

Migratory Child Labor: The Nature of the Socio-Economic Condition and Problems

Rotele Kedarsingh Chandansingh^{1*} Dr. Pratima Shukla²

¹ PhD Student, Kalinga University, Raipur, Chhattisgarh

² Research Supervisor, Kalinga University, Raipur, Chhattisgarh

Abstract – India has a long history of giving legal protection to working children suffering from exploitation. There are specific provisions both in the Directive Principles of state policy and the Fundamental Rights of the Constitution of India on the rights and protection of children. This policy aims at successfully rehabilitating working children withdrawn from employment and reducing the incidence of child labor progressively through a number of measures. More children under fourteen live in India than there are in the entire United States. To feed, educate, and treat these children is India's most pressing development concern. This paper a brief review of migratory child labor, and focus of nature of the socio-economic condition and problems.

Key Words – Migratory Child Labor, Socio-Economic Condition, Problems, Nature

-----X-----

INTRODUCTION

Though inter-state migration of labour is practiced in many parts of Orissa, but as per the official statistics of labour commission, the district of Ganjam encounters maximum number of out-migrants particularly working in Surat Textile Mills. Jan Breman notes that the army of Oriyas is particularly impressive, Nine out of 10 are migrants from the Ganjam district of Orissa. In recent years, there has been a heavy out migration of child labours of this district of textile mills operating in Surat. It has been observed that child labour working in Surat textile mills sufficiently supplements the family income with constant periodic remittances. A qualitative research with the aid of Participatory Rural Appraisal (PRA) technique amply suggests that the emerging middle class families mainly turn their children into labour. Present money cost of imparting education to a child, future cost of probable educated unemployment, benefits of present skill formation, enhancing financial liquidity due to the constant periodic remittances of their children etc. influence the parents to determine the level and volume of out migration of child labours. Besides, very often these parents with the objective of further strengthening their resource entitlements like land, pucca house, etc. and to demonstrate others about their financial strength often instigate their children to be manifested as labour in far off places, particularly Surat. Though, the children working in adverse conditions in the far off places like Surat are denied of parental love and affection, still the amount of

present earning provides them some degree of compensation and relief so that they carry out this process of regular cyclical migration.[1]

Efforts to eliminate child labour in India have been going on since 1938, when the Employment of Children Act was passed. This core principle made clear that even under extractive colonial control, using minors in the industrial process was unacceptable. Under the Factories Act, 1948, and the Mines Act, 1952, minors were barred from working in factories and mines. A decade later, in 1986, the Child Labour (Prohibition and Regulation) Act was passed, making it illegal to employ anyone under the age of 14 in any job that poses a risk to their health or safety, and in 2000, the Juvenile Justice (Care and Protection) Act was passed, making it a criminal offence to employ children under the age of 14. An infraction punishable by imprisonment for three months to one year or by a fine of no less than INR 10,000–20,000 rupees or both was enacted shortly after India ratified the CRC in 1992. The Right to Education Act, passed in 2009, was intended to go beyond penalising those who engage in child labour and instead create an atmosphere in which all Indian children might develop their potential and enter the workforce of their own free will, rather than being forced to. Despite this, many businesses continue to use child labour as the standard.[2]

While rural child labour has decreased since urbanisation began, the number of children working

in cities has risen from 1.3 million in 2001 to 2 million in 2011. Millions of youngsters are worked as domestic help and paid salaries that fall well short of those mandated by Indian law, despite the fact that these figures depict a bleak image. The UNICEF has noted that girls are frequently assigned to home domestic work while males are sent to the fields and mines, indicating that gender bias in the workplace persists. An Oxfam investigation of sugarcane growers in Uttar Pradesh discovered that labour contractors were selling youngsters to small-scale farmers since they were less expensive and didn't require compensation for their services. It has been compared to modern-day slavery in a number of situations, when youngsters are simply fed enough for their survival and get little to no remuneration for their labours. Stunted and unhealthy children are the result of a lifetime of working for the same family, with their work hours only rising as they become older. A child's entitlement to a brighter future is forfeited when a child's older, more affluent parents sponsor an institution that profiteers off their impoverishment. This tradition will not be eradicated by legislation approved in Delhi's halls, therefore we must begin the process in our own homes and tea stands. When it comes to ending child labour, the first step is to educate children and cut off financial assistance from organisations and institutions that employ children. Considering our experience with the subject, let's just take it from there.[3]

There is no universally accepted definition of child labour. International organisations, non-governmental organisations, labour unions, and other interest groups all utilise different definitions of the word. The definition of a kid is likewise a matter of debate. Individual governments, as well as diverse cultures, may define "children" according to different ages or other criteria, despite international treaties defining them as persons under the age of 18. In order to avoid misunderstandings, it is necessary to specify exactly what the term "child labour" refers to. Work that exploits children, harms them mentally, physically or socially, or puts them in moral risk is defined as child labour by the International Labor Organization (ILO). Their infancy, potential, and dignity are being squandered because of job that interferes with schooling.[4]

Child labour more truly mirrors a process of dehumanization. Marx proclaims that the result of purchasing children at an immature age by the capitalists is not only a physical deterioration, but a social degeneration as well. Though employment of child is more or less global phenomenon, its incidence is heaviest in South Asia (including India). In these countries, employment of child labour has become a "conspicuous problem" whether it is due to the need of assistance in the "struggle for survival" of the poor families, or inclination of employers due to comparative cheapness, or other various reasons including less effective application of the preventive legal measures, children in a large number are forced to sell their prospects for petty gain.[5]

The ILO study summarises many of the same themes in an older UNICEF report. While 90% of child labour in India is concentrated in rural areas, the UNICEF report stated that in rural areas, about 50% of government-funded primary schools do not have a building, 40% lack a blackboard, few books, and 97% of funds for these publicly funded schools have been budgeted by the government as salaries for the teacher and administrator. An article in the Wall Street Journal in 2012, notes that while the number of Indian children attending school has expanded considerably in recent years, the infrastructure in schools, aimed in part at reducing child labour, is still lacking. During the monsoons and severe weather, more over 81,000 schools do not have a chalkboard, and around 42,000 government schools are forced to function in temporary conditions.[6]

2. SOCIO-ECONOMIC CONDITION OF MIGRATORY CHILD LABOUR

A lack of education, a lack of knowledge, and poverty all play a role in causing child labour. Because of this, parents are forced to put their children to work rather than school in the hopes that they will earn some money and help support the family. Because child labour has been so pervasive and so deeply ingrained in Indian society for so long, it is not something that can be quickly eradicated. As a result, low-income children miss out on important developmental opportunities like as schooling, play, health, and well-being. They may also be denied their constitutional right to an early childhood. During childhood, an individual's destiny is formed by formal education and interactions with others. Thus, children under the age of 14 who work in factories or other workplaces are considered to be engaged in child labour. According to the International Labour Organisation (ILO) "Working long hours for low pay in unhealthy conditions that harm children's physical and mental development while also separating them from their families and depriving them of meaningful educational and training opportunities that could pave the way for a better future are all examples of child labour.". Innocent youngsters are forced to labour in appalling conditions by businesses or individuals. Both primary (agricultural) and secondary (industry) sectors in India are rife with child labour (industrial sector). However, child labour is prevalent in the industrial sector, particularly in unorganised units, since it is readily accessible at cheap salaries. As a result, the government has taken a number of aggressive initiatives to address the issue of child labour in the country.[7]

where the employment of children in 2011 was 43,53,247 compared to 1,26,66,377 in 2001. The ratio was lowered by 83,13,130 between 2001 and 2011, which was a remarkable success for

India. As a direct result of the government taking the required efforts to enforce the law and implement rehabilitation programmes at the same time, this outcome was achieved. State and district governments are ordered to perform frequent inspections and raids to find out whether there are any instances where children's rights are being violated. In addition to banning child labour, the government has focused on eradicating poverty as a major cause of the problem. Table 1 shows that the child labour ratio was relatively high in 1991, 1981, and 1971, up to roughly 1,12,85,349; 1,36,40,870; and 1,07,53,985.[8]

Child labour has decreased by a third since 2000, from 24.6 million to 16.8 million youngsters as of November 2015, according to an ILO report. Sub-Saharan Africa, on the other hand, still has almost 7.8 million (9.3 percent) child labourers, which is still fewer than in Asia and the Pacific (APAC). According to the International Labor Organization (ILO), there are 5.9 million children working in Sub-Saharan Africa (21 per cent). India does not appear among the world's top ten most prosperous nations. Overall, the word "child labour" is a significant problem that has to be entirely eliminated from civilization throughout the globe. Rural areas have the highest rate of child labour engagement in the country.

- **Occupational Patterns of Households With & Without Working Children:**

There are studies indicating that out of the 55.55 per cent of the adult family members of both the categories of households with working children and households without working children, 44.3 per cent of adult family members of the households are engaged in their home based work. Very few of the family members of the households were found studying. Children constitute 45.71 per cent of the total workforce in the households with working children. It has been reported that 0.24 per cent are in government service, 0.47 per cent in private service, 1.9 per cent in business, 0.75 per cent in rickshaw pulling, and a bulk of the population engaged in lock-related labour (96.57 per cent). A similar trend can be seen in the case of households without working children, too.[9]

- **Age of Entry into Employment:**

Government of India published amendments to the Child Labour (Prohibition and Regulation) Central Rules after thorough consultation with stakeholders. For the prevention, prohibition, rescue, and rehabilitation of child and adolescent workers, the regulations establish a comprehensive framework. Additionally, particular regulations have been introduced into the rules to clarify concerns linked to family and family companies, as well as the concept of family with respect to children. In addition, it protects artists who are allowed to work under the Act by setting limits on the number of hours they may

work and the circumstances they can work in. In order to guarantee that the Act's provisions are effectively implemented and complied with, the regulations include explicit provisions including the roles and obligations of enforcement authorities. The NCLP Scheme was launched in 1988 as part of the National Child Labour Policy to rehabilitate child labour. The first phase of the plan focuses on rehabilitating youngsters who work in hazardous jobs and procedures. Children who work in dangerous occupations and processes will be taken out of their jobs and placed in special schools so that they can enter the formal education system. This is the goal of the Scheme.[10]

- **Number of Years of Service:**

A sizeable 38.61 per cent proportion of the adult members of all the households have got into employment in the past five years. 27.92 per cent of them having been at work for the previous five to 10 years and 12.58 per cent for 10-15 years. Those who are in employment for the last 15-20 years constitute 9.13 per cent and those who remain in employment for more than 20 years constitute 11.7 per cent. This indicates that about 60 per cent of the family members of the households are working for the last 10 years or so.[11]

- **Children in the Workforce:**

There are several ways in which children throughout the globe are involved in paid and unpaid labour that is not hazardous to their well-being. Nevertheless, they are considered to be child labourers if they are either too young to work or are engaged in dangerous activities that may jeopardise their physical, mental, social, or educational growth. In the world's poorest countries, one in every four youngsters (between the ages of 5 and 17) is working in a job that is harmful to their health and development.[12]

Conventions 138 (1973) and 182 (1999) of the International Labour Organization address the issue of child labour and recommend immediate action to eliminate its worst forms, as well as the United Nations Convention on the Rights of the Child (1989). All three conventions provide guidance on the issue of child labour. Signatory countries to these treaties use them as a framework for legislation addressing the issue of child labour.[13]

3. NATURE OF SOCIO-ECONOMIC PROBLEMS OF MIGRATORY CHILD LABOUR

Aligarh is famous for the Aligarh University and the lock industries. Since its a criminal offence to employ children below the age of 14yrs in India, the employers give it off as job works to agents and

families who do the work from their homes employing children from their neighbour-hood and most times their own children as well. Things could get really bad if anyone is found talking to the children or taking photographs of these children working. None of the children in the industry ever gets to go to school and do not know what they were going to do in the future. It is sad to realize that these children had lost the ability to dream or never had the time to dream because they worked minimum 10 hours a day and mostly all 7 days a week. They work there from the time they don't remember They are paid Rs. 40 a day (80 cents) and while they work from morning till sunset and sometimes if the work is more till 10pm.[14]

Large families with as many as 12 children are a common sight. While the father and sons go to the city in search of work, the daughters and mothers stay at home and do different kinds of jobs to contribute to the family income - Painting on shawls, *jari* work on sarees (sewing glitter or semi precious stones), adding small aluminium pellets to the bulb holders etc.

The children have never been to school and has been working since the age of 5. The factory agents provide the family with weekly supply of small aluminium bulb holders that have two tiny holes with the pellets. They do job like hammering the pellets into the tiny holes in two strokes. They complete 4000 holders in a day by working almost 10hrs each they will earn a total income of just Rs. 40. They sit in a crouched position the whole day and gets up only during the short breaks to have food, nature call or take bath. They dream of being carefree, going to school and playing with other children in the community but is usually not permitted to leave the house since they have to focus on earning for the family. They work from early morning till the sun sets, because after dark there is no electricity in the house. The irony of these little hands contributing to the production of 1000 light bulbs every day but not being able to enjoy the light herself strucks like a blow. The government denies the presence of Child Labourers in the district but the reality is very different. Poverty and large families with 8 to 12 children is one of the key driving forces behind children being sent to work to support the family.[15]

• **Size of Family:**

Since the average size of the households is 6.47 for households with working children and 6.11 for households without working children, there is comparatively no significant difference in the household size. There are more adults and adolescents in the households without working children compared to households with working children, which could be probably one reason for the absence of child workers in some of the families where there are more adult earners.

The Child- Women Ration (CWR) 1 and 2 for households with working children are 509 and 128 whereas for the households without working children the figures for CWR1 and CWR2 are 543 and 1010. The CWR1 and 2 figures for the state of UP are 631 and 572 which indicate the availability of younger children in the households with working children that ensures the constant supply of child labour in the households with working children, male members constitute 59.6 per cent and female members 40.34 per cent.[16]

• **Age Structure**

The proportion of children to the total sample population is 47.57 percent, which is significantly higher than the state average of 40.3 per cent (1991 census). Age-wise distribution of the population reveals a sharp decline in the 12-14 age group, both in households with working children and without working children. The proportion of children in the age group of 6-11 is higher in the households with working children when compared to the proportion of children of the same age group in households without working children. Similar trends can be observed for the age group of 12-14.

Of the higher proportion of children in the households with working children, they are forced to sent their children to work. Both , in the households with working children and without working children, the proportion of children in the 6-11 age group is the highest of all the age groups. It is significant that the population above 40 is only around 11 per cent of the total population in both the households with working children and without working children. The early morbidity in the study area is reflected by the fact that the proportion of the population above 60 constitutes less than one per cent for both the categories of households.[17]

• **Migration:**

A preponderant 95.2 per cent of households with working children and those without working children are native households though there is a higher migration rate into the city, as far lock workers are concerned, only 4.80 per cent of all the households are migrants. This indicates that the lock industry is not attracting many workers from outside but is confined to traditional lock workers and their families. The residential status of households with working children and that of those without working children is almost similar. This reflects that almost all the households are native to this place. Nearly all the migrant households with working children have migrated to Algiers because of poverty and 80 per cent of the migrant households without working children

have migrated with the hope of getting better employment.[18]

• **Literacy Levels:**

Currently, millions of children throughout the world are employed as child workers. Despite the fact that child labour has been curtailed in many places, it may still be found in some industries and small stores. As a result, many of them are not enrolled in school since their families are impoverished and/or poorly educated. They are subjected to perilous situations on the job. Because their families' daily sustenance is dependent on the additional cash their children provide, these kids are forced to work. People in this nation have adopted the mindset of having more children and using them as a means of earning money, which has resulted in an increase in the population.[19]

• **State of Education:**

Despite the fact that child labour has been curtailed in many places, it may still be found in some industries and small stores. As a result, many of them are not enrolled in school since their families are impoverished and/or poorly educated. They are subjected to perilous situations on the job. Because their families' daily sustenance is dependent on the additional cash their children provide, these kids are forced to work. The population of the country has grown as a result of this attitude, which has led to a rise in the number of children being born. Child labour is a direct result of poverty, illiteracy, and joblessness. Illiterate parents are less likely to send their kids to school. Force them to work as a substitute for education. This results in a lack of knowledge for little children, who are unable to keep up with their peers as a result.

• **Income:**

Of all the households, a sizeable 27.48 per cent are in the monthly income range of Rs. 1000-1500, 19.49 per cent are concentrated in the income range of Rs.1500-2000, 17.06 per cent are in the income range of Rs. 500-1000 and 11.72 per cent in the income range of less than Rs.5000. One-fourth of the households have reached the income bracket exceeding Rs. 200-3500. The percentage of the households with working children in the income bracket of Rs.500-2000 is higher than households without working children whereas the percentage of households without working children who are in the over Rs. 2000-3500 income bracket is more than households with working children. 29.30 per cent of the households with working children and 27.48 households without working children reported to be having an income of Rs. 1000-1500 per month. When prosecutions fail, inspectors become discouraged and employers continue to engage children. Besides, pressures from the industrialist lobby on the labour

department also influence ineffective implementation.[20]

4. CONCLUSION

The migrant labor's family had no farming land, if at all they have any land of agriculture, it is not more 1.5 acres which is insufficient for their daily nourishment and expenses. According to the poor socio-economic condition of the migrant child labours, they are compelled to the work as a seasonal or permanent migrant child labour, where ever work is available for them. Migrant child labours belongs from poor socio-economic and neglected large families. Almost all of the migrant child labour comes from below poverty line condition deprived and neglected by society and family. Due to most of the migrant child labour are extremely weak in their socio-economic conditions and deprived by society, they are unhealthy or they are average in health and are deprived from education. The migrant child labours are neglected by their families and relatives, excluded from social gatherings because of their poor socio-economic status. An occupation of the migrant child labours is extremely worst and they must have to work in dangerous working condition.

REFERENCES

1. Barman, Subhash (2011). Socio-Economic and Demographic Impact on Child Labour in India, West Benga.
2. Dutta, Progya (2016). Maharashtra Among Top Four Child Labour States, Finds NGO Survey, The Hindu.
3. Ospina, Esteban Ortiz. and Max Roser (2016). Child Labour, Our World in Data.
4. Khare, Shirish (2013). Small Hands, Hard Labour in Surat Textile Industry, India Together.
5. Child Labour, UNICEF For Every Child, 2015.
6. Trade Unions and Child Labour a Tool for Action, SlideShare, 2013.
7. P K, Navya (2015). For Almost 15 Million Migrant Children, Education remains a Luxury, Citizen Matters.
8. The Problem of Child Labour Needs More than One Solutions, EPW Engage, 2015.
9. Maharashtra, Wikipedia, 2013.

10. Sule, B. M. and A. J. Barakade (2011). Growth of Population Change in Maharashtra (India), Bioinfo, Vol. 2, No. 2.
11. Census 2011: In Maharashtra More Buddhist, Jains than Christians, DNA, 26 Aug. 2015.
12. Wanmali, Sudhir Vyankatesh and Sitanshu Mookerjee (2013). Maharashtra State, India, Encyclopedia Britannica.
13. Information About Maharashtra: Industries, Exports, Economy and Infrastructure Growth, IBEF, 19 June, 2013.
14. Maharashtra, Wikipedia The Free Encyclopedia, 20 June, 2013
15. Economy of Bhandara District, Maharashtra, India Netzone, 2014.
16. Explainer, Child Labour, Their World, 2014.
17. Shrivastava, Kalpana. Child Labour: Issues and Challenges, Industrial Psychiatry Journal, vol. 20, no.1, 2011.
18. Courmoyer, Michel. Global Labour Migration-164 Million People are Migrant Workers Says ILO, Job Market Monitor, 2014.
19. Initiatives Against Child Labour in India: Save the Children, 2016.
20. Census of India 2011, Maharashtra, Series 28 Part XII A, Village and Town Directory, Directorate of Census Operation, Maharashtra, 2011.

Corresponding Author

Rotele Kedarsingh Chandansingh*

PhD Student, Kalinga University, Raipur, Chhattisgarh