

Child Internet

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Child Resource Development Center
(CRDC)



Forum on Street Children-Ethiopia
(FSCE)

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Child Resource Development Center
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FORUM ON STREET CHILDREN- ETHIOPIA (FSCE)

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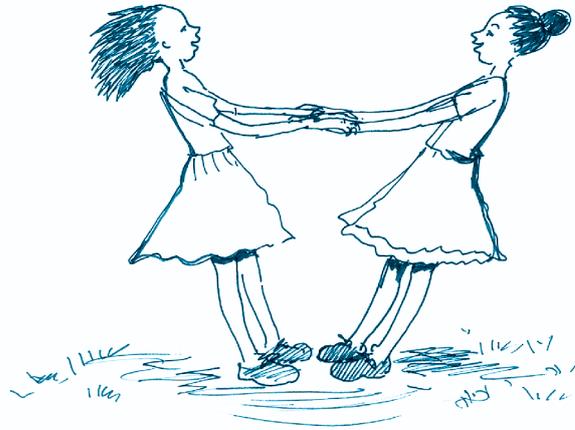
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Challenges of a Working Girl Child



When you look into child's eyes you expect to see hope, trust and innocence, but when you see these signs of childhood are replaced by betrayal, hunger, fear and suspicion, we need to take serious stock of ourselves and the society we have created (Nandana Reddy opening address from the national workshop on the rights of the child, 1988).

Background

The above quotation reminds about the natural tendencies that are universal to all children under normal circumstance. It is only natural and normal for a child to have aspirations for freedom, happiness and acceptance. In quite many cases the reality is different. Betrayal, abuse, hunger, fear and suspicion are widely observed in the day-to-day lives of children particularly in among those in the developing world. In many societies these problems get worse with a girl child.

Girls often have fewer opportunities for intellectual, social, emotional and physical development as they are culturally bound to household activities. In quite many cases a girl child is forced to engage in a hard work in her early years. A child is often forced to marry and bear a child in early age. The child brides suffer a common experience — an abrupt end to childhood. Many of the daughters are only nine or 10 when they are married off. They have to drop out of school; in Mali, nine out of 10 married girls cannot read. Further, sexual activity and childbearing are health risks at these young ages (Crouse, 2007).

In a struggle to survive, quite many girls take up streets as a place to work and live. Millions of children are forced to live on street. It is estimated that worldwide over 50 million children are exposed to street life. The magnitude of children working on street may vary from one country to another depending on the country's socio- economic development, cultural and traditional settings. The vast majority of these children reside by and large in urban areas of developing countries: 40 million in Latin America, 25-30 million in Asia, and 10 million in Africa. In the Ethiopian context, about 100,000 children live and/or work in street with the majority in Addis Ababa, in the towns of Nazareth and in Dire Dawa and Dessi. The number of street children in Addis Ababa is estimated to be 50,000 (UNCIEF, 1995; Tocon, 1991; FSC- E, 2002:6).



Street children spend part or whole of their time in the city streets working, begging or engaged in the illicit and petty crimes in their attempt to adapt to street life. They face almost similar problems throughout the world. Poverty and unemployment are the main problems. Throughout the world, street children have been found to be predominantly a product of poor families, whether urban or rural (MOLSA and RADDA BARNEN, 1998; UNICEF, 1993).

In the developing world, millions of girls are married while they are still children, some barely pass puberty. Though accurate data is difficult to get, experts estimate that 100 million girls in the developing world will be married before the age of 18. The practice is more common in Africa, the Middle East, Latin America and parts of South Asia. Today, 51 million girls under 17 in developing countries are married. Most of these marriages are formed because the community expects them and often they are forced or coerced (CROUSE, 2007).

The main obstacle facing a girl child in Ethiopia is the negative stereotype harbored by society that “girls won’t go far” academically. According to Simenesh as reported in Kumera 2004, girls are sold like commodities at the market place, in exchange for wealth, power and influence to older men. Incidents of forced marriages are still rampant in rural areas of Ethiopia (Simenesh Jifara, 2004)¹. In the Ethiopian context, migration, poverty, unemployment, broken homes, displacement and stressful conditions which occur when the family and the society fail to function properly are referred to as factors that force children to work and/or live on street.

Research on street children in Addis Ababa indicates that most of the children (72%) covered in the study were from outside Addis Ababa. Of these 78% join streets because of economic problems, 9% due to family displacement, 2% due to broken home, and 11% because of other reasons. It is observed that children on street live miserable life in the alleys and street corners, verandas and plastic shelters. Most street children engage in marginal occupations such as shoe-shinning, carrying goods, petty trade activities and parking cars to earn income for live hood. Some of them survive on begging, stealing and working in the informal sectors (Aster 1999: 23).

The problems associated with children particularly in reference to working on street are complex. A girl child faces more complex problems compared to boys. Working girls on street face all problems that boys face. Moreover, a girl child faces special problems. Younger girls are subjected to a lot of abuse. They are constantly threatened, intimidated and robbed by older boys. They miss family life - the care and protection it provides.

In the Ethiopian context, protection of child rights appears encouraging particularly from the point of legislation. Constitutional provisions, revisions of the penal code, establishment of the institution of the Ombudsman are some of the major indicators along this line. There are also notable efforts made by the social sector to organize sensitization programs for school teachers, health workers and communities through regional governments, NGOs, etc. Nonetheless, there still exists significant gap in protecting the rights of the child particularly the rights of the girl child. The country has one of the highest rates of child marriage in the world, despite a national law prohibiting the practice. Nationwide, 60 percent of girls younger than 18 are married. In the Amhara region, half of girls younger than 15 are married (Berhane, 2006).

This study was conducted in Gullele sub-city around Sidist Killo and Arat Kilo areas in the City of Addis Ababa. It examines the case of six girls in the age range of 13 and 18 that are engaged in different activities

¹ A Statement by a girl participant of the conference of Junior high school children on the occasion of observing the Day of the African Child held at the Economic Commission for Africa (ECA) on 16th June 2004 in the presence of UNICEF’s Executive Director, Carol Bellamy and Ms. Bience P. Gawanas, the African Union’s Commissioner.

on streets as a strategy for survival. It presents a descriptive account of the girls' situation with a focus on their family background, education and health conditions as well as their future aspirations. The children covered in the study were involved following their consent for participation. Those who did not give their consent were not included. The six girls were interviewed on selected issues and their real names are not reported for purpose of anonymity. Instead, each girl was given artificial identification names. In fact, the new names given to the girls were identified after organizing and reading their case histories. In all cases, the new names were given in such a way that the meanings of the names have some connotation to their life experiences.

Considering the limited number of the research participants, the study does not intend to arrive at generalizations about larger population. Instead, it attempts to examine few cases with the intention of giving insight on their situation. The interview data obtained from the six girls were read and presented as a summary of each case. The presentation of the cases reveals similarities among the girls in quite many aspects. Attempts were made to examine each case mainly from the point of view of a different but most important aspect the case illustrates. The cases were examined in reference to five factors that emerged from the data generated through the interviews. The data were framed and discussed under themes of poverty and its effects, cultural problems in reference to gender, determination and struggle the girls make for survival, and uncertainty and lack of direction.

Poverty and its effects

The history of each case has significant association with the economic problems of families. The participant children were asked to tell about their family background including parents' education, occupation and area of residence. The children were also asked to tell about their living arrangements.

Table 1: Family Background of the Participant Children

Identification of the Girl child	Living arrangement	Parents' education		Parents' Occupation and area of residence	
		Mother	Father	Mother/countryside	Father
Tesfu	With both parents	Illiterate	Literacy Education	Petty trade/Addis Ababa	Guard / Addis Ababa
Netsanet	With a younger brother	Illiterate	Illiterate	Farmer/countryside	Farmer/countryside
Emebet	With elder brother	Literacy Education	Not alive	Petty trade/Addis Ababa	Not alive
Mastewal	With mother	Illiterate	Illiterate	Handcraft	Farmer/countryside (Diseased)
Manasibosh	Alone by herself	Illiterate	Illiterate	Farmer/Countryside	Farmer/countryside
Abozenech	With aunt	Illiterate	Illiterate	Farmer/Countryside	Farmer/countryside

It was learnt that most of the children involved in the study came from illiterate peasant families. Parents' occupation includes farming, petty-trade and low-income public sector employment. In most cases, the children do not live with their parents. Five of the children moved to the capital leaving their parents behind in a countryside. Out of the five children who moved to the capital, two children left together with their mothers.

Break of families for one or another reason appears an important event that results in a lasting consequence in the lives of the children. Economic problems, among other factors, also play an important role in strengthening or loosening the family bonds.



Tesfu: An Illustrative Case of the Effects of Economic Problems on a Girl Child



Tesfu is a thirteen years old girl child currently attending fourth grade in a public primary school in the capital. She lives with both parents in a two-room house made up of mud. She comes from a low income large family. She has a sister and five brothers. Her father works as a guard. Her mother works on street changing coins for taxi drivers to support her family. In order to be able to help her family, Tesfu started polishing shoes two years ago. She usually wakes up at of 7 o'clock in the morning to start her daily work. When she works actively for a full day (mainly on week-end days), she earns a minimum of 10 Birr per day. But on other days (when she works only for a few hours) she earns 2 to 3 Birr per day. Tesfu gives the money she gets to her mother as a support to the family. Because of overlapping responsibilities, Tesfu doesn't have enough time to study at home. She is often late and some times absent from school. When she was ten years old, she got car accident while crossing a street to her daily job. Due to this accident, she has got some damage on her eye and face. At present, she feels continuous headache. From the time she started work on street, she faces verbal and physical abuse by some street boys. For the future, she says" I want to continue my education; and I want to graduate from the Addis Ababa University. I want to help myself, my family and my country".

Tesfu is a typical example of girls whose education is markedly affected by the economic situation of the family. Her life patterns and educational problems illustrate the situation of most school girls with low economic family background. Despite the economic problems and challenges in her education, she thinks big and positive. She aspires for university education. She has a strong desire for changing and improving economic conditions of herself and her parents.

Netsanet is another case that illustrates the effects of economic problems on the lives of girls with poor family backgrounds. She has a lot of similarities with Tesfu. However, unlike Tesfu, she does not attend school at present. Her experience illustrates the challenges girls face when they serve in individual families on employment basis.

Netsanet: An Illustrative Case of Economic Problems and Struggle for Survival



Netsanet is 17 years old girl. She has a family-a mother, a sister and a brother living in a countryside. Before she came to the capital she attended school up to grade eight and she discontinued education due to her mother's sickness. Now she is in the capital living with her younger brother in a single room rented from individual. When Netsanet moved to the capital, she used to work in individual homes as a cook and taking overall household responsibilities. Her immediate needs are helping herself, her mother and to support education of her younger brother. As she stated "working in individual homes has serious problem. Hence, I planned to leave this work and take up street life selling small articles". She started to work on street a month ago. At present, she sells small articles such as gum, candy, nuts, soft paper and the like on street. She earns about 2 Birr per day as a profit and she tries to support herself and her younger brother with what she gets from work on street. She is not able to help her mother, though she wishes. She says it is difficult to get two meals a day for herself and her brother. With a smiling face, she says, "street life is far better than working in individual homes". For the future she wishes to continue her education. If this fails, she wants to go to Arab countries in order to help her family.

Families in urban areas often recruit children from rural villages through family, friends or contacts and while most child domestics come from extremely poor families, many have been abandoned, are orphaned or come from single parent families. Child domestic work is one of the most common and traditional forms of child labor. The practice, especially in the case of girls, is quite extensive as many cultures continue to view girls' work in the household as an essential part of their upbringing. Regardless of the type of employment; children confirm that their assigned duties go beyond their normal ability. Working hours are long with no regular days off. A study carried out in Tanzania for example, showed that the average day is 15 hours long for child domestics who do not live with their employers and between 16-18 hours long for those who do (ILO,1998).



Cultural Basis of Challenges of a Working Child

The situation of children covered in the study, in addition to the family economic background, is determined by the culture. The specific problems observed in each case and the problems shared by children are significantly rooted in the societal beliefs and value system. The economic problems could be common to boys and girls. Girls, however, face problems that boys may not. The value society attaches to education of girls is an important factor in parental support to girls' education. Moreover, practices of early marriage and expectations of society concerning differential engagement between boys and girls in domestic activities plays determinant role in the school attendance of girls.

One of the six girls covered in this study never had opportunity to attend school. Three of the girls used to attend school when they were in a countryside. They had to drop out of school due to different problems. Some of the problems were unique to the girls compared to boys. The girls reported that they were afraid of consequences of repeated sexual harassment. The girls reported that they were also afraid of possible early marriage. Economic problems and lack of support to their education were also mentioned by the girls. Currently, two out of the six girls attend school. One of them attend day program while the other attends evening program. The case of Emebet illustrates the problems girls face due to culture.

Emebet: An Illustrative Case of Girls Resistance to Early Marriage



Emebet is 17 years old girl. Her parents live in a countryside. She has four brothers and three sisters. She dropped out from school when she was at grade five. The main reasons for the drop out were fear of rape and early marriage. At present, she lives in the capital with her elder brother. Emebet makes and sells tea on market days at Minilik road. She has been engaged in this job for two years. She makes a profit of 10 to 15 Birr per market day. She uses her earnings to support her brother in paying house rent and for purchase of food items. Due to the current price rise in all aspects of the economy, she does not want to stay in Addis Ababa. She has a plan to go abroad particularly to Arab countries. Her brother also sells second-hand clothes. She stays the other days at home making food for herself and her brother.

Emebet was in a dilemma of choosing between two undesirable situations—rape and early marriage on the one hand and discontinuing her education on the other. These conditions were incompatible in her case. If she continues her education, it was likely that she could be raped and forced to marry any time. If she had to escape rape and early marriage, that would mean dropping out from school. Emebet chose the second undesirable option and she had to move to the capital escaping the problems of rape and early marriage. Naturally she had to abandon her education as well. “In addition to being deprived of education opportunities, the girls are also victims in a male dominated society, starting from the classroom level where male teachers ask for sexual favors in exchange for good grades.” Hiruy Gosaye,²

Determination and struggle for survival

Determination and survival in adverse situation was observed across all cases. Each girl tries hard to generate some income by engaging in a very difficult tasks such as serving in a parking lot, shoe-shining and selling small articles on a street. In most of the cases, the girls support their family members through the limited money they make. Mastewal is a good example here.

Mastewal: An Illustrative Case of a Struggle a Girl Child Makes to Pursue Education

Mastewal was born in Addis Ababa in 1982. Her father died during her early childhood. She lives with her mother. Her mother makes embroidery “Tilf Sira” to support her children. She has two younger brothers who are living with her. At present, she is grade six student in a night program. She faces problems of adequate educational materials and shortage of study time. Mastewal has health problem as well. She started work at a parking lot two months ago. She earns an average of 4 Birr per day and uses the money in order to support her mother and to cover her school fees, purchase school materials and cloth. She complains that some clients do not pay their service charges. The amount is deducted from her salary. She has great desire to continue her education.

Mastewal tries hard to make some money to pay for her education and to support her family. But it appears she is challenged by the behavior of the clients of the parking lot she is in charge. Parking-lot service is not a paying job in view of the difficulties the employees face. The fact that employers deduct salaries of the employees makes the situation worse.

² A Statement by a girl participant of the conference of Junior high school children on the occasion of observing the Day of the African Child held at the Economic Commission for Africa (ECA) on 16th June 2004 in the presence of UNICEF’s Executive Director, Carol Bellamy and Ms. Bience P. Gawanas, the African Union’s Commissioner.



Abozenech: An Illustrative Case of Challenges of a Girl serving in Parking-lot



Abozenech is 18 years old girl. Her parents live in a countryside. She has two sisters and two brothers. She dropped out from grade nine upon parents' refusal to support her education. The parents wanted her to assist them in household activities. At present she lives with her aunt in a one-room rented house in the capital. She is employed at a parking lot for the last two years earning an average of 4 birr a day. Abozenech complains that some clients leave the parking lot without paying the service charges. The management requires the employee to pay the difference. As the girl mentions, there are quite many clients who do not want to accept the charges and resort to complaints and insult. She has a plan to quit this job and shift to some other job such as selling small articles on street.

The case of Abozenech supplements the complements by Mastewel. Insult from clients is another challenge for girls serving in a parking lot. Serving in a parking lot has its own challenges that are particular for girls. Compared to their counterparts (boys), girls working in parking lot services face special problems. One of the girls says “Our counterpart boys try to force us to make unwanted sexual relations; if we refuse they beat and insult us”.

Uncertainty and Lack of Direction

Uncertainty and lack of direction appears one of the major problems a working girl child faces. Although it is difficult to ensure one hundred per cent certainty about correctness of the future directions in ones life, it is normal to have aspirations, to make predictions and to work out plans based on assessment of current situations. The children interviewed in this study had little control over their future. Their intellectual, social, emotional as well as physical development were negatively affected by the societal beliefs and practices, lack of resources and proper psychological support system. Failure to attend school and lack of good education, among other conditions, contribute to more uncertainty as to the future. The case of Manasibosh illustrates this situation.

Manasibosh: An Illustrative Case of Lack of Direction

Manasibosh is a 14 years old happy and healthy child born in Welega administrative zone, Jiru Wereda. Her parents are both farmers. She has four brothers. She never had opportunity for education. After she came to Addis Ababa two months ago, she started to sell petty materials like combs, ladies artificial ornaments and underwears. She spends four to six hours a day selling her items at different places on the streets. On Saturdays and Sundays she goes to Minlik road market in order to sell her materials. Manasibosh faces different difficulties in working on street. Sometimes, the money she gets is stolen. She is not allowed to sell on streets. Chasing by police is a serious problem. Getting market for her materials is a problem. She gets an average profit of about 2 birr a day and saves about one birr everyday in her “Bank box” for a house rent. She uses the remaining amount for her meals. Most of the time, she cannot eat her breakfast and even lunch. She says “ I always pray to God for a better life”.

Manasibosh represents the worst scenario. She has never attended school. There is no indicator, either from the efforts she makes or from the support she might get from other people, that she would attend education in the future. She makes very little money out of her work in street. In fact, she has not managed to get minimum food she needs for survival. It appears she has lost hope as to the future. She has no idea about what would be the next move in her life. The rest of the children showed some hope in the face of challenges as to their future. Going to Arab countries, continuing education if support could be obtained and completing university education were some of the aspirations reported. The point here is that the situation of Manasibosh could be typical to hundreds of thousands of girls all over the country.

Conclusions

Analysis of the selected cases reveals that a girl child shares all challenges that boys face. Economic problems threaten optimal development of both boys and girls by threatening family bonds and in quite many cases leading to break of families. As a result, children are forced to engage in petty income generation activities to support themselves and their families. Girls are forced to shoulder in difficult household responsibilities.

A girl child undergoes serious psychological crisis a result of un protective families and hostile behavior of people on streets. They face problems ranging from insult and intimidation to beating and sexual harassment. Fear and lack of confidence in the people around them appears a common phenomenon among young girls with poor family backgrounds.

Culture plays an important role in determining the current situation and the future of children. Practices of sexual harassment and early marriage force the girls to run away from their homes to a new environment, which could be more damaging and frustrating.

Lost educational opportunity is typical to a girl child. This problem is observed in several circumstances. Whether the girl stays with her parents or gets married; whether she gets employed to serve in individual families or works on street, she is either provided with limited time and in adequate supplies or totally denied her right for education. Hence, a girl child with poor family background loses opportunities for good education (education as good as education the boys get).



Recommendation

A girl child is challenged everywhere-at home, on street, at work place...It needs to be clearly understood that the root cause of the problem is in the beliefs and traditions of the society. No society, under normal circumstance, considers this problem a less priority as ignoring the child, particularly a girl child would mean ignoring the nation which is the worst scenario. Hence, it is essential that multiple strategies be employed to address the challenges a girl child faces. Sensitization of parents and communities through media, youth/women's associations, etc. needs to be intensified. Educational support for a girl child is another key area of intervention. Conducting studies of similar nature elsewhere and carrying out periodic national surveys would help in getting more insight on the nature and magnitude of the problem so as to rethink and act accordingly.

Refereces

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Ethical Issues in Child Studies

Introduction

Researchers, Policy makers, child rights advocacy organizations, educators, social workers, counselors and students often seek and generate data on children for different purposes. Forum on Street Children-Ethiopia (FSCE), has been conducting series of observations, surveys and case studies with children as a strategy of learning situations of different groups of children, particularly those who are at risk and in poor living and working conditions. Other local and international organizations also engage in child studies of different scope and purpose. The data generated from such studies are used for important decisions including setting priorities, starting or phasing out programs, planning and allocation of resources, introducing new approaches, interventions, etc.

Research involving children requires consideration of certain important issues. Certain questions are always important to ask in connection with research involving children. Why is this research worthwhile? Why do we need data about children? How do we get the data? Who benefits from the research? Etc..

This article takes up these questions particularly issues surrounding ethics in research with children. The paper presents an overview of ethical issues that researchers, research assistants, child right advocacy organizations, journalists, parents and other stakeholders need to observe in research with children. The article highlights ethical principles that need to be adhered during observations, interviews and discussions with children.

Despite significant engagements of different bodies with child studies, it appears issues of ethics in doing research with children are not adequately addressed. The concerns about observing ethical principles in research, producing articles for news papers, radio, TV, etc; with children appear minimal. In some cases, researchers and their assistants may not have sufficient knowledge of the implications of any investigation for the participants. In quite many cases it looks no body takes issues of ethical standards seriously; hence, there could be problems of ignorance and possible subsequent mal-practices and violations of rights of children in a research process and reporting of cases of children as well.

Failure to observe ethical principles in research with children could have serious negative consequences. First, it affects quality of the research project, particularly the validity of its findings and conclusions. Second, it may lead to wrong decisions concerning programs, resources, and approaches in child-focused organizations. Third, the research experience may have adverse psycho-social effect on the children.

Conversely, observing ethical principles in research with children helps the research work in different ways. It protects the dignity of the participants while allowing valuable research to be conducted. Observing ethical guidelines does not only protect children's rights, it also enhances quality of research data and its results. Moreover, it provides members of a profession with standards of behavior and principles to be observed regarding their moral and professional obligations toward one another, their clients, and society in general.



Operational Definition of Key Terms

Definition of a child

With due consideration to the well-established definition of a child as a person under age 18, this article considers the 1998 classification of childhood by Kennedy and Grubb. Kennedy and Grubb describe children three categories in relation to their ability to consent, particularly to health care. The first, group refers to children in tender years. These children lack the capacity to consent. The writers do not give age range for this group. Those in early and middle childhood could be considered to fit to the category of the tender years. Kennedy and Grubb identify the second category as ‘Gillick competent’ children. These are children under 16-years old who have developed sufficient maturity such that they are able to consent to some or most healthcare procedures. Gillick competence refers to a particular case in which the principle that a child could be competent to consent was established. Third, there are 16- and 17-year-olds, young people who could be treated similarly to adults in that they are assumed competent unless there are grounds to believe they are not. Their only difference from adults is that if they are not competent then their parents may consent for them. This article focuses on children in the first two categories.

What is ethics?

Ethics is the science of criteria, norms and values for human action and conduct. It is engaged in reflection and analysis of morals concerning whether an act is good or bad and how it influences our basic quest for meaning, our search for humanity and our attempt to create a humane society. Its intention is to safeguard human dignity and to promote justice, equality, truth and trust. In a nutshell, ethics is critical reflection on morality.

Ethical Dilemmas

Arnoson and Carlsmith as reported in Cohen and Manion(2000) argue that conducting research involves tension from two sources. The tension that exists between two sets of related values held by society: a belief in the value of free scientific inquiry in pursuit of truth and knowledge; and a belief in the dignity of individuals and their right to those considerations that follow from it. Striking balance between the two requires a skill and involves ethical considerations particularly from the point of view of the research participants.

In quite many cases, participation of children in research becomes indispensable because information available from research on other individuals cannot answer the question posed in relation to children. The researcher has a responsibility to make sure that the study method is appropriate for children; the circumstances in which the research is conducted provide for the physical, emotional and psychological safety of the child.

Ethical Standards for Research with Children

The historical origin of current ethical principles for conducting research with children arises from the German Nuremberg Trials, which took place after the Second World War, and the Nuremberg Code, which emerged from these. The Code sets out statements of certain moral, ethical and legal principles relating to research involving human subjects. Later, the emergence of the Declaration of Helsinki in 1964, most recently amended in 1989 and 1996, now includes an examination of the issue of children as research subjects in relation to informed consent.

The principles for conducting research contained in the 1964 *Declaration of Helsinki* by the World Medical Association apply to all human subjects, adults and children. For example, adequate information must be provided to the research participants, participation in the research must be freely volunteered, with the understanding that the participant can withdraw at any time, and in addition, informed consent should be obtained, preferably in writing. There is one section, which refers specifically to research with children and states: “when the subject is a minor, permission from the responsible relative replaces that of the participant in accordance with national legislation. Whenever the minor child is in fact able to give a consent, the minor’s consent must be obtained in addition to the consent of the minor’s legal guardian”. The guidelines are clear that the consent of the child should be sought in addition to that of the responsible adult.

Latter, ethical standards are developed by different professional societies. The ethical principles presented below are derived from the principles developed by of different professional societies including: American Psychological Association (1992), the American Educational Research Association (1992), American sociological association and South African Medical Research Council. Members of the professional societies are expected to abide by the ethical principles in conducting research involving children. In the Ethiopian context, these codes are generally respected and observed in research in social and pedagogical sciences. The ethical codes of the American Psychological Association are particularly popular and widely observed in the pedagogical **sciences**.

Principle 1: Non-Harmful Procedures

Researchers should use no research procedure that may harm the child either physically or psychologically. Research should be considered from the standpoint of participants; any foreseeable threats to children’s psychological well-being, health, values or dignity should be eliminated.

Principle 2: Informed Consent

Informed consent has been defined by Diener and Crandall as ‘the procedures in which individuals choose whether to participate in an investigation after being informed of facts that would be likely to influence their decisions’ (Diener and Crandall, 1978). This definition involves four elements: competence, voluntarism, full information and comprehension (Cohen, and Morrison, 2003: 51; Cobb : 124, 125).

Before seeking consent from the child, the researcher should inform the child of all features of the research that may affect his or her willingness to participate and should answer the child’s questions in terms appropriate to the child’s comprehension. Moreover, the researcher should respect the child’s freedom to choose to



participate in the research or not by giving the child the opportunity to give or not give assent to participation as well as to choose to discontinue participation at any time. Wherever appropriate, researchers, information seekers should provide the participants information on the following points about the planned research.

- The purpose of the research/assessment;
- The likely benefits of the research for the participant;
- Any risks associated with the research/assessment;
- The procedures to be undertaken and their duration;
- The arrangements for the protection of confidentiality and privacy throughout the research activity;
- The likelihood of any complications from the research, including pain; and
- That participation in the research is voluntary and that the participant may withdraw consent at any time.

Cohen, Manion and Morrison (2000) suggest that researchers dealing with pre-school or nursery children may dismiss the idea of seeking informed consent due to the age factor. Fine and sandstorm on the other hand, indicate that even though children at this age may not understand about the research, the researcher should give some explanation about their involvement. According to these writers, children’s age should not limit their rights for information.

Principle 3: Parental Consent

Research with children who are too young to deal with issues of consent or have impairments that may limit understanding and/or communication such that they are



unable to give their real consent requires special safeguarding procedures. In such circumstances, it is essential that consent should be obtained from parents, care givers or teachers.

Principle 4: Incentives

Incentives to participate in a research project must be fair and must not unduly exceed the range of incentives that the child normally experiences. Moreover, payments to participants must not be used to induce them to risk harm beyond which they risk without payment in their normal lifestyle.

Principle 5: Deception

Although full disclosure of information during the procedure of obtaining consent is the ethical ideal, a particular study may necessitate withholding certain information or deception. Rationale for withholding such information needs to be established and all efforts need to be made to minimize possible consequences.

Principle 6: Confidentiality

The researcher and information seeker for that matter should keep in confidence all information obtained about research participants. The participants' identity should be concealed in written and verbal reports of the results, as well as in informal discussions with students and colleagues. When a possibility exists that others may gain access to such information, this possibility, together with the plans for protecting confidentiality, should be explained to the participants as part of the procedure of obtaining informed consent. While the researcher feels excitement at finding key facts and pride in producing a full report, the readers of that report might be shocked at just how much intimate details are included (Blaxter, Hughes and Tight, 2001 : 157)

Principle 7: Mutual Responsibilities

From the beginning of each research investigation, there should be clear understanding and agreement between the researcher and the parents, guardians or relevant others in safeguarding the child from possible threats accompanied with the research while creating conducive situation for the research undertaking.

Principle 8: Jeopardy

When, in the course of research, information comes to the researcher's attention that may jeopardize the child's well-being, the former has a responsibility to discuss the information with the parents or guardians and with those experts in the field in order that they may arrange the necessary assistance for the child.

Principle 9: Unforeseen Consequences

When research procedures result in undesirable consequences for the participant that were previously unforeseen, the researcher should immediately employ appropriate measures to correct these consequences, and should redesign the procedures if they are to be included in subsequent studies.

Principle 10: Informing Participants

Immediately after the data are collected, the researcher should clarify for the research participant any misconceptions that may have arisen. The researcher also recognizes a duty to report general findings to participants in terms appropriate to their understanding. Where scientific or humane values justify withholding information, every effort should be made so that withholding the information has no damaging consequences for the participant.

Principle 11: Reporting Results

Because the researcher's words may carry unintended weight with parents and children, caution should be exercised in reporting results, making evaluative statements, or giving advice.



Principle 12: Implications of Findings

Researchers should be mindful of the social, political and human implications of their research and should be especially careful in the presentation of findings from the research. This principle, however, in no way denies researcher's right to pursue any area of research or the right to observe proper standards of scientific reporting.

Principle 13: Scientific Misconduct

Misconduct is defined as the fabrication or falsification of data, plagiarism, misrepresentation, or other practices that seriously deviate from those that are commonly accepted within the scientific community for proposing, conducting, analyzing, or reporting research. It does not include unintentional errors or honest differences in interpretation of data.

Principle 14: Personal Misconduct

Personal misconduct that results in a criminal conviction of offense may be sufficient grounds for a member's expulsion from a professional Society.

What happens in case of intentional breach of the principles?

The United Nations issued different conventions that require member countries to protect the rights of different groups of people including children. As stated in *Article 16 of the 1989 UN convention on the right of the child* "No child shall be subjected to arbitrary or unlawful interference with his or her privacy, family, home or correspondence, nor to unlawful attacks on his or her honor and reputation...". Article 19 of the convention requires state parties to take all appropriate legislative, administrative, social and educational measures to protect the child. The professional societies may expel the researcher from membership in case of intentional breach of the ethical codes.

Strengthening professional societies and professionalism in general is a key for bringing about significant improvement in observing ethical codes among researchers and their assistants in conducting research involving children. Professional quality of researchers, awareness of the public as well as parent, commitment and hard word work among child-focused advocacy organizations are essential strategies to develop a tradition of professional and acceptable practices in doing research with children.

Conclusions

Ethical issues in research with children involve dilemmas. The dilemma lies in between the need to ensure adequate conditions and procedures scientific research on the one hand and the need to respect individual rights of participants on the other. One has to strike a balance between the two. It is imperative that those who take part in research with children should adhere to the ethical principles. Parents, professional associations, child right advocacy organizations, and researchers have professional and moral obligations to see to it that ethical principles are observed in research with children.



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