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## Impact of livelihood earning on the education of school going children: A pilot survey

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### Abstract

Ethiopia is the second most populous country in sub-Saharan Africa. Ethiopian women, teen-agers and youth are disadvantageous in terms of extremely poor lifestyle with the state of affairs that reflected through their extremely poor economic, social and health indicators. Many Ethiopian young people face challenges in attaining the goals of their education and livelihood. Though, it is known fact that education is one of the best sources for improvement and development of life style, mental potency and economic growth, not only for their own-self but also for the society, region and nation. The awful part even for moderate boast-up in education and good living, finance is an essential requirement as indispensable devil, directly or indirectly. On the above stated context, we tried to compare the time distribution among the students who are struggling with their livelihood and the other's who are tension-free from their bread earning. A survey was conducted in five dissimilar schools situated in the different corners of Mekelle City - comprising of three public, one NGO and one privately organized. From these institutions 209 boys and 150 girls ageing between 15-18 years, have participated voluntarily. This survey was analyzed on five components of time schedule distributions, viz. time for study, time for play, time for home-help, time for livelihood and time without any work. Results of this survey stated that boys spend 39% time for their study, where as girls use up 41%. Whereas, the boys who earn their own-bread spend 29% of time for education and similarly girls can manage 23% of time only for making their future. More-over, these girls and boys are spending 23% and 24% of total available time to earn their own bread, respectively. From this study, it could be concluded that livelihood earning is one of the prevalent hindrance in the way of education, among the schools going children. Also, this might be visualize as one of the leading causes for school drop-out and enable to de-accelerate the rate of higher education among the Mekelle city students.

In order to avoid such problems of the economically challenged kids, foster care unit could be one of the suitable options for the improvement of younger generations. Moreover, the nation-builders of the present day like the educationists, the political and social leaders should initiate together some effective measures to declare juvenile work as a national crime and its implementation as national law.

**Keywords:** Livelihood, Education, Time-distribution, Mekelle-city, School children.

### 1. Introduction

A well-known mission of every human being is to lead one's life with peace of mind and soul, by spending happy and healthy days without problematic occasions. In order to achieve this mission, every one struggles and tries to work out one's daily need for his better living style. According to Lam Leone Ferem [16<sup>th</sup> sept 2011] [4], in the modern human race each person knows that education is one of the best options to achieve the above goal. Also, only the education is suitable applicable source that helps them to improve their intellectual and cognitive philosophy. According to John Dewey [1944] [5], education is the process that facilitate- learning, knowledge, skills, values, believes and habits of a group of people transferred to other people, through discussion, teaching, training, or research. It helps to exchange the new innovative ideas and thoughts which are useful in interacting with many known and unknown neighborhood. But, the worst part of this coin i.e. human life is, to attain education one should have one's average living standard, where he can fulfill his basic needs like food, water, shelter and health facilities. In sub-Saharan countries, Ethiopia is the second most populous nation [Federal Demography Republic of Ethiopia Central Statistical Agency, 2013] [2] where women, teenagers and youth are facing the unfavorable livelihood, in terms of extremely poor lifestyle, edge corner poor economic, social and health care, that

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has made their life highly challenging. Irrespective of such problems, the government of Ethiopia [African Development Indicator, 2009; Ghelawdewos Araia, 2015] <sup>[1, 3]</sup> has stressed educational improvement programs beginning from school level to higher education level, including research sectors by creating low fees schools and colleges. But, still a lower economic section of Ethiopian youth is struggling with challenges in attaining their educational and livelihoods goals. Due to above mentioned problems, the young generation forced to work for earn their own bread, before thinking to step-up the path that leads to school. Thus keeping these facts in view based on above-mentioned problems the main objective of the research is to survey on the impact of livelihood earning on their educational as well as social life, such as playing time, free time & household work.

**2. Methodology**

**2.1. Subject selection**

This survey was conducted for 47 days i.e. 1<sup>st</sup> March to 16<sup>th</sup> April 2015. During this period, the team has visited five high schools out of which three are public, one private and one NGO supported. These are located at five different corners of Mekelle city. In the beginning of this survey, our investigation team has sought the required appointment from the higher authorities of schools such as school academic directors, Academic Vice principals and like on. As per the given schedule, the team has harmonized a meeting with the higher bodies and discussed openly about the investigation plan. With their consent, we fixed the date and time to have a brief discussion related to present survey with the students i.e. object of pilot survey. The procedure adopted for selection of the study sample was random and performed by respective school authority. Before visiting the schools, our team experts prepared few questionnaires about their living and time management in normal school going days, such as time for study, time for play, time for livelihood, time for house-hold activities, e.g. helping parents, relatives etc including the time spending for no work. On paying visit to all five schools, we could manage a sample of 359 students, ageing between 15 to 19 years. They are volunteers to communicate with us and ready to reveal about their living.

**Procedure of Data Collection**



**Schools pictures for data collections**



For collecting the data, the local teachers of their respective school has coordinated with the team in distribution of our self-made questionnaires to the school kids. Though the questionnaires were in English, but for their accurate and better understanding, translated into Tigrinya and Amharic (local languages) and explained to them. The students were instructed to express their views as free as possible without any kind of pressure. There was no compulsion to reply each and every question. If the student is not feeling free to express oneself related to any question, he can leave the questions or even may express in his own language. The students were given 10 minutes to reply and then the data papers were collected. Some of the data were interpreted from local language to English with the help of same school teachers.

**2.2. Results**

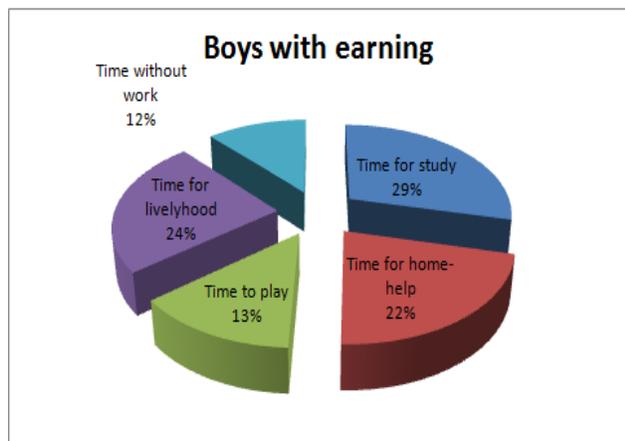
An experimental sample of 359 volunteers, with 209 male and 150 female students have participated in this survey. In the sample, average age of boys was  $16.67 \pm 1.4$  years and of girls  $16.57 \pm 1.03$  years. The first and foremost outcome originated from this sample's study was : one out of every three boys is struggling for livelihood by engaging his time for earning money, similarly, one of every five girls has engaging her time for earning their own bread to live-on.

**2.3. Comparison of Time Distribution among Boys**

The spectrum of time schedule management between the males with and without earning has been portrayed in graph no. 1 as follow:

**GRAPH No-1**

**COMPARATIVE ANALYSIS OF TIME EXPENDITURE BETWEEN THE BOYS, WHO STRUGGLE FOR OWN LIVELIHOOD AND WHO LIVES BETTER PART OF LIVE**

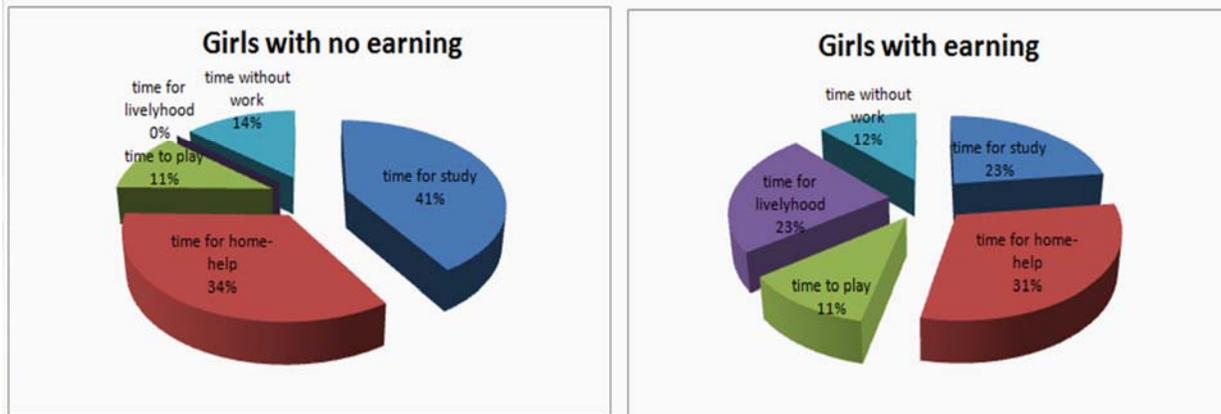


On analyzing the above presented pie-charts, one thing is clear that the self-maintained and own livelihood earning male subjects have an intense effect on their day-to-day normal living style. It is evident on the basis of evaluation from the above said graphs, it can be stated safely that boys with earning can spend only 29% of time on their education whereas boys of non-earning group are spending 39% of time on study. Similarly, other factors such as time for play and time without any work: the earning boys spend 13% &

12% of their time respectively, as compared to 17% & 23% of the boys who are free to live. On the other hand, the earning boys had to pay-out majority of their time in household activities and livelihood earning, i.e. 22% and 24% as compared to 21% and 0% by boys who get cared/fully supported by family adults.

The time management of female students on the basis of the persuasion for bread-earning versus the elderly supported one's have been presented in graph no. 2 as below:\*\*

**GRAPH No-2**  
**COMPARATIVE ANALYSIS OF TIME EXPENDITURE BETWEEN THE GIRLS, WHO STRUGGLE FOR OWN LIVELIHOOD AND WHO LIVES BETTER PART OF LIVE.**



There is an approximately analogous depiction in pie-chart. The earning girls are spending 23% of their time in searching and securing livelihood to pull on. For the compensation of this time they have to sacrifice it in other spans of time, such as these are utilizing only 23% of time on education as compared to 41% of time disbursed for education by the girls who are totally supported by family adults. The interesting fact that appears from this study is whether they earn or not, they spare only 11% of time for play activities. In case of house hold activities, girls who won't earn for livelihood spends more time, i.e. 34% of their time while the girls who work for bread earning, spends 31% of time only. Other surprising result upcoming from the survey is time utilized for without work is 14% and 12% only whether girls earn or not earn for livelihood respectively.

### 3. Discussion

According to American Time Use Survey (ATUS) to elucidate the full range of daily activities and focus on specific dimensions of time-use that may be important for teenagers' cognitive in their social development based on-time in paid work, time utilization in studies and time for housework & helping in child care. Whereas, in order to understand the behavior of Mekellian kids, efforts have been made to analyze these observations focusing our concentration on the factors like time for study, time for household activities, time for play, time for livelihood earning and time spent for without any work. In this study we aimed to discuss the above factors in the light of the differences between the Mekelian employed and elderly cared kids. Furthermore, we tried to focus ourselves on the effect of timing on social and educational life style after the exclusion of school hours.

#### 3.1. Timing for Household activities

Parents may enlist, indeed expect that their teenage children may take responsibilities around the house-hold activities such as the girls are expected to help mother in cleaning, washing and cooking especially, during different religious and ritual occasions, house hold functions and even in daily life. Similarly, boys are expected to help parents in their business, farming, and religious activity and like on.

Earlier survey reports have suggested that there are both kind- positive and negative- effects of such types of responsibilities on the behavior of adolescent or teenager kids. For instance, the development of responsibility, maturity, an ability to plan for future, a concern for others, and a feeling of being part of the family may be facilitated by sharing responsibilities [Smolensky & Gootman 2003; Aronson *et al.* 1996; McHale *et al.* 1990] [6]. Conversely, adolescents' increased responsibilities may force them to assume adult roles prematurely, that become the reason of increasing stress, anger, anxiety, depression and decreasing opportunities to participate in extracurricular activities [Smolensky & Gootman 2003; Clark-Kauffman *et al.* 2002; Capizzano *et al.* 2004] [3, 8]. According to American researchers [Gager *et al.* 1999] [7] there are similar reports observed among 2000 higher school kids (boys & girls) who spend approx 15% of time in house hold activities. The outcome of our pilot survey (n=359) was that overall 28.9% boys and 31.5% girls are engaged in house-hold activity. As per our findings the basic focus of parents to make their wards independent as soon as possible. On one side, it seems a wise thinking of the guardians but at the same time they forget that these steps could create undue early pressure which causes hindrance in the development of their normal life. It is our suggestion that parents should be aware of the

negative aspects and be ready to modify the means and ways of child care and nurture process that may enhance the level of maturity in their psychological and physiological behavior.

### 3.2. Time for play

Playing with friends has several advantages besides making them healthy. In an article “Why parents should push their kids to play team sports” published by “Grown & Flown-Parenting never ends” collected many research articles and affirmed that kids-play are less likely to use drugs, smokes, illegal sex, unhealthy eating habits. Moreover, team games makes boys five times and girls thirty times happier as compared to non-playing kids. Girls develop better social sense of belonging. Even sports make kids well cooperative, disciplined and well committed. According to Kelvin Kniffin, professor of behavioral sciences at Cornell University stated that kids involved in team games are preferred by job interviewer. Perkin [2004] [10] stated that adolescent, who involve in sports is eight times active as compared to those who remain un-involved up to the age of twenty four. According to the statement of GAO [2012] [11] that sports can develop concentration, attention, cognitive skills, attitudes, academic behavior, classroom behaviors like on.

As per our survey we found that boys cared by elderly, invest 17% of their time in playing with friends where as 13% time investment by employed kids. More over the girls only spend 11% of time for playing games with their friends, which is remarkably lower than boys. Even same result has been reported by Jilian Winner et.al [2009] [12]. Based on above facts, journalist Michelle Castillo from CBS News channel [April 3, 2012] [13] stated that parents are not encouraging the participation of their children in playing activities, especially of young girls, which becomes the root cause of hindrances in their physical, mental and cognitive development. This results in developing the dreadful effects on their educational career and health, as well. As per our assumption the elderly cared boys can spend sufficient time for play, whereas employed kids and even parental cared girls have very little time for the playing with the friends which future can hamper their educational and social life.

### 3.3. Time for study.

During achieving school or degree programs, the basic question comes how many hours do a students need to study? To answer this Utsa state University Academic resource center calculated on the basis of subject credit hour and its difficulty level. For most difficult subject, it should be 3 Hrs of study and least difficult be 1 Hr of study. Reed W. Larson [2001] [20] stated that, on daily average base European school kids spends 25% to 34.37% of their time for education where as in United States it ranges between 9.3% to 15.6% and in East Asia it is 34.37% to 46.87%.

From our survey we found earning boys spends 29% & girls even lower i.e 25% of time for education, whereas contemporary free living boys spends 39% whereas girls 41%. Though the time spending by Mekellian kids are same as European or Asian kids, but the above difference in study time between employed kids and free to live kids of Mekelle, had shown an impact on livelihood earning by teenagers, as a very serious and negative effect on their education. The employed teenagers are on their best to make the survival and improve themselves by education, but the amount of time to be deputed for studies is not enough like their

companions, and thus get failed to compete the contemporaries at national and international level exams which deprived them form higher education. Such factor is not only making hindrance for the kids or for a family, but also it is a suicidal for the region and nation.

### 3.4. Time for livelihood.

The objective of our survey is to study the effect of adolescent kids spending time for livelihood and its influence on their education. In our survey sample we found that every third boy and every fifth girl child is struggling for earning their own bread. On an average boys spend 197 minutes a day whereas girls are spending 220 minutes per day. According to Christopher Heady [2000] [15] its consequence will be a substantial effect on learning achievements in the key areas of reading and mathematics. Moreover, according to Beegle & Dehejia [2004] [16] the other consequences are less attendance in schools, lower attention towards academic fields and lack of motivation towards learning. This kind of problems is seen in sub-Saharan Africa and south Asia [Riho Sakurai-2006] [17].

### 3.5. Time for No-work activity.

The no-work activity is also known as “alone time activity”. There are several benefits of no time activity in the lifestyle of kids as they can amuse themselves, ignite imagination along with sparks creativity. Even kids can focus on their interest and utilize the time more meaningfully. They try to become self-sufficient and make an effort to find solution of their own and can elevate their own self-esteem [Susan K.Perry-2011, Carmen Sakurai-2014] [18, 19]. As per our assumption this is the time where kids can express what they feel and think which further relaxes their psychological pressure and helps them to learn new things. As per our survey we found that the employed kids having lesser time for alone time activity as compared to elderly cared kids. Moreover, the boys supported by elders, enjoys 23% of time for alone time activities, whereas girls get only 14% of time for unaccompanied work activity.

## 4. Conclusion

This survey related to the employed teenagers revealed that they are under much stress as compared to their counterpart who is under the care of elders. One of its positive side is that teenagers who work for their own livelihood become self-dependent, but due to modest age, immature thinking and lack of correct decisive power these kids comes in contact with the anti-social elements and become their disciples, who force them to disservice action in their life, like crime, illegal national activities and so on [Reed W. Larson-2001] [20]. However, we feel that Mekelle cultural society won't push their kids on illegal activities, but we are scared that employed kids are suffering or going to suffer problems such as depression, stress & associated troubles. In addition, the scarcity of educational time is affecting their educational-life as well future life style. It is interesting to note that self-bread earning kids are truly struggling for better life and trying to focus on education by compromising their time for playing and leisure activities. Here we feel, it is a strong hindrance toward their physical growth and natural thinking developing capacity, which is important for the kids for the growth. In our study we found employed boys spending 46% of time in work activities (paid + unpaid) whereas female are contributing 54% of time, as a result due

to physical stress and mental strain these kids unable to focus on education properly as they need.

### 5. Recommendation

Though the Govt. of Ethiopia has put all efforts for the development and upgrading the living standard of her fellow-countrymen. The researchers suspect that the national policies, somewhere lacking a few important facts for which country is paying heavy penalty and facing very bad consequences. The researchers suggest that country policy makers, educationalists, political leaders and qualified, literate, elderly and experienced citizens should share a table and take such action where every child can enjoy his life and can focus on his study, so one can get opportunity to grow and make one's comfortable, happy and healthy life. In future, they can lead the nation in much better manner. The researchers suggest that Juvenile employment should be declared as a serious crime and maximum punishment should be implied. Moreover, such disadvantageous children should be cared in foster home, govern by regional public sectors and to be financed by taxpayers, corporate, religious and community services / centers and commercials organizations. Being a citizen, awareness programs should be conducted by different educational bodies, supported by local leaders. Under very poor economic situation, kids should be encouraged to join vocational courses from where a proper learning and earning system could be maintained. For example, the Wathnakpheap project in Cambodia targeted children and young people in a rural area. The main objective was to reduce youngster helplessness through education and skills training programs. The project established skills training programs based on market demand identified in the targeted communities and on the availability of local natural resources, such as bamboo and rattan. Such action can be taken by Ethiopian society for proper mutual development and growth.

Another favorable step is through developing social peer network system in school teacher, parents and social leaders. They can take initiation, in which the school going kids can encourage the disadvantage youth (friends) to help them to focus on education or by helping them to learn in better way. A similar project done by ISAT implemented a project in the mining community of Peru that empowered adolescents in the community to raise awareness among their peers of the dangers of premature entry to the workplace and the benefits of going to school.

Last but not the least, Govt. should think over the temporary employment to outstanding disadvantage kids in their own schools, such as teaching assistance for primary kids which is one of the successful outcome in many NGO's running schools in India.

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