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WORKING CHILDREN IN HAZARDOUS SECTORS

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Abstract:

Child labour is an international evil which spoils the whole life of the children who suppose to be the future of the nation. Due to many reasons the children becoming child labourer neither by force or by own interest towards the eager of earning etc... Every children need to enjoy their childhood with family, friends, education, entrainment etc... but many are playing their role as adult to work and earn to support their family. Here this study will give a picture of causes, risks and more about the working children in hazardous sector.

KEY WORDS:

Working Children , Hazardous Sectors , International Evil , Entrainment .

2.INTRODUCTION

Child labour has become an issue of great concern in recent all times all over the world. Millions of children are working, many in servitude and under hazardous condition all over the world today. Child labour was found to be cheaper and easily available. Thus began the exploitation of child labour.

Large number of children are employed in the plantation and in the match and fire work industries, more than half of work force was children, other industries where children work are cigarette manufacturing, diamond, gem polishing, lock manufacturing, handicrafts, carpet weaving, brassware and glass factories. Children also work in petrol bunks and restaurants or they may be self employed as porter, vendors and parking attendants, street children resort to rag picking, begging, show shinning, selling balloons, snacks in the beach shores and also involved in construction works, manufacturing explosives.

The term child labour means different things to societies.

Child labour : 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. (ILO Convention No. 138) Within this protected realm of childhood, ILO marks out minimum ages for different types of employment:

Age 15 for ordinary work;
Age 18 for hazardous work;
Age 13 for light work

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The ILO Convention No. 182 (Article 3d) defines hazardous child labour as 'work which, by its nature or the circumstances in which it is carried out, is likely to harm the health, safety, or morals of children'.

According to the Government of India, there are 2 million children working in hazardous industries. Examples of hazardous occupations include brick manufacturing, stone quarrying, fireworks manufacturing, lock making and glassware production.

3. MAJOR CAUSES OF CHILD LABOUR (Ahmad, 2004)

Many a reason can be attributed to the growing menace of child labour in India. Amongst others, the main reasons are poverty, and illiteracy, inequitable distribution of assets, insufficient legislative protection and absence of strong child labour unions. (Kishore, Nabi & Panigrahi, 2003)

3.1. Poverty:

The parents of the poverty-ridden population are faced with the bewildering question as to whether they should send their children to educational institution to learn and equip themselves with adequate knowledge in order to prepare themselves for adulthood, or to send them to the labour market to augment the income of their starving families. Wide spread poverty is one of the major causes of child labour. In India, which is a developing country, poverty forces the parents to send their children to seek employment, because augmentation of their income is essential for the survival of the family, including the children themselves. Illness and other contingencies demand extra money in hand and the employment of children is resorted to as a quick and easily accessible way to get it.

The poverty may be mainly divided in five categories (Panigrahy, 2003)

Economic Poverty: Inadequate financial resource including income, which does not meet the day-to-day expenses even if basic amenities of life of a family which create economic poverty.

Geographical Poverty: Certain communities are located in such a geographical area being deprived of where there is no scope of natural resources and supportive infrastructure for economic development of the community.

Social Poverty: It is a product of gender, caste, class.

Cultural Poverty: It is the poverty created by belief, faith, culture, caste, etc.

Political Poverty: Due to no political access and representation, it creates poverty which causes child labour.

3.2. Large family size:

A family, which is larger in size with less income, can't live a happy life. As a result, the members in the family can't have facilities of better education, recreation, health care and opportunities to be developed in a healthy family atmosphere.

Large families with comparatively less income can't have happy notions in their mind. As a result, they can't protect and encourage the childhood of their children. If a family is limited and well planned there will be no scope for sending their children to the labour market and the children can be carefully educated. Illiterate and innocent parents think just contrary to this.

3.3. Child Labour a Cheap Commodity: With the advent of industrialization, the tendency among the employers is to have quick and more profit at low costs. Hence, in every country there was an enrolment of children in a large number of factories, who were paid very low wages, were subjected to excessive hours of work, and were made to work in terrible conditions. Child labour exists not because children are more capable workers but because they can be hired for less money. Thus, the preference for child labour by many employers is mainly due to the fact that it is cheap, safe and without any problem.

4. CHILDREN AT RISK:

Hazardous work of children (ILO Recommendation No. 190)

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Work which exposes children to physical, psychological or sexual abuse;
Work underground, under water, at dangerous heights or in confined spaces;

Work with dangerous machinery, equipment and tools, or which involves the manual handling or transport of heavy loads;

Work in an unhealthy environment which may, for example, expose children to hazardous substances, agents or processes, or to temperatures, noise levels, or vibrations damaging to their health;

Work under particularly difficult conditions such as work for long hours or during the night or work where the child is unreasonably confined to the premises of the employer.

4.1. Hazardous work by children:

All forms of slavery or practices similar to slavery, such as the sale and trafficking of children, debt bondage and serfdom and forced or compulsory labour, including forced or compulsory recruitment of children for use in armed conflict;

The use, procuring or offering of a child for prostitution, for the production of pornography or for pornographic performances;

The use, procuring or offering of a child for illicit activities, in particular for the production and trafficking of drugs as defined in the relevant international treaties;

Work which, by its nature or the circumstances in which it is carried out, is likely to harm the health, safety or morals of children.

ILO's Worst Forms of Child Labour Recommendation, 1999 (No. 190), the non-binding guidelines that accompany Convention No. 182, gives some indication as to what work should be prohibited. It urges member States to give consideration to:

Work that exposes children to physical, emotional or sexual abuse;

Work underground, under water, at dangerous heights or in confined spaces;

Work with dangerous machinery, equipment and tools, or that involves the manual handling or transport of heavy loads;

Work in an unhealthy environment, which may, for example, expose children to hazardous substances, agents or processes or to temperatures, noise levels, or vibrations damaging to their health;

Work under particularly difficult conditions such as work for long hours or during the night or work that does not allow for the possibility of returning home each day.

4.2. Occupation wise distribution of child labour in different sectors where child labour is concentrated in the state Tamil Nadu is given below.

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OCCUPATION	CHILD LABOUR
Agarbathi workers	302
Automobile repair and maintenances in work shops	1342
Bakery work	456
Beedi making	1984
Brick and roof making work	734
Carpet weaving	264
Catering	559
Cattle grazing	3387
Cloth dyeing	116
Coir making	509
Construction work	1000
Coolie	14365
Cotton ginning and production of hosiery goods	1583
Fire cracks making	172
Fishing	677
Garment work	268
Handicraft	394
Matches work	1955
Not employed	2299
Rag picking	138
Saw mill	126
Sheep rearing	4786
Shops and establishments	2278
Silver anklets work	685
Stone Quarry work	683
Street vendors	424
Tailoring	847
Weaving	3975

Source: Child labour survey. State government of Tamil Nadu

In Tamil Nadu about 64 Percentage of the child worker force is concentrated in agriculture and allied activities. Though agriculture is the predominant occupation where children are involved, employment of children in manufacturing and service sector is quite significant in Tamil Nadu with over 36 Percentage of the working children.

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4.3. Major sectors where children work

Children work as a part of family labour or as wage earners, sometimes as migrant labour. Very often they remain invisible and in bondage. They are found in all the three sectors of the economy i.e. the Agrarian, manufacturing and Service sectors.

4.3.1. Agrarian sector

In rural area children are engaged in agricultural and allied occupations as a part of family labour or as individual workers. They may work as paid or unpaid workers in different forms:

Migrant Labour
Invisible Labour
Bonded Labour

4.3.2. Manufacturing sector

Children are engaged in various manufacturing process of different Home-based industries such as Brassware, Lock, Match and Fire works, Diamond cutting, Gem polishing, Glassware, Carpet making, Slate etc. Very often they work in sub-human conditions and in exploitative situation. They may be working as:

Migrant Labour
Invisible Labour
Wage Labour

Self employed children

4.3.3. Service sector

Self-employed Labour
Invisible Labour
Wage-based employment

Children work in different sectors of the economy. Census enumerates only those workers who are engaged in economically productive work and working children are counted as part of the labour force.

Among the male child workers, though about 52% are agricultural labourers and in total about 83% are in agricultural sectors. Thus concentration of female child workers in agricultural sector is more than that of male child workers. As an implication of this, their presence in non-agricultural sector is only 12.61%. The overall picture reveals that more and more female children are engaged in low paid jobs as compared to the male children.

In Tamil Nadu about 64% of the child work force is concentrated in agriculture and allied activities. Though agriculture is the predominant occupation where children are involved, employment of children in manufacturing and service sector is quite significant in Tamil Nadu with over 36% of the working children.

5. CONCLUSION:

child labourer in hazardous sectors is still remaining after many decades. Generally Employer prefers children to adults because of various reasons. Children are employed because they are available at cheaper wages and they are exploited because they are poor. All this explains why children are liked more for jobs. Unless reduce the level of poverty, it will still remain and grow for many more years.

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