



Socio-economic condition of child labour: With special reference to District Anantnag

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ABSTRACT

Children are the future of nation their all round development is responsibility of society. The abolition of child labour in underdeveloped countries is often held to be practically infeasible because it would bring about closure of the economic activities which subsist only because of admittance to such labour. Children of the world are innocent, vulnerable and dependent. They are all probing, active and full of hope. Their life should be full of joy and peace, playing, learning and growing. Their future should be formed in harmony and co-operation. Their childhood should grown-up, as they broaden their perspectives and gain new experience. It has been observed over decades that, poverty forces poor families to send their children to work, which results in a serious problem the world is facing nowadays. Child labour can leave many severe consequences on children and their families. When children work, it does not mean as a standard, they support their families economically, neither all of them get paid for their work since many of them work as bonded labour or as slaves. In addition to that, they face many problems which may cause everlasting damage to their childhood. Children usually work to contribute and provide financial support to their families. Their health is often ignored by their parents or they may not be aware about their children's health. Socio-economic factors are highly responsible in any plight of child labour. This paper explores the hidden socio-economic factors - pushing our future children towards child labor. Sixty child workers have been selected through the simple purposive sampling technique. Among the respondents there were 40 male and 20 female in the age group of 07-15 years.

Keywords: Causes, Child labour, Socio-economic condition

I. INTRODUCTION

Children are precious gift of ALLAH (SWT) for any society. Children are the greatest gift to humanity and Childhood is an important and impressionable stage of human development as it holds the potential to the future development of any society. They are not born to work. There are so many reasons like poverty, un-awareness, lack of resources, and negligence of governments in third world countries and so on. Such a gift is bound to work without knowing hazardous of labor. Children who are brought up in an environment, which is conducive to their intellectual, physical and social health, grow up to be accountable and productive members of society. Every nation links its future with the present status of its children. By performing work when they are too young for the task, children unduly reduce their present welfare or their future income earning capabilities, either by shrinking their future external choice sets or by reducing their own future individual productive capabilities.

Definition of Child Labour: Child labour is the practice of having children get engaged in economic activity, on part or full-time basis. The practice causes the childhood of the children to be ephemeral, and is harmful to their physical and mental development. The child labour problem is not unique to India; worldwide,



about 217 million children work, many full-time. It is important to note that not all work done by children is considered “child labour.”

ILO: The term “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.

Article 24 of the Indian constitution clearly states that, "No child below the age of fourteen years shall be employed to work in any factory or mine or employed in any hazardous employment."

UNICEF defines child labour differently. A child, suggests UNICEF, is involved in child labour activities if between 5 to 11 years of age, he or she did at least one hour of economic activity or at least 28 hours of domestic work in a week, and in case of children between 12 to 14 years of age, he or she did at least 14 hours of economic activity or at least 42 hours of economic activity and domestic work per week. UNICEF in another report suggests, “Children’s work needs to be seen as happening along a continuum, with destructive or exploitative work at one end and beneficial work – promoting or enhancing children’s development without interfering with their schooling, recreation and rest at the other. And between these two poles are vast areas of work that need not negatively affect a child’s development.”

II.METHODOLOGY

The three blocks of district Anantnag are taken as field of study because the child labour situation is not well defined in district Anantnag so to locate them was not easy. Primary as well as secondary data has been used in this present work. Primary data was collected through interview schedule in which 60 sample child labours were approached secondary data was collected from articles, journals, reports.

Sampling: To study the Socio-economic condition of child labour, the researcher has selected the district Anantnag for the present study. For the present study purposive sampling method was used. 60 respondents were analyzed in the present study.

III.OBJECTIVES OF THE STUDY

1. To study the socio-economic condition of child labour.
2. To know the cause of child labour.

IV.MAGNITUDE OF CHILD LABOUR

The magnitude of child labor in India has been witnessing enormous decline in the last two decades, both in terms of magnitude and workforce participation rates. Evidence drawn from the National Sample Survey data suggest that India’s child workforce during 2009-10 was estimated at little over nine million (9.07 million) as against twenty-one and half million (21.55 million) in 2003. During this period, the number of child employment has declined sharply by 12.48 million. There is considerable fall in child workforce is observed among boys than girls. The corresponding fall in boys and girls workforce during 2003 to 2009- 10 is observed to have decreased from 12.06 to 4.76 million, and 9.49 to 4.31 million, respectively. In effect, the gender difference that existed between boys and girls (adverse against boys) during the early 1990s has almost dissipated in recent years, the difference being slowed down from 2.57 million to roughly 0.45 million.



However, in absolute numbers, the problem is large. As per the Census 2011, there are 1.26 crores economically active children in the age-group of 5-14 years. It was 1.13 crores in the 2001 Census.

As per NSSO survey 2009-10, the working children are estimated at 49.84 lakh which shows a declining trend. As per the Global Report on Child Labor published by International Labor Organization last year, the activity rate of children in the age group of 5-14 years is 5.1 per cent in Latin America and Caribbean Region, which is the lowest in the world. In the Asia-Pacific Region, it is 18.8 per cent. In comparison to that, the activity rate of children in India, as per 2011 census is 5 per cent.

V.RESULT AND DISCUSSION

The child labor situation in study area is also prevalent covertly there is no big industries were we could seen the children worked. They are usually doing the work which is available for them in the study area like, Stitching work and carpet making work for girls. Boys take part in daily based labour for which they migrate from their respective areas to urban areas, and also they are engaged in bonded labour 'usually does the work at employer's house'. Social category of children who were engaged in child labour belongs to hilly areas of study area. They don't have economic resources in their locality they need to rely on the maze based agricultural work and also they do cattle rearing to manage their daily consumption. They took the migration from their local area to urban areas sometimes outside of the state. When they do not manage their daily consumption they send their children to the labour market to provide financial assistance to their families.

Table 1.1. Age and sex wise distribution of child labour.

Age	Male Respondents	Female Respondents	Total
9-10	5	0	5
11-12	13	8	21
13-14	22	12	34
Total	40	20	60

The above table shows the age and sex wise distribution of child labour in study area. Out of sixty respondents females were taken twenty and males were forty.

Table No.1.1. Work wise distribution of child labour

Type of work	No. of child labour	Percentage
Labour work	18	30%
Bonded labour	8	13.33%
Seasonal worker	14	23.33%
Carpet making	12	20%
Stitching work	8	13.33
Total	60	100%

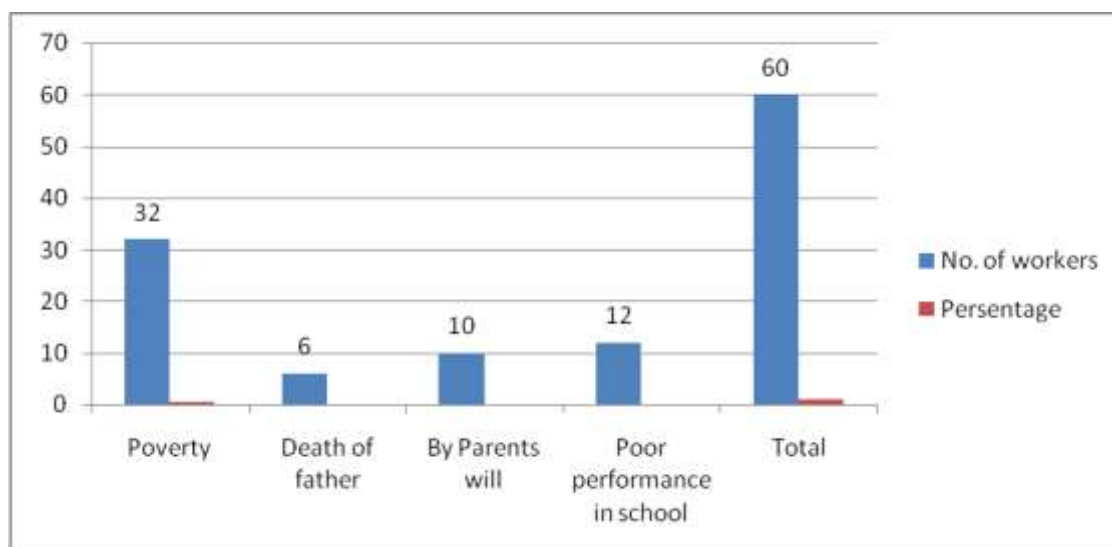


The researcher has found multi task functioning options in Anantnag district during his field survey. The percentage of labour is higher in the 'labour' 30%, who do the daily based labour work they usually took the migration from their village to the urban areas where they found the good wages and availability of work, so they prefer to migrate for work because in their own village they do not get the full availability of work and good enough wages. On the second position it is seasonal workers, who work only few months in a year. They generally do the (Nut picking, or road vendor work during tourism season) which comprises 23.33%. On third position there is "carpet making" work. 20% they went to carpet making center and reside there for whole day carried out their work. Forth number is for "bonded labour", who work at the home of their employers they stay behind there for months and takes 2-3 days leave after one month. 13.33%. Another one is "stitching work" who do the work at their homes which is 13.33%.

Table 1.2 Reason for work

Reason	No. of workers	Percentage
Poverty	32	53.33 %
Death of father	6	10 %
By Parents will	10	16.66 %
Poor performance in school	12	20 %
Total	60	100 %

Graph 1.1 Reason for work



The above table shows that the main reason for working as child labour is poverty, following by poor performer in the school. Parents also force them to do work to supplement their family income. They live in hilly areas of District Anantnag they do not find the working options there which could prevail throughout year. They are



compelled by circumstances to migrate during winter season either urban area of Kashmir or outside of Kashmir division.

Monthly income in Rs.	No. of child labour	Employment patterns
500-1900	14	Seasonal work
2000-2900	8	Stitching work
3000-4000	20	Bonded labour / carpet making
4000-5000	18	Labour work

Table No. 1.3. Monthly Income of child labour

The above table shows that the children who got up-to 2000 monthly based money comes under the seasonal work, they usually do the work for 3 to 4 months. Monthly based work attains the salary of 3000 to 4000. And labour workers who did the construction work in urban areas took up-to 5000.

VI. CAUSES

Child labor is a socio-economic problem. Parents for the reason of poverty have to send their children in order to supplement their income derived from child labor, however meager are essential to sustain the family.

The major reason that creates the circumstances for a child to work as a child labor includes the following.

- Socio-economic backwardness
- Poverty
- Illiteracy
- Unemployment
- Over population
- Lack of education facilities
- Ignorance of parents about the importance of education.
- Ignorance of impact on children of labor.
- Government apathy

Poverty, lack of good schools and growth of informal economy are considered as the important causes of child labour in India. The increasing gap between the rich and the poor, privatization of basic services and the neo-liberal economic policies are causes major sections of the population out of employment and without basic needs. This adversely affects children more than any other group. Entry of multi-national corporations into industry without proper mechanisms to hold them accountable has lead to the use of child labour. Lack of quality universal education has also contributed to children dropping out of school and entering the labour force. A major concern is that the actual number of child labourers goes un-detected. Laws that are meant to protect



children from hazardous labour are ineffective and not implemented correctly. A growing phenomenon is using children as domestic workers in urban areas. The conditions in which children work is completely unregulated and they are often made to work without food, and very low wages, resembling situations of slavery. There are cases of physical, sexual and emotional abuse of child domestic workers. The argument for domestic work is often that families have placed their children in these homes for care and employment. There has been a recent notification by the Ministry of Labour making child domestic work as well as employment of children in dhabas, tea stalls and restaurants “hazardous” occupations.

VIII.CONCLUSION

The problem of child labour in the third world countries is not only financial but is also a socio-economic problem which can be addressed by adopting certain measures for improving the economic conditions of the community and enabling it to provide education and leisure time to the children. At the same time, due diligence is required in effective implementation of child labour legislation.

The children who work full-time under-accumulate the necessary human capital that could allow them to get a better paid job in the future and to break the circle of poverty and inequality. The situation when girls work more hours than boys re-construct the gender inequality and existing power structures in the societies. The existence of cheap and unskilled labour negatively affects the investments in technology and dump technological progress and labour productivity. At least in some sectors, child labour has a negative effect on the adults’ earnings and in this way support the existence of chronic poverty and income inequality. A multidisciplinary approach is needed to work on the quality of a working child, and therefore, as health care personnel, we should begin to reflect and work collectively to combat this issue.

VIII.SUGGESTIONS

1. There is dreadful need to impart education to the child workers. Though child workers cannot attend normal school during the usual school hours, the only alternative is to provide them some agency of education at the time when they are free.
2. The dropouts who attain the little high age were seen shy to go school after the big gap so there should be alternative to teach them in their vacant hours. Special schemes should be imparted for them to avail the education.
3. Governmental and non-governmental organizations should organize awareness programmes regarding the consequences of child labour and motivate common people, village heads, teachers and other employers, senior citizens, etc. and seek their cooperation in respective areas to serve the purpose.
4. Media should play its role in generating awareness among the people regarding the up-liftment and betterment of socially, economically and educationally backward communities by providing them information regarding various programmes and schemes launched by the government for their up-liftment.
5. Wage rate of the parents should be increased so that they can manage the education of their children..

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