



AN EMPIRICAL STUDY ON PROBLEMS OF CHILD LABOUR WITH SPECIAL REFERENCE TO ANANTAPURAMU DISTRICT

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Abstract

Children are future citizens of the Nation and their adequate development is utmost priority of the country. Unfortunately, child labor engulfs children across the world. The world is home to 1.2 billion individuals aged 10-19 years. However, despite its menace in various forms, the data shows variation in prevalence of child labor across the globe and the statistical figures about child labor are very alarming. There are an estimated 186 million child laborers worldwide. The 2001 national census of India estimated total number of child labor aged 5–14 to be at 12.6 million. Small-scale and community-based studies have found estimated prevalence of 12.6 million children engaged in hazardous occupations. Many children are “hidden workers” working in homes or in the underground economy. Although the Constitution of India guarantees free and compulsory education to children between the age of 6 to 14 and prohibits employment of children younger than 14 in 18 hazardous occupations, child labor is still prevalent in the informal sectors of the Indian economy.

Keywords: *Child labour, working hours, employer*

Introduction

The Sustainable Development Goals sets the target of ending child labour in all its forms by 2025 (SDG target 8.7). However, this is increasingly looking less likely. This is why we need renewed commitments and efforts by all, especially by governments where there is high prevalence of child labour, the private sector involved in supply chains that involve child labour, civil society and other stakeholders. The solutions are known, it is the commitment and resources that need reinventing.

In terms of health, there needs to be trained and sufficiently resourced health and safety or child protection officers to respond to the health and safety impacts on child labour. While the elimination of child labour is the ultimate goal, in the interim, when child labour is still prevalent, we must do our utmost to prevent injury, harm or even the death of children involved in child labour.

The term “child labor” is often defined as work that deprives children of their childhood, their potential and their dignity, and that is harmful to physical-mental development. It refers to work that is mentally, physically, socially or morally dangerous and harmful to children, and interferes with their schooling by depriving them of the opportunity to attend school, obliging them to leave school prematurely or requiring them to attempt to combine school attendance with excessively long and heavy work. The statistical figures about child workers in the world have variation because of the differences in defining categories of age group and engagement of children in formal and informal sector.



Child labor continues to be a great concern in many parts of the world. In 2008, some 60% of the 215 million boys and girls were estimated to be child laborers worldwide. Major engagement was in agriculture sector, followed by fisheries, aquaculture, livestock and forestry. In addition to work that interferes with schooling and is harmful to personal development, many of these children work in hazardous occupations or activities that are harmful. Incidentally, 96% of the child workers are in the developing countries of Africa, Asia and South America. With respect to the child workers between the ages of 5 and 14, Asia makes up 61% of child workers in developing countries, while Africa has 32% and Latin America 7%. Further, while Asia has the highest number of child workers, Africa has the highest prevalence of child labor (40%).

Law and Child Labor

The policy curbing child labor exists but lack of enforcement of labor restrictions perpetuates child labor. This is manifested in variation in minimum age restriction in different types of employment. The International Labor Office reports that children work the longest hours and are the worst paid of all laborers. In India, the Child Labor (Prohibition and Regulation) Act 1986 and Rules state that no child shall be employed or permitted to work in any of the occupations set forth in Part A of the Schedule or in any workshop wherein any of the processes set forth in Part B of the Schedule is carried on. For this purpose, “child” means a person who has not completed his 14th year of age. The Act prohibits employment of children in certain specified hazardous occupations and processes and regulates the working conditions in others. The list of hazardous occupations and processes is progressively being expanded on the recommendation of the Child Labor Technical Advisory Committee constituted under the Act.

Krishna Reddy, Aditi Jha, et al (2024) conducted a study on A Study on Child Labour. They stated that the econometric model applied explains for a substantial proportion of the cross-country variations in child labor. The elasticities estimated would enable us to forecast the percentage change in the employment of child labor resulting from a given percentage change in any one of the explanatory variables consisting of the level of development (GNP per capita), poverty, income inequality, school enrolment, parental education, dominance of agriculture and age structure of the population. Children's work that is harmful, hazardous, or is in other ways exploitative can create, exacerbate, or perpetuate an intergenerational cycle of poverty, malnutrition, and social disadvantage. The neglect or violation of a range of human rights exacerbates the conditions that lead to child labor, and child labor in and of itself raises issues of neglect and violation of human rights. Harm to individuals also deteriorates public health in their communities. The development of national and global responses to child labor should occur in the framework of a public health model set within the context of human rights, with particular attention to the rights of girls.

Need For the Study

The researcher identifies the problem of child labour in India for the research work. According to the constitution of India child labour is prohibited but hitherto child labour is continuing in the society. In this research work an attempt will be made to analyses the problem of child labour in view of the fact that in most of the Tea Stall, Dabha and Mechanic shops, in Anantapuramu district. The children are employed in large number. The exploitation by extracting more work and payment of meager wages is the order of the day. In this context the study focuses on the existing legal frame work, the efforts made at the International Level and how far the child labour laws have been implemented by the executives and the measures employed in order to curtail the growing tendency of the abuse of the rights of child. The child labour is a serious and multi-dimensional problem across the world. Multiple



causes are responsible for perpetuating problem of child labour. There are various practical difficulties involved in the design and implementation of laws. There is also a problem of differences in perception about what constitutes a child or child work or child labour. There is also a problem with regard to prohibition and regulation of child labour. Hence, the present proposed study focus on problems at work place in Anantapuramu district of Andhra Pradesh.

Objectives

1. To know the concept of the child labour
2. To identify the problems pertaining to child labour.
2. To analyse problems of child labour in Anantapuramu district, and

Methodology

The methodology adopted in the study is both doctrinal and empirical. Doctrinal study includes analysis of research articles, books, reports treaties, conventions, Statutes, mass media like newspapers, Journals, Periodicals, Bulletins, Websites and cases decided by courts. The study also includes empirical study for which data was collected from various sources including survey; interviews etc from the children working in hotels dhabas, tea stalls and mechanic shops where child labour is found.

Sample design

The proposed study is selected on empirical basis. In this context, 150 sample child labour was selected from each factor such as Hotels/dhabas, tea stalls, and mechanic shops and altogether 450 will be selected by using simple random sampling techniques from entire district.

Data Collection

The present proposed study is depends on both primary and secondary data. The primary data is collected from the sample child labour from the district. And secondary data was collected from dailies, journals, books, published and unpublished theses/dissertations, various university libraries, government reports and official websites.

Table 1
How long have you been working as a child labourer

S. No	Experience	No. of respondents	Percentages	Mean	S.D
1	Lessthan 6 months	270	20.00	2.7161	1.1324
2	1 year	99	22.00		
3	2 years	108	24.00		
4	Morethan 3 years	153	34.00		
	Total	450	100.00		

Source: Field Survey

The researcher has raised a question to the selected sample child labour regarding the number of experiences in various units as a child labour in the study area. After that, the researcher has collected empirical data, analysed and presented hereunder. The present table depicted that majority of the respondents in the study area have been moving as a child labour morethan 3 years and it is represents 34 per cent, 24 per cent represents 108 sample respondents have expressed their opinion they have been working from last two years, 22 per cent of the sample respondents have stated that they have



been working as child labour from last one year and finally 20 per cent of the respondents were expressed that they have been working in the various units less than six months in the study area.

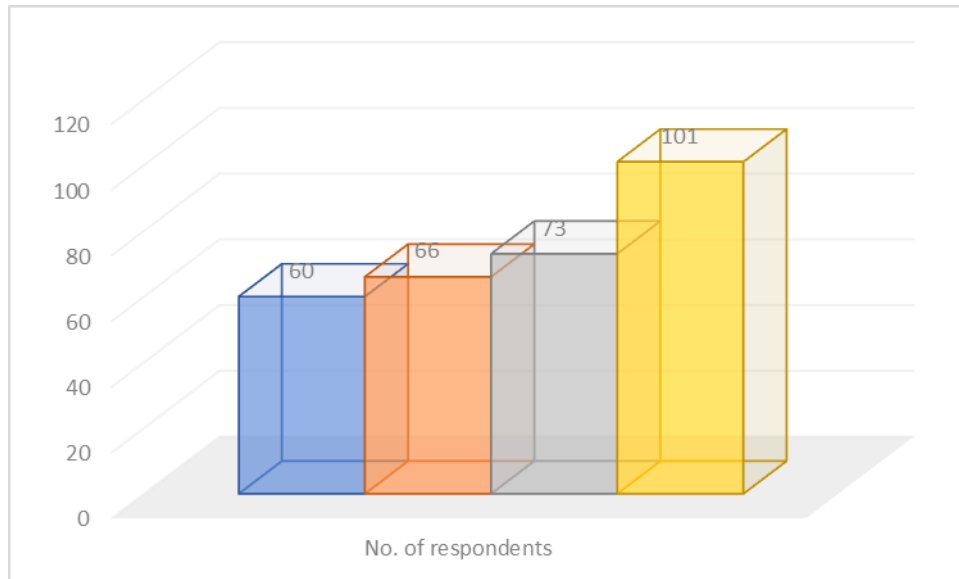


Table 2
Details of working hours a day by the child labour in the study

S. No	Hours	No. of respondents	Percentages	Mean	S.D
1	Six Hours	167	37.00	2.3032	1.2760
2	Eight Hours	130	29.00		
3	10 hours	153	34.00		
	Total	450	100.00		

Source: Field Survey

The one more dimension of the researcher -how many hours have been working of child labour? This statement has raised by the enumerator and classified the hours like six hours, eight hours, and 10 hours. Among these, data has tabulated and allocated of child labour. The table furnished that 37 per cent of the sample respondents were expressed that they have been working maximum six hours at working place, 34 per cent of the respondents have stated that they are working upto 10 hours and rest of them were expressed that the have been working eight hours in the study area.

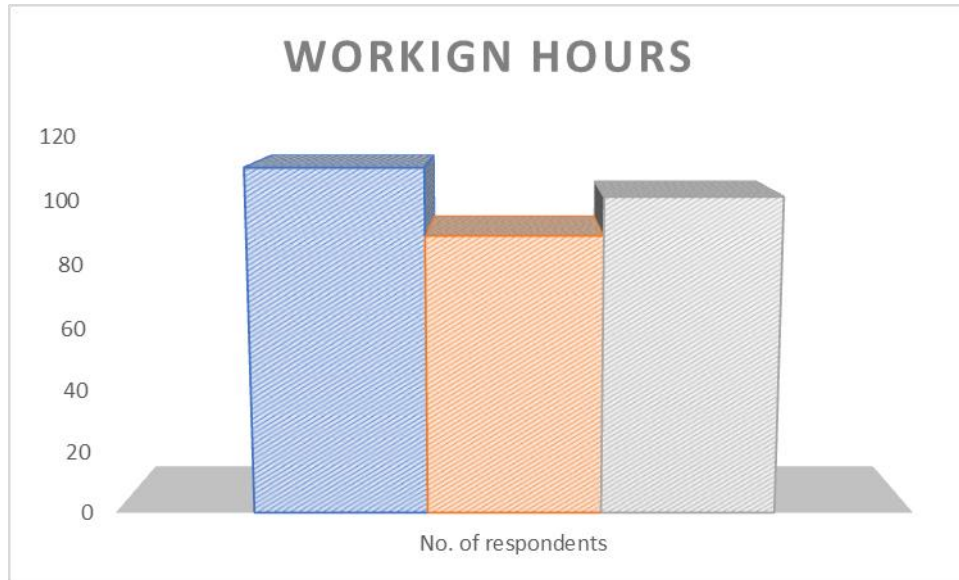
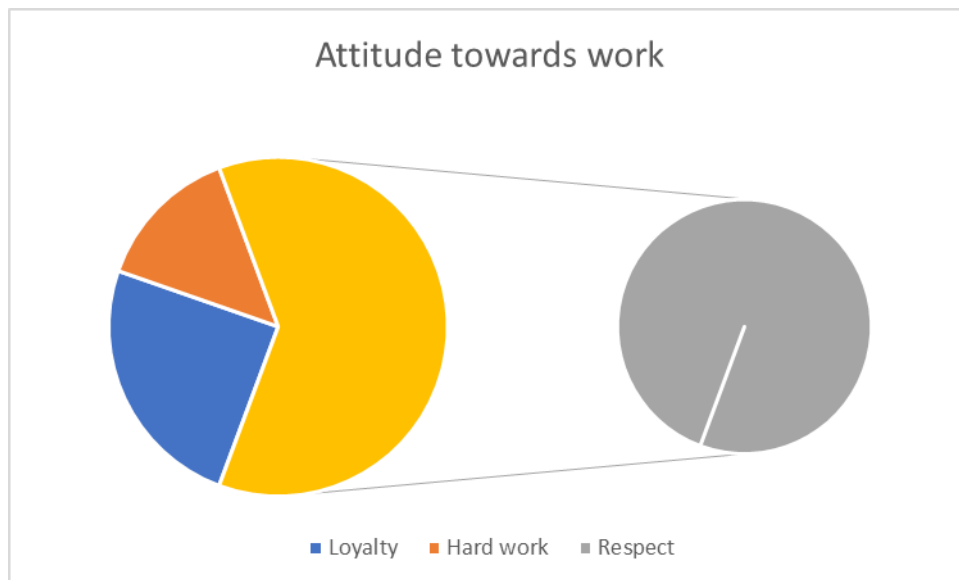


Table 3
Opinion of the child labour about their work

S. No	Opinion	No. of respondents	Percentages	Mean	S.D
1	Loyalty	108	24.00	1.8735	0.3784
2	Hard work	67	15.00		
3	Respect	274	61.00		
	Total	450	100.00		

Source: Field Survey



The researcher has come to know about working attitude of child labour at working environment in the study area. The present table discloses that the attitude like loyalty, hard work, and respect etc. It can be found that 24 per cent of the child labour were expressed that they have been working with loyalty



at respective industrial units, 15 per cent of them with hard work and rest of them have been given respect to their respective working place in Anantapuramu district.

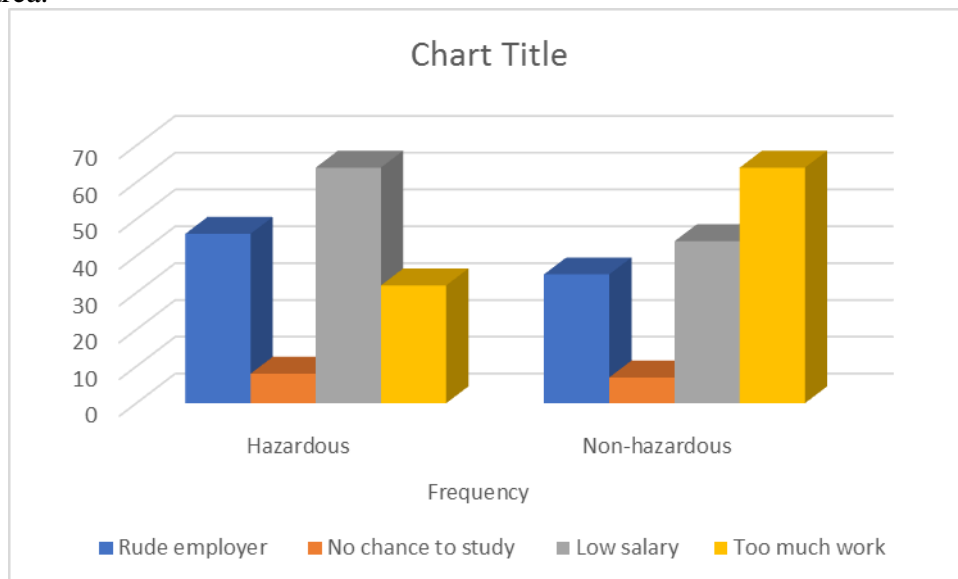
It can be clearly concluded from the above table that majority of the respondents have stated their opinion that they have been giving respect to their jobs and also loyalty in the study.

Table 4
Causes of leaving previous work by the child labour

S.No	Reasons	No. of Respondents	Percentage
1	Rude employer	121	27.00
2	No chance to study	23	05.00
3	Low salary	162	36.00
4	Too much work	144	32.00
	Total	450	100

Source: Field Survey

The present table discloses that how the employers have treated to child labour and why they were leaving the organization and enter into other organizations. It can be noted from the table that 27 per cent of the sample child labour were noticed that they have been leaving existing organization due to the rude employer among this, 46 of the respondents were belong to hazardous and 35 are belong to non-hazardous workers, 5 per cent of the sample child labour were noticed that they do not change the existing organization, 64 hazardous child labour and 44 of non-hazardous were stated that they have changed organization because of low salary and finally 32 respondents of hazardous and 64 non-hazardous child labour were expressed that they have leave too much work in the existing organization in the study area.



It can be concluded from the above table that majority of the sample respondents were expressed that they have been leaving the existing organization due to low salary and heavy work at working environment in the Anantapuramu district of Andhra Pradesh.

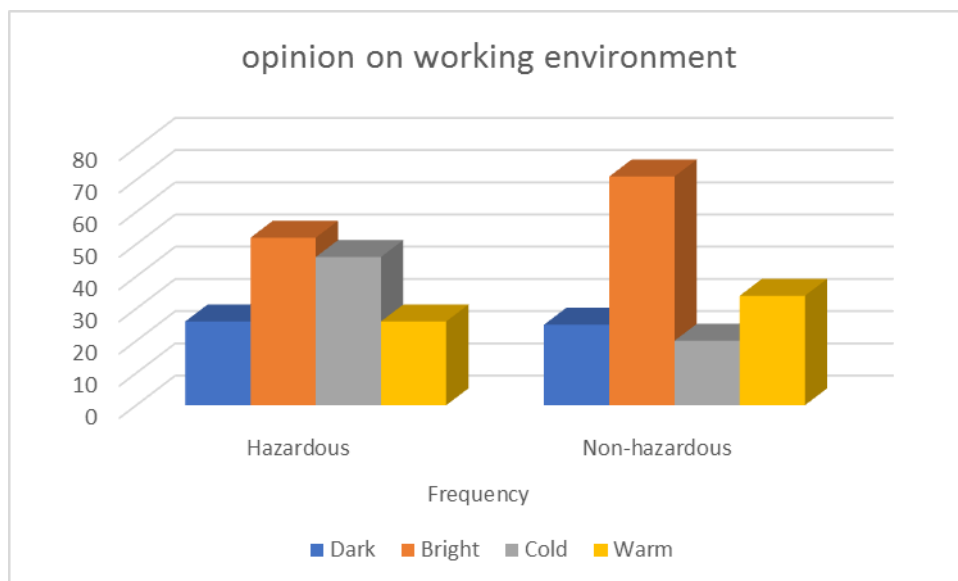


Table 5
Working environment of the child labour

S.No	Nature	No. of Respondents	Percentage
1	Dark	77	17.00
2	Bright	184	41.00
3	Cold	99	22.00
4	Warm	90	20.00
	Total	450	100

Source: Field Survey

The above table discloses that the child labour were classified into according to the nature of work and working environment in the study area. It can be found that 17 per cent represent 51 selected sample child labour (26 are belong to hazardous and 25 are belong to non -hazardous) have been working under the dark areas, 41 per cent represents 123 sample selected child labour were discloses that they been working under the better lighting conditions (bright) by 52 hazardous and 71 non-hazardous child labor, 22 per cent of the child labour have been working under the cold area (with 46 hazardous and 20 non hazardous) and finally 20 per cent of them working at warm environment in the study area.



Conclusions

Child labor is a public health issue with negative outcomes that demands special attention. A multidisciplinary approach is needed to tackle child labor issues. Per ILO, poverty is a major single cause behind child labor. Lack of affordable schools and affordable education is another major factor to force children to work. Certain cultural beliefs rationalize this practice and encourage child labor as character building and skill development for children. Some cultural traditions encourage child labor as footsteps to their parents' jobs. Socioeconomic disparities, poor governance, and poor implementation of international agreements are among major causes of child labor. Macroeconomic factors also encourage child labor by the growth of low pay informal economy. Child labor prevents the normal well-being including physical, intellectual, and emotional psychosocial development of children. This public health issue cannot be eliminated by only enforcement of child labor laws and



regulations. Any comprehensive policies should engulf a holistic approach on the education of children and their families, investment in early childhood development programs, establishing public education task forces in rural areas, implementing policies with focus on increasing adult wages, and discouraging consumers to buy products made by forced child labor.

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