



Education vs Child Labour

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ABSTRACT

Child labour is one most major social evil that requires most effective and be-fitting strategy to deal with it. It is a phenomenon which is existing everywhere on the globe in different degree. India- our country is badly facing this problem with regard to the problem of child labour. International labour Organization (ILO) as well as International Programme on the Elimination of child Labour (IPEC) contend child labour as "Work situation where children are compelled to work on a regular basis to earn a living for themselves and families". Moreover, they described child labour for resulting educational and social backwardness and the children work in conditions that are exploitative and damaging to their physical health and mental development as children being a child labour are separated from their families, often deprived of educational and training opportunities and subsequently children are forced to lead prematurely adult lives.

Child labour seems to be an unnatural act forced to be performed by children that deprive children for pursuing education and enhancing their quality of life in a longer perspective. For such unnatural and illegal act carried on by children are the functions of numerous factors that be identified before developing any intervention strategy to cope with the problem of child labour. It is therefore, necessary to have the genesis of this social problem. In quest of identifying the reasons which compel children to work for earning living for themselves and/or for their family, a survey was conducted on some families' parents and their children for identifying the real forces which have forced the parents to keep their children for working in quest of earning living.

At length, it is imperative to highlight on the basis of field survey research that child labour is basically is the function of lack of awareness of parents and the children about the benefits of education, illiteracy of the family members itself, poverty, general unemployment, etc. Moreover, government lack of concern with poor people especially living below poverty line and also the corruption faced by these people while any effort is being made for implementing the laws for protecting children to under-take child labour and also the failure of the implementing agency to provide better conditions of life both economically and educationally. At least, it is to say that child labour is a great social evil that must be eradicate provided they and their family are assured for adequate living free from extreme poverty.

KEYWORDS : Child Labour and Education.

Introduction: The slogan "child labour" is often defined as work that deprives children of their childhood, their potential and their dignity, and that is harmful to physical and mental development.

Neera Burra, an author whose writings have helped to focus the public attention on child labour (see Burra 1995), writes explicitly that a working child is 'basically a child who is deprived of the right to education.... What makes this definition important is that it makes it unambiguously clear that all out-of school children are child labourers in one way or another' (Burra 1997: 8). Mahendra Dev and C. Ravi (in Ramachandran and Massün 2002: 193) also consider a broadening of the definition 'by defining a child labourer as one who is deprived of the right to education and childhood.'

Not all work done by children should be classified as child labour that is to be targeted for elimination. Children's or adolescents' participation in work that does not affect their health and personal development or interfere with their schooling, is generally regarded as being something positive. It includes activities such as helping their parents around the home, assisting in a family business or earning pocket money outside school hours and during school holidays. Such types of activities are contributed to children's development and to the welfare of their families; they provide them with skills and experience, and help to prepare them to be productive members of society during their adult life. Child labour refers to work that:

- is mentally, physically, socially or morally dangerous and harmful to children; and
- interferes with their schooling by;
- depriving them of the opportunity to attend school;
- obliging them to leave school prematurely; or
- requiring them to attempt to combine school attendance with excessively long and heavy work.

Child labour involves children being enslaved, separated from their families, exposed to serious hazards and illnesses and/or left to fend for themselves on the streets of large cities – often at a very early age, all these are the extreme forms of child labour. Whether or not particular forms of "work" can be called "child labour" depends on the

child's age, the type and hours of work performed, the conditions under which it is performed and the objectives pursued by individual countries. The answer varies from country to country, as well as among sectors within countries.

The main reasons of Child labour is rooted in poverty and the lack of economic opportunities. It is often a response by the household to the need to satisfy basic requirements. Parents who are unemployed as well as they do not have social security, their children must work in order to help in their family's struggle for survive. The satisfaction of these children's basic needs in life takes precedence over their other needs such as education and recreation.

Children are also impelled to work from an early age because of the centuries-old tradition that the child must work through solidarity with the family group, so as to compensate as much as possible for the economic burden that he/she represents and to share in the maintenance of his/her family, which is usually a very large one.

Another reason why children work is the failures in the education system. Many parents prefer to send their children out to work rather than to school, either because there is no school within a reasonable distance of the family home, or because they cannot do without the income the working child brings in, or because they cannot meet the costs of sending the child to school, or again because they cannot see what use schooling would be to him. Poor schooling has little credibility for many families since it does not promote economic improvement. For so long as developing countries cannot successfully maintain their commitment to a decent quality universal education, increased child participation in the labour market is to be expected.

Another major factor in the increase in the number of working children is the demand for child workers. Employers know all too well the advantages of employing children. They represent a docile work force, which could be hired and replaced at a fraction of adult wages. They do not join labour unions and very seldom complain. Above all, employers who hire children gain a competitive advantage in both national and international markets due to the low wages they pay children. Causes of Child Labour

1. OVER POPULATION: Most of the countries are overpopulated. Due to limited resources and more mouths to feed, Children are employed in various forms of work.
2. ILLITERACY: Illiterate parents do not realize the need for a proper physical, emotional and cognitive development of a child. As they are uneducated, they do not realize the importance of education for their children.
3. POVERTY: Most of the time poverty forces parents to send their children to hazardous jobs. Although they know it is wrong, they have no other alternative as they need the money.
4. URBANIZATION: The Industrial Revolution has its own negative impacts. Most of the time during import and export industries in the developing world employ child workers, particularly in the garment industry.
5. UNEMPLOYMENT OF ELDERS: most of the time elders often face the difficulties to get jobs. The industrialists and factory owners find it profitable to employ children. This is so because they can pay less and extract more work. They will also not create union problem.
6. ORPHANS: those children with no parents and relatives, often do not find anyone to support them. Thus they are forced to work for their own living.
7. WILLINGNESS TO EXPLOIT CHILDREN: This is at the root of the problem even if a family is very poor, the incidence of child labour will be very low unless there are people willing to exploit these children.

22 -05-12.

7. http://members.tripod.com/~siddharth_sundar/causes.html time:20-52, day Tuesday. Date. 22-05-12
8. <http://www.fitnessfinger.com/Article/causes-of-child-labour-in-the-world-281.aspx> time:22:18, day Tuesday, date 22-05-12

In order to solve the child labour problem we need to first of all clear out the causes of child labour. Child labour generally means work or employment for children (generally under the age of 18) that harms or exploits them physically, mentally, morally, socially etc. Child labour might hinder his education and hence expose him to physical and mental torture. There are few reason why child has to labour:

- * Family cannot afford the upbringing of child and hence obvious choice of survival for the child to learn how to work. (There are various scenarios here - sometimes the earning member of the family dies or there isn't any kind of earning etc etc.)
- * Family is illiterate and doesn't know the value of education. Hence doesn't provide him/her access to studies.
- * Uncaring attitude of families - sometimes kids are forced to work for their family business (often part-time) so that he learns the work - but its often seen that the child loses interest in studies due to this.
- * Child doesn't study / leaves studies due to personal reason (may be bad tackling by their parents) and hence indulge in work himself/herself.
- * Lack of schools or college. (possible in certain villages where access to primary or secondary education isn't there)
- * Kidnapped kids (yes this is possible! Although rare)
- * Orphan kids (this is quite unfortunate - the kid has to survive by working as he/she doesn't have any option - since he/she is on his own -- mostly in 3rd world nations)
- * Orphan kids (sometimes relatives take responsibility of the kid - but instead of being responsible make them work for their living)
- * Extra money - yes sometimes for extra income the child voluntarily works (Eg: as part-time mainly as a paper boy) [Although its a question of debate as is this child labour or not]

So, if we keep in mind all the reason, which are responsible of child labour than it is possible to control the child labour and save the child to work in very early age, and make them educated and self depend by the mean of schooling.

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