



A Socio-Economic Study of Child Labour in Various Industries in India

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Abstract

According to UNICEF (United Nations International Children's Emergency Fund) India has the highest population of child labour. The document funded by UNICEF, contains abstracts of studies on child labour working in various industries. Every nation links its future with the present status of its children. The demand for child labour, related to technological change in today's developing economies, has not received much attention in contemporary debates on child labour. The present study was done to assess the effects of technological change and industry restructuring on the existence of child labour. Author have tries to observe the same phenomenon in the country.

Preface

The employment of children in India, in the form of slavery, was mentioned even in Kautilya's Arthashastra of 3rd Century B.C. in medieval period, children were normally placed as trainees under artisans and craftsmen certain crafts depends totally on the employment of children.

Global Scenario Empirical estimates of the ILO (International Labour Organization) show that the number of economically active children in the world in the age group 5-14 years was nearly 191 million in 2004, with a work participation rate of 15.8 per cent.

India has all along followed a proactive policy in addressing the problem of child labour and has always stood for constitutional, statutory and developmental measures that are required to eliminate child labour.

The Constitution of India has relevant provisions to secure compulsory universal primary education. Labour Commissions and Committees have gone into the problems of child labour and made extensive recommendations. India's judiciary, right up to the 2 apex level, has demonstrated profoundly empathetic responses against the practice of child



labour. Despite several proactive legislations, policies and judicial pronouncements, the problem of child labour persists as a challenge to the country.

Objectives of the Study

- To study socio-economic condition of Child Labour.
- To study child labour in relation to various industries.
- To study the prevention of child labour.

Socio-Economic Study of Child Labour

Children are the greatest gift to humanity. Childhood is an important and impressionable stage of human development as it holds the potential to the future development of any society. Child labour refers to the employment of children in any work that deprives them of their childhood, interferes with their ability to attend regular school, and that is mentally, physically, socially or morally dangerous and harmful.

Parents decide to send their child for engaging in a job as a desperate measure due to poor economic conditions. It is therefore no wonder that the poor households predominantly send their children to work in early ages of their life. One of the disconcerting aspects of child labour is that children are sent to work at the expense of education.

Hence, the more child workers in the economy, the lower the wages of jobs that children engage in (unskilled work). This creates a cycle of poverty: child labour leads to low wages, which leads to the need for more income in poor households, which leads to the need for child labour.

Child labour is classified into two groups in India: Main workers: Main workers are those workers who work for at least some months or more per year, and. Marginal child workers: Marginal child workers are those workers who work for less than 6 months in a year and work at any time during the year.

As defined by the convention, the worst forms of child labour include : Slavery or similar practices, Child trafficking, Forced recruitment into armed conflict, Sexual exploitation, Drug production and trafficking or other illegal acts, Debt bondage, Hazardous work that can cause injury or moral corruption.

Various Causes of Child Labour



Various causes of child labour like the curse of poverty, lack of educational resources, Social and economic backwardness, Addiction, disease or disability, The lure of cheap labour, Family tradition, Discrimination between boys and girls.

Child labourers are particularly vulnerable to abuse, and their families are often trapped in a cycle of poverty.

Greatest cause of child Labour is Poverty. Like so many other issues in the world, the root cause of child labour is poverty. Unemployment and the need to survive often lead families to make desperate decisions.

However, there are five sectors of note, for their high child labour employment and poor working conditions :Garment industry. Child labour runs rampant in India's garment industry, hidden away in small, owner-operated enterprises or home setups, Brick kilns, Unorganized sectors, Agriculture, Fireworks.

Some of the root causes which make children particularly vulnerable to child labour :Poverty, Lack of access to quality education, Poor access to decent work, Limited understanding of child labour, Natural disasters & climate change, Conflicts & mass migration, Fighting child labour.

Advantages and disadvantages of child Labour : 1) Children from a poor family can pay their school fees by working during their free time. 2) Some children in developing countries often help with their family business, which assists in the process of the products. 3) Child Labour is cheap. If a family has sick family members, the child can work and bring in income

Statewise Child Labour

As per the Census 2001, there are 1.26 crores economically active children in the age-group of 5-14 years. It was 1.13 crores in the 1991 Census.

Among the states, Uttar Pradesh accounts for a larger share of close to onefourth of all child labour in India followed by Andhra Pradesh. While Maharastra and West Bengal respectively garnered nine and eight percent of India's child employment.

Hazardous Occupation-wise Child Labour



General injuries like cuts, burns, lacerations, fractures and dizziness are very common. Sexual abuse, STDs, HIV/AIDS, drugs, alcoholism, sexual exploitation of girls, rape, prostitution are also the consequences of child labour. They also face physical neglect in food, clothing, shelter and medical treatment.

The occupation-wise data of children in this age group of 5-14 working in the non-agricultural sector has been classified. Though these occupations in the Census data do not match with the occupations listed as hazardous under the Child Labour (Prohibition & Regulation) Act, a tentative segregation of data into hazardous & non-hazardous occupations gives a broad estimation of children working in different occupations.

As per this data, 36.43 lakh children in the age group of 5-14 years are working in non-agricultural sector in the country, out of which 12.19 lakh children are working in hazardous occupations. Their distribution in some major hazardous occupations is given below:

Children involved in hazardous work comprise around 38.7 per cent of global child labour population. Among the different regions, largest number of child workers, 122 million constituting 64% was concentrated in Asia and the Pacific, within which India accounts for a substantial size. 3.2. In four years, from the year 2000 to 2004, the number of child labour globally fell by 11 per cent.

During this period the magnitude of children in hazardous work decreased by 26 per cent. The decline was even steeper (33 per cent) for children in hazardous work in the age group of 5-14 years. The global picture shows a declining trend i.e. the more harmful the work and the more vulnerable the children involved, the faster the decline.

Child Labour died during the Industrial Revolution. The children worked in dangerous conditions. According to statistics in 1900 there were 25,000 - 35,000 deaths and 1 million injuries occurred on industrial jobs, many of these victims would have been children.

Industry-wise Child Labour

Article 24 includes a prohibition against the employment of children under the age of 14 in factories, mines and other dangerous work.



Working in factories - Exposed to a factory environment with no health and safety regulations, children are forced to work in unhealthy atmospheres with toxic air, heavy machinery and hazardous chemicals.

Children performed all sorts of jobs including working on machines in factories, selling newspapers on street corners, breaking up coal at the coal mines, and as chimney sweeps. Sometimes children were preferred to adults because they were small and could easily fit between machines and into small spaces.

Industries that rely on child labour. According to the International Labour Organization (ILO), agriculture is where the worst and most common forms of child labour are found : Coffee, Cotton, Bricks, Garment industry, Sugarcane, Tobacco, Gold etc.

In the manufacturing sector, bricks, garments, textiles, footwear, carpets, and fireworks appear most frequently. In mined or quarried goods, gold, coal and diamonds are most common.

Child labour in India are employed with the majority (70%) in agriculture some in low-skilled labour-intensive sectors such as sari weaving or as domestic helpers, which require neither formal education nor training, but some in heavy industry such as coal mining.

Labour in India refers to employment in the economy of India. In 2020, there were around 501 million workers in India, the second largest after China. Out of which, agriculture industry consist of 41.19%, industry sector consist of 26.18% and service sector consist 32.33% of total labour force.

Globally there are 151.6 million children aged between five and 17 years in child labour. Half of these children are in hazardous work including in fashion supply chains.

Across India child labourers can be found in a variety of industries: in brick kilns, carpet weaving, garment making, domestic service, food and refreshment services (such as tea stalls), agriculture, fisheries and mining.

Number of child workers (5-14 years) engaged in Hazardous Occupations as per 2001 Census : 1) Pan, Bidi& Cigarettes - 252574, 2) Construction - 208833, 3) Domestic workers -185505, 4) Spinning/ weaving - 128984, 5) Brick-kilns, tiles - 84972, 6) Dhabas/ Restaurants/ Hotels/ Motels - 70934, 7) Auto-workshop, vehicle repairs - 49893, 8) Gem-



cutting, Jewellery - 37489, 9) Carpet-making - 32647, 10) Ceramic - 18894, 11)Agarbati, Dhooop& Detergent making - 13583 4 12) Others – 135162. Total = 1219470.

Prevention of Child Labour

Awareness-raising :Organize an activity with friends in your community to raise awareness about child labour. This could be a play, concert or public debate and you could involve local musicians, actors and artists in your community.

Every family must earn their minimum income in order to survive and prevent child labour. It will reduce the level of poverty and thus child labour. Family control will also help in controlling the child labour by reducing the families burden of child care and education.

According to the Constitution of India, children below the age group of 14 years are completely prohibited to be involved in factory, mine or other hazardous employment in anyways. They (children of 6-14 years) should be provided free and compulsory education by the state government.

Child labour also increases drop-out rates, as poverty forces many children out of schools and into paying jobs. In countries where child labour is common, children who combine work and school are disadvantaged compared to children in full-time education.

Effective state intervention to eliminate inequities, including class and caste barriers to employment and other opportunities in areas such as health and education, will put an end to child labour.

The scheme involves establishment of special schools for child labour who are withdrawn from work. Advertisements : These special schools provide formal and informal education along with vocational training, and also provide a monthly stipend.

In short :1) Spread awareness. 2) More stringent laws and effective implementation.

3) Sending more children to school. 4) Discouraging people to employ children in homes, shops, factories, etc. 5) Supporting NGOs like Save the Children. 6) Stakeholders must take responsibility. 7) Increased access to education. 8) Provide support for children. 9) Improve economic growth.10) Engage with the Sustainable Development Goals.

Conclusion



It is time to consign child labour to the history books. Allow all children to realise their rights. Child labour is a fact of life for children. It is an issue that effect of all us in many country. It is the duty of everyone to contribute to the stop child labour – governments, trade unions, businesses, international organisations, communities, employers, teachers, parents, children and you. The ‘school is the best place to work’ campaign. Child labour of any type of work which is harmful to a child’s development. It is affecting full-time quality education. The main key to eliminate child labour is political mobilation and practical action.

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