



CHILD LABOUR AND ITS CONSEQUENCES

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ABSTRACT Child labour and the worst forms of child labour, as defined by International Labour Organization (ILO) Conventions, damage children's health, threaten their education and lead to further exploitation and abuse. UNICEF does not oppose work that children may perform at home, on the family farm or for a family business as long as that work is not a danger to their health and well-being, and if it doesn't prevent them from going to school and enjoying childhood activities.

KEYWORDS :**1 Historical Background**

Children in this country have been associated with work from time immemorial. When the structure of society was not so complicated various occupations used to be pursued on the caste lines within the framework of the joint family system in which the joys and sorrows, Pleasures and pains, Prosperity and poverty and business and idleness used to be shared by all the members according to their capacity and needs of all the members used to be full filled within the available family resources.

The principle of "Each for all and all for each" was followed and all family members were prepared to make sacrifices.

2 The Evils of child Labour

Today children are required to work individually without being given the personal and paternalistic guidance that they used to get in earlier times while working in family undertakings within or outside the precincts of their houses.

The work of children's today is characterized by long hours of work, late hours or night employment, continuous standing, sitting or use of single Set of Muscles. Pressure of speed in the performance of simple mechanical acts, contract with industrial poisons exposure to inclement weather are all harmful conditions for the growing child who is peculiarly susceptible to certain deformation and diseases, (occupational) like Tuberculosis, Asthmas, Eye defects, skin diseases, burn Injuries respiratory disorders etc.

Child workers take tablets like anal gin, metacin, aspirin and cococin and also liquor on a regular basis immediately after work to get rid of general body ache due to continuous work of long hours.

Thus child labour simultaneously increases and reduces the family income, but as it clear it reduces rather than increases that income.

3 Meaning and definition of Child Labour

Children are considered as a born to Society. And it is said that child labour is a curse to the society as well as to the children themselves. According to the biological science "Child" refers to both boy and Girl, According to medical science, a boy is considered as child up to his 16 years and girl till the age of 12 years. However a legally a boy or a girl under the age of 14 years is considered in India as child irrespective of sex. But according to the standard laid down by the international labour organization (ILO)

The minimum age for admission to employment is fixed at 15 years.

That means the operational definition of child differs from one authority to another, however, a boy or girl up to the age of 14 years as prescribed by the relevant laws of the country is used in this work to denote child.

The term "Child labour" may be described as one who is below the age of 14 years and who engages in any productive work whether paid or unpaid under certain circumstances. Children are forced to work without any wages. Hence even the unpaid worker is included in the meaning if the child labour. In common sense child labour means working children. But in strict sense it not only includes working children. But also the exploitation of weak tender and under developed bodies work is not as evil or bad thing for the children.

Because, doing work in childhood itself make them more intelligent and helps them to active perfect ness in a particular work.

As against this if children are working in hazardous units. It creates a sever problem to the society as well as to the country. one can find children working in Industries Factories, Hotels, Garages, Restaurants, etc., in unhealthy surroundings and polluted environment. They are hardly getting any facility. They are forced to do hard work and for more than normal working hours and usually, they do not get any leave facility.

Further, they have to work for major part of the day in unfavorable condition. In the process, they come in contract with toxic substances. Hence the child labour is often considered as Economic Practice and Attendant social Evil.

Anyhow child labour practice will have both plus and minus points.

Definition of Child Labor:

The child labor (Prohibition and Regulation) Act, 1986 has stated.

Child is a person who has not completed his fourteenth year of age.

The term child labour not only applies to the children working in organized industries but also to the children working in all forms non-industrial and unorganized occupation, which are injurious to their normal physical mental and social development. The definition of a child as given in Factories Act 1948 is a person who has not completed 15 years, an adolescent as a person who has completed 15 years but is less than 18 years and a young person includes both child and adolescent.

Childhood can be defined in terms of age. But then different societies may have different age thresholds for demarking childhood and adulthood many attempts have been made to define the term child labor without much success. It generally refers to the employment of a child in a gainful occupation with a view to supplement the labour income of this family.

A generally valid definition of child labour is presently not available either in the national or international context.

According to late Shri V.V. Giri, the former president of India a Labour leader of repute the term child labour has two basic elements.

1. Employment of children in gainful occupations with a view to adding to the labour income of their families.

2. The work to which he is exposed is dangerous. Purposeful oppression and exploitation of working children leading to deprivation of their legitimate opportunities for growth. It must deny to him. The opportunity of normal mental and physical development.

The term child labour basically means the children below the age of fifteen who are employed for hire or reward in occupations that are injurious to their physical, mental intellectual, moral and social development due to oppression and exploitation inherent in that employment. Child labor instead encompasses the young boys and girls working in small industries enterprises.

4 Classification of Children

Child Labor can be broadly classified under two broad categories such as Domestic work or Non-Domestic work.



According to National Convention of Child Laborers working Children are employed in different occupations in to 4 broad categories namely.

1. Agriculture and Allied activities:

This includes activities like cultivation agricultural labour livestock tending dairy farming forest work (Collecting fire wood and other Minor forest Products) and flower picking, Bonded agricultural labour was also prevalent and several employments were casual in nature.

2. Manufacture:

This includes working in corn Mills, glass factories, lathe brick kilns, tiles manufacture, stone quarries, handlooms, silk reeling and silk weaving units, gaining factory garment units, carpet looms, Match factories, fireworks, fertilizer factory, soap factory, engineering factory, gem cutting mat meaning knit wear power looms dyeing units, mental factories, beedi making, agarbatti making, screen printing, weaving bangs making metal cutting, rubber ball making, leather shoe making paper bag making, chappal making and purse making.

3. Service Sector (Relatively Organized)

This includes working in hotels, canteens, tea shops, hawking groundnuts, flowers fruits, can juice, coconut pieces, other eatables, lottery tickets, newspapers, papad, puffed rice kerosene oil etc.

4. Service sector (Unorganised)

Shamiyana decoration, waste recycling pruning, domestic work, loading and unloading cobbler, rickshaw puller, washing cars, singing on streets, cleaning train compartments, porters and watermen on boats.

5 Reasons of child Labour

No single factor alone it responsible for the social problem.

Child labour in India is on the account of increase in illiteracy, poverty, bad habits of the parents, adult unemployment, intermittent and in adequate family income and ignorance of parents are the main reason for the child labour. Who is to be blamed?

1. Continued Poverty

Poverty is strongest single factor responsible for high incidence prevalence and perpetuation of child labor.

2. Situation at Home

Another direct cause of child employment is the situation at home. There may be tension and uncertainly provoked or increased by poverty, the father may have left home, the mother may be alone. The father or mother or both may fall ill or become physically unfit or die. However, the argument that the children are obliged to work because of the disappearance of the bread winner is often fallacious because it is generally the head of the family himself who sees to it that these children go out to work. Bad habits of the parents and their attitudes: Due to the bad habit of the parents for additional income, alcoholic parents send children to work. Such parents are under the impression that children are born to serve and support them and see nothing wrong in their not being in school or not being able to play

4. Migration:

Again, when a rural family migrates to the town the adults are straight away faced with a new and unknown environmental and labour situation. As a result of the instability and insecurity are the reasons the children are often set to work so that the family may survive.

5. Traditional Occupation:

It has been found that generally some work was the traditional

occupation of the family. Children come into this field because of the encouragement provided by their parents or their close relatives.

6. Lack of education facilities, illiteracy and ignorance of Parents:

It is not poverty which lies at the root of child labour but the lack of an effective education system. Inadequate and poor education facilities as well as the neglect of the enforcement of free and compulsory education for all children below the age of 14 years leads to child labour. Because of poverty their families are not able to afford the expenditure on education. However, less it may be education facilities mere not available for girls belonging to traditional families having *purdah* among the families.

An alcoholic parent may dislike to send his child to school. Children may sometime drop out from school due to domestic responsibility to look after younger siblings when the parents are out on work or overloaded with agriculture work.

7. Increased Profits

Child labour is seen by the employers as a much cheaper available commodity.

Employers feel that since children provide the same productivity as adults, in several cases even more at lower costs, they can take work for long time with less wage with short break for lunch and other intervals. So it is recognized as means of lower overheads increased profits.

8. Advance/Taking of Loan

Continued poverty forces the parents to take advance from the owner/master for unproductive reasons as well as productive purposes. The need to incur expenditure on births, marriage and deaths as well as other social obligation force to poor villagers to borrow from the unscrupulous village money lenders who would demand free service of the person in lieu of the interest.

6 Conclusions

Acknowledging the children's rights and restricting their exploitation may remain voiceless if any financial support is not engaged by the richer countries in favour of the achievement of this objective in the poorer countries. On the contrary, rich countries tend to reduce the minimal age for working. Cultural and tradition arguments are not relevant to restrict these rights. It is especially necessary to accept that choices are made under economic considerations.

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