

A study about child labour in India & its effect on economy

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Abstract

Child labour is a very complicated issue, affecting human society all over the world. In many countries children are forced to work with disastrous consequences. Children, under age 14 are often forced to work for as many as 18 hours a day. They are subject to malnutrition, impaired vision, deformities from sitting long hours in cramped over crowded work places, they become easy preys to deadly diseases like serious respiratory diseases, T.B., asthma, cancer. They are often forced to lead solitary lives away from their families, deprived of meaningful education and training opportunities that could prepare them for a better future. Child labour not only lead to a perpetual cycles of poverty for a family, it depresses the economy also.

Keywords: child labour, T.B., asthma, cancer

Introduction

Child labour is work for children under age 18 that in some way harms or exploits them physically, mentally, morally, or by blocking access to education. According to the International Labour Organisation, "215 million children under 18 work fulltime. Moreover, some 8.4 million children are engaged in 'unconditional' worst forms of child labour, which include forced and bonded labour. The children are used in armed conflict, trafficking and commercial sexual exploitation. 53 percent of child labours live in Asia and the Pacific, 30 percent in sub-Saharan Africa, and seven percent in Latin America. According to the ILO, 58.6 percent of child labours work in agriculture. Other industries that frequently rely on child labour include manufacturing, mining, quarrying, construction, domestic service and general service such as in retail, restaurants and hotels. Boys are more often involved in child labour than girls.

India has the largest number of child labours under the age 14 in the World. According to Census data, there are over 82 lakh child labours (aged between 5 – 14 years) in India. Child labour is prominent in rural India - 80% of working children live in India's villages, where most of them work in agriculture. Some of them also work in household industries and are employed in home-based businesses. Children between 14-17 years engaged in hazardous work account for 62.8% of the India's child labor workforce, 10% of who are hired in family enterprises. Over half of working adolescents do not study. This number is higher for adolescents doing dangerous work. It is not surprising that more boys than girls (38.7 million vs. 8.8 million) are forced into doing hazardous. As per census 2001, Uttar Pradesh (15.22%) recorded the highest share of child labour in the country, followed by Andhra Pradesh (10.76%), Rajasthan (9.97%), Bihar (8.82%), Madhya Pradesh (8.41%), and West Bengal (6.77%).

Generally children are engaged in following work:

Agriculture

Children work long hours and under severe hardships on the fields. They are also exposed to the hazards of working with modern machinery and chemicals.

Hazardous Industries/Occupations

Like glass making, mining, construction, carpet weaving, zari making, fireworks.

Small industrial workshops and service establishments

On the streets- Rag pickers, porters, vendors etc.

Domestic work- In this work children face higher degree of exploitation and abuse in the home.

The percentage of children engaged in work activities decreases steadily with parent's increasing education and increasing wealth quintile. With parents' higher education and greater household wealth, there is a substantial reduction in the extent of paid work, involvement in household chores and other family work, but involvement in unpaid work is cruel situation. Poverty is a prominent cause for child labour.

Methodology

Present research is based on survey of organizations. Collected data is expressed in 4 tables and analyzed. Table-1 contains data related to child labour in different occupations. Child labour's age wise, locality wise details is exhibited in table 2. Child labours are divided age wise into 3 groups as 5 to 8year, 9-12 year, 13 to 16 year old. Data related to effect of economic status on child working is depicted in table 3 and effect of parent education on child working is depicted in table 4.

Finding and Analysis

Table 1: Child Labour percent in Different Occupations

S. No.	Domestic worker	15
1	Restaurant/ Hotel/ Motel	6
2	Agarbatti/ Detergent Making	1
3	Pan/Bidi/Cigarette	21
4	Spinning/ Weaving	11
5	Construction	17
6	Brick/ Tiles	7
7	Jewellery	3
8	Carpet making	3
9	Vehical repairing workshop	4
10	Ceramic	2
11	Other	11

Table 2: Age wise, Locality wise Child Labour Detail

Age Group	Rural		Urban	
	Male Child %	Female Child %	Male Child %	Female Child %
5-8 year	8	6	4	2
9-12 year	11	8	6	3
13-16 year	15	11	8	5

Table 3: Effect of Economic Status on Child Working

Parent annual income status	% of children working
Below 25 thousand	31
Below 50 thousand	27
Below 75 thousand	19
Below 1 lakh	13
Below 2 lakh	7
Below 3 lakh	3

Table 4: Effect of Parent Education on Child Working

Parent Education Status	% of children working
Uneducated	32
Primary Level	26
Middle Level	19
High School Level	13
Higher Secondary Level	8
Graduation Level	2

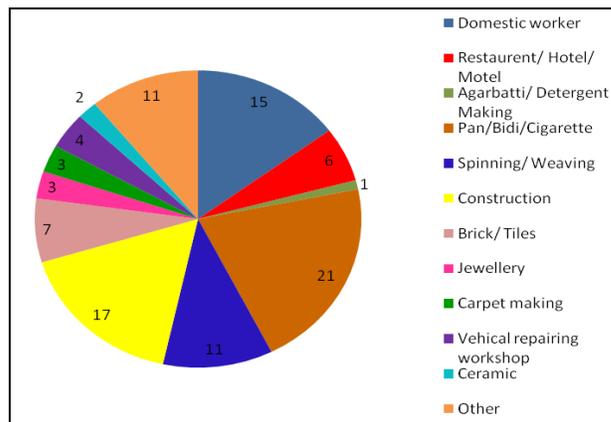


Chart 1: Child Labour in Different Occupations

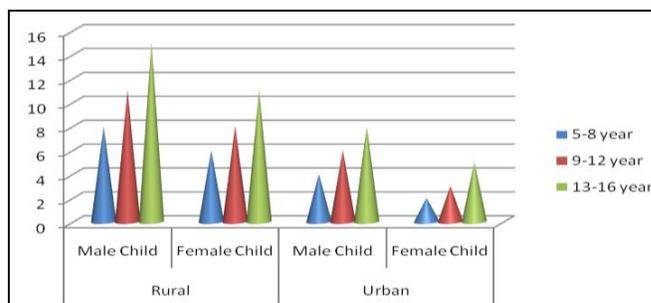


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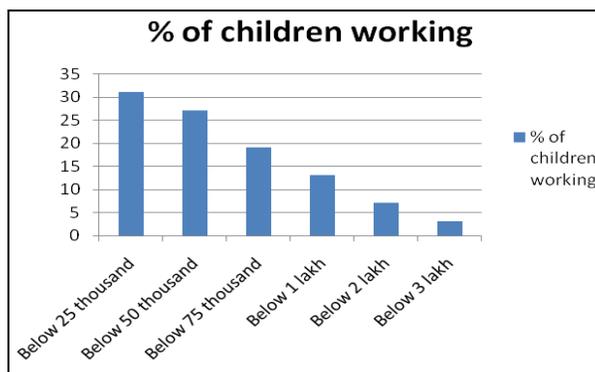


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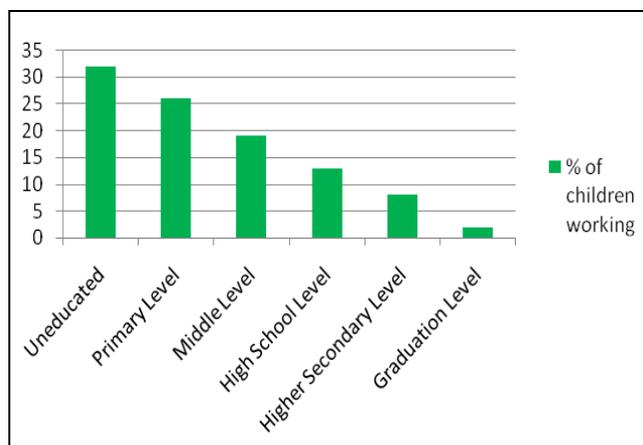


Chart 4: Effect of Parent Education on Child Working

Highest engagement of child labour is in pan, bidi, cigarette occupation i.e., 21%. In construction industry 17% child

labours are engaged. 15% child labours are working as domestic worker. In spinning and weaving related work 11% children are doing job.

Table-2 show that in age group 5-8 years, in rural area 8% male child and 6% female child while in urban area 4% male and 2% female child are engaged at work. Data related to 9-12 year age group indicate that in rural area 11% male child, 8% female child while in urban area 6% male child and 3% female child are doing work. In age group 13-16 year in rural area 15% male child, 11% female child and in urban area 8% male child 5% female child are doing work.

Relation between economic status and no. of child worker denotes that as family income increases % of child worker becomes less. Poor families where annual income is below 25 thousand no. of child worker is high i.e., 31%. In families having annual income 50 thousand 27% children are engaged at work. 19% children are doing work belonging families having annual income less than 75 thousand. Only 13% child labour found from families having annual income below 1

lakh. 7% and 3% children are at work from families with annual income below 2 lakh and below 3 lakh respectively. Educated parents don't send their child for working. 32% children of uneducated families are doing work. Families where parents are primary level educated, 26% children are doing work. 19 % children are labouring from families having middle level education. From families having education up to high school only 13% child go for job. As parents education level increases no. of child worker decreases. 8 % child labour found from families having higher secondary level education. In case of graduate parents only 2% child labour searched.

Conclusion

This Child labour leads to the creation of an unskilled adult labour force which causes early physical decay, economic insecurity, low quality of life and ultimately high poverty. Thus child labour creates a vicious circle of poverty, unemployment, underemployment and low wages. Over the years the Government of India has multiplied its efforts to prevent exploitation of children. Still, the issue remains grave and demanding more rigorous measures. In order to eliminate the social evil of child labour there is a need for more intensive initiatives to tackle poverty and promote education opportunities to help all children.

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