

SOCIO- ECONOMIC STATUS AND CAUSATIVE FACTORS OF CHILD LABOUR- A DESCRIPTIVE STUDY

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ABSTRACT

Child Labour is a burning issue of worldwide, and it is a by-product of socio-economic strata of the society. Children are always an asset to any society as well as to the nation. They are like the blooming flowers of the nation, therefore; the duty of the nation is to protect these flowers so as to have a meaningful and prosperous contribution to the development of the nation in the future. It is also a fact that the future of any society or a nation highly depends on the sound growth and development of the children. Due to some push and pull factors or circumstances, children are forced to work in the early ages of their childhood, which harm the children and ultimately the society in various factor. Hence, child labour is considered a social and economic problem of any nation. The most terrible myth about child labour is that they have very little liberty to opt for their occupation. They have no rights as common employees, and they cannot join Labour Unions to raise their voice against the exploitation. In the context of the prevalence of child labour among the affected families, the current study attempts to describe the socio economic status and causative factors of Child labours in Chamarajanagar District of Karnataka with the intention of understanding the correlation and association between the various factors which had plays a major cause on the existence of the issue.

KEY WORDS: Child Labour, Poverty, Socio-Economic Status, Causative Factors

INTRODUCTION

The issue of child labour is not a modern phenomenon. Even in the olden days children were put to strenuous labour in houses and in fields at an early age. Children were asked to perform the tasks such as nurture of cattle, a collection of grass and fuel, etc. Because of this adult member of the family could be able to get relieved for more fruitful and productive works. There was no common labour beside children working along with their family members. It was the factor that child labour which strongly established family and kinship ties in many occupations. In urban areas, because of an abject poverty majority of the parents cannot make any investment in their child development and they are also averse to support them.

They are eager about children to find work for themselves. The employers wish to prefer children as they are more nimble, amenable to discipline, control and too cheaper. The problem of child labour became more distinct with the beginning of industrial revolution. Being labour, children are denied educational opportunities; their physical, mental and intellectual development is hampered. The working children usually remain unskilled, underpaid and underprivileged throughout their life. The problem of child labour with multidimensional repercussion is one among the many crucial problems faced by the developing nations, and even India is no exception to this.

The problem of child labour is a global phenomenon, and its degree of extent is varying from country to country. The filthy practice of child labour is widely prevalent in many third world countries such as India, Pakistan, Bangladesh, China, Nepal, Brazil, etc. Despite a number of ways and means undertaken by the Government and Non –Government organizations to tackle the exploitation of children, India has come to acquire the dubious feature of possessing the largest child labour in the world. (Bilal Bhat, 2011).

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Children need to grow in an atmosphere that facilitates them to lead a life of freedom and dignity. Opportunities for education and training are to be given to enable them to grow into responsible citizens. Unfortunately, a large proportion of children are deprived of their basic rights. They are found working in various sectors of the economy particularly in the unorganized sector. Some of them are cramped and beaten, reduced to slavery or denied the guaranteed fundamental right of access to free and compulsory education thus making child labour a human rights issue and a developmental issue. (NHRC, 2011).

The recent ILO report on child labour pointed out that globally 152 million children engaged as child labour, out of these 64 million girls and 88 million boys and this is accounting for almost one in ten of all children worldwide as child labour. In this estimate 71 percent of children working as child labour in the agricultural and allied sector and 69 percent work within their own family. Nearly half of all those in child labour 73 million children are in hazardous work that directly causes dangerous to their health, safety, and moral development. Children in employment, a broader measure comprising both child labour and permitted forms of employment, involving children of legal working age, number 218 million. (ILO, 2017).

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GLOBAL FACT AND FIGURES OF CHILD LABOUR

- Worldwide 218 million children between 5 and 17 years are in employment. Among them, 152 million are victims of child labour; almost half of them, 73 million, work in hazardous child labour.
- In absolute terms, almost half of child labour (72.1 million) is to be found in Africa; 62.1 million in the Asia and the Pacific; 10.7 million in the Americas; 1.2 million in the Arab States and 5.5 million in Europe and Central Asia.
- In terms of prevalence, 1 in 5 children in Africa (19.6%) are in child labour, whilst prevalence in other regions is between 3% and 7%: 2.9% in the Arab States (1 in 35 children); 4.1% in Europe and Central Asia (1 in 25); 5.3% in the Americas (1 in 19) and 7.4% in Asia and the Pacific region (1 in 14).
- Almost half of all 152 million children victims of child labour are aged 5-11 years. 42 million (28%) are 12-14 years old, and 37 million (24%) are 15-17 years old.
- Hazardous child labour is most prevalent among the 15-17 years old. Nevertheless up to a fourth of all hazardous child labour (19 million) is done by children less than 12 years old.
- Among 152 million children in child labour, 88 million are boys, and 64 million are girls.
- 58% of all children in child labour and 62% of all children in hazardous work are boys. Boys appear to face a greater risk of child labour than girls, but this may also be a reflection of an under-reporting of girls' work, particularly in domestic child labour.
- Child labour is concentrated primarily in agriculture (71%), which includes fishing, forestry, livestock herding and aquaculture, and comprises both subsistence and commercial farming; 17% in Services; and 12% in the Industrial sector, including mining. (ILO).

LITERATURE REVIEW

The following are the various researches that have been conducted earlier in the area of Child labor in India and elsewhere. The researcher has conducted an extensive literature survey to trace the research gaps and finalize the exact problem for the study. The below are few of the studies that have been analyzed in detailed.

Sunandamma P G (2014), studies that Child labour refers to the employment of children in cartable occupations or national contribution to the income of the family. It is both an economic and social evil in that it leads to serious health hazards and denies them the opportunity for physical and mental development. The term child labour is commonly interpreted in two different ways, first as an economic evil and secondly as a social evil. In the first context, it signifies employment of children to earn the livelihood for them or for their family. In the second context, it is said to restrict on children obstructing them to develop academically.

Roy Chandan et al. (2012) stated that India has five million working children who are more than two percent of the total child population in the age group of 5-14 years. Despite the existence of legal prohibitions, several socio-economic situations ranging from a dearth of poverty, over-fertility, non-responsive education system to poor access in financial services adversely affect a section of children and keep them in work field. This work burden not only prevents the children from getting the basic education, but it is also highly detrimental to their health and ultimately leads to intellectual and physical stunting of their growth. The paper identifies various reasons behind non-inclusiveness of a great portion of child labour in main-stream of education through empirical analysis in two backward districts of West Bengal. An analysis of NCLP activities based on evaluation surveys helps to trace the gap of work and lack of convergence mechanism with activities of Sarva Shiksha Mission. We recommend a few measures to revamp the whole process so that the relationship between child labour and inclusive education activities can be revamped. NCLP and Sarva Shiksha Mission should work hand in hand to fulfill this objective. Complete implementation of Right to Education can help to solve many of these issues involved with child labour, as the act itself has an inclusive approach.

Das Swati, (2012) revealed that the issue of child labour is a frontline concern in India, as early entry into labour market at formative stage of life does mean absconding from proper schooling leading to loss of future scope of better livelihood, since the existing literature shows that there is wage premium for education in Indian labour market. In this perspective, this study aims to carry out a supply-side analysis towards examining the incidence and pattern of child labour and child schooling to test out regional and gender disparities, if any, in terms of these incidences. Socio-economic determinants across gender and region also have been identified for an everlasting way out of the crisis. The database utilized for the analysis has been extracted from the National Sample Survey on "Employment and Unemployment Situation in India" for the 61st large sample round (2004-2005).

Prasad Shalini (2015), in her stated that, in 1971 census it was estimated that there were slightly over 13 lakhs (13, 26,726) working children in the State of Uttar Pradesh. In the same year, among the States with the maximum number of child workers, there were more than 16 lakhs (16,27,492) working children in Andhra Pradesh, around 11 lakhs (11,12,319) in Madhya Pradesh, around 10 lakhs (10,59,359) in Bihar and just under 10 lakhs (9,88,357) child workers in Maharashtra. There were over one crore child workers in India (1, 07, 53,985) that year. Further, they studied that 57% of children surveyed reported being enrolled in schools, or attending schools or Madarasa before going off for work. But almost none of them could read or write. Children who reported that they were studying in Madarasa, could not read or write in either Urdu or Arabi. The study teams met only a handful of children who could read a sentence in Hindi or could write their name in Hindi, who would possibly have continued to study, incise they had not been sent to work.

Roy Sujit Kumar (2016), in his case study of selected brick industries in 24 paragons of Andhra Pradesh, he pointed out that Child labour is a serious socio-economic issue and has been a topic of wider debate both in the developed and poor countries. Due to the moral concern associated with the problem some opine that child labour should be banned. However, it is found that families with very low income have no option but to send their children to do hard works. One such example is brickfields where migrant, poor workers from Bihar have to toil with their children in a very harsh and uncongenial work atmosphere. In this study, an attempt has been made to gauge the problem of child labour in the brick fields of West Bengal.

A J Bhat et al., (2017), in their study they stated that the failure of providing meaningful employment is the catastrophic development failure of a country. India is a diverse economy encompasses agriculture, handicraft, a wide range of modern industries and multitude services sectors. These spacious spectrums of industries are classified under private and public sectors, but unfortunate for the nation neither the public nor the private sector is able to provide enough employment for the widening labour force. The formal sector affords to manage only marginal cult of the unemployed population although it is an informal/unorganized sector which perceived in the past and is increasingly recognized as an alternative source of employment in today's world. However, the informal/unorganized sector have prominent problems like job security, social security, the stability of living, migration, child labour, and exploitation of working women. The worries in the informal sector are mounting and seem to be unbroken day by day.

Bhullar Harpreet et al., (2015) viewed that Garment industry is one of the largest employers in the country, generating 1/5th of the total export earnings and contributing to 4% of the country's total GDP. The Economic Survey of India, 2013- 14 noted an overall increase of 4, 19,000 people in employment from 2012 to 2013 with the highest increase recorded in textiles (including the apparels sector) at the increase of 2, 90,000 people. The problem of child labour has been more serious in developing countries. Due to poverty, hunger, illiteracy, ignorance, traditional thinking and lack of proper implementation of child labour laws in our country, the problem of child labour still persists in our society.

U Gayathri, (2017), point out that Child labour is nothing but the employment of children in any work that deprives them of their childhood. Work in the sense which does not allow the children to attend the school regularly. Child labour is the children who live within the four walls of the society, where the first wall is poverty, the second wall is illiteracy, the third wall is hunger, and the fourth wall is the unemployment.

Zafar et al, (2014), in their study of *Socio-Economic Conditions of Child Labour in Lahore District, Pakistan*, The researchers analyse the major determinants of socio-economic conditions of child labour are age of child, level of education, economic activities in which the child involved, employment status of child labour as self, unpaid and employed as well as reasons adopting child labour such as poverty, wish of the child, etc.

Zaman Shituma et al., (2014) in their study *A Study on Present Scenario of Child Labour in Bangladesh*, they expressed their views that the problem of child labour is a socio-economic reality of Bangladesh. This issue is enormous and cannot be ignored. This study indicates the child labour increase in a developing country like Bangladesh and the positive and negative effects of child labour on the society. Poverty is the main reason for the children to become child labourers.

Kumari Veena, (2017), in her study she has been analyzed that Child labour is one of the evils of the society both of poverty and illiteracy. It has been in existence for many decades and has thus taken firm root in India. However, with the era of industrialization, the use of child labour in hazardous places has increased. India has the dubious distinction of employing the largest number of children in the world. According to UNICEF, 14% of the children between the ages of 5-14 in India are engaged in child labour.

Satyanarayana Rama (2017), in his study; *An Empirical Study on Root Causes of Child Labour in Krishna District of Andhra Pradesh*, examines the root causes of child labour in Krishna dist of Andhra Pradesh. 300 sample respondents were taken on convenience random sampling technique for the study. The descriptive research design was adopted for the study, and both primary and secondary data were used. Statistical tools like chi-square test were used to test the statistical significance of the proposed hypothesis. The study reveals that there exists a relation between the root causes of child labour and the Socio-economic conditions. Based on the analysis, the researcher draws the policy suggestions to cease the child labour in the selected study area.

OBJECTIVES OF THE STUDY

The objective set for the study is to assess the socio economic factors and causative factors behind child labour.

METHODS AND MATERIALS OF THE STUDY

The type of research is descriptive in nature. The study is designed with special reference to Chamarajanagar district of Karnataka state. The study area is comprised of Chamarajanagar, Kollegal,

Gundlupet, and Yelandur Taluks covering the incidence of child labour in three major areas such as Agriculture and Allied sectors, Petty shops/Small establishments and Hotels. The sample size of 240 is arrived with the help of multistage, systematic stratified sampling where 20 child labourers are identified from each of the three sectors of child labour spread across 4 taluks of the Chamarajanagar district. The sampling units of the individual respondents are selected based on the convenient sampling. For the study, the researcher mainly used primary data that was collected using structured interview schedule. The data was collected during January 2017 to December 2017. For analyzing the collected data the researcher used descriptive statistics and arrived at the desired results.

DATA ANALYSIS AND INTERPRETATION

Assess of Socio-Economic Status of Child Labours

Table No. 1 - Socio Economic Status of the Child Labour

Socio Economic Status		Frequency	%
Gender	Male	120	50
	Female	120	50
Age in Years	9-10 years	10	4.2
	11-12 years	109	45.4
	13-14 years	121	50.4
Religion	Hindu	228	95.0
	Muslim	12	5.0
Caste	General	26	10.8
	SC	66	27.5
	ST	41	17.1
	OBC	107	44.6
Mother Tongue	Kannada	229	95.4
	Hindi/Urdu	5	2.1
	Tamil	5	2.1
	Telugu	1	0.4
Patterns of Migration	Inter Taluk Migration	199	82.9
	Inter District Migration	39	16.3
	Inter State Migration	2	0.8
Causes of Migration	Economic Problems	59	24.6
	Family Issues	41	17.1
	Better Work	140	58.3
Type of House	Kutchha	220	91.7
	Pucca	15	6.3
	Rented	5	2.0
Type of the Family	Joint Family	31	12.9
	Nuclear Family	209	87.1
Educational Qualification	3 rd Standard	2	0.8
	4 th Standard	7	2.9
	5 th Standard	5	2.1
	6 th Standard to 9 th Std	213	88.8
	SSLC	13	5.4

The above table 1 and its subsequent charts describe the Socio Economic Status of the Child Labour in the Chamarajanagar district. The socio economic status and the demographic profile of the study area is constituted by the variables like Gender, Age in Years, Religion, Caste, Mother Tongue, Patterns of Migration, Causes of Migration, Type of House, Type of the Family, Education Status. The highlighting facts of the socioeconomic status are, the male respondents among the child labours are 89.2%. 95.8 % of child labours are in the age group of 12-18 years. 95% of them are of Hindu religion and 44.6% belongs to backward communities. 95.4% of the respondents' mother tongue is Kannada and 82.9% are inter district migrants. 24.6% of the migrants are cited the reason of economic problems and 58.3% are migrated in search of better work. 88.4% of the families are reported to have their own houses and 87.1% are the nuclear family and 88.8% of the child labourers education level is above 5th standard.

Table No. 2 – Causative Factors Child Labour

Causative Factors Behind Child Labour		Frequency	%
School Experience	Bad	33	13.8
	Average	120	50.0
	Good	87	36.3
How were the Teachers	Tolerant	20	8.3
	Average	59	24.6
	Strict	161	67.1
Grade in the School	Bad	52	21.7
	Average	149	62.1
	Good	39	16.3
Discontinued Education	Yes	210	87.5
	No	30	12.5
Reasons for Discontinuation of Education	No Interest	124	51.7
	Financial help to Family	25	10.4
	Helping to Mother	26	10.8
	Financial Problem	27	11.3
	Father Death	11	4.6
	Parents Decision	18	7.5
	No Knowledge of Education	5	2.1
	Interest in Self-Employment	4	1.7
Size of the Family	Less than 3 Members	18	7.5
	4-5 Members	186	77.5
	6-7 Members	33	13.8
	8-9 Members	3	1.3
Living Status of the Parents-Mother	Alive	197	82.1
	Dead	43	17.9
Living Status of the Parents-Father	Alive	223	92.9
	Dead	17	7.1
Literacy of the Parents	Illiterate	179	74.6

	Primary schooling	60	25.0
	Secondary schooling	1	0.4
Occupation of the Parents Father	Construction Cooli	8	3.3
	Cooli	176	73.3
	Agriculture	29	12.1
	Business	12	5.0
	Garments	4	1.7
	Death	7	2.9
	Wood works	3	1.3
	Driver	1	0.4
	Occupation of the Parents-Mother	Construction Cooli	3
Cooli		123	51.2
House-Wife		95	39.6
Silk Reeling		13	5.4
Beedi Roling		3	1.3
Domestic work		2	0.8
Death		1	0.4
Income of the Parents	Within Rs. 1000	2	.8
	Rs. 1,001 - Rs. 1,500	6	2.5
	Rs. 1,501 - Rs. 2,000	28	11.7
	Rs. 2,001 - Rs. 2,500	30	12.5
	Rs. 2,501 - Rs. 3,000	67	27.9
	Rs. 3,001 and above	107	44.6
Parent's view of Desirability of Child Labour	To fulfill Financial Requirements	137	57.1
	Solution for Economic Problem and Development	77	32.1
	Development of Agriculture	15	6.3
	Could not be replied	11	4.6
Diseases-Father	Asthma	15	6.25
	Tuberculosis	4	1.67
	Jaundice	3	1.25
	Skin Disease Psoriasis	5	2.08
	Heart Problem	6	2.50
	Diabetes	1	0.42
	Cancer	4	1.67
	Not alive	17	7.08
No Diseases	185	77.08	
Diseases-Mother	Asthma	3	1.25
	Stomach Pain	2	0.83
	Skin Disease Problem	2	0.83
	Leg Pain	1	0.42
	Blood cancer	1	0.42
	Cardiac Problem	1	0.42

	Not alive	43	7.92
	No Diseases	187	77.92
Drug Addictions-Father	Alcohol	92	38.3
	No	148	61.7
Family under any debt	Yes	9	3.8
	No	153	63.7
	Money Lender	27	11.3
	Mahila Sangha	39	16.3
	Loan	12	5.0
Special schemes implemented either by the Govt. or NGOs	Yes	17	7.1
	No	223	92.9

The above table 2 and its subsequent charts describe the Causative factors behind child labour. The highlighting facts of the socioeconomic status are Majority of the respondents are of the opinion that the school experience was average (50%) and even bad to the extent of 13.8%, the teachers were strict, 51.7% of the child labourers cited the reason as lack of interest in continuing the education, 87.5% of the respondents are the school drop outs and discontinued their education at the primary school level itself, 77.5% of the respondents belongs to the family of 4-5 members with both the parents alive but illiterate, with the major occupation of construction coolie, the income per month was Rs. 2000-3000 (40.4%). The parents of the child labourers were reported with illness of Asthma, Alcohol addictions and 92.9% of the respondents opinioned that no Special schemes were implemented either by the Govt. or NGOs.

SUMMARY OF FINDINGS AND CONCLUSION

The current study has provided empirical evidences regarding the social and economic aspects of the child Labourers and its subsequent causative factors. It is the economic poverty of the parents and the unorganized way of social set up and the life styles are found to be the critical factors of Social and economic status causing the incidence of child Labour. The causal factor like average – poor school experience, the dropout rate of the primary schooling, the illiteracy and lack of awareness among the parents and elderly members of the family and the limited and highly confined means of economic earning capacity of the parents are of the more concerning issues, intern found causing the social evil; Child Labour.

On the cumulative side of the problem of the child Labour even the parent are found suffering from the critical illness like Asthma, cancer and Tuberculosis, which has aggravated the dark side of the issue of the child Labour.

Hence it is worth to imitate more stringent policy measure to curb and track the dropout rates of school going children and health welfare schemes supported by employment facilities to the concerned parents of the child labours.

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