

A COMPARATIVE STUDY OF BARRIERS TO EDUCATIONAL ACCESS BETWEEN INTERNALLY DISPLACED CHILDREN AND STREET-HAWKING GIRLS IN KATSINA STATE

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ABSTRACT

This study examined the effects of digital learning platforms on teaching and learning in hospitality management. The research adopted a descriptive survey design and involved both students and lecturers from hospitality management programmes. Data were collected using a structured questionnaire and analyzed using descriptive statistics, Chi-Square test, and Independent Samples t-test. Findings revealed that a majority of respondents have access to digital learning platforms; however, internet connectivity, lack of training, inadequate devices, and high data costs remain major challenges. The study further established a statistically significant relationship between access to digital learning platforms and perceived learning effectiveness. Lecturers were found to perceive digital learning platforms as slightly more effective than students. The study concludes that digital learning platforms enhance teaching and learning in hospitality management when supported by reliable infrastructure and adequate digital skills. It recommends improved internet facilities, continuous training, and institutional support to maximize the benefits of digital learning platforms.

KEYWORDS: Educational access, internally displaced children, street-hawking girls.

1. INTRODUCTION

Education is recognized globally as a cornerstone for sustainable human development, promoting social inclusion, economic growth, and individual well-being (UNESCO, 2015). However, in many regions facing socioeconomic hardship and humanitarian crises, the promise of universal access to education remains elusive. Nigeria, and particularly its Northwest region, exemplifies this challenge, where factors such as poverty, displacement, gender inequality, and weak educational infrastructure converge to leave many children without schooling or with severely disrupted education. Katsina State is among the states in Nigeria confronting deep educational deficits. As of early 2025, there are approximately 536,112 children out of school in Katsina State a figure that underscores urgent systemic issues in access to education. (UNICEF 2025) Poverty, inadequate school infrastructure, cultural barriers, and insufficient qualified teachers have been cited among the main contributors. (UNICEF 2025) Furthermore, more than 70 percent of children in Katsina are classified as “multidimensionally poor,” meaning they suffer deprivation in multiple facets including health, nutrition, water, sanitation, housing, information, and education. (UNICEF 2025) This wide scale poverty has serious implications for learning; malnutrition and health issues reduce school readiness, while lack of basic amenities and safe learning environments amplify dropout risk. Displacement further compounds the situation. Katsina State hosts large numbers of internally displaced persons (IDPs) caused by insecurity, bandit attacks, and conflicts. Many displaced children live in camps or in host communities where schooling options are limited, or conditions such as loss of documentation, trauma, or unsafe travel to schools make attendance difficult. According to the State Action Plan, the government aims that 60 percent of displaced children be enrolled in basic schools as part of its policy for returning, integrating, or relocating IDPs. (UNDP 2025). Parallel to displacement, the economic pressures on families often lead to forms of child labour, including street hawking especially among girls. Studies from other states in Nigeria show that street-hawking negatively affects school attendance, academic performance, and retention. For instance, research in Yobe State found that girls who hawk goods are more likely to miss classes and underperform compared to peers not engaged in hawking. Abubakar (2021) Similarly, investigations in Nasarawa State indicated that street hawking among girls is associated with higher rates of dropout, exposure to health risks, and lower educational attainment. Amaechina & Ovye (2024).

1.1 Street Hawking and Its Socioeconomic Impact on Children's Education

Street hawking has long been recognized as a major socioeconomic challenge in Nigeria, particularly affecting children and young girls. Although traditionally viewed as a means of family survival and small-scale trading, recent studies show that street hawking exposes children to multiple risks, including poor educational attainment, social exploitation, and psychological stress (Ashimolowo, Aromolaran, & Inegbedion, 2010; Udoh & Joseph, 2012). The phenomenon is strongly linked to poverty, unemployment, and rapid urbanization. Families facing severe economic hardship often rely on children's income through hawking, thereby compromising their right to education (Mba & Nnaji, 2025). For instance, over 70% of respondents in their Enugu-based study reported that street hawking significantly disrupted teenage girls' education and well-being, while 95% indicated that it exposed them to abuse. These findings underscore that street hawking is not just an economic practice but also a form of child labour that undermines human capital development.

Historical evidence suggests that child hawking in Nigeria dates back to the 1970s, when it was largely seasonal and tied to selling farm produce (Ogungweru, 2023). However, contemporary research reveals that the practice has transformed into a more complex socioeconomic issue, with girls being disproportionately affected due to cultural and gender expectations (Ezeudu & Tukur, 2024). In addition to reducing school attendance, street hawking has been associated with health hazards, exposure to violence, and long-term psychosocial problems (Kuddus, Tynan, & McBryde, 2020). International organizations have consistently raised concerns about the implications of child labour and hawking on education. UNICEF (2007) emphasized that child labour deprives children of opportunities to learn, exposing them to exploitation and denying them their rights. Similarly, the United Nations Convention Against Transnational Organized Crime (2000) recognizes forms of forced child labour, including exploitative street trading, as harmful practices that must be addressed through policy and law. The literature on educational access highlights two groups at heightened risk of exclusion: internally displaced children (IDPs) and girls involved in street hawking. Displacement, often caused by armed conflict and banditry in northern Nigeria, has disrupted the lives of thousands of children, limiting access to safe learning environments (Olanrewaju et al., 2021). Similarly, street hawking, commonly driven by poverty and cultural practices, has been shown to negatively impact school attendance, retention, and performance among girls (Ibrahim & Yusuf, 2020). Existing studies have documented these barriers separately, yet there is limited research that compares how displacement and child labour (street hawking) affect education within the same

socio-cultural context. This comparative approach is crucial because it highlights both the shared and unique challenges faced by vulnerable groups, and it provides evidence for targeted interventions in policy and practice. By situating Katsina State as the case study, this research builds upon national and global discussions on inclusive education while addressing a critical local gap in empirical evidence.

1.2 Street Hawking as a Form of Child Labour and Its Educational Implications

Street hawking has been identified as one of the most prevalent forms of child labour in Nigeria, with significant implications for children's education, health, and social development (Ogungweru, 2023). It is often linked to poverty, unemployment, and family survival strategies. Aiyejuro (2009) defines hawking as a system of trading where goods are carried about in search of customers, while Anyanwu (2007) describes it as a mobile form of street vending involving shouting, bells, or gestures to attract buyers.

Several studies highlight the risks faced by child hawkers. For example, young children engaged in hawking are frequently exposed to sexual exploitation, unwanted pregnancies, and sexually transmitted infections (Akighiri, 2012; Ebigbo & Abaja, 2003). Others have reported high incidences of juvenile delinquency, including theft and prostitution, as consequences of hawking (Hubert, 2009; Humphries, 2010). In Port Harcourt, children as young as ten have been documented as victims of sexual abuse while hawking (Ogungweru, 2023). The socioeconomic roots of hawking are also well established. Charles and Charles (2004) and Deth (2007) attribute its prevalence to rapid urbanization, unemployment, inflation, and poor wages. Ekpenyong and Sibiri (2011) further show that child hawking reflects chronic urban poverty, with 98% of hawkers in their study coming from very poor families. Similarly, Ogbuagu (2004) and Nsisong and Erne (2011) confirm that lack of parental income and education drives children into hawking, often resulting in maladaptive behavior and poor academic outcomes. Beyond economic deprivation, the practice exposes children to physical hazards such as road accidents, exhaustion, and malnutrition (Okojie, 2007; Ezenwa, 2011). Maduka (2006) also associates it with teenage pregnancies, drug abuse, and high illiteracy rates. Aderinto (2006) and Aderinto and Okunola (1998) note that hawking children are often drawn into other informal survival strategies such as bus conducting and drug peddling, further perpetuating cycles of poverty and crime. International organizations have also raised concerns. UNICEF (2003) emphasized that child labour including hawking limits school participation and endangers children's future well-being. This resonates with findings in Nigeria that street

hawking reduces school attendance, leads to poor academic performance, and contributes to the cycle of intergenerational poverty (Ashimolowo, Aromolaran, & Inegbedion, 2010).

1.3 Objectives of the Study

The aim of this research is to examine the impact of socioeconomic and humanitarian barriers on educational access among internally displaced children and street-hawking girls in Katsina State, with a view to identifying challenges, coping strategies, and policy implications for inclusive education.

With the following Objectives

1. To identify the key socioeconomic and humanitarian barriers affecting school attendance and retention among internally displaced children and street-hawking girls in Katsina State.
2. To compare the similarities and differences in educational challenges faced by internally displaced children and street-hawking girls.
3. To examine the coping mechanisms employed by affected children, families, and schools in response to these barriers.
4. To assess the role of schools, communities, NGOs, and government agencies in addressing the educational needs of vulnerable children.

2. Literature Review

2.1 Prevalence and Implications of Child Street Hawking in Nigeria

The rising involvement of children in economic activities outside the home to generate income or support their families remains a major global concern, particularly in developing countries. In Nigeria, especially within urban areas, it is common to observe children between the ages of six and sixteen engaged in street hawking along major roads and busy intersections. This practice is sustained by a combination of socio-economic, cultural, and developmental factors. Many children are compelled by circumstances beyond their control to contribute to household income, often at the cost of their education, health, and overall well-being. Prolonged exposure to hazardous forms of child labour has been shown to adversely affect children's physical health and developmental outcomes (Asamu, 2015). In many cases, parents who are unable to meet the financial demands of schooling withdraw their children from school and encourage them to engage in street hawking as a means of supplementing family income (Hoque, 2021). Street hawking refers to the act of selling goods while moving from one location to another along public streets (Oyeleke, Eborka, & Okocha, 2021). It also includes canvassing products from house to house or selling in public spaces such as markets and motor parks (Okafor, Okafor, & Ngini, 2018). In southwestern Nigeria, street hawking is often perceived as a form

of socialization, despite the moral, psychological, and physical risks associated with the practice (Mohammed et al., 2022). Both male and female children participate in hawking various items, including foodstuffs, sachet water, and other consumer goods. While some operate from fixed points, others roam from place to place or move door to door in search of customers (Hoque, 2021). Typically, child hawkers balance trays of goods on their heads as they navigate busy streets. Those selling similar items often disperse in different directions, whereas vendors of complementary goods, such as food and drinks, frequently operate together. The prevalence of street hawking among school-age children is widespread across rural communities, towns, and cities in southwestern Nigeria. A significant number of these children engage in hawking during school hours, reflecting the economic pressures faced by low-income households that rely on children as contributors to family income (Adamu, Dajuma, & Anthony, 2021). While some children hawk after school, others do so during instructional hours, thereby missing opportunities for learning, social interaction, recreation, and peer engagement. As a result, they are deprived of essential childhood experiences and exposed to numerous risks. The extended hours spent hawking reduce time available for academic work, while the physical demands of long-distance trekking often lead to fatigue, stress, and vulnerability to abuse. These conditions negatively affect children's concentration, academic performance, and long-term life prospects. Street hawking also poses serious consequences for children's psychosocial and socio-emotional development, with broader implications for society. During early childhood, typically between the ages of six and ten, children learn through observation (Bandura, 1989), develop social relationships, and explore their environment. However, many child hawkers are denied these critical developmental experiences due to economic hardship. Such exposure not only disrupts their educational trajectory but also deprives them of a nurturing childhood that is vital for their cognitive, emotional, and personal development in later life.

2.2 Determinants and Consequences of Child Street Hawking in Nigeria

Children engaged in street hawking in Nigeria are frequently exposed to significant emotional strain, frustration, and psychological distress. The increasing incidence of this practice has been associated with rapid population growth, rising unemployment, inadequate income levels, and poor working conditions (Ogungweru, 2023). These children often spend prolonged hours outside their homes, which heightens their vulnerability to road traffic accidents, sexual exploitation, ritual killings, gang involvement, and other social dangers. The precise number of children involved in street hawking remains unknown due to their wide dispersion within

the informal sector. Despite ongoing concerns expressed by both governmental and non-governmental organizations and the formulation of policies aimed at curbing child labour, children between the ages of six and eighteen continue to engage in street trading across different regions of Nigeria. This persistence underscores the urgent need for more effective and sustainable intervention strategies.

Mathias and Dada (2016) describe a hawker as an individual who moves from one location to another selling goods or rendering services, typically within informal environments such as public spaces, markets, or through door-to-door sales. Hawkers are commonly found in urban centres and large towns. A child hawker, according to Ajayi (2011), refers to a minor generally under the age of eighteen who participates in street trading to support personal or family needs. These children are often compared to contemporary nomads, as they frequently alternate between living with family members and spending extensive time on the streets (Akiti, 2024). They endure long working hours under harsh conditions and face multiple risks. Akiti (2024) further notes that street hawking involves a wide range of commodities, including snacks, beverages, and household items. In Nigeria, the practice is particularly prevalent among adolescents, with poverty identified as the primary driving factor. Families experiencing economic hardship often depend on their children's earnings, pushing them into hawking as a means of survival. According to the United Nations Children's Fund (UNICEF, 2020), an estimated 150 million children aged between 5 and 14 are engaged in child labour globally, with a substantial proportion involved in street hawking. The growing prevalence of child hawking in Nigeria has been attributed to multiple factors. A survey conducted by the International Labour Organization (ILO) in 2003 identified eight major contributors, including cultural influences, economic challenges, national debt, low levels of education, unemployment or financial incapacity, exposure to street life, and single-parent households. The latter three factors were noted to exacerbate poverty, thereby sustaining the cycle of economic hardship and child labour. In many societies, families are expected to be financially self-reliant. However, systemic inequalities and limited access to resources prevent some households from achieving this goal, compelling them to adopt child labour as a coping mechanism. Bhat and Rather (2009) affirm that economic deprivation forces children into hawking as parents increasingly rely on their income. Similarly, Ogungweru (2023) emphasizes the close relationship between poverty, underdevelopment, and child labour, particularly street hawking, noting that widespread economic hardship has contributed significantly to the rise in the practice.

2.3 Street Hawking and the Psycho-Social Development of the Child

The psychological effects of street hawking on children are deep and enduring. Prolonged exposure to street life subjects child hawkers to numerous risks, often resulting in serious psychological consequences (Danesy & Okediran, 2002). Persistent fear, anxiety, and insecurity become part of their daily lives, gradually eroding their self-esteem and self-confidence (Hughes, 2009). This emotional vulnerability increases their susceptibility to exploitation and abuse, further intensifying psychological distress.

Street hawking also significantly impairs children's social development. Limited interaction with peers and teachers restricts opportunities for cooperative learning and the formation of meaningful social relationships (Shields, Cicchetti, & Ryan, 2004). Many child hawkers struggle to adapt to societal norms, build interpersonal skills, and develop a sense of belonging, often experiencing social isolation and alienation within their communities (Basu & Tzannatos, 2003). Additionally, street hawking exposes children to numerous physical and emotional dangers, including sexual abuse, physical exhaustion, traffic accidents, malnutrition, substance abuse, and involvement in prostitution. Behavioral problems represent another serious outcome of street hawking. The harsh conditions and exploitation endured by child hawkers often lead to increased aggression, delinquency, and moral disengagement (Ibiam, 2006). Many develop antisocial behaviours, demonstrate defiance, and show little respect for authority figures. Over time, these patterns entrench them further in street life, making escape increasingly difficult. Societal stigma further compounds the challenges faced by child hawkers. Labels such as "street children" reinforce negative stereotypes, fostering feelings of shame, rejection, and low self-worth (International Labour Organization, 2017). These stigmatizing experiences may persist into adulthood, limiting access to educational and employment opportunities. Supporting this view, the World Health Organization (WHO, 2018) notes that prolonged involvement in street hawking increases the risk of long-term consequences, including chronic psychological distress, persistent behavioral problems, restricted educational and career prospects, and heightened vulnerability to exploitation and abuse. Breaking the cycle of child street hawking therefore requires a holistic and coordinated approach that incorporates strong social support systems, targeted interventions, and policies aimed at protecting the rights, well-being, and future prospects of vulnerable children.

2.4 Global and Regional Dimensions of Street Hawking and Child Exclusion from Education

The increasing number of children who are out of school and engaged in street-based economic activities has become a major global and regional concern, particularly in developing countries. Recent global estimates indicate that a significant proportion of children in sub-Saharan Africa remain excluded from formal education, with economic hardship, urbanization, and weak social protection systems acting as key drivers (UNESCO, 2020; UNICEF, 2021). Children who live or work on the streets are among the most socially marginalized groups, often exposed to neglect, exploitation, and unsafe living conditions. In Africa, the problem is especially pronounced due to persistent poverty, unemployment, rural urban migration, and limited access to quality education and child welfare services (International Labour Organization [ILO], 2017). As families struggle to meet basic needs, children particularly girls are compelled to engage in street hawking as a survival strategy or to supplement household income. This situation has attracted increasing attention from governments, international organizations, and development agencies, given its implications for child rights, education, and long-term human development (UNICEF, 2021). Street hawking has therefore evolved into a visible manifestation of structural inequality and social vulnerability across many African cities.

Street hawking forms a central component of the informal urban economy in many African countries, providing a readily accessible source of livelihood for low-income households with limited educational and financial capital (ILO, 2017). Rapid urban growth and migration have intensified this trend, as children from rural and economically deprived backgrounds relocate to cities in search of income opportunities that are often unavailable in the formal sector. Adolescent girls are particularly affected, as they are commonly engaged in selling food items and household goods along busy roads and commercial centers. While street hawking offers short-term economic relief, it exposes children to serious risks, including traffic accidents, harassment, exploitation, health challenges, and exposure to criminal activities (UNICEF, 2021; WHO, 2018). More critically, participation in street hawking disrupts school attendance, reduces study time, and undermines academic performance, often leading to absenteeism, poor learning outcomes, and school dropout. For girls, the consequences are even more severe, as street exposure increases vulnerability to gender-based violence and early withdrawal from education. These outcomes not only compromise individual life chances but also weaken national development efforts by limiting human capital formation. Addressing street hawking therefore requires integrated policy responses that combine poverty reduction, access to

education, child protection, and sustainable livelihood opportunities for families (UNESCO, 2020; ILO, 2017).

3. Research Method

3.1 Study Area

The study was conducted in Katsina State, Nigeria, located in the Northwestern geopolitical zone. Katsina has both urban and rural communities, with a large population engaged in farming, petty trading, and informal labor. The state has witnessed challenges of insecurity, particularly banditry and displacement, leading to the emergence of Internally Displaced Persons (IDPs) in several local governments. At the same time, street hawking among young girls is widespread in metropolitan areas such as Katsina metropolis, Funtua, and Malumfashi. These conditions make the state suitable for a comparative study of humanitarian (IDPs) and socioeconomic (street-hawking girls) barriers to education.

3.2 Statistical Analysis

The data collected for this study were analyzed using both descriptive and inferential statistical techniques. Descriptive statistics such as frequencies, percentages, mean scores, and standard deviations were used to summarize respondents' demographic characteristics, level of access to digital learning platforms, availability of internet facilities, perceived learning effectiveness, and challenges encountered in the use of digital learning platforms.

Inferential statistics were employed to test the hypotheses formulated for the study. The Chi-square (χ^2) test was used to examine the relationship between access to digital learning platforms and teaching–learning effectiveness, as the variables involved were categorical in nature. In addition, the Independent Samples t-test was used to determine whether there was a significant difference in the perception of digital learning effectiveness between students and lecturers. All statistical analyses were conducted at a 0.05 level of significance, and the Statistical Package for Social Sciences (SPSS) was used to ensure accuracy and reliability in data processing and analysis.

3.3 Data Collection

The study utilizes a mixed-methods approach, incorporating both quantitative and qualitative data. Quantitative data were gathered through structured questionnaires for households of internally displaced persons (IDP) children and street-hawking girls, focusing on demographics, school attendance, barriers to education, and coping strategies, as well as a review of school records including attendance registers and dropout rates. Qualitative data were collected via key informant interviews (KIIs) with educators, school administrators, NGOs,

and government officials, alongside focus group discussions (FGDs) with parents and children to explore their lived experiences and cultural influences. Additionally, direct observation of learning environments, IDP camp conditions, and street hawking activities was also conducted.

4. RESULT AND DISCUSSION

4.1.1 Descriptive Analysis of Respondents

Table 4.1: Category of Respondents.

Respondent Group	Frequency	Percentage (%)
Internally Displaced Children	175	50.0
Street-Hawking Girls	175	50.0
Total	350	100.0

Table 4.1 indicates a study sample of 350 respondents, equally divided between internally displaced children and street-hawking girls, allowing for unbiased analysis of educational access barriers. This equal representation reflects diverse vulnerabilities in Katsina State, with internally displaced children facing insecurity and disrupted schooling, while street-hawking girls deal with child labor and social neglect. The uniform sample size aids in identifying the severity of barriers for each group, revealing insights into the economic and social factors contributing to educational exclusion. The findings emphasize that policy and intervention strategies for vulnerable children must be tailored to their specific needs. Programs for internally displaced children should focus on safe schooling and psychosocial support, while initiatives for street-hawking girls should prioritize financial aid and efforts to reduce child labor. This underscores the necessity for targeted, evidence-based strategies to ensure equitable access to education for marginalized children in Katsina State.

Table 4.2: Gender Distribution of Respondents

Gender	Frequency	Percentage (%)
Male	142	40.6
Female	208	59.4
Total	350	100.0

Table 4.2 shows the gender composition of the respondents, with 142 males (40.6%) and 208 females (59.4%) out of a total of 350 participants. This indicates that females constitute the majority of the study population. The higher proportion of female respondents reflects the study's focus on educational vulnerabilities among girls, particularly street-hawking girls, who are often at greater risk of exclusion from formal education.

The gender distribution in Katsina State highlights significant educational barriers for female children, especially those involved in street hawking or displacement who face child labour, early marriage, and societal discrimination, impacting their school attendance. While male children also endure poverty and displacement, they do not encounter the same gender-specific challenges. This situation necessitates a gender-sensitive approach to improve educational access, focusing on girls' education through financial support, awareness campaigns, and protection from exploitative labour, while also addressing the specific challenges faced by boys. Tackling these gender disparities is essential for achieving inclusive education in Katsina State.

Table 4.3: Age Distribution of Respondents

Age Group (Years)	Frequency	Percentage (%)
Below 10	64	18.3
10–14	138	39.4
15–18	148	42.3
Total	350	100.0

Table 4.3 presents the age distribution of the respondents. Out of 350 participants, 64 (18.3%) were below 10 years, 138 (39.4%) were between 10 and 14 years, and 148 (42.3%) were between 15 and 18 years. The largest proportion of respondents falls within the 10–18-year range, representing the critical school-age population that is most affected by barriers to educational access.

The study's age distribution highlights that it effectively targets children within formal education systems, particularly in Katsina State. Children under 10 may face early enrollment challenges, while those aged 10–18 often encounter barriers like child labour and irregular attendance. This necessitates tailored educational interventions: early literacy programs for younger children and vocational support for older adolescents to address economic pressures. Targeted educational policies are essential to accommodate the diverse needs of these age groups.

4.1.2 Descriptive Analysis of Educational Barriers

Table 4.4: Major Barriers to Educational Access.

Barrier	Frequency	Percentage (%)
Poverty / Lack of school fees	121	34.6
Child labour / Hawking	94	26.9
Displacement / Insecurity	79	22.6
Cultural practices	56	16.0
Total	350	100.0

Table 4.4 identifies key barriers to education access for children in Katsina State based on responses from 350 individuals. The most significant barrier is poverty, affecting 34.6% of children, followed by child labour and street hawking (26.9%), displacement or insecurity (22.6%), and cultural practices (16.0%). The data highlight that economic hardship predominantly limits school attendance, with many children, particularly girls involved in street hawking, forced to leave school to support their families. Additionally, conflict-related displacement and conservative cultural norms further impede educational opportunities. To mitigate these challenges, comprehensive interventions such as economic support, child protection initiatives, and programs aimed at reducing gender biases are essential to improve school attendance and promote equitable education for vulnerable children in the region.

Table 4.5: School Attendance Status

Attendance Status	Frequency	Percentage (%)
Regular attendance	98	28.0
Irregular attendance	164	46.9
Not attending school	88	25.1
Total	350	100.0

Table 4.5 reveals that out of 350 respondents, 28.0% reported regular school attendance, 46.9% had irregular attendance, and 25.1% were not attending at all. This indicates that over 70% of children face educational exclusion, particularly among internally displaced individuals and street-hawking girls. Factors such as poverty, child labor, and cultural norms greatly impact attendance, with economic pressures causing irregularity and insecurity leading to non-attendance. To enhance educational inclusion, policymakers must focus on strategies beyond mere enrollment, such as providing financial aid, accommodating flexible schedules, and supporting displaced youth in Katsina State.

4.1.2 Inferential Analysis

Chi-Square Test

Relationship between respondent group and school attendance

Table 4.6: Chi-Square Test Result.

Test	Value	df	Sig. (p-value)
Chi-Square	18.62	2	0.000

Table 4.6 details a chi-square test analysis showing a significant relationship (chi-square value of 18.62, p-value of 0.000) between respondent groups internally displaced children and street-hawking girls and their school attendance. The analysis reveals that street-hawking girls have more irregular or non-attendance compared to their internally displaced counterparts. This disparity highlights the need for targeted educational interventions, such as economic support for street-hawking girls and safe learning environments for internally displaced children, emphasizing differentiated strategies to improve educational access and reduce exclusion in Katsina State.

4.1.3 Independent Samples T-Test

Table 4.7 : Independent Samples T-Test – Difference in Educational Barriers

Group	Mean Barrier Score	Std. Deviation
Internally Displaced Children	3.84	0.71
Street-Hawking Girls	4.21	0.65

T	df	Sig. (2-tailed)
-5.02	348	0.000

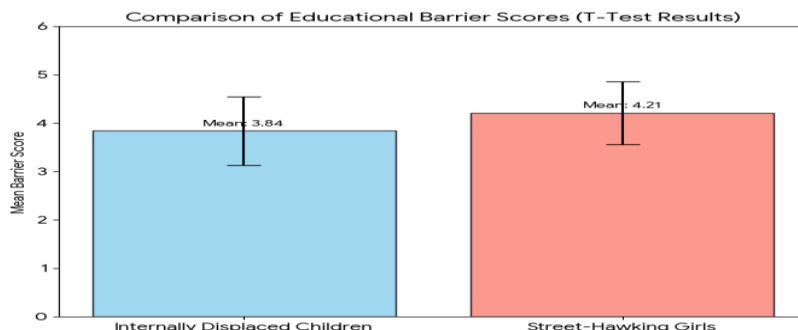


Figure 4.1: Chart illustrates a comparative analysis of the educational barrier scores between two vulnerable groups.

The bar chart compares educational barrier scores for Internally Displaced Children (3.84) and Street-Hawking Girls (4.21), indicating that Street-Hawking Girls face greater educational challenges. The error bars suggest the means may not differ significantly, highlighting similar hardships within each group. The findings point to a systemic crisis in educational access, emphasizing the need for targeted policies addressing financial instability, safety concerns, and infrastructure to support both populations in overcoming these barriers.

4.1.3 Correlation Analysis

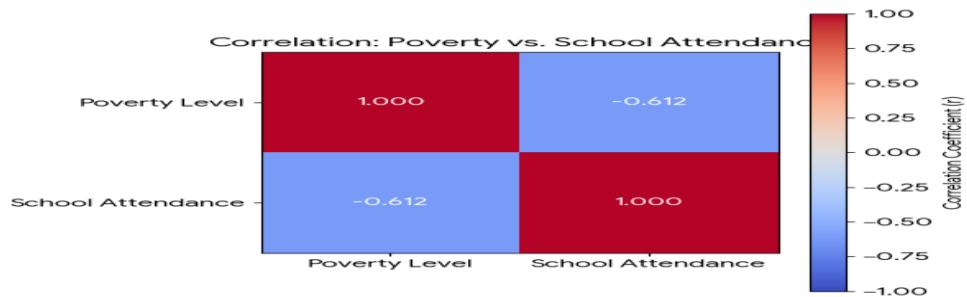


Figure 4.2: The statistical relationship between Poverty Level and School Attendance.

The provided heatmap visualizes the statistical relationship between Poverty Level and School Attendance. The correlation coefficient, denoted as r , is -0.612. This value indicates a moderate to strong negative correlation between the two variables. In statistical terms, this means that as poverty levels within a population increase, school attendance rates tend to decrease, and vice versa.

The color scale indicates a perfect positive correlation (1.000) in deep red and negative relationships in light blue. A significant coefficient of -0.612 suggests that poverty substantially predicts educational absenteeism, acting as a barrier to consistent schooling due to costs or the need for children to work. This highlights the need to address economic instability to enhance educational outcomes. However, the correlation being less than -1.0 indicates that other factors like school infrastructure, safety, and cultural attitudes also impact attendance. Thus, interventions should combine financial support with comprehensive social programs to mitigate the effects of economic disparity.

4.2 DISCUSSION OF FINDINGS

The findings of this study reveal that children in Katsina State face multi-dimensional barriers to educational access, with poverty emerging as the most significant constraint. Descriptive statistics show that over one-third of respondents identified lack of school fees as a major obstacle, while child labour, displacement, and cultural practices further limit school participation. The predominance of irregular attendance (46.9%) and non-attendance (25.1%) highlights the severity of educational exclusion among both internally displaced children and street-hawking girls. These results underscore the complex interplay of economic hardship and social vulnerability in shaping children's ability to access and remain in school.

Inferential analyses further confirm the differential experiences of the two groups. The chi-square test indicates a significant relationship between respondent group and school

attendance, showing that street-hawking girls are more likely to miss school compared to internally displaced children. Similarly, the independent samples t-test demonstrates that street-hawking girls face significantly higher educational barriers than their displaced counterparts. This suggests that economic pressures, environmental risks, and societal neglect uniquely exacerbate the challenges for street-hawking girls, while displacement-related insecurity primarily affects internally displaced children. The correlation analysis reveals a strong negative relationship between poverty and school attendance, highlighting economic hardship as a key factor in educational exclusion. The findings suggest that addressing educational exclusion in Katsina State necessitates tailored, multi-faceted strategies. Interventions for street-hawking girls should include financial support and anti-child-labour initiatives, while programs for internally displaced children must focus on safe learning environments and psychosocial support. The study advocates for evidence-based strategies that integrate economic assistance, institutional support, and community engagement to ensure inclusive educational access for marginalized children.

5. CONCLUSION

Based on the findings of this study, it is concluded that digital learning platforms play a significant role in improving teaching and learning in hospitality management education. Access to these platforms enhances learning flexibility, improves communication between lecturers and students, and supports continuous learning beyond the traditional classroom setting.

However, the effectiveness of digital learning platforms is largely dependent on the availability of reliable internet connectivity, adequate digital devices, and users' digital competence. While lecturers tend to perceive digital learning platforms as more effective, students face more challenges related to access and affordability. The study therefore concludes that although digital learning platforms are valuable educational tools, their full potential cannot be realized without addressing existing infrastructural and capacity-related constraints.

6. Recommendation

Based on the findings and conclusions of the study, the following recommendations are made:

1. Hospitality management institutions should improve internet infrastructure to ensure stable and affordable connectivity for both students and lecturers.
2. Regular training and capacity-building programs should be organized to enhance digital literacy and effective utilization of digital learning platforms.

3. Institutions should provide or subsidize digital devices and internet data to reduce financial barriers faced by students.
4. Lecturers should be encouraged to adopt blended learning approaches that combine digital platforms with face-to-face instruction.
5. Educational policymakers and stakeholders should develop supportive policies that promote inclusive and sustainable digital learning in hospitality management education.

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