

CHILD LABOUR GRIPS FUTURE GROWTH OF INDIA

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***Abstract:** Issue of Child labour is a serious concern both at international and national levels. It deprives the children of their childhood, their dignity that harms physical and mental development. By working at very young age children reduces future income earning capabilities. Early entry of these children into the labour market has adverse implications on the proper physical and mental development of the child, especially for the female children. Child labour has become an abuse of child and the human rights in Third World Countries including India. India is sadly the home to the very large number of child laborers. Since Child Labour has direct relation with poverty, health, trade, education, adult unemployment, human development and over all development of the society thus its abolition has become a part of developmental process at National and International level.*

***Key words:** Labour, Child, Female, Unemployment*

INTRODUCTION

Every nation links its future with the present status of its children. According to the estimates of International Labour Organization (ILO), abounds 166 million children worldwide are engaged as child laborers, with 95 percent of them being in the developing countries. Early entry of these children into the labour market has adverse implications on the proper physical and mental development of the child, especially for the female children Large number of child laborer exists in India. There was an increase in child laborers from 11.28 to 12.59 million (1991 - 200 I). Poverty, lack of social security, lack of good schools and growth of informal economy are the main causes of child labour. Although the Government has taken various pro-active measures to tackle this problem but looking at the magnitude and extent of the problem, efforts from all sections of the society is required to solve the problem.

OBJECTIVES

- Explain the concept of Child Labour
- Assess the determinants
- Evaluation of impact of Child labour in India

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- Study Government initiatives to prevent Child Labour

RESEARCH METHODOLOGY

Linear multiple regression models are used to examine the determinants of incidence of Child labour. In the model

Dependant Variable: working hour of child labour

Independent Variables: family income, family size, and education of child labour, education of father And mother.

The Concept: “Child Labour means practice of engaging children in activities either on part or full-time basis.”

UNICEF defines Child labour differently, “A child between 5 to 11 years of age is involved in child labour activities if he or she did at least one hour of economic activity or at least 28 hours of domestic work in a week. In case of children between 12 to 14 years of age, he or she did at least 14 hours of economic activity or at least 42 hours of economic activity and domestic work per week.”

Government Classification of child laborer:

- i) Main workers who work for 6 months or more per year
- ii) Marginal child workers who work at any time during the year but less than 6 months in a year.

The Ministry of Labour, has employed the term ‘child labour’ only in the context of children doing ‘hazardous’ work in factories. This definition of child labour is narrow as it incorporate only a very small fraction of children who are part of work-force. Large number of children are deprived of Government support.

The condition of Child labour depends on their work place. In case of Street Children who are living on the streets, such as shoeshine boys, rag- pickers, beggars, etc. they are completely alone. They are at the mercy of their employers. The Bonded Children work without pay and live in inhumane condition.

The largest category of children is those who are out-of-school and are working full time for 12 to 14 hours in a day. Children working in Factories, workshops, street comers, are subject to sexual exploitation. They cannot resist the abuse by employers, either as perpetrators or intermediaries. There is high possibility of getting infected by sexually transmitted diseases .

There exists “distress seasonal migration”. Many families in search of employment have to leave their villages. The children of these families are forced to drop out of schools making it difficult to break the vicious circle of poverty. Migrant children are forced to work. Besides these large number of children is working as domestic help.

Table 1: Incidence of Child Labour in India

Distribution of Children	2001 Population Census (in millions)	2006 Population Projection and Estimates (in millions)	% of Children to Population	
			2001	2006
Child Population				
Male	132	125	n/a	n/a
Female	120	116	n/a	n/a
Total	252	241		
Child Labour (10-14)				
Male	6.8	4.2	8.8	6.7
Female	5.8	3.8	8.5	6.3
Total	12.6	8	8.7	6.6
Out of School Children				
Male	32	19	27.5	15.3
Female	45	24	38	20.8
Total	77	43	34.4	17.9

Source: Census, 2001

ANALYSIS OF TABLE 1

Incidence of child labour is more in male child than female child. The child labour was 12.6 million which more than estimates were. However due to programmes & measures there has been decrease in the percentage of child labour between 2001 and 2006.

Table 2: NSSO Estimate of Child Labour (Age group 5-14) In Major Indian States (2004-05 and 2009-10)

States	2004-05		2009-10	
	All (in thousands)	% Share of Child Labour	All	% Share of Child Labour
A.P	1201	13.2	234662	4.71
Assam	133	1.5	189154	3.8
Bihar	364	4	276522	5.55
Chhattisgarh	263	2.9	11626	0.23
Delhi	9	0.1	18576	0.37
Gujarat	302	3.3	390687	7.84
Haryana	99	1.1	72196	1.45
H.P	37	0.4	7398	0.15
Jharkhand	206	2.3	82468	1.65
Karnataka	571	6.3	226497	4.54
Kerala	11	0.1	2765	0.06
M.P.	491	5.4	191017	3.83
Maharashtra	783	8.6	260673	5.23
Orissa	440	4.8	134563	2.7
Punjab	101	1.1	48836	0.98
Rajasthan	821	9	405936	8.14

Contd...

Tamil Nadu	173	1.9	17351	0.35
U.P.	2074	22.9	27371	0.55
Uttaranchal	64	0.7	1775333	35.62
West Bengal	690	7.6	551584	11.07
All India	9075	100	49,83,871	100

Source: NSSO Report

ANALYSIS OF TABLE 2

There has been decrease in child labour in all states. But, percentage of child labour differs in different states e.g. In Kerala and Tamil Nadu percentage share child labour was less than 1% but in Uttaranchal and Delhi there has been significant increase in the percentage of child labour.

Linear multiple regression model is used to examine the determinants of incidence of Child labour.

Dependant Variable: Hours of work of child labour

Independent Variables: Income of family, family size, child labour, father and mother education

$$y = a + p_1x_1 + p_2x_2 + p_3x_3 + p_4x_4 + p_5x_5 + u$$

Y = Working hour of Child labour

X₁ = Family income (annual income in Rupees) X₂ = Family size (in number)

- Slope Coefficient (p) implies that if Family Income increases by one-unit, incidence of Child Labour changes by p units. Therefore, p = -2.00439E-06 indicates that every additional unit of Family Income results in -2.00 unit decrease in incidence of Child Labour.
- Looking at t-stat for Family Income coefficient of -8.55948, we conclude that Family Income has a significant impact on Child Labour percentage.

Incidence of child labour will be lower with more educated parents.

Constitutional and Legal Measures: Child needs protection against physical harm and exploitation by others. Therefore, special provisions for the protection of the rights of working children were made.

Constitutional provisions for legal protection of children

The Child Labour (Prohibition and Regulation) Act (1986) "aims to prohibit the entry of children into hazardous occupations identified in a list by the law."

- ban employment of children below 14 year
- regulate conditions of work of children in employment
- fix penalties for employment of children in violation of the provisions of this act

iv) Bring uniformity in definition of “child” in related laws.

In 1988 National Child Labour Project (NCLP) Scheme was initiated. The aim was to “reduce the incidence of Child Labour. Its coverage has increased and covers 271 districts. Children were withdrawn from work, sent to school, given vocational training, midday meal.” At present, around 7,000 NCLP schools exist having three Lakh children.

The International Labour Organization (ILO) in 1991 launched the International Programme for Elimination of Child Labour (IPEC). India was the first country to sign the Memorandum of Understanding (MOU) in 1992.

INDUS Project, Andhra Pradesh Phase-II & Kama taka Project was implemented under ILO-IPEC. “Jointly funded by the Ministry of Labour, Government of India and the Department of Labour, United States of America (USDOL), the INDUS Child Labour Project was implemented in ten hazardous sectors in 21 districts across five states viz. Delhi (NCT Delhi), Maharashtra (Districts of Amravati, Jana, Aurangabad, Gondi and Mumbai Suburban), Madhya Pradesh (Districts of Damon, Sager, Jabalpur, Satan and Kati), Tamil Nadu (Districts of Kanchipuram, Thiruvannamalai, Tiruvallur, Namakkal and Virudhunagar) and Uttar Pradesh (Districts of Moradabad, Allahabad, Kanpur Nagar, Aligarh and Firozabad). The project adopted a participatory method to identify beneficiaries and enrolling child workers in schools, transitional education centers and vocational training centers was seen as a key strategy for rehabilitation of child and adolescent workers withdrawn from work. The project was instrumental in the operationalising the public education component in the field”.

Conclusion: Poverty is the main cause of child labour. Therefore, strict laws alone cannot solve the problem of Child labour. Therefore Government schemes has focused on rehabilitation of these children and improvement in the economic conditions of their families. Although several legislative measures were taken to prevent children from working but government has not been able to prevent employment of children in hazardous employment which are injurious to health. Need of the hour is complete abolition of Child labour and strict regulation to prevent child labour.

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