



A STUDY ON CHILD LABOUR WITH SPECIAL REFERENCE TO COIMBATORE CITY

Dr. A. Ramasethu

Assistant Professor, Department of Commerce, Rathinam College of Arts and Science (Autonomous), Coimbatore.

1.1 INTRODUCTION

Children are the greatest gift to humanity and Childhood is an important and impressionable stage of human development as it holds the potential for the future development of any society. Children who are brought up in an environment, which is conducive to their intellectual, physical and social health, grow up to be responsible and productive members of society. Every nation links its future with the present status of its children. By performing work when they are too young for the task, children unduly reduce their present welfare or their future income earning capabilities, either by shrinking their future external choice sets or by reducing their own future individual productive capabilities. Under extreme economic distress, children are forced to forego educational opportunities and take up jobs which are mostly exploitative as they are usually underpaid and engaged in hazardous conditions. Parents decide to send their child for engaging in a job as a desperate measure due to poor economic conditions.

It is, therefore, no wonder that the poor households predominantly send their children to work in early ages of their life. One of the disconcerting aspects of child labor is that children are sent to work at the expense of education. There is a strong effect of child labour on school attendance rates and the length of a child's work day is negatively associated with his or her capacity to attend school. Child labour restricts the right of children to access and benefit from education and denies the fundamental opportunity to attend school. Child labour, thus, prejudices children's education and adversely affects their health and safety.

India has the largest number of working children in the world. Child labour is a source of income for poor families. Children's work is considered essential to maintaining the economic level of households, either in the form of work for wages, of help in household enterprises or of household chores in order to free household members for economic activity.

There are very few borrowing options for a poor rural Indian. Even if a Bank or Cooperative society is accessible the poor laborer cannot qualify for a Loan, having no security or collateral to offer. With no Institutionalized credit sources to turn to, the laborer is forced to take loans from other sources, namely, the local moneylenders or local employers or landlords. Money lender charge mostly high percent monthly interest on their loan. To repay the amount the whole family starts working including the children.

1.2 SCOPE OF THE STUDY

- The present study is confined to child labour working in and around Coimbatore city. Children are the pillars of future.
- With lots of development that are taking place, it becomes the duty of every individual to make the world a nice place to live in. If the younger generation is affected due to our ignorance, it is going to affect the whole future generation itself.
- Child labor effect the normal physical, intellectual, emotional and more development of a child. So, it becomes important that we understand the magnitude of the problem that is going on in the areas we are living in and whether we can do something to change this condition.

1.3 OBJECTIVES OF THE STUDY

- To understand the socio-economic background of the children.
- To understand the causes of child labor.
- To advocate for better enforcement of child labor laws and regulations, including devising and encouraging innovative ways to ensure employer compliance;
- To educate the public, business, and governments to broaden awareness and understanding about the nature of child labor
- To offer suitable suggestions for eradicating child labour.

1.4 METHODOLOGY

The social research contains many steps and procedures that the researcher should follow in order to achieve the objective of the study. According to advanced learners dictionary of the current English "Research methodology is a careful investigation or inquiry especially through search for a new facts in any branch of knowledge".

1.4.1 Research design

A Research design is the arrangement of conditions for collection and analysis of data in a manner that aim to combine relevance to the research purpose of procedure. In this research the researcher has taken descriptive research design.

The data was collected through a survey wherein a pre-tested structured questionnaire was administrated to 50 child labour.

1.4.2 Sampling Technique

A Sample design is a definite Plan determined before any data are actually collected for obtaining a sample from the given population.

In this research the researcher has adopted convenience sampling, when population elements are selected for inclusions in the sample on the case of access is called “convenience-sampling”.

1.4.3 Sources of Data

Primary data are those which are collected from child labour through questionnaire method. In order to determine the causes of child labour in the city of Coimbatore, researcher had used primary data collection method. The data relating to the child labour were collected in and around Coimbatore city. The researcher randomly selected 50 child labours in Coimbatore city and the details are shown in the table below

1.5 TOOLS FOR DATA ANALYSIS

For the Purpose of the study following tools has been considered percentage analysis is used for ordinary table and chi-square analysis is used to test the significant association between two attributes.

1.5.1 Simple Percentage Method

Percentage analysis is carried out for the answer given by the respondents towards the questions given in the questionnaire.

1.6 LIMITATIONS OF THE STUDY

- The study is restricted to Coimbatore city only.
- Since the survey has been conducted 100 respondents only.
- As the time is limited, the study subjected to time constraints.
- The respondents had replied according to their own perception and experience.
- The respondents are not truly answered because of their social constraints.

1.7 REVIEW OF LITERATURE

Tatek Abebe (2009): A holistic perspective on child labour recognizes how work is tied up with processes of development and socio-cultural change, how it is constructed differently geographically, and how it becomes either rewarding or exploitative. Whether children benefit from working or not, the social meaning attached to their labour and their views not only differ from those of adults, they are also shaped differently according to their family circumstances, local cultural norms and economic situations, as well as by differences between rural and urban locations. Therefore, although it is crucial to “listen to what children say”, it is necessary to ground their opinions within the complex material social practices of the interconnected histories and geographies in which their livelihoods continue to unfold.

Christiaan Grootaert And Ravi Kanbur(1994):An encouraging consensus emerging both in the literature and in the policies of international agencies concerned with child labor, that effective action must aim in the first place at protecting the children and improving their living and working conditions. This implies a less stigmatized view of child labor, recognizing e.g. that the condition of child labor can itself be used as a targeting device to help the children with schooling, health, nutrition and other interventions. The long-term objective of elimination of child labor needs to be approached through a package of legislative action and economic and social incentives, which take into account the types of child labor and child labor arrangements present in a country, as well as its institutional and administrative capacity.

Philip and Robinson, Mary (2005): India is still a country strongly dependent on the labor of young children. These children produce goods for in country markets and export throughout the globe. India has created many different laws to try to make it illegal to employ children under the age of fourteen but economic standing makes that difficult. The issue of child labor in the country is widely known, but only vaguely. Many people, in countries where child labor is nonexistent, believe child labor to be outright wrong and horrible, but there are many different sides to the issue that need to be looked into further before judging the Indian government.

Professor Franziska Gassmann (2008): The key to reduce child labour which may interfere with education and other children's activities needed for their healthy development should lie in the set of public policies that are combined in order to break "the development traps" of sub-optimal human capital investment by parents and employers/firms. Few parents in the world purposely or unconditionally seek opportunity to negatively impact their children's current and future wellbeing for their own gain, if they have the choice of not doing so. The challenge of policy makers is, therefore, to build on this natural parental instinct, providing them with alternatives to child labour through the effective implementation of proper economic and social policies and programmes, coordinating all actors of the society, such as public and private sector employers, informal sector employers, parents, teachers and community members.

Christopher Udry (2003): Child labor can effectively be reduced by subsidies for school enrollment. This tool dominates alternatives because it addresses directly the tragic circumstances that impel families to send their children to work instead of school. An effective subsidy program is not unreasonably expensive because the costs are tied to the low wages earned by child workers. Therefore, while more careful cost-benefit analyses should be completed on an urgent basis, the expansion of targeted education subsidies into areas of developing countries with high rates of child labor force participation is an extremely promising strategy.

Peter Dorman (2008): Child labour is increasingly being viewed as, above all, a human capital problem, measurable by its impacts on education and health. The most recent decade of evidence corroborates this perspective and provides ample basis for taking action to reduce harmful impacts. Nevertheless, much work remains to be done to link specific outcomes to particular types of work, at particular intensities, for children of particular ages, gender and socioeconomic circumstances. This review has attempted to locate the current research envelope and to suggest, on this basis, directions for further empirical work that can be expected to have the greatest impact.

Singh (1980) a majority of the working children are employed on temporary basis in seasonal work. Comparatively the self-employed children have greater stability than the bounded labourers employed for lifetime. Unlike adults the child labour is least bothered about stability of

Ramesh Kanbargi (1991) in his book 'Child Labour in the Indian Sub- Continent' analyses the demographic trends of child labour and its relation with fertility, literacy and education.

1.8 FINDINGS

- Majority of Child Labours age ranges between **12 and 15 years**.
- Majority of Child Labours are **Male**.
- Majority of Child Labours are in **41(82%) Secondary Level of Education**.
- Majority of child labours earns salary range between **1500 and 3000**.
- Majority of child labours family earns range between **15000 and 20000**.
- Majority of child labours Family Expenditure range between **10001 and 15000**
- Majority child labours are from **Rural Area**.
- Majority **39(78%)** of respondents strongly agree that agree that poverty leads to child labour.
- Majority **22(44%)** of respondents agree that agree parental illiteracy that leads to child labour.
- Majority **22(44%)** of respondents strongly agree that Tradition of Making Children to Learn the Family skills that leads to child labour.
- Majority **20(40%)** of respondents strongly agree that Tradition of Making Children to Learn the Family that leads to child labour.
- Majority **21(42%)** of respondents strongly agree that Ineffective Enforcement of the Legal Provisions that leads to child labour.
- Majority **20(40%)** of respondents agree that Non-Availability and Non-Accessibility of Schools that leads to child labour.
- Majority **16(32%)** of respondents agree that Employers Prefer Children as they Constitute Cheap Labour that leads to child labour.
- Majority **15(30%)** of respondents strongly agree that Educational Problem For Children that leads to child labour
- Majority **17(34%)** of respondents agree that Bonded Children that leads to child labour.
- Majority **16(32%)** of respondents strongly agree that Unemployment of Elders that leads to child labour
- Majority **17(34%)** of respondents agree that Orphans that leads to child labour.



1.9 SUGGESTIONS

- Parents should not send their children to the work.
- Government has to take stringent penal action against the employer, who employ child labour in their concern.
- Government may offer scholarships to the poor studying students for pursuing school level education.
- Rotary club, Lions clubs may sponsor poor children for their studies.
- Government may introduce the scheme of paying stipend, those child labours who register for his studies.
- The government may cancel the license of entrepreneur, who employ child labour.

1.10 CONCLUSION

From the studies it is found child labour problem is mainly due to poverty, parental illiteracy. Thus government has to initiate necessary steps to eradicate poverty; by offering employment opportunity to the younger thereby future child labour problem may be contained. The problem is so serious that most of the children are growing up illiterates because they have been working all their life and do not get the opportunity to go to school. As certain section of the population gets education and is developing fast, another section of the population is still in the clutches of illiteracy thereby increasing the gap between the rich and the poor which, needs to be addressed taking into account the volume of economic activity that is taking place in the country.

1.11 BIBLIOGRAPHY

1. Weiner, M. 1991. *The Child and the State in India*. Princeton, New Jersey: Princeton University.
2. Department of Women and Child Development, Indian Council for Child Welfare, and UNICEF, India Country Office, "Rights of the Child: Report of a National Consultation, November 21-23, 1994, P.102.
3. Dr.Narendra Prasa, "Child Labour in India", *Yojana*, Vol.34, No.8, May 1-15, 1990, p.12-13, 19.p.12.
4. S.N. Tripathy, *Migrant Child Labour in India*, Mohit Publication, New Delhi, 1997, p.2.