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Impact of Demographic Variables on the Dimensions of Child Labour in Trichirappalli District

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Introduction

Child labour is not only morally acceptable, illegal and an af-front to human dignity, it is also extremely poor economics. It retards the development of human resources, reduces life-time earnings of the individual, and lowers the level of produc-tivity and economic growth for the society at large. Children who work at an early age tend to have a lower level of educa-tion, which enforces social and economic inequalities and lim-its their prospects for upward mobility. The working children, therefore, face differentiation and segmentation in job access, which is, associated with differential access to the schooling system itself. Therefore, child labour is highly inimical to the educational, intellectual and potential economic development of these children. The skill development of children as child labourers is no substitute for the access to social mobility, which is possible through access to formal educational sys-tem.

Statement of the Problem

It is obvious that in a society the importance of child wel-fare cannot be over emphasized because the welfare of the entire community, its growth and development depends on the health and wellbeing of its citizens. Children are a su-premely important national asset and the future of a nation depends on how its children grow and develop.   The need of the hour is therefore to make child visible and ensure his access to education and healthy socialization. For this, the utmost priority must be given to make provisions for compul-sory primary education, vocational training, and improvement of socio-economic condition of the families where children are forced to work. The present study is made to analyse the socio-economic background of child labour in various occu-pations of unorganised sector in Trichirappalli District.

Objectives of the Study

The main objective of the study is to analyse the impact of demographic variables on the dimensions of child labour.

Hypotheses

There is no significant impact of different groups of child labour based on socio-economic variables of age, religion, caste, native residence, size of family and family income on the dimensions of child labour.

Sampling Design

Researcher has followed the sampling method for the re-search work. The snow ball technique is used for collecting the data from the child labours in unorganized sectors. The head quarters of revenue divisions have been selected to be included in the sample as convenient sample basis at the rate of 50 from each of the three divisions. A sample of 150 re-spondents is selected for administering interview schedule at the business houses in these Revenue Divisions.

Statistical Tools applied

The quantitative techniques like frequency distribution of data, simple averages, multiplications, percentage analysis and 't' test were applied for the tabulation of data.

Socio-Economic Background of the Child Labour

The socio-economic conditions play a significant role in giving rise to the problem of child labour. The questions regarding their age, religion and caste, place of residence, size of fam-ily, educational level of the family members of the respond-ents, basic facilities in the home, family income and indebted-ness are analyzed and presented below.

Distribution of Child Labours by Socio-economic Factors

Factors	Group	No. of Respondents	Percentage
Age	9-12 Years	49	26
	13 – 15 Years	111	74
Religion	Hindu	142	94.70
	Muslim	8	5.30
Caste	Forward Caste	12	8.00
	Backward Caste	66	44.00
	Scheduled Caste	72	48.00
Native Residence	Rural	93	62.00
	Semi-urban	35	23.33
	Urban	22	14.67
Size of Family	Small	72	48.00
	Medium	45	30.00
	Big	33	22.00
Family Income	Below Rs. 6,000	78	52.00
	Above Rs. 6,000	72	48.00

Source: Primary data

It is observed that out of 150 samples, a majority falls in the age group of 13-15 years (74%) and the rest are in the 9-12 age group(26%). No child labourers below the age of 9 have been found in the sample. Though the Child Labour (Prohibi-tion and Regulation) Act 1986 abolished the employment of children in any industry, still child labour exists in the unorgan-ized sectors. Children at this tender age are forced to work due to the pressure of circumstances.

The majority of the children working in the unorganized sec-tor are Hindus (94.7%) and the remaining (5.3%) are Mus-lims. Children belonging to Christian are not found working in the unorganized sector in Tiruchirappalli District. It may be inferred that 92% of the child labourers belong to socially and economically backward section of the society. Hence there is a close relation with socio-economic and child labour.

It is found that more than 60% of the child labourers are from rural areas. People in the rural area confront the problem of unemployment more acutely. They find it very difficult to feed their family with the low wages. So they are compelled to send their children for work.

IMPACT OF DEMOGRAPHIC VARIABLES ON THE DIMEN-SIONS

This part enables the researcher to analyse the collected data by using relevant statistical methods. The first step in the analysis is the classification which means arranging the data in different classes are groups according to their simi-

larities or dissimilarities. It is the easiest and simplest method of discovering order out of the confused mass of data. The researcher used the statistical device of 't' test to interpret the collected data.

WILLING TO COME OUT FROM WORK
An attempt is made to find whether there is any significant impact of different groups of child labour based on socio-economic variables of age, religion, caste, native residence, size of family and family income on the dimension of 'Willing to come out from work'.

DISTRIBUTION OF 't' VALUE BETWEEN DEMOGRAPHIC VARIABLES AND THE DIMENSION 'WILLING TO COME OUT FROM WORK'

Variables	Calculated 't' Value	Table value	Significance
Age	1.68	1.96	Not Significant
Religion	0.96	1.96	Not Significant
Caste	1.32	1.96	Not Significant
Native Residence	1.85	1.96	Not Significant
Size of Family	1.26	1.96	Not Significant
Family Income	0.87	1.96	Not Significant

The generated t-values between dimension of 'Willing to come out from work' and different demographic variables via, Age, Religion, Caste, Native residence, Source of employment and education are not significant at any level and infer that there is no significant impact of demographic variables on the dimension of 'willing to come out from work'. Hence, Null hypothesis of there is no significant impact of different groups of child labour based on socio-economic variables of age, religion, caste, native residence, size of family and family income on the dimension of 'Willing to come out from work' is accepted.

WORK EXPERIENCE
An attempt is made to find whether there is any significant impact of different groups of child labour based on socio-economic variables on the dimension of 'Work Experience'.

DISTRIBUTION OF 't' VALUE BETWEEN DEMOGRAPHIC VARIABLES AND THE DIMENSION 'WORK EXPERIENCE'

Variables	Calculated 't' Value	Table value	Significance
Age	2.16	1.96	Significant
Religion	1.18	1.96	Not Significant
Caste	1.24	1.96	Not Significant
Native Residence	2.71	1.96	Significant
Size of Family	1.98	1.96	Significant
Family Income	2.34	1.96	Significant

There is a significant difference in the dimension 'Work Experience' in respect of different demographic variables via, Age, Native Residence, Size of Family and Family Income. However there is no significant difference with the same dimension in respect of Religion and Caste. It can be inferred that there is a significant difference in the dimension 'Work Experience' among majority of demographic factors of child labor. Hence, Null Hypothesis is rejected.

PROBLEMS WITH PRESENT WORK
An attempt is made to find whether there is any significant impact of different groups of child labour based on socio-economic variables on the dimension of 'Problems with Present Work'.

DISTRIBUTION OF 't' VALUE BETWEEN DEMOGRAPHIC VARIABLES AND DIMENSION 'PROBLEMS WITH PRESENT WORK'

Variables	Calculated 't' Value	Table value	Significance
Age	2.04	1.96	Significant
Religion	1.54	1.96	Not Significant
Caste	1.45	1.96	Not Significant
Native Residence	2.33	1.96	Significant
Size of Family	2.40	1.96	Significant
Family Income	2.07	1.96	Significant

There is a significant difference in the dimension 'Problems with Present Work' in respect of different demographic variables via, Age, Native Residence, Size of Family and Family Income. However there is no significant difference with the same dimension in respect of Religion and Caste. It can be inferred that there is a significant difference in the dimension 'Problems with Present Work' among majority of demographic factors of child labor. Hence, Null Hypothesis is rejected.

CONCLUSION
It is true that child labour cannot be washed away with a magic wand. Of course, normal growth and development of children can be protected, absolute poverty overcome, population growth slowed down and environment deterioration arrested. For decades now, this has not been a question of possibilities but of priorities. Whatever be the particular cause, be it democracy or human rights, development or equality, gender equality or environmental protection, the growth, development and education of the children is central to long term success. It is hoped that this type of study and the suggestions contained therein will be useful for eliminating child labour.

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