



CHILD LABOR: PROBLEM AND SOLUTION: A SOCIOLOGICAL APPROACH

ISSN: 2249-894X

IMPACT FACTOR : 5.7631 (UIF)

UGC APPROVED JOURNAL NO. 48514

VOLUME - 8 | ISSUE - 8 | MAY - 2019



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ACKNOWLEDGEMENT

India is a country facing different social problems. Many problems are born as result of over population, in which poverty or often other problems born from poverty, which is root of poverty and becomes often cause of problem.

In the present article, the problem related to child labor is studied.

➤ INTRODUCTION:

India is considered as an emerging country. A strong and effective legal provision is made, so that problem of child labor can be removed, but it is such a problem, which is too difficult to be uprooted. During last some years, child labor is decreased. Poverty, unemployment and illiteracy are main causes of the problem of child labor. Generally problem of child labor is found everywhere. As a result of large scale industrialization, children are kept on employment in factories and unorganized sectors. Such industrial units are interested to keep children as laborers for their selfishness and lower wages. The system of child labor has started in India since industrial revolution. Since then, industrial demand for cheap laborers and poverty has increased to so much and children are engaged as

laborers in industrial field. Due to lack of laws related to child security and employment, children are made to work for hours for little returns. We cannot ignore that large numbers of children are made to work like laborers in India. So certain problems are born. Though there is age limit in certain industries, child labor is continued. The Labor Inquiry Committee (1946) wrote in this reference that, "The major problem related to child labor in India is that children are engaged illegally in some industries." After some years, child labor is found decreased because of social laws in industries and efforts put to apply them effectively. But such situation is seen in unorganized small scale industries. After 1950, Labor Bureau had observed that, "Child labor is not a serious problem in factories and industries but the Inspectors

experienced that children used to run away during the inspection by officers." It is cleared from this study that employment of children, younger than determined age in continued in small scale industries like making match sticks, bidis, crackers etc without any certification. Moreover, their working hours, salary, place of work etc are found exploited.

OBJECTIVES OF THE ARTICLE:

- To know about laws related to Indian society and child labor.
- To know about causes for child labor in India.
- To examine ratio of child labor in India.

RESEARCH METHODS:

Certain children were interviewed by using interview sheet in this study. Library method was also used to get primary and secondary data.

KEY-WORDS: *Child labor, Laws for child labor, causes of child labor.*

➤ **LEGAL PROVISION RELATED TO CHILD LABOR IN INDIA:**

So many laws are established in India in order to provide social security to child labors working in different industries. The history of child labor related laws in India is the history of exploitation of child laborers because place of work of children is shifted to factories from homes and villages. Child laborers are given legal protection in different stages in India. The detail is presented as below.

(1) Factory Act, 1881:

Child was defined in the form of the person less than 12 years age in this act. To give work to child, minimum age was decided at 7 years. Nine hours working hours were determined for children of 7 to 12 age groups. The provision for recess and holidays was also made.

(2) Factory Act, 1891:

To give employment to child, minimum age was decided at 9 years. Seven hours working hours were determined for children of 9 to 14 age groups. Children were made to work only at day time.

(3) Factory Act, 1911:

Six working hours for children were fixed in paper mills. Provision of strict observation and certificates was made. Working of children from 7 pm to 5.30 am was prohibited.

(4) Factory Act, 1922:

The person under fifteen years was considered as 'child' under this act. The hours of working were fixed for 6 hours including recess time. The minimum employment age was increased to 12 from 9 years.

(5) Factory Act, 1934:

Age of 12 years was fixed as the minimum employment age under this act. The persons of 12 to 15 age groups were considered as 'children'. A new 'juvenile series' of 15 to 17 age groups was constructed. Working from 7 pm to 6 am from children was prohibited. Working hours were fixed for five hours.

(6) Factory Act, 1948:

It was decided in this act that employment should be given to any children after the age of 14 years. Working hours for children were fixed for five hours.

(7) Factory Act, 1952:

For working in mines, 15 years age was fixed as the minimum employment age under this act. Providing employment to child less than this age was strictly prohibited.

(8) Child Act, 1933:

This act was constructed based on recommendations of Royal Commission. In many industries (mostly weaving and bidi industry), there was a tradition of mortgaging children by parents to factory owners in place of their debt. According to this system, child labor was being mortgaged for indefinite time. By this act, such child mortgaging was considered invalid, even it was in written or oral form. The person of less than 15 years age was considered as 'child' in this act. The provision of fine or punishment was made for parents or owners in case of breaking the law.

(9) Child Employment Act, 1938:

This act indicates that children younger than 15 years should not be engaged in the works related to Post and Department, travelling or ports. The provision of collective jobs is made for the

employment of children less than 14 years age in workshops related to building, hand weaving, cement production, cloths printing, colour works, making match sticks, explosives, leather, wool washing etc except the jobs are done by family or the acts under authority of state government applied to other fields. Both, jail or fine can be done in case of breaking the law.

Causes responsible for child labour in India:

There are many causes responsible for child labour in India. Among them, major causes are mentioned below.

(1) Urbanization:

The most responsible cause for child labour in India is urbanization. Urbanization is the result of higher lifestyle, which is expensive. Therefore, poor and illiterate parent send their children for work. Cities attract village people. Seasonal and disguised unemployment is found in rural areas, so such industries are established in cities, where only children can be provided employment. Such industries run by specific skills of children.

(2) Poverty:

Poverty is the root cause of child labour. Currently, about 24% poverty index is found in India. Parents enforce children to do work due to poverty. Children are considered as asset in poor families. Children are made to do labour to maintain existence in poverty. Such children cannot get education.

(3) Hereditary professions:

Children have to mostly do labor work, which their parents have done, so they are sent for work from their little age. At the passage of time, this employment activity becomes permanent. The tradition of hereditary profession is continued in the fields of building work, weaving, home industries etc.

(4) Illiteracy:

The literacy ratio in India is about 65%. Due to lack of education, parents do not show attitude of educating their children. Children have no option except labour as they have to leave the school education, so they turn to doing work for income.

(5) Specific skill of children:

Only children are engaged for employment in certain fields and professions. Some industries are depended on specific ability and skills of children. The fingers of children are useful in minute works like hand weaving, which cannot be done without children.

(5) Ineffectiveness of laws:

However, better legal provision is made related to child labour in India; we have less management of education and inspection for application of those laws. So, violation of such laws is more found, and child labour is encouraged. Moreover, it is difficult to make the children aware of these laws. The industrialists do misuse of ineffectiveness of laws.

(7) Orphan children:

Orphan children naturally turn to child labour. A separate group work to find out such children and engage them in work. Children turn to child labour because they have no activity to do and no scope for education.

Actually following economical impacts fall by the problem of child labour.

(1) This problem is directly related to health of children as child labour creates bad effects of their health.

(2) Lower productive labour or child labour creates diverse effect on employment availability of adult persons.

(3) The system of giving employment to children is like unequal competition against adult persons.

(4) Child labour has harmful effect on normal life of children's family, which weakens the social structure.

(5) Mental, physical and intellectual development of children is disturbed.

(6) Children are future of the nation. By child labour, children put their future in serious problems.

Child labour in India:

1.1 According to census year:

No.	Year	Child labourers
1	1971	10753985
2	1981	13640870
3	1991	11285349
4	2001	12666377

It is observed from above table that 10753985 child laborers were found in 1971, in which 2886885 child labourers were increased in 1981 and reached to 13640870 during that decade. In 1991, 11285349 child laborers were found, in which 2355521 child labourers were decreased during that decade. Total 531355 child labourers were increased during 20 years, whereas 2355521 child labourers were decreased during 1091 to 2001. In comparison of 1991 to 2001, 11285349 child labourers were existed in 1991, whereas 12666377 child labourers were existed in 2001. In comparison of 1971 to 2001, 10753985 child labourers were existed in 1971, in which 1912392 child labourers were increased during those 30 years.

Child labour in marginal child laborers:

In 2010:

No.	Age group	Child labourers
1	5 to 9	495494
2	10 to 14	2711397
3	15 to 19	5821090

It is observed from above table that child labourers of 5 to 9 years age groups are 495494, whereas child labourers of 10 to 14 years age groups are 2711397. Child labourers of 15 to 19 years age groups are 5821090, which is highest in all age groups.

CONCLUSION

Statistical data about child labour is presented in this research article. Industrialization is growing rapidly in India. Environmental problems are also found. On the other hand, problem of child labour is also created, which deprives the children from their right in childhood. Efforts are being put for protection of environment. It is essential to put the same efforts for avoiding child labour.