



CHILD LABOUR PROBLEMS IN KARNATAKA

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ABSTRACT

The socio-economic conditions play a significant role in giving rise to the problem of child labour. Child labour perpetuates poverty, it does not reduce it as it condemns one generation after another to its vicious circle. It is generally considered that illiteracy, ignorance, low wages, poverty, unemployment, and social life – all are the root cause of child labour. Present paper concentrates on the Economic compulsions weigh heavily on the consciousness of the poor parents and they did not mind colluding with their children's employers in violating the law and putting their children under the risk of inhuman exploitation. This paper refers the Karnataka state and The Gulbarga District is facing many problems like over population, mounting poverty, increasing unemployment, underdevelopment and object backwardness. Child labour is also one of them.

KEYWORDS : Child Labour, Economy, Illiterate, Poverty and Law

Introduction:

The socio-economic conditions play a significant role in giving rise to the problem of child labour. Child labour perpetuates poverty, it does not reduce it as it condemns one generation after another to its vicious circle. It is generally considered that illiteracy, ignorance, low wages, poverty, unemployment, and social life – all are the root cause of child labour. The estimation of child labour in the district/state is not correct. As census data gives statistics regarding children working in the organized sector only. It does not give precise account of children working in the unorganized sector of the country. As per census 2001 the percentage of child labour to total population in Gulbarga fell from 7.19 in 1991 to 5.97 in 2001. But whatever may be the actual figure on child labour, the important point is that the phenomenon of child labour is on the rise in Karnataka and Gulbarga. Child labour prevails both in rural and urban areas throughout the state. An overwhelming majority of child labourers is engaged in rural areas. The percentage of child labour in rural areas of Gulbarga district was 8.74 in 1981 and slide down to 6.35 in 2001. Despite of all rules and regulations, facts and figures, child labour is accepted as a harsh reality. It is widely accepted that there is a very dubious nexus between illiteracy, poverty and child labour. The phenomenon of child labour mirrors a social curse. The children of today will be leaders of tomorrow who will hold the country's banner high and maintain the prestige of the nation.

Offends Being Committed On the Child Labourers in Different Occupations

In Gulbarga district the employment of children in different hazardous occupations started after industrialization and urbanization. In Gulbarga children are found to be working in both organised and unorganized industries such as construction work, mechanical work, roadwork, hotels, plantation, agriculture, brick kilning, road works, transport centers, bidi cigarettes, canteen, dhabas, carpet weaving, match box industry and other small scale industries.

Parents/guardians used take advances in return for the bonds pledging the labour of their children like bonded labour.

- 1) Children under 12 years were being appointed in factories and the working time for these children was more than 5 hours per day.
- 2) Some children who were ran away from their houses for sake of money used to utilize the money for prostitution and bad habits, earned from their work.
- 3) Children were denied from their education
- 4) The conditions of the work places were not good for children to work.

The phenomenon of child labour not only closes the future of millions of children but it also restricts the development prospects. Child labour cannot be viewed in isolation because it is a symptom of the disease, which is spread at various levels. It must be accepted that the problem cannot be solved by legislation alone. It calls for multi-dimensional approach, the major dimensions being economic, educational and legal.

ECONOMIC

Important economic factors responsible for child labour in Gulbarga District are:

1. Among some of the major factors responsible for the institution of child labour, poverty ranks first. Most of the children workers belong to poor, landless and semi-landless families whose income is otherwise insufficient to keep the family alive.
2. The incidence of child labour is much more pronounced in agriculture and allied activities and in Scheduled Caste families.
3. The socio-economic compulsions of the parents/guardians are also responsible for making the institution of child labour survivable.

The measures to be taken for eradication of Child labour in Gulbarga District are:

1. It is essential to eradicate poverty of the masses to minimize the evil of child labour.
2. There is need to change the attitude of the parents and guardians. They have to think that children employment is loss to the family in long run.

EDUCATION

Education for all is the great goal of social development. Due to continued population explosion, poor and inadequate educational facilities and people striving, our children continued to become child labour and the problem still continued as usual. To have check on this problem of child labour, fertility check has to be assured through adoption of family planning and proper medical facilities, better and adequate schooling facilities have to be provided. Studies have revealed that seven years of schooling leads to 3-5 years delay in marriage and also lower infant mortality.

On the education front following measures should be adopted:

- (i) Compulsory primary education for all the children below the age of 14 years should be strictly reinforced.
- (ii) Contents of primary education should include skill formation training relevant to the needs of the economy.
- (iii) It is essential to include co-operation and awareness building among the exploited children themselves.
- (iv) Night schools and fixing school time as per agriculture cycle.

- (v) The on-going thrust on school enrolment, particularly for girls should be concretized at each district level, where even local resources can be mobilized to organize mid day meals scheme to which contribute to better retention of the girls in the school.
- (vi) School environment and curricula must be made attractive and interesting. Measures like supply of books; uniforms medical facilities should be introduced in all schools attended by poor children.

LEGAL

The following legal suggestions can be made to deal with the problem of child labour in Gulbarga District

1. It can be suggested that child labour legislation should be organised and unified as well as extended to occupations in the unorganized sector.
2. The legislation should clearly make distinction between hazardous and non-hazardous occupations for the children. Legislations which aim at abolition of child labour from hazardous occupations should be applicable to family workers also.
3. It is also necessary to promote research studies on the impact of laws relating to child labour in order to bring out the strengths and weaknesses of the existing legislations.
4. It is essential to implement the existing laws effectively fortifying them with wide public participation and effective social control.
5. Lastly, the parent should be literate so that they may not evade the law.

OTHERS

The law enforcing officials should be sincere and honest in regulating the laws regarding such social problems. Administrative machinery should be strengthened and a uniform attempt should be made to deal with the problem as a whole because multiplicity of laws and their spheres of implementation bring many difficulties. Comprehensive area planning approach should be adopted for eradicating child labours from the areas where child labour is concentrated. Special machinery should be set up for this. An extensive and intensive study by a team of researchers and social scientist is required to identify and assess the different aspects of child labour in the Gulbarga District

At the end, it may be said that many of the economic, educational and legal suggestions mentioned above are either implemented or in the process of serious concerned but the problem ridden Gulbarga district still continue to be plagued by child labour. Though pressure from the west has also persuaded the Indian government to formulate a five-year Plan of Rs.850 crore project to eliminate child labour in the manufacturing and serviced sector, but it is doubtful whether any notable advance has been made considering that poverty remains a major factor for the prevalence of child labour. This means that its elimination is for more difficult than is generally thought.

Undoubtedly child labour is embedded in the fabric of our society and this is one of the serious problems facing the country as a whole. Children are like buds which need to be properly nursed and well taken care of so that they bloom full grow-into able human beings and contribute their worth to the future development of the society.

Conclusion:

Thus, with the advent of 21st century when we are busy on one hand in ensuring best of human rights, living conditions, social justice and development, on the other kneels with object poverty, illiteracy, poor health and misery of life, thousands of poor children are forced to come out for their livelihood and working in poor and hazardous conditions. Their rights for life, good health, food, education and a loving childhood remains life a dream unfulfilled. Hence, the problem of child labour demands serious and immediate attention at the national and state level.

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