

Child Labour in India: A Study of Informal Sector in Haryana

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Abstract – The problem of child labour is a global phenomenon in the world. It is more common in developing and under developing countries. Today child labour is a serious challenge for India. India has largest number of children employed than any other country in the world. The primary as well as secondary data was used to get the data. A questionnaire was used to collect the primary data from the respondents. Analysis revealed that many provision are provided in our constitution and in laws to control child labour but socio-economic conditions prevalent in the country do not force children to get compulsory education and enjoy right to education. The attempt has been made in this paper to provide brief account of child labour laws in our country, socio-economics condition of child labour and suggestions to control child labour.

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INTRODUCTION

Child labour means a working child who is between 6 and 15 year of age is not attending school during the day is working under an employer or is learning some trade as an apprentice. Children are the greatest gift to humanity. The parents themselves live for them.

The World Bank, on a similar vein, said that child-work that does not involve an exploitative relationship should be distinguished from child labour. It further argued that in some instance, work done by children within the family may even contribute to the development of the child labour. "Not all child labour is harmful. Many working children who work under the protection of their parents/guardians can derive the benefit in terms of socialization, informal education and training." (World Bank 1998)

In developing countries it is impossible to control child labour as children have been considered a helping hand to feed their families, to support their families and to feed themselves. Due to poverty, illiteracy and unemployment parents are unable to tolerate the burden of feeding their children and to run their families. So, the poor parents send their children for work in inhuman condition at lower wages. The economic status of the slaves, hired labour unskilled workers is bad. The same was the position of child when he was engaged in agriculture

sector, road construction, digging of well and house building. A large number of children are employed in plantations. Children are found generally in highway side restaurants, small hotels and other eat-outs, cotton ginning and weaving, match-making, stone-breaking, brick-kiln, handicrafts, automobiles repair workshop. Mostly child labour was found in the rural areas as compared to urban areas. As per (2004-05 NSSO) data, out of 9.07 million child labour, 12.16 million were in rural areas. Due to lack proper implementations of child labour laws, improper implementation of child welfare plans and improper checks by department of women and child welfare, the problem of child labour has been still continuing in our society in urban as well as in rural areas.

As per the UNICEF report on the child labour, according to this report there are 246 million children are working in the world in the age group 5- 14 years. The magnitude of child labour is as high as 61 per cent in Asian countries, followed by 29 per cent in Sub-Saharan Africa, 16 per cent children are working in Latin American and Caribbean countries and 39.15 percent in Kenya.

The problem of child labour is a global phenomenon in the world. It is more common in developing and under developing countries. Today child labour is a serious challenge for India. India has largest number of children employed than any other country in the world. According to the National Sample Survey (NSSO) 61th round in

India estimated that the child labour in country is around 9.07 million. The 4.7 million of boys and 4.31 million of girls are working in our country. Thus the estimates of total number of child labour very extensively in India. According to Census 2001, Uttar Pradesh has the highest 19.2 lakh (4.08 per cent) child labour, followed by Andhra Pradesh 13.7 lakh (3.91 per cent), Rajasthan 12.63 lakh (3.31 per cent), Bihar 11.18 lakh, Madhya Pradesh 0.6 lakh, Haryana 2.57 lakh and Punjab 1.17 lakh child labour (Census of India 2001).

REVIEW OF LITERATURE

Gill K.G (1994) focused on the child labour in rural and urban areas of Punjab. The present study found that the poverty is the main reason of child labour. The majority of children in child labour belonged to the lower cast and poor families. They are employed as trainees in factories for small manufactures, work in unsafe area, hot and nosy area. The author suggested that the government should have taken a step towards improving the present conditions of child labour. These conditions are small family size, compulsory free education, choice of past- time employment social security etc.

Ray Ranjan (2000) examined the impact of household size and composition of household expenditure between the different states in India. The study identified the certain type of household, namely the backward classes and female headed household as being exposed to a greater risk than other from poverty. It is observed that the rural poverty exceeds with the urban poverty and the backward classes faced higher poverty rate than the higher classes. In the concluding results author provides the evidence to show that the poverty act as a strong stimulus to children to taking up work and losing out on schooling.

Culder Van Rob (2002) examined the way in which multinational, business association, government and non-government organization deal with the child labour in their codes. The author analyzed their codes with the help of standardized framework. The study found that the majority of child labour takes place in the informal sector, in agriculture, services and small-scale manufacturing fields. The study identified the "broader" and a "stricter" approach to the child labour and the author discussed the implication of this study, offering suggestion for future research.

Ali Hasnaim and Khan Samsuddin (2012) highlighted the issues of child labour. They criticized that the child labour is a socio-economic problem. According to the study the major reason that created the condition for a child to work as a child labour includes the following: Poverty, illiteracy, unemployment etc. In this paper they stand for to give the scenario in which child problem like violence, child trafficking, street children are also discussed in detailed. In the end the author

concluded that the child labour is still a major problem in India.

RESEARCH METHODOLOGY

The primary and secondary data was used in the present study. The Primary data of the study has been collected through a questionnaire relating to personal details of the child labour, socio-economics background and educational level of the parents and reasons for taking up job. Sampling method has been followed in choosing a sample of 120 child labour working in informal sector of Haryana. The secondary data was collected by reviewing previously published literature, journal articles, books relevant to the topic, academic website and internet, Statistical Abstract and Census Reports.

CHILD LABOUR INFORMAL SECTOR OF HARYANA

An informal sector can be defined as the sector where the element of formal sector is absent. While defining an informal sector we can say that it is a part of the workforce which has not been able to organize in pursuit of a common objective because of constraints such as causal nature of employment, ignorance and illiteracy, small size of establishments, superior strength of the employment etc.

Most of the children are engaged in the informal sector, on part and full-time basis. They are increasing at time to time in informal sector in India. In 2001, out of 12.6 million child workers, about 120,000 children in India were in hazardous job. The practice of having children of their childhood and is harmful to their physical and mental development. Poverty, lack of good school and growth of informal economy are considered as the important causes of child labour in India (Rajesh Kesari, 2014).

In developing countries mostly Child labour is depends on informal sector. It is estimated that informal sector employs 85 per cent of child labour. As revealed by NSSO data 2004-05, this sector alone account for over two third of the child employment. This sector is followed by manufacturing sector which explanation for 3.81 per cent of child employment, 65.87 per cent children are working in agriculture sector, 7.03 per cent work as construction worker, 2.59 per cent work in transport, 8.08 per cent work on trade/restaurants / hotels and 15.51 per cent children are working in commercial sector in Haryana.(NSSO, 2004-05).

No doubts, Haryana state is not having any child labour endemic area as per government of India norms, yet the states government is fully cognizant of its responsibility for undertaking of the programme of progressive elimination of child labour. The state government is not only trying to

fulfil the constitutional and statutory obligation to lift up and rehabilitate the child labour family but also trying to bring them in the main stream of the society.

CHILD LABOUR LAWS IN INDIA

Various laws have been made in country to control the child labour.

According to Homer Folks (the chairman of the United State National Child Labour Committee) defines child labour as...“any work by children that interfere with their full physical development, their opportunities for a desirable minimum of education on their needed recreation.”

The children (Pledging of Labour) Act (1933)-define “child” as a person under the age of 15 year.

The factories Act 1948, prohibits children below the age of 14 year from working in any factory.

The minimum wage Act (1948) defines a child as a person below 15 year. It also has provision regarding hours of work (4.5) in case of a child and physical fitness.

The minimum age of child as a labour is 15 year in the Mines Act 1952.

The Plantation Labour Act, 1951 define that the prohibits employment of children below 12 year of age .According to the act no child can be allowed to work for more than 40 hours in a week and only between 6 am to 7 PM.

According to Prohibition and Regulation Act 1986 child labour means a person who has not completed his fourteen years of age but working as a labour is called child labour. The Act defines “prohibit the engagement of children in certain employment and to regulate the conditions of work of children in certain other employment.”

Article 27

State Parties recognize the right of every child to a standard of living adequate for the child physical, mental, spiritual, moral and social development.

Article 28

State parties recognize the right of the child to education and with a view to achieving the right progressively and on the basis of equal opportunity, they shall in particular. Make the primary education compulsory and available free to all also.

Article 32

State Parties recognize the right of the child to be protected from economics exploitation and from performing any work that is likely be hazardous or to

interfere with the child education or to be harmful to the child’s health or physical, mental, spiritual, moral or social development.

Article 45

Provision of free and compulsory education for the poor children’s. The state shall endeavor to provide with in a period of 10 year from the commencement of this constitutions for free and compulsory education for all the children until they complete the age of fourteen years.[1]

SUGGESTIONS

1. In India the problem of child labour is directly connected with the poverty and illiteracy. There should be ever possible efforts on the part of government and NGO’s.
2. Most of the working children are living in slum-areas because of parent’s poverty. The working conditions of the child workers in the different sector like organised and unorganised sector not satisfactory.
3. There should be great attention on exhaustive and detailed survey of child labour in other section for the purpose of comparative study which would enhance the specific problem of child labour.
4. The government reduce the child labour by starting evening schools to avoid heavily dropout and the children can get education after their working hours.
5. In the area where child labour concentration is much higher their implement such action plans by the government. This area should get priority.

CONCLUSION

There is a lot of provision added in the constitutions of India for child welfare to overcome child labour and to avoid the situations that comes as a consequence of the child labour. In this paper the recent data analyzed that the majority of child laborers are compelled to work due to poverty and having large families. They work more as compared to money they receive in return.

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