

Curbing Child Abuse and Neglect in Nigeria through Visual Enlightenment, using Sculpture

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Abstract

This study is geared towards identification and investigation of the problems caused by child abuse and neglect in Nigeria and their effects on the socio-economic lives of the victims. The study aimed at employing sculpture as a vehicle for enlightening the populace on the need to eradicate these ill-practices because of their negative roles on national development. The research identified some of these societal menaces caused by child abuse and neglect to include, physical, behavioral, emotional and psychological imbalance in the state of the child. The research employed a qualitative method of research. Data was sourced through primary and secondary sources. The study also comprises of both literary and practical aspects or studio output. Here the researcher explored stone chunks and other materials for sculpture productions, which depict various concepts of 'child abuse and neglect'. The practical works were designed to sensitize the public on the challenges associated with child abuse and also to serve as an avenue towards the amelioration of the problem.

Introduction

Art restores the wholeness of man as a being capable of reasoning and can also arouse our emotions and inspires our imaginations. Adewunmi (2005:8) avers that: "Art is emotion and always has been. Art is not simply a craft, but rather it is the concept of emotional expression". Art is certainly the best vehicle for our emotions and, artists produce emotionally transparent images, in view of this, the society can make art a development factor by creating public awareness aimed at producing a critical mass of citizens with the objective to fully grasp development issues. Selz (1981:376) Stresses that: "Gabo's commitment to the ideal that art could influence the state of mind of society, instead of adding to its materialism". Indeed, the functions of art boil down to an effective participation in the construction of a society.

According to UNESCO, "about 16 million children in Africa under the age of 13 are working". Ebigbo (1999) describe the situation as "an exploitative form of child labour whereby middle men/women recruit children from villages or from other countries to perform share labour in their homes or work places". Similarly, Osahon (2006) in Ebigbo and Abaga, (1990) observes that, "Child labour is a major phenomenon and should be considered seriously, hence, measures for curbing, child labour demands some urgent attention from everyone in our society today". However, dexterous artists use their creative ability to showcase this concept in their art works. Magueye (2008:27) Holds the view that:

Artistic production is called on to address the various concern of the environment, cultural, spiritual, and socio- economic. These concerns if actually taken into account determine development which in turn will impact on the society.

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Magueye further reiterates that: “Skill is the expression of creativity and of the mind; it brings together disciplines that rely on aesthetics and emotion as well as the public consciousness.”

Many countries around the world are plagued by the monstrous problems caused by child abuse and neglect. These problems affect the socio-economic lives of the victims and adversely affect the general well-being of the citizens. Many underage children are forcefully removed from their parents and taken to places where they serve as home servants and forced Labourers. Most of these children do not attend school and are constantly exposed to danger and death. In view of this situation the researcher attempted at ameliorating the problem by using sculpture as a tool for advocating a change of attitude towards child abuse and neglect. Here sculpture was used to extensively dramatize the problem for public awareness.

In view of the problems identified in this study, The research is aimed at the exploration of various Sculpture media for the production of art which comment on the issues of child abuse and neglect bedeviling the Nigerian Society. The objectives of the study include;

- To examine the impact of child abuse and neglect on the socio-economic lives of the victims and the entire society.
- To produce sculptures that will serve as commentaries on issues of child abuse and neglect in Nigeria.
- To help in creating the needed awareness on the necessity to engage the society on the rights of children and discourage all forms of child abuse.
- To exhibit the studio outcome of the research in the Awka Campus of Nnamdi Azikiwe University, in order to intimate the audience about the researcher’s concern about the high rate of abuse and neglect of Nigerian children and elicit their responses

Research Questions

The following questions were constituted to guide the researcher through the study.

1. What are the ways in which the impact of child abuse and neglect in Nigeria could be assessed?
2. What is the possibility of using the project as a veritable instrument for creating awareness towards the campaign against the ill-practice?
3. How can the study be used to create the necessary awareness for the amelioration of the child abuse and neglect?
4. What is the possibility of exhibiting the sculptures produced during the research for the appreciation of the University audience?

Review of Related Literature and Knowledge

This section consists of conceptual framework, related theory, empirical studies and a summary of the review.

Conceptual Framework

The conceptual framework presents the researcher’s synthesis of literature based on the concept of child abuse and neglect.

Child abuse and neglect are peculiar universal phenomena in our society, the categories are many and complex; Children have been bought, sold, tortured, and exploited. It is only of recent, in 1960's, that child abuse has become more exposed in our society (Ekpe 1986; p. 212). Rural-urban migration breeds child abuse and neglect in Nigeria, consequently, ignorance contributes the genesis and sustenance of the ugly situation. Ebigbo (1990; 8) stresses that:

Various forms of child labour in Africa carry along with them other forms of child abuse and neglect. Examples are agricultural farm labourers, house-helps, child trafficking, child prostitution, street trading, child apprenticeship, child used in armed conflict, apartheid and widespread malnutrition. Other forms are of poverty, wife battering, imprisonment of pregnant women, non- adoption of alien and refugee children, child battering, child killing, child abandonment, neglect and abuse of handicapped children, early marriage of the girl child, various forms of extreme religious training of children (including begging, beating, starving), children used by adults for street begging, and street children Child labour which is exploitation and which did not build into it: the overall moral, physical, mental and emotional wellbeing of the children.

Other forms are child neglect are deprivation, illegal fostering, child stealing, child imprisonment, child slavery, among many others. In the same vein, Ekpe *et al* (1986; 212) in Cook and Bowles (1980) situates that:

Child abuse implies physical or mental injury, negligent treatment or maltreatment, sexual abuse of a child under the legal age for adulthood by a person who is responsible for the child's welfare under circumstances which indicate that the child's health or welfare is harmed or threatened.

Who is a Child? The International Labour Organization (ILO) fixed the minimum age for admission to employment at 15 years and recommend, with various provisos, that this be gradually raised to 16 years. It seems that Nigeria labour law agrees with the ILO; Part 1 section 2 of Children and Young Persons Act of the Law of the Federation of Nigeria and Lagos Cap 32, defines a child as "a person under the age of 14 years". A child could be observed as development stages of human being between birth and adolescence period. In other words, a child is a young human being who is not yet an adult. In the same Vein, Sule (1996: 58) in Olukoshi et al [1990] posits that:

There are divergent definitions as to who is a child. Whereas the International Labour Organization and the United Nations Population Division refers to children as those below 18 years of age, the 1989 convention on the Rights of the Child states that a child means every human being below the age of 18 years...

Contextual Meaning of Child Abuse

Child abuse is observed as a system of well-coordinated intentional or unintentional act or acts which results to the impairment of social, physical or mental well-being of the child. A child is abused when that child's survival is threatened by situation in the home. These situations could be in form of sexual abuse, verbal abuse, psychological treatment or maltreatment of a child under the age of 15 years. Wisdom (1999:1) States that:

Child abuse is the physical, sexual, emotional maltreatment, or neglect of a child. In the United States, the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC) define child maltreatment as any act or series of acts of commission or omission by a parent or other caregiver that result in harm, potential for harm or threat of harm to a child. Child abuse can occur in a child's home, or in the organization, schools or communities the child interacts with. There are four major categories of child abuse: neglect, physical abuse, psychological/emotional abuse, and sexual abuse.

What is Child Labour?

Child labour refers specifically to children under a stipulated minimum age, being required to work. According to International Labour Organization (ILO) (2012), 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 interferes with their schooling by depriving them to leave school prematurely; or requiring them to combine school attendance with excessively long and heavy work.

Anukam (1986; 73) emphasizes:

Child labour can be described as any engagement of the child either paid or unpaid directed to alleviation of adult burden outside or inside the home to make a living for himself or help adult to make a living when overstretched, it can turn into child abuse”.

Okpara (1986: 54) also holds the view that:

Child labour is social problems, a phenomenon hindering the harmonious physical and mental development of the child. In other words, child labour became an exploitative systematic process when, in addition to the under paid rates of exchanges, children were used for jobs that are monotonous, strenuous, harmful or unduly prolonged. Child labour also includes the systematic exploitation of the child in jobs that are either self-employed or wage earning.

In all, child labour remains a negative factor towards development of mankind. Different kinds of child labour include: Factory/industrial child labour (with pay), the child of the

family labour (without pay), Maid/servant (house help) child labour (with or without pay), Apprentice child labour (without pay), and Alien child labour.

Studies on Child Labour and Abuse

Child labour remains a significant problem in many parts of the world. According to recent estimates by the International Labour Organization (ILO), there were approximately 176 million children between the ages of 5 and 14 in employment in 2008, of which roughly 53 million were participating in hazardous work (Diallo *et al*, 2010). A common perception is that most child labourers work for wages in the formal sector, conjuring images of children working long hours in sweatshops or toiling away in mines. As a result, consumer boycotts and trade sanctions against products using child labour as an input are often discussed as means of reducing the incidence of child labours. However, such methods may have little impact for several reasons; firstly, the majority of working children are active in the agricultural sector, rather than manufacturing (ILO, 2006; Diallo *et al.*, 2010). Secondly, very few children work for wages outside the home; rather, most children are employed by their parents on the family farm or enterprise (Edmonds and Pavenik, 2005). As a result, the majority of child labourers will not be affected by boycotts and trading sanctions.

Further, children working in the affected sectors may simply relocate to an unaffected sector. Similarly, an outright ban on child labour would in most cases be difficult, if not impossible, to enforce and as such would likely have little effect on the overall incidence of child labour. In the worst case, a ban could end up making some children significantly worse off if these children are compelled to work in order to keep themselves and their families out of extreme poverty. This is not to say that bans are never motivated; clearly a ban on illegal and hazardous activities is desirable. However, additional policy instruments are necessary in order to effectively combat child labour (Fors, 2008).

Often the terms ‘child work’ and ‘child labour’ are used interchangeably in the literature, the ILO, however, distinguishes between three types of working children: children in employment, child labourers and children in hazardous work. The category ‘children in employment’ is the broadest of the three categories and includes all types of paid productive activity. Examples of the latter are production of goods for own (household) use or domestic work outside the child’s own household. Domestic work performed within the child’s own household does not, however, count as economic activity.

Further, the definition of economic activity is not confined to legal activities, but also encompasses illegal activities. The category ‘child labourer’ is more restrictive than the previous category, excluding certain types of children in employment. Children who are older than age 11 and only work a few hours in light work are not considered to be child labourers, where light work by definition does not interfere with the child’s ability to attend school or vocational training. Further, children over the age of 14 who are not engaged in hazardous work are excluded from this category. Finally, ‘hazardous work’ is defined as work that has or leads to risks for the children engaged in these activities. Risks include the child’s safety, moral development, physical and mental health. Fors, *et al.* (2008).

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Child abuse has been noted to have many causes: as a childhood symptom of mental illness in parents, as the culmination of a lifelong experience of violence towards the caregiver, of environmental and social stresses on the family, and of society's acceptance and promotion of physical violence. Contained in each causal explanation is a theory of etiology. And within each theory, researchers extract from the complexity of families' lives those particular factors that are believed to be causal agents for violence against children. By the middle 1960s, after a model Child Abuse Reporting Law was promulgated by the U.S. Children's Bureau, every state adopted one or another form of child abuse reporting statute. In 1979, according to The National Center on Child Abuse and Neglect in the U.S Department of Health and Human Services, over 711,000 reports were received. This represented a 10-fold increase in the course of a decade. (Newberger *et al*, 1983). Newberger *et al*. (1983) also noted that the clinical literature on child abuse contains many assumptions about the consequences of child abuse for the victim, his or her family, and society. For example, Schmitt and Kempe (1975) assert that,

The dangers of child abuse extend beyond harm to the victim. If the child who has been physically abused is returned to his parents without intervention, 5% are killed and 35% are seriously reinjured. Moreover, the untreated families tend to produce children who grow up to be juvenile delinquents and murderers, as well as the batterers of the next generation.

Such concerns on the part of clinicians derive in part from the frequently noted multigenerational nature of identified clinical cases of child abuse: the parents of abused children are often themselves perceived to have been abused and neglected in childhood. (Steele and Pollock, 1974). In adulthood, the parents may have more frequent drug and alcohol abuse, criminal behavior, and psychiatric disturbance (Smith *et al.*, 1975), leading to worry about what will be the fate of their offspring. Concerns about the developmental sequence of child abuse are also supported by the observation of psychiatric workers on the behavior of small numbers of abused children in clinical and laboratory settings (Galdson 1971; Martin *et al.*, 1974; Silver *et al.*, 1969).

Empirical Studies

In our present society, visual art still remains one of the means by which awareness can be created and also information can be disseminated to the masses. Most of the works reviewed under this section are projects executed by artists and works closely related to the subject. While writing on the causes, Dangers and Solution to Child Street Hawking in Nigeria, Okoruwa, (2017) defines street hawking as "the selling of goods and other commodities along busy roads or residential areas". Street hawking has huge implications for children's physical and emotional well-being. It exposes them to sexual abuse, physical exhaustion, vehicle accident occurrence, death, malnourishment, drug, substance abuse, unwanted pregnancy and prostitution.

Okoruwa's definition appears to form the subject of James Amilo's sculpture which addresses fundamental issues that are becoming nightmare to every sphere of human life. The artist observes that art could be a vehicle for liberation, sustainable development and co-

existence. Similarly, another sculpture in-the round produced by Alexander Nze centers on child battering. See plate 2 below.



Plate 1: James Amilo, *The Street Hawker*, Concrete, 2013, photo by the researcher



Plate 2: Alexander Nze, *Child Battering*, concrete, 2010, photo by the researcher

There a man was depicted with a cane and a male child who is a victim of child abuse. The pose suggests a scenario where a man who batters a child. After series of beating, the child made an attempt to escape from the inhuman abuser who had beaten him mercilessly.

Consequently, Battered Child Syndrome (BCS) is found at every level of society, although the incidence may be higher in a lower-income households, where adults caregivers may suffer greater stress and social difficulties and have a greater lack of control over stressful situation. Other risk factors include lack of education, single parenthood and alcoholism or other drug addiction. More especially, the abused vulnerable child who lives with wicked guardians is always bullied by the abuser. Nze's project relates to the present study because both artists employed the form language as an avenue to create awareness among the public that such malicious act should be shunned for the interest of the society. In severe cases, the matter should be reported to the human Right Agencies for appropriate measure to save the situation of maltreatment of the children, which is child abuse.

Okeke

Another project that relates closely to this study is James Amilo's Sculpture project, entitled; A child leading a blind man



Plate 3: James Amilo, A Child Leading a Blind man, concrete,
2016 photo by the researcher

The composition portrays a typical scene of child begging in the streets, motor parks and public places. Begging is gradually becoming the primary source of income for street children domicile in the urban areas. It is obvious that, children who are lured into begging by abusers are often removed from their families, on daily basis they surrender the majority of their income to their exploiters, while the children encounter a lot of problems which may include starvation, inadequate clothing and poor health care, above all the road traffic accident which can cause permanent disability or death of the victims.

Similarly, another sculpture was produced by Adaeze Orjiekwe also relates to the present study. The work focuses on child killing for rituals and sacrifices. Children are kidnapped, adopted, killed for rituals and sacrifices, they are also hold captive through child trafficking, among others. This work was produced to fight against such nefarious behavior in the society.



Plate: 4 Adaeze Orjiekwe, *Child Killing/Ritual Sacrifice*, concrete, 2007.

Child genital mutilation is another common type of child abuse in Nigeria. This situation was captured by Sunday Kanu in his project entitled: “Child Genital Mutilation”.



Plate 5: Sunday Kanu, *Shape Female Genital Mutilation*, Enamel paint on metal board, 2018 photo by the researcher

Okeke

This visual representation of child genital mutilation is executed on a metal board using enamel paint. The art piece portrays female genital mutilation and reflects the agony of the victims. The artist employed this medium of expression to create awareness and call for an imperative measure to stop child genital mutilation in our society, Kanu's work relates closely to the present study, however, it differs art medium and genre employed, while the researchers project are sculptures, Kanu's work was executed in graphic design mode.

Summary of Literature Review

In the course of the review, researcher found out that most of the literature by other researchers are not comprehensive and usually based on few aspects of child abuse and neglect. This project attempts at closing this gap by touching various aspects of child abuse and neglect. The researcher presented his facts very vividly by employing theoretical and practical dimensions to the study.

Research Methodology

Research Design

The Researcher adopts a qualitative and exploratory research methods. The study also consists of both literary and practical aspects.

Sources of Data

Data for the study was sourced from both primary and secondary sources. The primary sources are mostly oral sources such as interviews, researcher's observation among others, while the secondary sources are written materials both published and unpublished. The researcher used mixed- media of stone, metal, and fibre glass, to create visual forms that depicts concept of child abuse and neglect. The studio experimentation involves the transformation of concept "Child abuse and neglect" from the preliminary sketches to finished sculptures.

The stages of production are as follows:

Stage 1: Photographs and Sketches

In the course of the study, photographs were taken; different poses of child abuse and neglect were captured. Secondly several sketches were made, before the selection of the desired sketches which facilitates the practical works. Sketches were transformed to marquette made of clay and finally transformed to permanent materials.

Stage II: Marquette

Marquette were produced from the desired sketches. These are concepts in the miniature form of the main practical works. Marquette serves as a guide to the researcher during the execution of the main art work

Stone Sculpture Production. The following are the stages of stone sculpture production.

Stage I: Roughing Out

Roughing out is the process of removing the unwanted areas of the materials and carving the basic shape of the sculptural piece without fine detail. The basic tools for roughing out stone are the pitching tool and the punch, both normally hit with suitable hammers. The pitching

tool is of value in removing large fragments during the early stages of carving out the initial form. In other words, the purpose of pitching is to remove excess stone so that more detailed work can begin. When the heavy hammer is used with the pitching tool and applied with force, the blows can remove considerable amounts of stone. The punches vary in width and length, they are been used for softer stone and the shorter ones can be used also, for granite one can use the same type of hammer. The marble punches are used in the different stages of roughing out marble, depending on the varied point widths.



Plate 8: Roughing out by the researcher. Photo by Chisimdi Obianatam

Here, the researcher used the long punch to make a series of parallel strokes along the stone. It is being hold fairly loosely and at an angle to the stone. Stone carving tools of the proper design, steel and temper; may be hand, pneumatic or thermal tools. The tools should be kept sharp and in a good condition. Any mushrooming that occurs on the striking end of the chisel should be ground off immediately to avoid injury. The stone carving hammers vary in weight depending on their size. A small lead mallet, a small lead hammer and a slightly larger mallet are used to good effect with a range of fine claw and flat chisels. Then chisels may also have a broadened, rounded hitting end, and the cutting ends can be tempered steel or tungsten.

Stage II: Intermediate Carving: Clarification of form, using manual tools, power tools and devices

Masonry bits were used with electric drilling machine to create holes on the stone for easy removal of unwanted areas of the stone block with chisel. Laser cut diamond disc was fixed to the angle filing machine, to cut unwanted areas of the stone piece and to wear away the outer layers of the stone.



Plate 9: Clarification of Form by the researcher. Photo by Kamsiyo Obianatam

The researcher also used Firm multipurpose device which functions with cable attached to the device on one end and the other end, it has a provision for interchangeable masonry bits, abrasive stones and sandpapers. The researcher used the machine to define the details of the stone sculptures. However, the researcher used hammers of different weights, mallets and the carving manual tools like pitching tool, punch, flat chisels, four and nine toothed chisels (claw chisels) to detail the works for enhancement of features and embellishment. Rotary rasp was attached to the drilling machine for the abrasion of the stone surfaces. The dreadnought file was used initially for clarifying form followed by stone rasps, files, small and delicate rifflers are abrasive tools which were also used for finishing and fining down stone surfaces.

Stage III: Finishing

The researcher employed abrasive stones, usually carborundum grit in a range of thickness and bonded in shellac, are available in various grades of hardness. The researcher used ranges of grit from the coarsest stone, to the medium grade and the smoothest grade for final smoothing.



Plate 10: Finishing of form by the researcher. Photo by Munachi Obianatam

Alternatively, working through grade to wet and dry (silicon carbide) abrasive paper from coarse to fine, were used to polish up the stone's surface and diamond hand pads were used in the same way. For the final smooth textural appearance.

Production of Metal Sculptures

Many of the metal can be used sculpturally, but in the course of this work, the researcher limited the study to the mild steel and stainless steel.

Stage I: Preparation of the Metal during Welding Operations

The preparation of plate (metal sheet) is the first step in arc welding. However, the edges of the two metals should be properly prepared by cleaning the surfaces with hammer, file and metal brush before welding the metal pieces. The thicker plates are vied on both sides and the welding metal is deposited in series of layer.

Data Presentation Analysis of Works

The essential step in a research exercise is the nature of the presentation and analysis of the works executed. The data collected from both primary and secondary source were presented and analyze descriptively in line with the qualitative method of research.

Descriptive Analysis of Works



This section of the study discusses the result of studio experimentation which emanated from an in-depth study of the issues concerning child abuse and neglect. The practical works executed show a wide exploration of the subject matter and the vital role of art as a veritable instrument for the campaign against child abuse and neglect in Nigeria. The crystallized ideas expressed through art paradigms are enumerated and appraised. They cover visual art genres developed and executed in three-dimensional form, and in three major diverse media of expression, namely stone, metal and fibre glass. The works produced include; *Despair*, *Water vendor (Mai Ruwa)*, *Child trafficker*, *Vicious fellow* and *a child [Dehumanization]*, *Groundnut seller*, *Nwa n'ata ntu 1 (The suffering child 1)*, *Nwa n'ata ntu 2 (The suffering child 2)*, *Despondent condition*, *Pan handler*,

Plate 11: Emmanuel Okeke,
Despair fibre glass, photo by
Rosemary Okeke

Okeke

Despair (Plate 11) depicts a male child seated with hands crossed across his chest. The mood of the figure is apparently of neglect and abandonment. Such state of dejection could lead to psychological trauma. The figure might have also suffered sexual abuse and allowed to wallow in shame and low self-esteem.

Water Vendor (Mai Ruwa)



Plate 12: Water Vendor, Emmanuel Okeke, Metal, Photo: Rosemary Okeke

Water Vendor (Mai Ruwa) is a free-standing sculpture that depicts a child labourer who toil day and night on the streets to survive. Water vendor (*Mai ruwa*) which mean “water seller” in the Hausa dialect of Nigeria, sells water using two tin containers which he carries on his shoulders. It is a business that is common among the people of northern Nigeria. Water selling business is common in area where there is inadequate water supply. Water vendor (*Mai ruwa*) sells from one household to another with two large gallons of water with two ropes that are tied on a stick across his shoulders.

The researcher used this study to showcase the exploitation of the victims and expose all sorts of street dangers which the victims are prone to including road traffic accident.



Plate 13: Child Trafficker, Emmanuel Okeke, stone, photo by the researcher

Child Trafficker (Plate 13) is sculpture in-the-round. It is a mixed-media of stone and metal sculpture which denotes child abuse. The work depicts a bust of a child trafficker with the embodiment of beauty that contains the images of some children and design intricacies incorporated in the art piece. The work exposes the nefarious act of the perpetrators to the victims which is calls for an imperative solution to the menace. Child trafficking is the term given to the movement of children into and from the country with the intent to exploit them.

Some of the ways in which such exploitation take place are; sexual exploitation/prostitution, forced domestic work and chores, sweatshop and restaurant work, forced marriage, ritual killings, among others. Children may also be trafficked for the purpose of adoption. Child trafficking often has human right implications, it can have long lasting and devastating effects. The child can be kept captive, living or working conditions which can result to a serious impact on a child's mental and physical health injuries. Children exploited for domestic servitude and force labour can suffer physical injuries, develop problems with their emotional health and be denied access to an education. Children trafficked for sexual exploitation are at high risk of physical injuries, sexually transmitted infections and for girls, multiple pregnancies may also occur. The sculpture was designed and developed to enlighten the audiences on the evils associated with human trafficking, especially young ones.



Plate 14: Emmanuel Okeke, *Vicious Fellow and a child (Dehumanization)*
Metal and stone, photo by Rosemary Okeke

This is a three-dimensional sculptural composition comprising of an adult male figure and a child and it that depicts an adult figure battering a child. This is a typical act against the downtrodden by the brutal a fellow, which portrays the plight of the abused child and the people's apathy for the child. Child battering is the physical abuse of a child by a parent or guardian by beating or any other form of battering. The mistreatment of children at the hands of parents or guardians has a long history. "Battering Child Syndrome (BCS) refers to non-accidental injuries sustained by a child as a result of physical abuse, usually inflicted by an adult caregiver." (Encyclopedia of children's Health, 2019).

Internal injuries, cuts, burns, bruises and broken or fractured bones are all possible results of battered child syndrome. Emotional damage to a child is also often the byproduct of child abuse. It can result in the child exhibiting serious behavioral problems such as substance abuse or by physical examination which can reveal injuries such as bruises, burns, swelling, retinal hemorrhage (bleeding in the back of the eye), internal damage such as bleeding or rupture of an organ, fractures of long bones or spiral type fractures that result from twisting and fractured ribs or skull. Perhaps emotional trauma may remain after the physical injuries have healed. The damage can be redressed, therefore, both physical and psychological therapy are often recommended as treatment for the battered child. However, the visual form will sensitize the masses on the issue of child battering which is a rampant ill behavior in the society.

Groundnut Hawker (Plate 15) is a free-standing sculpture which depicts the concept of child street hawking. The work portrays a groundnut seller, produced in fibre glass, carrying groundnuts coated with fibre glass. In other words, everything about the child tells the story of his involvement in dealing with boiled groundnuts as a street hawker, instead of engaging in academic endeavor and other activities that will prepare him/her for a brighter future. He/she is always busy with the street hawking for profitable business venture own by the parents or guardians. Basically, the victims compromise his/her brighter future while engaging in street hawking. Child street hawking is/a common sight on streets in Nigerian's cities.



Plate 15: Emmanuel Okeke, *Groundnut Hawker*, Fibre glass Groundnuts, and metal, photo by the researcher.

Children sell products such as boiled groundnuts, fruits, confectionaries, drinks and other commodities that they carry on their heads or held in their hands. Recently, the practice has been on the rise, the increase could be linked to poverty and the worsening economic situation. Okeke (2015). Consequentially, street hawking has huge implications for children's physical and emotional well-being. It exposes them to sexual abuse, physical exhaustion, road traffic accident occurrence, death, malnourishment, drug abuse, prostitution and other nefarious acts.

Okeke

Child Begger (Plate 16) is a mixed media sculpture in-the round produced in stone and metal. The work depicts a figure in motion, holding a plate for aims begging. Here the researcher tries to sensitize the public about the street child begging. As a matter of fact, some parents send out their children to begin the street. While some engaged their children on the daily business of leading blind men and women to beg for alms on the streets, market arena, motor parks and other public places. However, the begging is often forced on family members, by their parents.

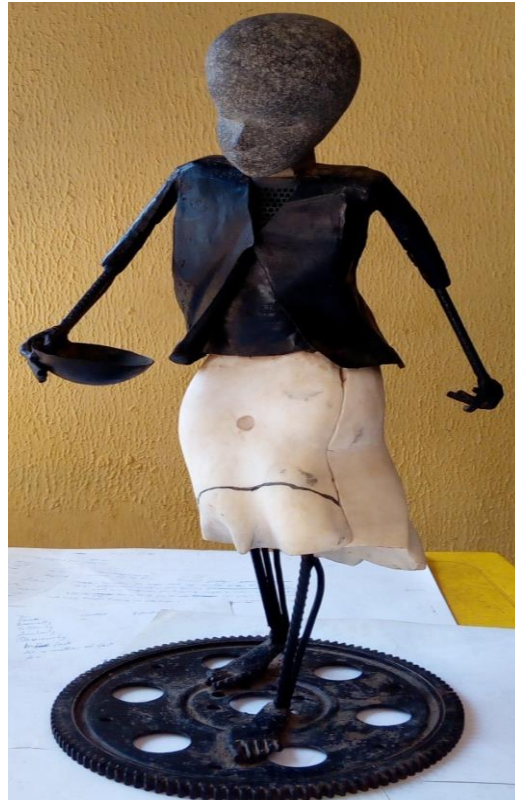


Plate 16: Child Beggar, Emmanuel Okeke, Stone and Metal, Photo by the Researcher

It has been revealed that, when begging hours are completed for the day, the child beggar often do not have proper shelters, adequate food, or access to healthcare where they reside. However, street begging exposes the children to all sort of dangers which include emotional, physical verbal abuse, road accidents juvenile delinquency, sexual abuse, banditry and many more ill behaviours.

Summary

The study was able to establish the fact that poverty, ignorance, illiteracy, maliciousness among others, form the major causes of child abuse and neglect in the society. The literary research was complimented by studio experimentation and exploration of the sculptural materials which broadened the horizon and sensibilities in the researcher's choice of mixed-media of stone, metal, and fiber glass. In order to achieve some level of consistency in the articulation of the details in child abuse and neglect issues, the researcher attempted to make each image an embodiment of visual excitement to the audience. According to Emuwem,

(2008; 88) in Vansina (1984; p.121): “Art is an integral part of the culture which it expresses and thereby communicating to others”. The positive outcome of these art works lie in their strength in the areas of aesthetic value, functionality, message and visual conceptions. “The creative African art practitioner is first and foremost interested in producing works of intensive visual effect. But he or she is simultaneously concerned with moral issues about the social condition of man in society”. (Anyaduba, 2011) in Aniakor, 2005).

Nevertheless, the sculptural renditions highlighted the subject of the research in various forms. The study proffers a lot of dynamism and symbols which could be employed to address the societal imbalance that challenges the human capital development. The problems encountered during the processes of research were also mentioned, while the data collected were analyzed, interpreted and synthesized. Anyaduba, (2011) in Okafoizunna, (2007) states that, “Beyond utility and aesthetics, art has other functions it plays in the society. It is also used to chronicle events and/or address sociological concerns in the society.” Essentially, the use of mix-media in this research is to enrich the documentation and to rekindle the interest of stone carving because of its aesthetic values and durability. Chinwuba (2014: 28) asserts: “To an artist, nature is the resource base from which creative ideas are inspired; the ideas so knitted out are interestingly rekindled into nature to sustain a continuous flow of novelty in the dynamics of creativity”. The dexterous artist has the knack to create visual art paradigms that serve as veritable instruments which could play vital roles towards the campaign for amelioration of societal ills.

Conclusion

Child abuse and neglect are illicit behaviours of some people in the society, the issue is one of the societal challenges that affect the development of mankind. The ill-practice could negatively affect the victim’s character, which could be detrimental to the future of such person.

Again, child labour can be observed as a work that deprives children of their childhood, their potential and their dignity. The labour may be harmful to physical and mental development. Child labour interferes with the victim’s schooling by forcing him/her to leave school prematurely; or requiring them to combine school with excessively long and heavy work. In its extreme forms, child labour involves children being enslaved, separated from their families and exposed to serious hazards. Child labour has been noted as work that exceeds a minimum number of hours, depending on the age of a child and on the type of work. Such work is considered harmful to the child and therefore should be eliminated.

Other forms of child abuse include, child trafficking, child sexual abuse, genital mutilation, child battering, physical abuse, verbal abuse and neglect. Despite the emotional trauma and physical dangers in which vulnerable children encounter little is being done to protect them or discourage the ill-practice in the society.

In all, this study has attempted to prove that, visual art is a viable strategy for the fight against child abuse and neglect in the society. Works of art could be displayed at various strategic positions in the public places and their messages disseminated to the masses. The research proffers a synthesized result aimed at bringing about a sustainable mind-set of positive

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change for profound standard of livelihood in the society. Individuals, government and non-governmental agencies should help to address the issue properly to ensure the positive result of human capital development in the society.

Recommendations

The research recommends the following:

1. Advocacy campaigns should be carried out by government and non-governmental agencies to sensitize the masses about the –ill-practice of child abuse and neglecting our society.
2. Proper national legislation is required to ensure that government sign, ratify and comply with all treaties aimed at protecting children.
3. The qualitative educational programmes, vocational education, job training programmes and better social amenities should be encouraged.
4. In order to protect the children in the society and to build a strong and wealthy nation for poverty alleviation and human capital development, the issue of employment and unemployment must be addressed.
5. Lastly, children need things that make them comfortable for better livelihood, such as the provision of adequate shelters and nutrition, association, interaction and entertainment.

Once these essential needs are provided, there is no doubt that they can perform wonderfully well in their undertakings for almost nation building and sustainable development.

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