to play a game of chance with our children as well as our future. Bringing up children should be intentional.

Amadou: Acacia (September 2022)

This informant thinks that if childhood employment brings fortune it means a blessing of development to the society. But if the reverse occurs, then there is danger on the family and the society at large. Therefore, there may be great development benefit in the phenomenon if it is successful without any harm on the child or children.

According to some labour inspectors we met on the field, there may be advantages on the development of the nation coming from childhood employment but on very rare cases. This means that childhood employment especially those forbidden by labour has negligible effects on development. For example a child who replaces studies with money making at an early age may get some income for the family which is usually in most cases hand to mouth. What about the fact that if this child studies hard he or she could be the engineer, doctor, and leader that could bring development to the nation? We see that many children who could have become development experts for the nation end up averagely at the detriment of development.

On the other hand, children who practice regulated childhood employment, and apprenticeship, for example do develop all sorts of skills; a necessary tool for development. So childhood employment can actually not just be bad per say but has its ups as far as the future of a country is concerned. Let us bring this example of many artists (musicians, painters, dancers, etc) who are successful today. Most of them started their career while still very young and because they were monitored, trained, encouraged and empowered they are a pride to our nation today.

5.9. Managing the Nature of Childhood Employment in Yaounde.

Childhood Employment may be very common and seemingly difficult to contain. Putting in place or reinforcing certain measures could help manage the phenomenon in Yaounde as seen below.

5.9.1. The Labour Code

The labour code being a document that carries all the do and do not as far as the labour is concerned is very old and experts will say needs some revision. It was drawn up 30 years ago, that is in the year 1992. During a period of 30 years a lot has changed in the labour market and many of its provisions cannot meet up with presents needs as far as childhood employment is concerned. The labour code for instance does not clearly regulate jobs like hawking on the streets, in bars, and restaurants. Meanwhile some aspects of these jobs are very hazardous to the lives of children. A good example is a child working for long hours in a house as a domestic worker is hardly traceable likewise those in other sectors. Things like these should be considered if the labour code is to be revised for better inclusiveness.

In the course of our research we found out that 95% of the people we interviewed had no idea about what the labour code says concerning the job they even do, not to talk of those done by

children. local perception on the labour code is that of ignorance and on the part of the state its implementation is hardly felt by the citizens. Many participants were surprised to learn that there is something called the labour code. This alone shows that majority of the people who employ these children decide their own labour code which is always to their favour and to the detriment of the employee. Therefore there is too much ignorance about the labour code in Yaounde reason why people are ignorantly free to do what they want in the job market.

5.9.2. The Forces of Law and Order

Popular opinion is that the forces of law and order in Yaounde do nothing about childhood employment even when they see the practice in front of them. Many believe if the police could arrest some of these children and call their parents to order in a consistent manner the practice will at least be reduced to the barest minimum. The goods these children sell for example should be seized and the owners of those goods be warned or sanctioned and next time nobody will try it again. Many Yaounde dwellers believe the forces of law and order are accomplices to childhood employment.

One time I went to marché Mfoundi in Yaounde. I don't know whether it was the mayor or who oh, he just came into the market and any child he saw hustling, he just gathered them and took them away in a car. The problem is that when I went there after sometime I still saw many children hustling. If this could be done in every market all the time the problem will stop

Joyce: Central Town-Yaounde (March 15, 2022) 1:30pm

This informant helps us to understand that consistency is very important in the fight against childhood employment. Stake holders in Yaounde need to target every area for a continuous period of time before change may occur. In Yaounde, there are forces of law and order, local council police/ workers in almost all markets, Carrefour junctions and check points. They could as well be empowered to stop under aged employment at the street and market levels. The struggle must be gradual and must start from somewhere if not the way forward will be difficult.

5.9.3. The Media

The people of Yaounde think proper sensitization is lacking. Yaounde hosts Cameroon Radio Television (CRTV) and many other TV and radio stations. We also see a long list of newspapers and while not the many social media platforms like WhatsApp, Facebook, and so forth. If stake

holders in the fight against childhood employment can make constant use of them then the phenomenon will be reduced to the barest minimum. There should be adequate sensitization that includes slots against socio cultural practices that promotes childhood employment.

5.9.4. Socio Political Stability

If the whole of Cameroon become stable, normalcy will return and the many who have escaped out of their home for fear of war will feel free to return especially with their children. It is clear that the two restive regions of Cameroon have witnessed a lockdown of schools for years. A stable state will mean children trapped in childhood employment as a result of the crises can now go back and continue school in their previous home with ease. Though the government is the main actor in this aspect, everyone has to contribute their own share for a stable Cameroon and for a safe environment for children.

5.9.5. A Complete Free Education

It is no doubt that education in public schools in Cameroon especially at the basic level is free.

But there is still PTA Levy in these public schools. For example at Government English Practising School Etoug – Ebe Yaounde the PTA Levy is 6,000 frs.

Children don't have to only pay this but they have to buy the too many text books on the book list. At Government School Biyam Assi the situation is not different. There is need for a total free education at least at this level. As long as the cost of education remain high, some parents and others will have no choice than to engage their children in childhood employment and the practice will keep on growing wings in Yaounde and beyond.

In this chapter we saw how childhood employment goes on in Yaounde, the analyses and interpretation of data gotten from the field. This was done taking cognizance of a discourse on childhood employment, effects of childhood employment, managing childhood employment and many others. We were able to come out with useful findings after analyzing and interpreting the data gotten from the field.

GENERAL CONCLUSION

This dissertation titled “Culture and Childhood Employment in Yaounde: A Contribution to Anthropology of Development” was carried out in Yaounde, the political seat of the government of Cameroon. It has a population growth rate of about 4% to 6% yearly according to macrotrends.net, mostly due to internal migration influenced greatly of recent by the current crises in the two English speaking regions of the North West and South West. Yaounde being the seat of government one would have expected a lot of orderliness in terms of employment but this is not the case. Somehow there is a lot of laxity as all age groups are seen at various avenues working for money. That is why we sorted to discover what is really going on with this indiscriminate employment phenomenon. As a guide for data collection we had a primary research question which was elaborated with three secondary questions. The main research question was: What is the nature of childhood employment in Yaounde? As for the three secondary questions we have: What are the perceptions of childhood employment by people in Yaounde? Why do the people of Yaounde engage children in employment? How do people in Yaounde engage children in employment?

Tentative responses were proposed to the above questions. The main research hypothesis justifies that the nature of childhood employment in Yaounde is in such a way that children’s fundamental rights are being violated. Concerning the three secondary hypotheses, some parents grow up experiencing childhood employment and think that it is a common practice. The local population of Yaounde thinks of childhood employment as normal because it is very common. And finally, childhood employment is practiced in Yaounde without any limits as children are active labourers in the labour market.

The objective of this piece of work included a general as well as three specific objectives. The main objective was to explore the nature of childhood employment in Yaounde. As for the specific objective, they were structured as follows: Firstly to understand the perception people in Yaounde have about childhood employment. Secondly, to discover why the local population of Yaounde engage children in employment and finally to find out how childhood employment is carried out in Yaounde.

From our findings, children’s rights are being seriously violated in Yaounde as they are involved in all sorts of money making ventures. We realize that some don’t concentrate in school, they are given over work in homes, restaurants, bars, farms, on the streets, with very little pay and some get into drugs, stealing and prostitution. These children involved in childhood employment are

deprived of their rights to proper education, proper medical care, protection from harm, and so on. Hence making the nature of childhood employment in Yaounde and why not Cameroon an activity to be seriously contained or regulated by the state and partners.

On the other hand, we found out that childhood employment is not totally bad if well regulated as there are children friendly jobs available in Yaounde. More to this we discovered that if all employers fully respect the labour code then children will be spared from jobs not friendly to them. For example employing children just for apprenticeship purposes will not be a problem but a plus. Note should be however taken that the nature of the job being carried out by these children must be well regulated.

We also found out that there are laws put in place to regularize employment but majority of the people are not aware of. This is due to the lack of knowledge about any one being punished for breaking such laws. Many people who dwell in Yaounde are not even aware of the rights of a child, nor do they even know when they are violating such rights. We discovered that is largely due to lack of consistent sensitization on the rights of a child and the dangers involved in uncontrolled childhood employment.

Furthermore, we realized that we don't just have poverty as the main cause of childhood employment in Yaounde; but we have culture, political instability, frustration, ignorance, bad fate, quest for much profit by employers, irresponsibility and negligence by parents, peer groups and many other factors help promote the phenomenon. On the cultural part for example many Bamilikes and some families allow their children to hawk or work for money as a way of practicing their business culture. This is very common amongst them where ever they find themselves. More on this cultural factor, we found out that parents who have grown up practicing and witnessing childhood employment see the practice as common and therefore have no problem with it. They easily allow their children to work for money or they easily employ other children to work for them. We also discovered that some practice childhood employment just because they think it's a normal thing to do since many are doing the same.

In the area of local perception of childhood we realize that some people think that it is a normal and acceptable thing. There can freely employ or even allow their children work for money. Some Yaounde dwellers on the other hand see childhood employment as a bad practice. Many are not

willing to allow their children to work. Some even say they will prefer to suffer any consequences than allow their child to be working at an early age for money. Many informants also think that the laws put in place to combat childhood employment needs to be updated. The labour code was put in place since 1992 and we are in 2023 which means a lot of things have changed. Some child care experts, labour officials and locals of Yaounde think the law is not being enforced enough that is why the activity is gaining a lot of grounds in Cameroon's political capital city - Yaounde.

In continuation, many Yaounde citizens believe and claim the Anglophone crises have greatly increased the number of children working under deplorable conditions in Yaounde. They believe if the crises were over that will be the beginning of a solution to the practice. Many hope the end of the crises and its multiplier effects will be a great relief to the phenomenon.

Still from our findings, the people of Yaounde think that there is a lot of laxity in the domain of law enforcement. Very few bother about what is going on; even the law enforcement officers seem so careless and care free about the children who hawk around them every day. In short, the local perception here is that the state does not even care about childhood employment. On the other way round, some people see childhood employment as an activity that if well regulated or done the right way will have no issue. For example, a child guided by the parents or guardian in music or family business will have no problem.

In terms of gender, the local population also think the female children are the highest victims of childhood employment. They are mostly domestic workers, waitresses, and sales agents/hawkers. They are the most vulnerable to the effects of childhood employment like sexual abuse and other worse forms of child abuses. Male children according to the local population are also very much exposed to all forms of abuses but not as much as a girl child.

Other findings reveal that there are many effects of childhood employment on development. For example majority of these children working do jobs that are not even related to what they want to be doing in future. Many of them wish to be doctors, engineers, and so forth but these dreams are being thwarted because of their involvement in work in the place of their studies. This means that future experts in various domains are lost in childhood employment practices. This deprives the nation of enough human capital given the fact that many of these children sometimes don't further their education nor even succeed in real business due to the multiplier effects of childhood

employment. Reasons why the state, stake holders and partners are doing their best to regulate the nature of childhood employment in Cameroon and Yaounde in particular.

In fact we found out that many N.G.O's think that the Sustainable Development Goals can never be fully attained if the rights of children are not fully respected. This they cried out as they celebrated the Day of the African Child (DAC) 2022. So childhood employment has a big role to play on the development on any community be it now or in the future.

On the other hand, if childhood employment is well regulated according to more findings, the city will progress in many ways now and in the future. The labour code accepts children between 14 and 18 to be trained as apprentices for skills acquisition. We found out that this do happen in many enterprises in Yaounde. This age group is seen learning skills in Fashion design, motor mechanics, carpentry, hair dressing, music, dancing, and more. This findings show that if every child in Yaounde or Cameroon were to be involved in formal education, the right way of employment, and skill training, the development of the nation would have been well guaranteed and poverty alleviation a sure thing in Yaounde why not Cameroon and Africa at large. But it is rather unfortunate that uncontrolled childhood employment according to our findings is rather growing with less difficulty.

Our findings also makes us understand that the fight against the negative effects of childhood employment should be a consistent affair not some event oriented activity. That is, much sensitization is required for the public to understand the rights of a child, what a child should or should not do; what to do when the rights of a child are violated, and when children should start working. More to this, the police should arrest those involved in childhood employment activities that violate the rights of children, cease goods from those children hawking on the streets, around offices, markets and all other public or private places. In addition, cultural practices that affect the future of the child should be discouraged. In other words, it shouldn't be a matter of a family or tribe deciding what is right or wrong for children.

We also realized that parental responsibilities are left in the hands of the parents to decide making those ignorant to grossly violate the rights of a child as they involved them in childhood employment without a second thought. A parent should decide what is good for the family but that

decision should not in any way violates the right of any family member including children. If it does, the state should come in to regulate the situation.

We equally discovered on the field that state efforts at combating children's problem in general still have a lot of challenges. For example free education is far from being a reality in the heart of Yaounde. Even with free education, parents still have to buy books, feed their children and take care of the rest of the child's need. That is why Yaounde dwellers think government should do more than just free school fees. Summarily, parents' problem is not just paying fees but the running cost of education in Yaounde is very expensive.

On a general note, we realized that the phenomenon of childhood employment is on the rise in Yaounde. With the start of the socio political crises in the north west and south west, many children have become serious victims of the adverse effects of childhood employment in Yaounde. Many think it should be limited with immediate effect.

These findings in general prove that there is a problem in Yaounde and the state and stake holders in the protection of children need a holistic approach to be able to manage and contain the dangers of childhood employment as well as enforced those that are favourable for children. As it is commonly said, one hand cannot tie a bundle, one party cannot do it alone. It should be everyone's efforts to endeavour to protect the rights of children. We equally see that much efforts are being made by the government, national and international organisations to manage childhood employment and reduce its effects to the barest minimum. There are laws, articles, events, and many other avenues they have exploited in order to do away with anything that has to do with childhood employment.

To end, this work was limited to Culture and Childhood Employment in Yaounde: A Contribution to Anthropology of Development. It was carried out using the qualitative research method. Further research can extend the research area to include other towns like Douala, Bafoussam, and Bamenda to better do a comparison about the phenomenon and see how the state can manage its nature at national level. Studies can be carried out on the effects of social unrest on children in cities should not just be limited to Yaounde, but to other towns of the nation Cameroon.

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Oral Sources.**Table 2: List of Informants.**

NO	Name	Age (years)	Profession and Other duties.	Gender	Telephone
1	MENGNJO ELVIS	36	Labour inspector (Ministry of Labour and Social Security)	male	675 956 519
2	TAKA AARON	45	Head of Zone 6 Head Teacher of GEPS Etoug – Ebe.	male	677 771 692
3	NDAM JOYCE	40	pedagogue	Female	675 581 019
4	MBANG MATHILDA	39	Pedagogue	Female	676 158 085
5	AMADOU OUMAROU	30	Pedagogue	Male	693 556 823
6	OWONA SAMUELLE	35	Sports / Dancing Coach	Male	650 879 964
7	MKONG LYDYA	40	Child Evangelist	Female	675 846 950
8	LILIAN DJAIDZEKA	40	Pedagogue	Female	674 783 974
9	NKANJO BRAIN R	32	Pedagogue	Male	677 191 512
10	NJEBA JULIUS	37	Fashion Designer	Male	675 850 905
11	VALINTINE BONGMBANG	47	Rev Pastor	Male	675 466 134
12	NDICHA ERICK	44	Farmer. C.E.O. and Founder of ERIBEL’s FARM	Male	674 360 522
13	GENESIS CHE	16	Child worker (hawker)	Male	
14	KAISA BLAISE	40	Yaounde Field Youth President of the CBCYSD.	Male	676 590 483
16	CALSON	16	Child worker in a restaurant	Male	
17	FEH TIMOTHY	35	Accountant	Male	679 367 754
18	NGONG DIVINE	26	I.T Consultant / Student	Male	650 449 779

19	TANGEM KINGLEY	35	Pineapple farmer / Driver	Male	650 706 096
20	KAMNGA CONSTANCE	45	-Coordinator of 300 Women Voices For Development - Business Woman -Works at MINFI	Female	671 863 371
21	KEFFIH THERENCE	36	PhD Student / hawker	Male	670 907 878
22	MARRIE - N	17	Domestic worker	Female	
23	CATHERINE	14	House help	Female	
24	NADAGE	15	House help	Female	
25	MBULI DERICK	30	Hawker	Male	650 035 914
26	ASHLEY	16	House help	Female	
27	ONDOUA	15	Wheelbarrow pusher	Male	
28	NADINE	16	House help	Female	
29	ERNESTINE D	35	Food Vendor	Female	677 942 517
30	LILIAN	15	Waitress	Female	
31	JACKLINE K.	17	Hawker / house help/ Pupil	Female	
32	JANIS MOFOR	7	Musician / Pupil	Female	
33	CHALSE VIBU	36	MINPOST	Male	678 783 584
34	NFOR NOEL	30	Youth President / Pedagogue	Male	680 012 545
35	VICTOR N	38	Farmer	Male	654 823 663
36	GEORGE GOMBA	40	Restaurant owner	Male	674 904 973
37	HASSAN MAIMUNA	25	Patched corn dealer / hawker	Female	
38	BELTA MBULI	39	Restaurant owner	Female	674 385 404
39	CALVIN B.	27	Student	Male	681 561 590
40	JESSY	9	Hawker	Male	
41	MAGDALINE N	18	House help / pupil	Female	
42	FOTSO	15	Hawker	Male	
43	YONG HABBAKUK	36	Wood work engineer	Male	674 815 760
44	AMSATU	12	Road side vendor	Female	
45	NYADI CHALSE	27	Teacher / Former hawker	Male	673 964 948

APPENDICES

APENDIX ONE

INFORMED CONSENT FORM FOR YAOUNDE COMMUNITY

This informed consent form is for Yaounde Community informants we are inviting to take part in the research titled “Culture and Childhood Employment in Yaounde: A contribution to the Anthropology of Development”

PRINCIPAL INVESTICATOR: NDZI MAGHA DERICK

NAME OF INSTITUTION: UNIVERSITY OF YAOUNDE 1

SPONSOR: SELF

RESEARCH TITLE: “CULTURE AND CHILDHOOD EMPLOYMENT IN YAOUNDE: A CONTRIBUTION TO THE ANTHROPOLOGY OF DEVELOPMENT”

Part I. Information Sheet

Introduction

I am **NDZI MAGHA DERICK**, a Masters 2 student of the University of Yaounde 1; Department of Anthropology. I am doing a research on the topic “*Culture and Childhood Employment in Yaounde: A Contribution to the Anthropology of Development*”. I am going to give you information and I invite you to be part of this research. You do not need to decide today whether or not you will participate in the research. Before you decided feel free to talk to anyone about the research. This consent form may contain words that you do not understand. Please ask me to stop as we go through the information and I will make time to explain. If you have questions later, you can ask them to me or another researcher.

Purpose of the research.

Children 5 to 18 years in Yaounde are supposed to be going to school or learning a trade for a better future for them and the nation, but their right to proper education is being violated as some of them are seen working at their young ages. Apart from their rights being violated, these children are exposed to all forms of dangers like child trafficking, drug abuse, violence, etc. We want to stop this practice from happening. We believe that you can tell us what you know about the

employment of children of children in Yaounde. We want to explore the nature of the practice in Yaounde. We want to know what people who live here know about the causes and practices of childhood employment. We also want to know about the different ways the government and others have tried to stop this practice as well as why it has been so difficult for it to come to an end in this community. We also want to learn what people in this community believe about children who work instead of going to school or learning a skill.

Type of research intervention

This research will involve your participation in an interview of about 45 minutes to one hour.

(Interview) You are being invited to participate in this interview because we believe being a stakeholder in the affairs of children can contribute much to our understanding and knowledge of childhood employment in Yaounde.

Do you now know why we are asking you to take part in this research? Do you now know what the research is about?

Voluntary participation

Your participation in this research is entirely voluntary. It is your choice whether to participate or not. The choice you make will have no bearing on your job or on any work-related evaluation or reports. Your decision will have no consequences on you or anyone related to you. You might also change your mind to stop participating even if you agreed earlier.

Procedures.

- A. We are asking you to help us learn more about the employment of children in Yaounde. We are inviting you to take part in this research project. If you accept, you will be asked to:
 - B. Take part in an interview with me. During the interview, I will sit down face to face with you. You may choose a place that is more comfortable for you than my own choice. In the course of this interview, if you do not like to answer any of the questions I will pose, please kindly say so and I will move on to the next question. No one else will be present except you want someone else to be there. The information recorded is confidential, and no one

else except my supervisor and school authorities will have access to. The entire interview will be recorded but no one's name will be involved in the tape recording. I shall use my telephone or a tape recorder for recording. This recordings shall be immediately stored with a password to restrict access by anyone except those mentioned above. The access shall remain restricted until this research is finally over in six months to come. After the research work is completed the recording shall all be deleted.

Duration

The research will take place within a space seven months that is starting from March to September 2022. You shall be interviewed only once, but if the need arises, you shall be contacted for another session of interview or for a follow up interview within these seven months. The interview will take place within forty five minutes or one hour.

Benefits

There will be no direct benefit to you but your participation is likely to help us find out more about how to stop the employment of children in Yaounde.

Reimbursements

You will not be provided any incentives to take part in this research. We will only say a word of appreciation for your time and sacrifices.

Confidentiality

We will not be sharing information about you to anyone outside of the research team. The collected information will be kept private. Any information about you will have a code or number instead of your real name. Only the researchers will know what your code is and we are going to put a password to the information. Your thought about the nature of childhood employment shall be quoted with you name and it will end only at that level.

Sharing the results

Nothing that you tell us today will be shared with anybody outside the research team, and nothing shall be tied to your name. The knowledge gotten from this study shall be used for academic purposes only.

Right to Refuse or Withdraw

You do not have to take part in this research if you do not wish to do so, and choosing to participate will not affect our job in any way. You may stop participating in the interview at any time that you wish without your job being affected. Feel free to do corrections on any sections of the interview that you might want to.

Who to contact

If you have any questions, you can ask them now or later. If you wish to ask questions later you may contact me through: Name: *Ndzi Magha Derick*, Telephone: *678280277*, E-mail: *nmdricko@gmail.com*. Mail box: *P.O. Box 2039 Grand Messa Yaounde- Cameroon*. *www.linkedin.com/in/dericko-production* .

Part II. Certificate of Consent

I have read the foregoing information, or it has been read to me. I have had the opportunity to ask questions about it and any questions I asked have been answered to my satisfaction. I consent voluntarily to be a participant in this research.

Name of participant; _____

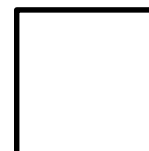
Signature of participant; _____

Date: _____

If illiterate

I have witnessed the accurate reading of the consent form to the potential participant, and individual has had the opportunity to ask questions. I confirm that the individual has given consent freely.

Name of witness: _____



Signature of witness: _____

Thumb print of participant

Date: _____

Statement by the Researcher

I have accurately read out the information sheet to the potential participant, and to the best of my ability made sure that participant understands that the following will be done.

- 1.
- 2.
- 3.

I confirm that the participant was given an opportunity to ask questions about the study, and all the questions asked have been answered correctly and to the best of my ability. I confirm that the individual has not been coerced into giving consent, and the consent has been given freely and voluntarily.

Name of researcher _____

Signature of researcher _____

Date _____

APPENDIX 2

INTERVIEW GUIDE

SECTION A: GENERAL QUESTIONS

1. Who is a child according to you?
2. What do you understand by childhood?
3. What do you understand by employment?
4. What do you understand by culture?
5. Explain the meaning of childhood employment or call it under – aged employment?
6. Is there a particular age where children should start working for a living? Why?
7. According to your culture, are there responsibilities children 5 -18 years have towards their parents?
8. What are the responsibilities of parents towards their children under the same age group as in the previous question?
9. List some jobs that you see under aged children doing in Yaounde.
10. What according to you are the reasons why some people allow their children 5 -18 years to be working?
11. What benefits do people get when they employ 5 – 18 years old children to work for them?
12. Are there benefits children 5 – 18 years children get working as employees? List them.
13. Are there negative consequences when under aged children are allowed to work? What are they?
14. What can be done in order to remedy the negative effects of childhood employment in Yaounde?

SECTION B: SPECIFIC QUESTIONS

TO PARENTS

1. You are a parent/guardian of children, is there a reason that can cause you to allow your child or children (under aged) to work? Explain?
2. If given the opportunity, will you employ a child 5 – 18 years to work for you? Why?
3. Do you have any advice or opinion about childhood employment in Yaounde? State your point.

TO CHILD CARE WORKERS/ EXPERTS

1. What are the basic or fundamental rights of a child?
2. Are there cases where the fundamental rights of children are being violated?
3. Is childhood employment a violation of the rights of a child?
4. Are there consequences of under aged employment on the children and society?
5. If yes, what are those consequences?
6. Are there measures that can be taken in order to protect the rights of a child? What are these measures?
7. Is there a particular person or organ responsible for the protection of the rights of a child?
Explain

TO LABOUR/ LEGAL EXPERTS

1. What does the labor code says about the employment of children?
2. Are there some employment avenues legal or acceptable for children to do?
3. Is there a role (+, -) childhood employment plays in the development of the nation?
4. Are there measures the state and others have put in place to manage the nature of childhood employment and its effects?
5. Are there some examples of cases where people have been punished by the law for the illegal employment of children in Cameroon or Yaounde to be specific?
6. As a labour or legal expert, are the provisions put in place by the labour code sufficient enough to protect the rights of children?
7. TO CHILDREN
8. What job do you do to earn money?
9. Why are you working at this age?
10. What do you do with the money?
11. Explain the things that happens to you as you carry out this job.
12. What will you do about your job if you have all the money you need?
13. Are you happy doing what you do? Why?

APPENDIX 3

RESEARCH AUTHORIZATION

UNIVERSITÉ DE YAOUNDÉ I
THE UNIVERSITY OF YAOUNDE I

FACULTE DES ARTS, LETTRES ET
SCIENCES HUMAINES



FACULTY OF ARTS, LETTERS
AND SOCIAL SCIENCES

DEPARTEMENT D'ANTHROPOLOGIE

DEPARTMENT OF ANTHROPOLOGY

Yaoundé, le **16 MARS 2022**.

AUTORISATION DE RECHERCHE

Je soussigné, Professeur **Paschal KUM AWAH**, Chef du Département d'Anthropologie de la Faculté des Arts, Lettres et Sciences Humaine de l'Université de Yaoundé I, atteste que l'étudiant **DZI MGHA Derick**, Matricule 17N271 est inscrit en Master II dans ledit département. Il mène ses travaux universitaires sur le thème : « **Culture and childhood employment in Yaounde : a contribution to the anthropology of development** », sous la direction du Professeur Paschal KUM AWAH.

A cet effet, je vous saurais gré des dispositions que vous voudriez bien prendre afin de fournir à l'intéressé toute information nécessaire à mesure de l'aider dans le bon déroulement de sa recherche.

En foi de quoi la présente autorisation de recherche lui est délivrée pour servir et valoir ce que de droit./-

Le Chef de Département



P. Paschal Kum Awah

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