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## REVIEW ARTICLE

# FACTORS RESPONSIBLE FOR CHILD LABOUR IN INDIA

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# Factors Responsible For Child Labour in India

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A child is the gift of God and we cherish every gift of our almighty. But in case of the child the situation is very different. In India the childhood of various children is lost due to the unexpected burden that is been put upon their little shoulders. In the age of giggling and playing the children get exposed to a disastrous environment where things are beyond their imagination. They behave like taught robots who only deliver the learned things and not able to apply their own thoughts. They are put in to the labour force forcibly or sometimes circumstances make them to do so. These small children lose their identity, and get lost in the crowd, people don't call them by their own name but one common name is given to them and they get a new name: **Child Labour**. But did we ever realise the basic cause behind this trouble. The answers are many but one of the major reason is- Poverty.

Poverty and child labour are contemporary to each other. Since India has an agro-based economy and since 70 per cent of the Indian population live in villages, therefore child labour is found mainly in this field. In poor families a large number of children in a family are considered to be an economic asset rather than a liability.

The problem of child labour is existent not only in our country but all over the world. The latest statistics show that about 250 million child labours exist in the age group 5-14 all over the world. India alone accounts for the largest number of child labours (**Bhargava, 2003**).

According to the World Bank Report (2000), nearly 6 crores working children are to be found in India; of which at least 1.5 crores are bonded labour. It is a serious shame that when other issues such as that of globalization and information revolution are being highlighted, very little attention is being paid to the issue of child labour. Mishra and Pande (1996) are of the view that the ultimate responsible factor for child labour is widespread poverty. It is this poverty that lets parent leave the child to fend for themselves.

Poverty is not the sole factor responsible for child labour. Other factors such as improper implementation of primary education system, poor schooling system, cheap labour, employer's preferences, poor

implementation of legislative measures, large family sizes and parent's poor or no employment are the other main causes of child labour. It has been found that 37 per cent people believe poverty, 33 per cent say over populated family, 10 per cent say government policy failure, 6 per cent say weak laws, 2 per cent say parents unemployment and 1 per cent say high education and living are responsible for growing child labour (**source Internet: Goggle search**).

## SOCIAL ASPECTS OF CHILD LABOUR

When we mention the word child labour it simply means that particular section of the society who is a socially disadvantaged group. This group is deprived of such basic amenities we all crave for such as education, healthy diet, parental love and care, recreational activities, shield of protection etc. On the other hand these children get acutely exposed to hazardous conditions, poor health, false upbringing and vulnerable environment. In their tender age the parents or guardians shoulder heavy responsibilities on them and carrying that burden becomes an obligation for these little children.

The other factors that give birth to child labour in India are following:

### 1:- Parent's illiteracy:

Education is an important tool for nation building. It is an important source which teaches the people social etiquettes. Educated parents plan the future of their children to the best of their ability and it also makes them to bring up their children in the right manner. It is an essential mechanism which makes people capable of leading a normal life.

Illiterate parents never encourage their children to attend schools because they lack the awareness of the merits of education. In an analysis made by Geetha (2005), it was found that there was a high incidence of illiteracy with around 50 per cent of them reporting lack of education. Lack of education may have also induced them to send their child to work.

A seminar held in 1977 highlighted the fact that child labour is prevalent extensively in lower socio-economic groups because of the lack of appreciation of the merits of education on their part of the role it plays in leading an improved life (Singh, 1990).

## 2:- Negligence of Parents Regarding the Ill Effects of Child Labour

Since parents hardly consider child labour abominable, hence, they can be directly held responsible for the ill effects suffered by their children. Illiteracy and lack of knowledge prevents them from taking right decisions for their children. As in poor families large number of children means more earning hands but due to excessive children, issues such as health and hygiene, education, social activities, proper socialization etc. are also not paid attention to.

Most of the parents who belong to the poor class did not agree with the notion that child labour has an adverse consequence on the child's future. By involving children into the labour force, they believe themselves to have done a wonderful job. Ultimately the child ends up earning something which he could not do while in school. Hence the perception of parents about child labour has also become a major cause of this menace.

## 3:- Improper Implementation of Compulsory Primary Education

***The Right of Children to Free and Compulsory Education Act, 2009*** guarantees free and compulsory education to all the children of the age of six and fourteen years in India under Article 21A of the Indian Constitution.

Although there is a free provision for education upto primary level, the schemes, however, are not properly implemented, hence, resulting in a fractured system of education. Education is a weapon which can be effectively used to tackle the social evil of child labour, but the primary schools fail in providing the kind of education which can brighten the future of the children. The kind of education provided in most educational institutions is of little relevance to the children and does not prepare them in any way for the challenges ahead (***Sinha, 1997***).

This crippled system of education has left many people dissatisfied and they have developed a notion that sending their children to work is better than letting them go to the school. Even if in 21<sup>st</sup> century the parents are discouraging their children in sending schools then we should admit the fact that our entire education system is crumbled and full of ambiguity.

## 4:- Poor Education System:

Poor education system along with the inaccessibility of schools plus an irrelevant and hideous school

syllabus, lack of skilled teachers is other issues have also become a major hurdle.

Accessibility of schools is important for the children who hail from remote areas. Usually these children do not have any convenient means to reach school, no proper transport, bad road conditions and long distances to cover etc. add to their miseries. The schools in their areas are located at a far off place such long distances make schools un-alluring for children as well as the parents. They feel that attending these schools is time consuming and a futile exercise.

The school curriculum is another repulsive feature of these schools. Most of the contents of the curriculum are irrelevant for poor children, who feel that learning in school is useless since it does not provide skills (Yama, 2003). Extra-curricular activities are almost non-existent in these primary schools and no due time and importance is given to sports and physical activities because of the lack of teachers of concerned subject. Due to lack of proper teaching training, the teachers lack proper communication skills and they cannot even interact with the students.

Basic amenities like toilets, blackboards, chalks water etc are usually not found in such schools. Even in various schools one or two teachers handle the entire school and the result is far from satisfaction.

## CONCLUSION:-

From the above mentioned detail it is quite evident that Child labour is not due to a single strand of problem but many other issues have made this problem graver. For few people poverty is the only cause of child labour but we all know that so many other factors are responsible for this wide spread epidemic.

The social factors also play a major role in encouraging child labour. The attitude of parents towards the issue of child labour is one more cause, as according to many parents doing work is no harm as it makes their children skilful and they become a source of livelihood for their family. For various other illiterate patents going to school is a futile exercise as the schools in their areas does not serve any purpose and they cannot help their children in earning money.

There is another section of the parents who have worked as labourers in their childhood, they feel that if a child starts to work from a young age his skills get polished and they can earn better in their adulthood. Thus there are so many perceptions about one single issue.

While some people mistakenly think that its better when all members of a family work. Child labour actually makes poverty worse. Child labour and poverty is inevitably bound together and if we continue to use the labour of children as the treatment

for the social disease of poverty, we will have both poverty and child labour to the end of time

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