

BORN TO WORK? A PRAGMATIC EXAMINATION ON EMPLOYER'S PERCEPTIONS ON CHILD LABOUR

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Even though child labour is the oldest phenomenon the world over the measurement of child labour depends on how it is defined. It is larger depends on social and cultural views. The different societies will have its own age criteria to draw a clear line to differentiate between child hood and adulthood. Some analysis shows that all non-school, non-leisure activities of children constitute child labour. This may include household enterprises work, domestic work etc. As some social scientists observed in many communities which belongs to different castes and religion, a 10-year-old boy who plays a vital role in contributing a major part of the income to the family is not considered a child. It proves that fulfilling of certain social and cultural obligations are absolutely necessary in conceptualizing the words between child and an adult. So experts say empirical analysis of child labour and related policies and programmes of both Government and NGO's should be culturally and socially specific. This study is conducted in Bangalore city India to find out Employer's Perceptions on Child Labour issue.

Key Words: Employer's, Policy, Govt.

INTRODUCTION

Since 1986 onwards researchers have conducted many studies on different faces of child labour. But they have emphasized on children who are working in organized or unorganized sectors.. Adequate importance didn't give to role and views of the employers in existence of this problem. Also researchers are mostly concentrating on socio economic causes of child labour problem. But this is the time of the researchers to explore how employers evaluate the risks associated with the job and what employer's perceptions on the child labour issue. The problem of child labour in India has of late assumed the proportion of a social menace threatening the very fabric of a social milieu. It has remained both an economic and a social problem since a long time. According to the latest report more than 100 million children below the age of 14 years are toiling in different corners of India. Since different culture and society defines childhood in different manner Government policies and programmes should be culturally and geographically specific. Recent studies have revealed that there are many reasons other than economic compulsion to perpetuate child labour. A simple definition would read like this: children of the age of 14 years and below, who are employed and exploited at the cost of their opportunities for development happy child hood.

Even though child labour is the oldest phenomenon the world over the measurement of child labour depends on how it is defined. It is larger depends on social and cultural views. The different societies will have its own age criteria to draw a clear line to differentiate between child hood and adulthood. Some analysis shows that all non-school, non-leisure activities of children constitute child labour. This may include household enterprises work, domestic work etc. As some social scientists observed in many communities which belongs to different castes and religion, a 10-year-old boy who plays a vital role in contributing a major part of the income to the family is not considered a child. It proves that fulfilling of certain social and cultural obligations are absolutely necessary in

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conceptualizing the words between child and an adult. So experts say empirical analysis of child labour and related policies and programmes of both Government and NGO's should be culturally and socially specific.

Among the developing countries of the world India has world's largest child workers working in all three sectors. More than 86 percent is in agricultural sectors, which is a major hidden form of child labour. Poverty and illiteracy, two basic reasons of low economic growth, have long been identified as the prime factor's influencing supply of child labourers. Child labour is a global problem but it is more prevalent in underdeveloped countries. As per India is concerned it is due the result of traditional attitude, rapid urbanization, population explosion, modern industrialization, urban migration, less investment on primary education, lack of Anthropological role in welfare policies, and globalization. But however, its causes are acute poverty, with high rate of illiteracy, which leads to the low economic growth.

Recent studies have revealed that the concept of children's work must be geographically, temporally, and ethically deconstructed and historically situated giving attention to place, era, generation and social class. Critics have further asserted that given the socio economic realities of most developing countries even if children were prohibited from working they would be unable to experience the kind of child hood envisioned as appropriate in developed countries. To succeed in the short term in removing children from the most hazardous forms of the work will require culturally and geographically specific data concerning how community classify the particular type of work as being appropriate for different age groups, how they judge the degree of risk associated with each type of work, and how community social economic resources can be mobilized for remediation campaigns.

National Child Labour acts and other related acts have a lot of drawbacks or internal contradictions. According to this act agriculture, hotel and domestic sectors and other few sectors do not come under hazardous sectors. I, e the work in domestic sectors and other unorganized sectors where majority of children work, are excluded from the labour legislation's. Also we must point out that the distinction of hazardous and non-hazardous work is fallacious in the context of the labour by children, especially girl children. As many NGO's are point out these also causes a lot of health related problems on the working children. Also these laws provide a lot of provisions to the employers' to escape from the clutches of the law or acts. Also this law does not say anything about the children who work in unregulated sectors with their parents. Moreover there is no such law to detect and protect this kind of hidden child labour practices. Weak enforcement machinery in the form of small numbers of labour officials related to the child labour is another factor for failure of this legislation's.

Mishra (2001) based on his study has revealed that in a transitional society, the case of child labour is also regarded as an economic practice because of the persistence of tradition-bound occupations and occupational immobility. But this society is also not free from the influence of modern science and technology development existing in the modern world and the use of child labour is also regarded as a social evil. If this society has a democratic form of government, the use of child labour as a social evil gets more currency there. Hence, the practice of child labour, exists simultaneously both as an economic practice and as a social evil in a transitional society. The use of child labour, in fact, regarded as a social evil because of the abuse of child labour on a large scale.

SAMPLING AND METHODOLOGY

Both formal and informal sector acts a vital role in the growth and development of the economy of the Nation. In Bangalore City-Karnataka it is not so easy to get the correct estimation of employers involved in both the sectors. So the researcher choose purposive samples rather than random samples. We had a survey questioner for the selected 100 employers drawn 20 employers' each from 1. Hotel and Garages 2. Construction sites 3. Domestic work 4. Factory 5. Shops and establishments sector. Data analyzed using latest minitab software's

Profile of the Bangalore City

Bangalore is a capital city of Karnataka State. 20 years ago it became a Million City of the State. As per 1991 census, it is the 7th largest metropolitan city of the country. The city is growing rapidly since last 35 years. Bangalore had a population of around 1.60 lakhs in 1901. It had 1.2 million in 1961. Now it has a population of 5.73 million (2011 Census). It recorded the highest decadal growth rate for any urban areas in India. Totally by and large Bangalore population has increased by 2.75 million between 1901 and 1981. At the same time Bangalore's urban population has increased from 9.7 per cent to 17.4 per cent since 1958-1960. A lot of people are migrating to the city from other places. The main reason was rapid industrialization and job avenues.

Table 1 : Employers Views on Reasons for Child Labour

SECTORS	Hotel and Garage		Construction		Domestic		Factory		Shop & commercial establishment		Total N = 100*
	f	%	f	%	f	%	f	%	f	%	
Poverty	14	56	16	64	12	48	14	56	17	68	73(73%)
Inadequate income	11	44	17	68	14	56	17	68	9	36	68(68%)
Adult unemployment	17	68	10	40	8	32	16	64	13	52	64(64%)
Big family size	14	64	16	64	17	68	9	36	10	40	66(66%)
Health problems	8	32	11	44	13	52	7	28	10	40	49(49%)
other	5	20	7	28	14	56	9	36	6	24	41(41%)

Note : Figures in Parentheses indicate percentage to total. * Multiple responses.

DISCUSSION

It is found that that 73% percent of employers also feels poverty is one of the main reason for child labour problem. 68% employer's falls inadequate family income is the reason for this problem. 64% employers said adult unemployment plays a vital role in sending children to work. 66% employers expressed their opinion that big family size and 49% employers said acute health problems may be one of the major reason behind sending children to work.. 41% constitutes other reasons. Since employers are the real directors of this problem. Their view plays a vital role in framing programmes to minimize the problem. Table shows that majority of the employers (78%) felt that payment of fewer wages is the main reason behind hiring children. More hours of work is

the second major (74%) reason. 72% employers have said flexibility is one of the reason why they would like to hire children only. 66% employer's said nonpayment of any extra benefits also one of the reson.56% felt absence of strikes, 49% feels easy to remove and 48% fells sympathy on the poor families are also some of the other reasons behind hiring children by the employers. In case of intensity of exploitation, 31% employers have admitted that they are exploiting children to a greater extent. 47% employers have said they are exploiting children up to certain extent. However 22% employers have said they are not exploiting children in any way Since most employers were not ready to reveal the intensity of exploitation has left a wide margin of error.

Table 2 : Employers Reasons for Hiring Children

SECTORS	Hotel and Garage N=20		Construction		Domestic		Factory		Shop & commercial establishment		Total N=100*
	f	%	f	%	f	%	f	%	f	%	
Less payment	12	48	18	72	19	76	15	60	14	56	78(78%)
More hours of work	17	68	15	60	15	60	16	64	11	44	74(74%)
More flexible	12	48	17	68	19	76	14	56	12	48	74(74%)
No extra benefits	14	56	8	32	9	36	18	72	17	68	66(66%)
No strikes	11	44	11	44	5	20	19	76	11	44	57(57%)
Easy to remove	9	36	14	56	8	32	7	28	11	44	49(49%)
Sympathy	9	36	7	28	15	60	7	28	10	40	48(48%)

Note: Figures in parentheses indicate percentage to total. *Multiple responses

In case of reasons for employing children majority of the employer's (78%) felt that payment of less wages is the main reason for employing children and long hours of work is the second major reason. Some of the employer's have said that flexibility is one of the reason and 66% of the employers said non payment of any extra benefits to the children is one of the reason for preferring children. Few of them felt absence of strikes and some of the employer's easy to remove and sympathy on the poor families are also some of the other reasons for employing children by the employers.

Table 3 : Exploitations of Child Labour by the Employers

SECTORS	Hotel and Garage N=20		Construction		Domestic		Factory		Shop & commercial establishment		Total N=100*
	No	Per	No	Per	No	Per	No	Per	No	Per	
To a great extent	7	28	6	24	7	28	6	24	5	20	31(31%)
Up to certain extent	9	36	10	40	11	44	11	44	6	24	47(47%)
Nil	4	16	4	16	2	8	3	12	9	36	22(22%)

Note : Figures in Parentheses indicate percentage to total. * Multiple reasons

Majority of the employers (51%) were unanimously agreed that construction work is most risky and hazardous when compare among rest of the selected child work for study. 21% employers have said factory work risky after construction work. 18 % employers have admired that garage work is a 3rd riskiest work for children. Only 7% employers say hotel job has got 4th place in case of risky for children. According to 2% employers incase of domestic work and 1% employers in case of commercial establishments are risky to the children respectively. Many employers have lot of prejudices towards domestic and work at shop's and commercial establishments. This is the most crucial aspect and Government and NGO should think about removing children from this hazardous work soon. Even though construction and other works are most dangerous to children they are working without any protective measurement.

Table 4 : Employers Awareness About Laws and Acts.

SECTORS	Hotel and Garage N=20		Construction		Domestic		Factory		Shop & commercial establishment		Total N=100*
	f	%	f	%	f	%	f	%	f	%	Total
Completely aware	8	32	5	20	5	20	10	40	6	24	34(34%)
Partially	8	32	6	24	6	24	7	28	12	48	39(39%)
Not at all	4	16	9	36	9	36	3	12	2	8	27(27%)

Note : Figures in Parentheses indicate percentage to total * Multiple reasons

This table 3 shows that majority (70 %) of employers says both Govt. and NGO's try to work on poverty, 68% employers has expressed their opinion to implement alternative income generation programmes for the poor people. 63% employers are of opinion that Government should bring new population policy. 60% employers said compulsory primary education should be mandatory. 41% employer said both NGO's and Government should monitor the strict enforcement of laws and acts. 34% employers prefers the joint efforts of both Govt. and NGO's in this issue and there should be no duplication of work.

Table 5 : Employer's Opinion of Government and NGO's Work.

SECTORS	Hotel and Garage		Construction		Domestic		Factory		Shop & commercial establishment		Total N=100*
	f	%	f	%	f	%	f	%	f	%	Total
Adequate	9	36	7	28	6	24	10	40	8	32	40(40%)
Satisfactory	7	28	6	24	9	36	7	28	9	36	38(38%)
Inadequate	4	16	7	28	5	20	3	12	3	12	22(22%)

Note : Figures in Parentheses indicate percentage to total * Multiple reasons

Further it is revealed that that 34% employers felt that child labour should be completely abolished. 58% employers has a opinion of removing children from most hazardous sectors is more

then enough. 66% employers are against the sudden abolition of the child labour. They said instead of this first Government should provide alternative income generation programme to the poor people then, gradually child labour itself ends. As many as 69% employers are preferred for partial abolition for economic reasons. But however, more than 73% employers are of the view that until poverty never ends abolition of child labour is not practically possible.

Table 6 : Employers Views on How Government and NGO's Should Work?

Suggestions	Hotel and Garage		Construction		Domestic		Factory		Shop & commercial establishment		Total
	f	%	f	%	f	%	f	%	f	%	
Eradication of poverty should be vigorous	15	60	12	48	18	72	14	56	11	44	70(70%)
Provide alternative income generation programme	16	64	11	44	16	64	15	60	10	40	68(68%)
New population policy											
is highly essential	13	52	12	48	9	36	14	56	15	60	63(63%)
Provide compulsory education	17	68	11	44	12	48	11	44	9	36	60(60%)
Strict enforcement of laws	6	24	9	36	7	28	8	32	11	44	41(41%)`
Both NGO's and											
Govt. work jointly	7	28	4	16	11	44	7	28	6	24	35(35%)

Note Figures in Parentheses indicate percentage to total, * Multiple reasons.

In this study we found that that only 34% employers are completely aware of existing laws and acts.39% employers are partially aware of the child labour related laws and acts. But, unfortunately 27% employers are not aware of any laws and acts at all. This table show's despite majority of the employers (73%) aware of laws and acts they have still hired the children for work. This is absolutely breach of law. Next it is found that 40% employers have said Govt. and NGO's work adequate and they are keep doing some good work.38% expressed satisfactory about joint effort in eliminating this problem.22% employers are not satisfied with the present joint effort. Most of the employers feel that providing job to the educated and eradication of poverty should be the main target to both NGO and Government. Many employers said both Government and NGO's officials are highly corrupted.

Table 7 : Employers Views on Abolition of Child Labour

SECTORS	Hotel and Garage		Construction		Domestic		Factory		Shop & commercial establishment		Total N= 100*
	f	%	f	%	f	%	f	%	f	%	
Should be abolished completely	5	20	9	36	6	24	5	20	9	36	34(34%)
Complete abolition from hazardous sector is enough	11	44	10	40	7	28	17	68	13	52	58(58%)
Gradual abolition is											
desirable	15	60	14	56	11	44	13	52	13	52	66(66%)
Partial abolition											
is desirable	13	52	14	56	13	52	15	60	14	56	65(65%)
Abolition is											
practically impossible	14	56	15	60	13	52	14	56	17	68	34(34%)

Note: Figures in Parentheses indicate percentage to total * Multiple reasons

The present study has revealed that despite the fact that majority of the employers aware of the laws and acts still they have employed the children in their business. Information collected about employer's opinion about the work undertaken by the Government and NGOs work has revealed that for majority of the employer's feels Govt. and NGOs are doing some impressive works. Some employer's expressed just satisfaction about the joint effort in eliminating this problem. Most of the employer's feel that providing job to the educated and eradication of poverty should be the main targets of both the NGOs and the Government and compulsory primary education should be mandatory. Some employer's have opined that both NGOs and Government should monitor the strict enforcement of laws and Acts. Some employer's have critically commented on the prevalence of corruption among the concerned officials. Regarding abolition of child labour, only few employers are in favor of complete abolition. Majority of the employers is against the sudden abolition of the child labour and employers are preferred for partial abolition and few of them have admitted that they are exploiting the children completely.

CONCLUSION

Each day, number of children is exposed to dangers that hamper the growth and development. They are often victims of gender and communal discrimination, aggression, neglect, cruelty and exploitation. A child being the last major subgroup of the family has drawn the attention of the social scientists with regard to their protection and rights. India is also one of the signatories of the International Convention for Child Rights (CRC). Hence, this is the time to find out the employers perception about child labourers, rights of children including how rights of the children can be operational zed within the existing culturally diverse social settings. Both the Government and NGOs have implemented many developmental programmes to eradicate child labour problem in the society. But success not up to mark. This is the time to involve employers in the eradication programme.

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