

ORIGINAL ARTICLE

CHILD LABOUR AND ITS CAUSES OF IN DISTRACT PESHAWAR

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Background: Children are our future society and their development play a key role in development of respective country. Child labour is an important problem of today's world and is associated with poverty, inadequate education problems, gender discrimination and a lot of health risks. Almost 96% of child labour population belong to developing world, although there are some pockets of child labour in developed countries. Although there is reported decline in child workers in period 1995–2000, still child labour remain a challenging target for present world. This study was conducted to determine level of child labour and to find the factors associated with it. **Methodology:** It was a cross sectional study conducted from January to April 2015. Data was collected from child labourers working in various fields of district Peshawar. Children were interviewed using structured questionnaire and results were evaluated in the light of the proposed hypothesis. Children between ages of 10–15 years were included in sample group. **Results:** A total of 500 children aged between 10–15 years were interviewed. Out of 500 children, 155 were of 10–12 years while 345 were between 13–15 years of age. The relative proportion of children in different fields was, workshop 200 (40%), brick kilns 80 (16%), restaurants 123 (24.6%), domestic 30 (6%), industries 32, (6.4%), self-employed 35 (7%). Out of 500 children, 47% worked for 8–10 hrs per day while 29.6% worked for 11–12 hrs daily while 23.4% worked for 13–14 hrs per day. **Conclusion:** The findings of our survey conclude that in our society the economic injustice prevail, there is no care provided to children and that child labour laws are not being implemented anywhere. Most of the children are aware of the importance of education and they wish to get education but the financial statuses of their families prevent them from doing so.

Keywords: Child labour, prevalence, Peshawar, Pakistan

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INTRODUCTION

Children are the future of societies and their development play a key role in the development of respective countries. The national census of India in 2001 estimated that total number of child labour aged 5–14 to be at 12.6 million.¹ This indicates the approximate prevalence of child labour in third world countries. Child labour is an important problem of today's world and is associated with poverty, inadequate education problems, gender discrimination and a lot of health risks.² Child labour is defined by the relevant international conventions (UNICEF's Convention on the Rights of the Child,³ International Labour Organization [ILO] Convention 138,⁴ and especially 182,⁵) as not by the activities performed by the child, but by the consequences of such activities (exceptions are the so-called unconditional worst forms of child labour such as prostitution and bondage, as noted in ILO Convention 182) and hence any work affecting children schooling and health should be eliminated.⁶ There are about 250 million child labourers across the world. Most child workers are aged between 11 to 14 years old and about 60 million are between ages 5–11 years.⁷ Almost 96% of child labour population belong to developing world, although there are some pockets of child labour in

developed countries as well.^{8,9} Albeit there is reported decline in child workers in period between 1995 to 2000¹⁰, still child labour remain a challenging target for present world. In a recent statistics of about 20 countries by ILO, about 74% of labour population among child are between 5 to 14 years of age.¹¹ Also in near future the offspring of such parents who belong to present day child labour group will be compelled to engage in child labour and hence it is running from generations to generations and also same is for poverty.^{12,13} A report from 2003 on children work in Morocco,¹⁴ Yemen,¹⁵ and Guatemala,¹⁶ and a review developed under the aegis of Understanding Children's Work Project¹⁷ provide nature of child labour extent, nature and its possible outcomes specially its risks for education and health services. Many studies have shown the association of child labour with malnutrition and impaired growth.^{18–23}

In Pakistan children aged between 5–14 years are about 40 million. According to recent survey of Federal Bureau of Statistics funded by ILO's IPEC (International Program on the Elimination of Child Labour), around 3.8 million children in age group of 5–14 years are working; fifty percent of these economically active children are in age group of 5 to 9 years. Even out of these 3.8 million economically active children, 2.7 million were claimed to be working in the agriculture

sector. Two million and four hundred thousand (73%) of them are said to be boys.

MATERIAL AND METHODS

It was a descriptive cross sectional study which was conducted from January to April 2015. The study was conducted in district Peshawar of KPK province. Working fields for children were workshops, factories, brick kilns, restaurants, street working, self-employed. Children between the ages of 10–15 years were taken as eligible for the study. Inclusion criteria included children between ages of 10–15 years working for at least one month prior to interview. All the children below 10 years and above 15 years were excluded. Total of 500 labour children were selected for the study. International labour organization (ILO) criteria were used to identify the sample unit and the technique used for the selection of children was convenient sampling. The children were interviewed using structural questionnaire. Consent was taken before interviewing the child. The data was analysed by using SPSS 20.

RESULTS

The study was conducted at District Peshawar. A total of 500 children between 10–15 years of age were interviewed. Out of 500 children, 155 were between 10–12 years and 345 were between 13–15 years. As shown in table-1, the relative proportion of children in different field, brick kilns (80), restaurants (122), workshops (200), domestic workers (30), industries (33), and self-employed (35) as shown in table-2.

Majority of the children presented financial causes to be the stimulus for their labour at this age as shown in table-3. These financial issues were to assist family 135 (27%), no other earnings 95 (19%), family is large 113 (22.5%), low family income 70 (14%), no interest in studies 65 (13%), to learn skills 23 (4.5%)

Upon enquiring, 46.5% children didn't complete primary education, 40% were completely illiterate, and 7.5% had just completed their primary education while 6% had gone through middle beyond primary education. So far as the educational status of their parents were concerned; father of 71% children were illiterate, 23% had their primary while only 6% had done their matriculation, while 96.5% of the mothers had no education at all, while only 3.5% had primary education.

Survey disclosed that 49% children came from homes with 6–8 members while 40.5% with 3–5 members while 10.5% with household members more than 8.

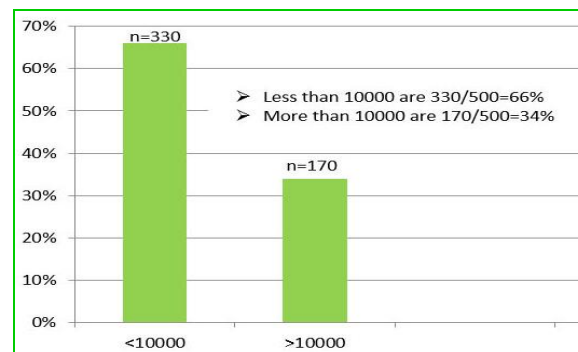
Most of the families (330), 66% had their total income less than 10000 per month, and 170 (34%) had income more than 10000 as given in graph-1.

Most (62.5%) of the children had their salary in the range 1500–2000 per week, 15.5% had income more than 2000 per week. 11.5% had income of 1000 rupees week and 10.5% had salary less than 1000 rupees per week.

Out of 500 children, 235 (47%) worked for 8–10 hours per day, 147 (29.5%) worked for 11–12 hours per day while 117 (23.5%) worked for 13–14 hours per day.

Majority (78.5%) showed dissatisfaction with the income they have while 21.5% were satisfied with their income. When children were enquired about their preference towards work and education, the main bulk (47%) preferred education, 37.5% preferred to work and 15.5% preferred to learn any other skill. When children were interviewed whether they want to change field of work, 285 (57.5%) said that they want to change while 212 (42.5%) said that they do not want to do so. Employee's behaviour towards 20.5% was soft while 79.5% was harsh.

The survey disclosed that 29.5% children had addiction while 70.5% had no addiction, among addicted population 4% were addicted to *Naswar*, 31% to Cigarette, while 24% has others like glue addiction etc. The causes for addiction were depression 23%, enjoyment 40%, and inspiration from others 37%.



Graph-1: Total household Monthly Income

Table-1: Age wise distribution of child labour among sample population

Age range	No of respondents out of 200	Percentage of respondents
From 10–12 years	155	31%
From 13–15 years	345	69%

Table-2: Distribution of child labour according to field of work

Field of work	Respondents out of	Percentages
Brick Kilns	80	16%
Restaurants	123	24.5%
Work shops	200	40%
Domestics	30	6%
Industries	32	6.4%
Self employed	35	7%

Table-3: Causes of child labour

Causes of child labour	Respondents our	Percentages
To assist family	135	27%
No other earnings	95	19%
Family is large	113	22.6%
Low family income	70	14%
No interest in studies	65	13%
To learn skills	22	4.4%

DISCUSSION

The study was conducted at District Peshawar. A total of 500 children between ages of 10–15 years were interviewed. The relative proportion of children in different field, was brick kilns (80), restaurants (122), workshops (200), domestic workers (30), and industries (33), self-employed (35). Studies shows that majority of child labourers belong to developing countries. A study shows that incidentally 96% of child labourers belongs to developing country. And out of total child workers in developing countries, 61% belongs to Asia specially those between 5–14 years of age while Africa has 32%. Another study shows Asia has highest number while Africa has highest prevalence of child labour (40%).²⁴

Majority of the children presented financial causes to be the stimulus for their labour at this age which were to assist family 135 (27%), no other earnings 95 (19%), family is large 113 (22.5%), low family income 70 (14%), no interest in studies, 65 (13%), to learn skills 23 (4.5%). Study indicates poverty as one of the most important factors of child labour.²⁵ Family income as represented by socio economic status and maternal education as two most important predictive of intellectual performance at 4 years of age.²⁶

Upon enquiring, 46.5% children were below primary, 40% were completely illiterate, and 7.5% had just completed their primary while 6% had gone through middle beyond primary. An international study's results are comparable with our results and shows that one third of children in developing countries fails to complete their primary education.²⁷ According to another study the time spent by child in school is directly proportion to the earning capability

of individual.^{28,29} And it require overall improvement of public health resources in collaboration with related fields in order to improve children education so that they are able to avail educational opportunities.³⁰ Another study suggest that children who worked were more likely to have failed at least one grade in school compare to others, who don't work.³¹

So far as the educational status of their parents were concerned; fathers of 71% children were illiterate, 23% had completed primary education while only 6% had completed their matriculation, while 96.5% of the mothers had no education at all, while only 3.5% had completed primary education only. According to study conducted by Handa, the maternal education play key role in the improvement of woman's ability to influence her children's education positively in male-headed household.³²

CONCLUSION

The survey conducted by us discloses all that forces which drives the children to work in horrifying conditions at such a young age. Financial crisis is making the main bulk among the causes of child labour which is further dependent on a number of factors like to assist family, no other earnings, family is large, low family income, no interest in studies, to learn skills. Many children preferred education because they wished to gain further education and because they considered it to be helpful in quenching their financial thirst but their current economic situation was the main hurdle in it. The findings of our survey concludes that in our society the economic injustice prevail, there is no care provided to children and that child labour laws are not been implemented anywhere. At the end it really need a multidisciplinary approach involving specialists with psychological, medical and socio-anthropological level help is need to improve overall good health and to facilitate these working children and to curb this evil.

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