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CHILD LABOUR IN INDIA: CAUSES, PERSPECTIVE & GOVERNMENTAL POLICIES IMPERATIVES

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ABSTRACT

Child labor strategy and plan of action needs to be reviewed and a new strategy practical and viable needs to be formulated with great urgency. The time is ripe to adopt a more enabling and empowering strategy that does not treat child workers as the problem, but include them as a part of the solution. The Action Plans for addressing child labor are built on a certain erroneous premise...they address the demand side of child labor and not the supply side. It is like removing the scum from the top of a boiling pot, without doing anything about the fire underneath. Child labor is the symptom of a very complex disease. It is now abundantly clear that the present piece-meal, scheme based, relief-oriented approach has little or no impact and practically no sustainability. Putting a child laborer in school does not solve the reasons s/he went to work in the first place. Schools do not solve poverty, deprivation, unemployment and discrimination. Children do not work because they enjoy doing so, but because they and their families have no other choice. Bans only attempt to shut off the demand for child workers, paying scant attention to the causes for the increasing supply of children into the labor market. Children are not commodities like narcotics that can be removed with a raid and then disposed of. What the children and families need most is a humane approach. An approach that does not snatch away their chances of survival, but provides real viable alternatives. Child labor in India can be eradicated only if its root causes are also addressed. Without strengthening both enforcement mechanisms and provisions for rehabilitation, this step has little meaning. Irreversible change is possible when children, parents, community groups and local government come together to identify, address and resolve the issues that constrain children. Raids only worsen the situation for the child as they are forced to work in worse conditions and in secrecy. They say if the government doesn't want us to work, they should ensure better paid jobs for our parents. If our parents get enough money, we will not have to work. It does not follow that all the work of children is ignoble or unworthy, and it certainly should not lead to the universal conclusion that children are always better off in schools. It is one thing to take children out of hazardous and health destroying occupations...but it is quite another to deprive families of the slender but critical income children can provide. Child labor is a far more complex and difficult phenomenon than campaigners suggest...it does not follow that initiation into a useful social function necessarily militates against the best interests of children. Trade does not necessarily promote economic growth. Even if trade boosts the economy, trade's benefits either do not trickle down to most citizens or are offset by the costs. One of the harshest ironies is how food and farm Products flow from areas of hunger and need. As countries are diverting resources away from social provision s to repay debt, those most affected are the poor, especially women and children. Child Labor is banned... the most detrimental aspect of this strategy is that children working in the banned sectors have no protection what so ever and are considered as infringers of the law themselves. India's secondary school enrolment figures... 58% [for] boys and 47% [for] girls. Of these children... the attendance is only 45% and 36% respectively. This indicates that more than half of India's young people between the age of 14 and 18 are not in schools and presumably must be engaged in some form of economic activity. The programmes framed by the Government of India based on the dictates of the World Bank increasingly deprive communities and families of resources on which they have traditionally depended. The symptoms of this negative fallout are visible. Children... are forced to migrate to urban centers in the hope of finding a means for survival. The ILO... turned a deaf ear to the solutions offered by working children themselves. Excluding them from the debate and criminalizing their means of livelihood without offering any viable alternatives. Child labor is not an easy issue to resolve; while it seems noble to immediately withdraw investments and cooperation with firms and factories that employ child labor it may do more harm than good. Depriving them [working children] of this income has led to some children seeking different, lower paid work, and even prostitution in some cases. Other ways with schemes to help children would likely be needed so that this labor can be phased out. A gradual phase out is said to be a more preferable solution. As long as alternative sources of income are not found for families whose children work in the banned sectors, the law would continue be flouted. The bad news of children continuing to be exploited will continue as long as the root causes of child labor are not highlighted and effectively addressed. What is the state of the government run schools to which these children will be admitted, how effective and relevant is the education being imparted in them? The many complex factors that precipitate and perpetuate the unholy trinity of poverty, illiteracy and child labor must be acknowledged and understood if these inextricably linked problems are to be effectively and conclusively addressed.

KEYWORDS

child labour, India.

INTRODUCTION

Child labour is a global phenomenon. Its magnitude and dimensions, however, vary widely from country to country. India possesses the largest child labour force in the world despite various measures undertaken by the government and non-governmental agencies to tackle this issue. According to estimate there are over 60 million children labour is in India constituting nearly twenty five per cent of the working children of the world. Child labour is not a new phenomenon to our age. What is new, however, is its perception as a social problem the world over. In the pre-industrial agricultural society of India, children worked as helpers and learners in hereditarily determined family occupations under the benign supervision of adult family members. The work place was an extension of the home and work was characterized by personal informal relationships. The tasks and technology that work involved were simple and non-hazardous which the child could learn smoothly and unconsciously, over the years through association. The social scenario, however, changed radically with the advent of industrialization and urbanization under the impact of the newly generated centrifugal and centripetal forces. There was an unbroken stream of the rural poor migrating to urban centres in search of livelihood. The child had to work as an individual person either under an employer or independently. His

work environment endangered his physical health and mental growth and led to his exploitation. The protection and welfare of these children, therefore, become an issue of paramount social significance. India has all along followed a pro active policy in the matter of handling problem of child labour. Child Labour is, generally speaking, work for children that harms them or exploits them in some way (physically, mentally, morally, or by blocking access to education). According to the articles 23 and 24 of Indian constitution no children below the age of 14 should be allowed to do work in any factory, mines or in any other hazardous work. Mainly the child labour are engaged in the works like taking care of animals, planting and harvesting food, many kinds of small manufacturing (e.g. of bricks and cement), auto repair, making of footwear and textiles. More number of boys works outside their homes than girls. But more number of girls work in some particular jobs: for instance, as domestic maids. Being a maid in someone's house can be risky. Maids typically are cut off from friends and family for which they can be physically or sexually abused easily. Despite various pro-active measures taken by the Government and some leading NGOs, Child Labour problem still remains a concern in Odisha. It indicates that either the enforced legislation in this regard is not at par with the problem or there are loopholes in executing it. It may be a small problem for others but in a poor state like Odisha this is a major issue to be dealt with. Everybody knows that Poverty is the reason behind the issue of Child Labour in Odisha. But it is also a fact that unemployment and lack of education also contributes to it. When a parent observes that even after getting education for long years when one still remains jobless, it is better to employ the kid from the early stage who can add some income to the family. As a result besides tea stall and hotels child labours are also seen working in hazardous occupations and processes like Beedi Manufacture, Diamond Industry, Silk Manufacture, Fireworks Manufacture, Domestic labour, Construction works and Brick kilns. The case even sometimes reach to more extreme stage when they are found to be illegally employed and used in drug trafficking, prostitution, illicit relations, forced labour, slavery and armed conflicts. It is a matter of high concern that these young buds are deprived of adequate education, health, leisure and basic freedoms of life, violating their rights. Employment of a teenager under the age of 14 is termed as Child Labour. This is not the age to work and to collect livelihood rather this age is the learning stage for the kids and to move freely to enjoy their freedom. Once they will get a good childhood they can be good citizens in the future. Also taking their age as a veneration it has been felt that often the employers torture them and the poor children have no other way but to bear it. The scheme of providing mid day meal to the school children by the Government is a good step towards eradication of poverty, illiteracy and Child Labour. However it is also a matter of regret that even some responsible public representatives do not feel ashamed to manipulate with the children's share and we have ill famous dal scam in Odisha. Different measures are being taken to deal with the problem at different stages. The framers of the Indian Constitution incorporated relevant provisions under various articles in Part-III and IV so as to protect childhood and youth against exploitation and ensure that no child below the age of 14 years shall be employed to work in any factory, mine or any hazardous employment. Besides, a plethora of national laws, some dating back to the 1930s, and offer protection from exploitation to India's working children. The Bonded Labourer System (Abolition) Act, 1976 and Child Labour (Prohibition and Regulation) Act, 1986 are the most significant and far reaching of these laws. Despite all these provisions, the incidence of child labour continues to remain high in our country, particularly in rural and tribal areas. Recently PECUC, the People's Cultural Centre had organized a rally against Child Labour on the occasion of Child Labour day in Bhubaneswar. Also on 19th March 2011 National Legal Services Authority (NALSA) has declared 2011 as the Year of Protection of Child Rights in a grand occasion organized at Kalinga Institute of Social Sciences (KISS), Bhubaneswar to support the causes of working children. In the international level even steps are being taken. The International Labour Organization (ILO) launched the first World Day against Child Labour in 2002 as a way to highlight the plight of working children. On 12th June every year it has been celebrated in every corner of the world. We welcome all these actions and also appeal the whole Odia society throughout the world to stand against this tragic issue. It needs co-operation from every section of the society to perform their respective obligations to fight with this most unfortunate socio-economic problem.



"Save the future full of promises by stopping child labour.

Children are the future heroes;

they need to learn before they can work.

See your child in every child, Stop Child Labour"

CHILD LABOUR: CONCEPTS AND CONNOTATIONS**WHAT IS CHILD LABOUR?**

The word 'Child Labour' has been differently defined in various studies. According to the committee on child labour, 'Child labour', however, can broadly be defined as that segment of child population in work, either paid or on unpaid. The term "child labour is commonly interpreted in two different ways: first, as an economic practice, and second, as a social evil. In the first context it signifies employment of children in gainful occupations with a view to adding to the total income of the family. It is in the second sense that the term child labour is now more generally used. In assessing the nature and extent of social evil, it is necessary to take into account the character of the jobs on which children are engaged, the danger to which they are exposed and the opportunities of development of which they have been denied. The term includes wage-labour as well as self-employed children working independently as well as in family enterprises. Child labour therefore, can be defined here as any work undertaken by children below 14 years in such works which are injurious to their health, and harmful to their proper development

A broad definition of child labour would generally include all working children, paid or unpaid, below the age of 15. In developing countries child labour is defined as work that impairs the development and well – being of children. Economists generally viewing child labour as those participating in some kind of economic activities have now come to realize that ignoring the time spent by the children in collecting wood and water, tending the animals, preparing food and meals, caring for family members would imply that a child spending only two hours a day in agriculture work could be placed alongside twelve hours a day in the absence of their parents. The Campaign against Child Labour (CACL) defines child labour to include children prematurely leading adult lives, working with or without wages, under conditions damaging to their physical, social, emotional and spiritual development, denying them their basic rights to education, health and development. This includes children working in any sector, occupation or process, including the formal and non- formal, organized and unorganized, within or outside the family. The general perception remains that any child out-of-school is a potential labour. The Government's ambivalent stand in this regard is considered to be the prime reason for the persistence of the problem, which reflected in the lack of political will. The most unrealistic and the reducing figures of child labour in India speak volumes about the misunderstood perception and lack of political and administrative determination to tackle the problem. The sector wise percentage distribution of child labour in the census 1991 reveals that more and more children are being pushed into the informal sector. Though over 80 % per cent of child labour in India are reported employed in agriculture (Census 1991), another 5.67 % in livestock management, while others employed in the domestic, hotel and some other industries, yet the National Policies and the CLPRA, Child Labour (Prohibition and Regulation) Act 1986 only recognizes and prohibits certain selected 'hazardous' occupations and processes which are estimated to be only six per cent of the total child labour force. As a result, a very large number of working children in the non-hazardous occupations' are without legal protection (or any schemes) or social programming that ensures the realization of their rights (HAQ). A study conducted by UNICEF in 1999 and 2000 in 30 developing countries revealed that factory work was rare. Only 3% of children worked outside of their households for remuneration and the unpaid domestic work remained the most common child labour practice.

PREVALENCE OF CHILD LABOUR

The numerical estimation of child labour has been subjected to differences in definitions, reference periods and the limited perceptions of the agencies concerned. The NSS 50th round (1993-94), puts the number of child workers across the country at 10.1million. The estimated number of working children in the country as per the 55th Round of the NSSO Survey 1999-2000 puts the child labour figure at 10.4 million (Economic survey, 2002-2003) which stands much in contradiction to the non-governmental estimates varying between 60 to 115 million. It accounts for the highest number in the world ranging from 75 to 90 million-child labours under the age of 14 (Human Rights Watch, 1996). International Labour Organization (ILO) estimates that 250 million children between the ages of 5 and 15 are working around the world, the largest numbers being in India. Whatever be the exact numbers, criteria or definitions, it is widely believed that one in every four-child labour in the world is to be found in India.

WHY DO CHILDREN WORK?

At the micro level poverty within the family as the major factor behind the prevalence of child labour remains the most accepted theory. It is viewed that e very where parents prefer to send their children to school but it is lack of resources that induces the impoverished households to push their children into child labour to meet their basic needs for their survival. It is the world's poorest nations that mostly account for the child labour population when compared to the richer and affluent countries with relatively higher per capita income and GDP. On the domestic front in India, child labour is more concentrated in the states of Uttar Pradesh, Bihar, M.P, Andhra Pradesh, Orissa, Karnataka and Tamil Nadu. Although, these more backward and the poverty stricken states account for a large percentage of child labour, this may not always hold true since there are instances of growing child labour in better off states like Punjab and Haryana. But, at the same time, poverty as the sole reason does not always have a direct bearing and it fails to convince the prevalence of the child labour situation in several parts of the country. The phenomenon spells out new dimensions in the wake of the new economic order, market forces and the globalization. It also holds true that the parents want their children to work. This view implies that parents take advantage of any earning opportunities open to their children. It is therefore appropriately believed that so long as the parents benefit more when the child goes to work than when the child goes to school, the problem of child labour will persist. It also most commonly observed that incidence of child labour is higher wherever the access to primary education is low. Child labour has a lot to do with the primary education system and the provisions thereof. In India, in spite of the Constitutional guarantee under the Directive Principles recognizing free and compulsory education of children in the age group of 6-14 years and now the same as a fundamental right, nearly 80-100 million children are reportedly out of school. Some of the prime reasons, probably not unknown that account for out of school children are: distance of school from home, poor school infrastructure, overcrowded classrooms, schools without proper drinking water facilities and sanitation (15.5% of primary schools had urinals, NCERT, NAYAR 1993), absenteeism of teachers, unappealing curriculum etc.

CAUSES OF CHILD LABOUR IN INDIA

Child labour is a source of income for poor families. A study conducted by the ILO Bureau of Statistics found that "Children's work was considered essential to maintaining the economic level of households, either in the form of work for wages, of help in household enterprises or of household chores in order to free adult household members for economic activity elsewhere". In some cases, the study found that a child's income accounted for between 34 and 37 percent of the total household income. This study concludes that a child labourer's income is important to the livelihood of a poor family. There is a questionable aspect of this study. It was conducted in the form of a survey, and the responses were given by the parents of the child labourers. Parents would be biased into being compelled to support their decision to send their children to work, by saying that it is essential. They are probably right: for most poor families in India, alternative sources of income are close to non-existent. There are no social welfare systems such as those in the West, nor is there easy access to loans, which will be discussed.

What is apparent is the fact that child labourers are being exploited, shown by the pay that they receive. For the same type of work, studies show that children are paid less than their adult counterparts. Employers would have been likely to defend their wages for child workers, by saying that children earn the same wages as adults. The fact that no employers stated children earned more than adults, should be also be noted. Other studies have also concluded that "children's earnings are consistently lower than those of adults, even where there two groups are engaged in the same tasks"

WHAT ROLE DOES POVERTY PLAY?

The percentage of the population of India living in poverty is high. In 1990, 37% of the urban population and 39% of the rural population was living in poverty (International Labour Organization 1995, 107). Poverty has an obvious relationship with child labour, and studies have "revealed a positive correlation - in some instances a strong one - between child labour and such factors as poverty". Families need money to survive, and children are a source of additional income. Poverty itself has underlying determinants, one such determinant being caste. When analyzing the caste composition of child labourers Nangia (1987) observes that, "if these figures are compared with the caste structure of the country, it would be realised that a comparatively higher proportion of scheduled caste children work at a younger age for their own and their families' economic support". Scheduled caste (lower caste) children tend to be pushed into child labour because of their family's poverty. Nangia (1987) goes on to state that in his study 63.74% of child labourers said that poverty was the reason they worked.

The combination of poverty and the lack of a social security network form the basis of the even harsher type of child labour -- bonded child labour. For the poor, there are few sources of bank loans, governmental loans or other credit sources, and even if there are sources available, few Indians living in poverty qualify. Here enters the local moneylender; for an average of two thousand rupees, parents exchange their child's labour to local moneylenders. Since the earnings of bonded child labourers are less than the interest on the loans, these bonded children are forced to work, while interest on their loans accumulates. A bonded child can only be released after his /her parent makes a lump sum payment, which is extremely difficult for the poor. Even if bonded child labourers are released, "the same conditions of poverty that caused the initial debt can cause people to slip back into bondage" (International Labour Organization 1993, 12).

Even though poverty is cited as the major cause of child labour, it is not the only determinant. Inadequate schools, a lack of schools, or even the expense of schooling leaves some children with little else to do but work. The attitudes of parents also contribute to child labour; some parents feel that children should work in order to develop skills useful in the job market, instead of taking advantage of a formal education. Poverty is generally considered as the most important reason for which children work at inappropriate jobs. But there are other reasons as well:

- Family expectations and traditions
 - Abuse of the child.
 - Lack of good schools and day care
 - Lack of other services, such as health care.
 - Public opinion that downplays the risk of early work for children.
 - Uncaring attitudes of employers
 - Limited choices for women.
- Besides these reasons one important reason is illiteracy of parents, which is most common in Rural areas.

CHILD POPULATION IN INDIA

As per 2001 Population Census, children in the age group of 0-14 constituted about 360 million and accounted for 35.3 percent of total population. Children in the 5-14 age group constituted about 251 million and accounted for 24.6 percent of the population. Though there is an increase in the absolute number of children, the proportion of children in the total population is declining between 1991 and 2001. By Census of India projections, the proportion of children (0 to 14) has further come down to 32.1 percent during 2006. Elementary school age children (5 to 14) in the total population constituted 241.7 million accounting for 21.7 percent of the total population. The reduction in the proportion of children is attributed to drastic reduction in the Total Fertility Rate (TFR) in many of the major states, especially in Kerala, Andhra Pradesh, and Tamil Nadu, Maharashtra and Gujarat. On the other hand TFR remains high in some of the major states like Uttar Pradesh, Bihar, Rajasthan and Madhya Pradesh. Thus the segment of child population varies across states depending on the TFR. It is seen Some Aspects of the Well-Being of India's Agricultural Labour in the Context of Contemporary Agrarian Crisis that the Proportion of children in the population has implications for the incidence of child labour. Number of empirical studies on child labour has associated large family size with high incidence of child labour. The demographic approach to child work has provoked a lively debate on the causal relationship between high fertility and the utility of children for the rural household⁴. Fertility behaviour is also related to various social and cultural factors. The results of these debates have so far been inconclusive. In India for example, the States that have experienced rapid decline in TFR have witnessed decline in the intensity of child labour. In contrast to this the states in Northern India where the trends in fertility decline have been rather slow the incidence of child labour has in fact increased between 1991 and 2001. Within India, Kerala State, where the fertility rate is lowest, has achieved highest literacy rates in the country and the incidence of child labour is negligible. Thus, the changes in the demographic structure in many states provide a positive ground towards elimination of child labour.

Key Statistics

- 246 million children are child labourers.
- 73 million working children are less than 10 years old.
- No country is immune: There are 2.5 million working children in the developed economies, and another 2.5 million in transition economies.
- Every year, 22,000 children die in work-related accidents.
- The largest number of working children – 127 million – age 14 and under is in the Asia- Pacific region.
- Sub-Saharan Africa has the largest proportion of working children: nearly one-third of children age 14 and under (48 million children).
- Most children work in the informal sector, without legal or regulatory protection:
 - 70% in agriculture, commercial hunting and fishing or forestry;
 - 8% in manufacturing;
 - 8% in wholesale and retail trade, restaurants and hotels;
 - 7% in community, social and personal service, such as domestic work.
- 8.4 million Children are trapped in slavery, trafficking, debt bondage, prostitution, pornography and other illicit activities.
- 1.2 million of these children have been trafficked

ELIMINATION OF CHILD LABOUR: POLICY PERSPECTIVE**CONSTITUTIONAL AND LEGAL PROVISIONS**

India has all along followed a pro-active policy in the matter of handling problem of child labour. The Constitution of India, both in the Directive Principles of State Policy and as a part of Fundamental Rights, has laid down that the State shall direct its policy towards securing the health and strength of workers, men and; women and; the tender age of children not abused and that citizens are not forced by economic necessity to enter vocations unsuited to their age or strength, and that children, are given opportunities and facilities to develop in a healthy manner and in conditions of freedom and dignity. Childhood and youth are to be protecting against exploitation and no child below the age of 14 years shall be employed to work in any factory, mine or in any hazardous employment. The framers of the Indian Constitution incorporated relevant provisions under various articles in part III and IV to ensure justice to children. Selected articles of Indian Constitution in this regard are presented as follows:

- ❖ **Article-23:** Prohibition of traffic in human beings and forced labour.
- ❖ **Article-24:** Prohibition of employment of children below the age of 14 years in factories, mines, or in any other hazardous employment.
- ❖ **Article-45:** Provision of early childhood care and education for children Until the age of six years (86th Constitutional Amendment Act-2002).

- ❖ **Article-21(A)** : Provision of free and compulsory education of children of the age of six to fourteen years (86th Constitutional Amendment Act, 2002).
- ❖ **Article-51-A (k)**: Fundamental duties of parent or guardian to provide Opportunities for education of children between the age of six and fourteen years. (*Human Rights Watch, 1996; Govt. of India, 2002*)

A number of legal provisions, including laws, acts, declarations, conventions, prohibiting child labour have been made at the international and national levels. The following international human rights conventions prohibit the practice of child labour. India is a party to all of them, and as such is legally bound to comply with their terms:

- Convention on the prevention and suppression of slave trade and all forms of slavery, 1926 (Signed at Geneva on 25th September, 1926).
- Supplementary Convention on the abolition of slavery, the slave trade, and institutions and practices similar to slavery, 1956. (Done at Geneva, 7th Sept. 1956).
- International Convention on Civil and Political Rights (ICCPR), 1966 prohibits slavery and the slave trade in all their forms, (UN Doc. A/6316, 1966).
- Convention on the Rights of the child, 1989. A plethora of national laws, some dating back to the 1930s, offer protection from exploitation to India's working children. The Bonded Labour System (Abolition) Act of 1976 is, for the purposes of this report, the most significant and far-reaching of these laws. The Bonded Labour System (Abolition) Act, the Child Labour (Prohibition and Regulation) Act, and the other pieces of protective legislation that apply in varying circumstances to the situation of the child labourer, are betrayed by an extremely low rate of enforcement. (*Human Rights Watch, 1996, p.27*).
- The major domestic national laws include:
 - ❖ Bonded Labour System (Abolition) Act, 1976.
 - ❖ Children (Pledging of Labour) Act, 1933.
 - ❖ Factories Act, 1948.
 - ❖ Bidi and Cigar Workers (Conditions of Employment) Act, 1966.
 - ❖ Child Labour (Prohibition and Regulation) Act, 1986.
 - ❖ Inter-state Migrant Workmen (Regulation of Employment and Conditions of Service) Act-1979.
 - ❖ Contract Labour (Regulation and Abolition) Act, 1970.
 - ❖ Minimum Wages Act, 1948.
 - ❖ Plantation Labour Act, 1950.
 - ❖ Apprentices Act, 1961.
 - ❖ Shops and Establishment Act, 1961.
 - ❖ Shops and Commercial Establishment Act.
 - ❖ The Motor Transport Workers Act, 1952.
 - ❖ The Mines Act, 1952.
 - ❖ The Merchant Shipping Act, 1958.

A number of programmes have been envisaging both at the international and national levels for the elimination of child labour.

INTERNATIONAL PROGRAMME

The International Programme on the Elimination of Child Labour (IPECL) was launched as a global programme by the International Labour Organization (ILO) in December 1991 with the aim to work towards the progressive elimination of child labour by strengthening national capacities. IPECL's priority target are bonded child labourers, children in hazardous working condition and occupations, and children who are particularly vulnerable, i.e. very young children (below 12 years of age) and working girls. Since 1999 and the adoption of Convention 182, children in prostitution has been added to the list of priority groups. IPECL has also targeted indirect elements to help facilitate and support the withdrawal of children from the work force, and assist their integration into educational programmes. Focus is also placed on research and training institutions in government and non-government sectors, workers' and employers' organizations, factory and labour inspectors and the communities and families of the children

NATIONAL CHILD LABOUR PROGRAMME

A National Policy on Child Labour was announced in 1987 which emphasised the need for strict enforcement measures in areas of high child labour concentration. In order to translate the above policy into action, the Government of India initiated the National Child Labour Project Scheme in 1988 to rehabilitate the working children starting with 12 child labour endemic districts of the country. Under the Scheme, working children are identified through child labour survey, withdrawn from work and put into the special schools, so as to provide them with enabling environment to join mainstream education system. In these Special Schools, besides formal education, they are provided stipend @ Rs.100/- per month, nutrition, vocational training and regular health check ups. In addition, efforts are also made to target the families of these children so as to cover them under various developmental and income/employment generation programmes of the Government. The Scheme also envisages awareness generation campaigns against the evils of child labour and enforcement of child labour laws. It is seen that the level of enforcement in the States of Tamil Nadu, Andhra Pradesh, Maharashtra & West Bengal is encouraging, whereas that in UP, Rajasthan, Madhya Pradesh & Orissa it is very low.

SOLUTIONS TO STOP CHILD LABOUR-ROLE OF STAKEHOLDERS IN STOPPING CHILD LABOUR

1. NATIONAL GOVERNMENT AGENCIES

- a) National Agencies need to ratify the UN Convention on the Rights of the Child. (CRC)
- b) An effective legal system needs to be introduced to check employment of children below 14 years through proper legislation
- c) Economic sanctions to be enforced on countries that allow the employment of children for the manufacturer of export products
- d) Proper monitoring and implementing authorities to be set up to implement various acts passed by the National Government.
- e) National social welfare schemes to be introduced to supplement income for poor families whose children are removed from work sites

2. N.G.Os

- a) NGOs have a Key role in raising awareness and informing people about the misuse of children, denying them the fundamental rights of shelter, food and education. UNICEF has clarified the role of NGOs as essential players in many of the intervention stages with direct involvement in identification and rescue operations.
- b) Assist governmental agencies in implementing 1206 Educ. Res. various pieces of legislation
- c) Identify areas where child labour exists and bring to the notice of Government.
- d) Undertake advocacy with national governments for the implementing of strict legislation to ban child labour .
- e) Organise rehabilitation centres to shelter children removed from work sites.

3. CIVIL SOCIETY / PEOPLES FORUM

- a) Civil society can play an active role in identifying and alerting authorities to child labour sites
- b) Create awareness among parents and the public about the effect of child labour on children.
- c) Motivate parents to send their children to school
- d) Organise counselling sessions for children and parents
- e) Organise joint protests, rallies, hoardings etc. against employing children below 14

4. CORPORATE ENTITIES

- a) Include banning of child labour in their mission
- b) Introduce welfare schemes for children
- c) Allot separate welfare funds as part of corporate social responsibilities to help organisations working for the cause to ban child labour
- d) Put up hoardings giving messages on the benefits of banning child labour

5. INDIVIDUAL SOCIAL SERVICE ACTIVISTS

- a) Resist any form of child labour
- b) Openly oppose child labour activities which comes to their notice without any fear
- c) Be very assertive in expressing displeasure to shop owners and organisations that employ children for labour. In India, there are many international and national NGOs campaigning for the abolition of child labour. A few important NGOs in the field are:

- a) Child right resource centre (CRRC)
- b) Campaign against child labour (CACL)
- c) Child Line

6. SOME MORE MEASURES ARE

- Income of the families should be increased
- Education for all children irrespective of their economic and social background should be ensured, that helps children learn skills that help them earn a livelihood.
- Social securities should be provided by the Govt. and other agencies, that help children and families to survive in crises, such as disease, loss of home and shelter there should be an awareness campaign for small families, so that families are not burdened by children.

CONCLUSION

The complex issue of child labour is a developmental issue worth investigating. The notion that children are being exploited and forced into labour, while not receiving education crucial to development, concerns many people. India is the largest example of a nation plagued by the problem of child labour. Estimates cite figures of between 60 and 115 million working children in India -- the highest number in the world. What are the causes of child labour in India? How do governmental policies affect it? What role does education play in regard to child labour in India? A critical analysis of the answers to these questions may lead in the direction of a possible solution. These questions will be answered through an analysis of the problem of child labour as it is now, investigating how prevalent it is and what types of child labour exist. The necessity of child labour to poor families, and the role of poverty as a determinant will be examined. Governmental policies concerning child labour will be investigated. The current state of education in India will be examined and compared with other developing countries. Finally, India's policies concerning compulsory education will be assessed. Child labor is a pervasive problem in today's world, but it is not a hopeless one. The evidence is clear that when individuals make a commitment, when communities mobilize, when societies come together and decide that child labor is no longer acceptable, great progress can be made toward the goal of ensuring that children are not denied a childhood and a better future. However, it's tough going. Building consensus—and bringing real change—remains an immense challenge internationally, nationally and in the families and communities where child labor exists. The common sense objective is to provide kids the opportunity of a sound education and parents a fair chance at a decent job. This is an economic issue for countries and families—but it is also an ethical one. The fight against child labor is ultimately a battle to expand the frontiers of human dignity and freedom. *Policymakers seeking to end child labor must address the poverty that is most often the cause of the problem. Although abusive child labor exists and must be eliminated, data show that the typical child laborer works alongside a parent and is helping his or her family meet its most basic needs. An effective policy for ending child labor can thus be crafted only within the context of a country's overall development strategy, and it must consider whether it eliminates the need for children to work and what children will do in the absence of work.* Child labour is both a cause and consequence of poverty and squanders a nation's human capital. It can impede the education of children, particularly girls. Any of the worst forms of child labour – including prostitution and trafficking – are a cause and consequence of the HIV/AIDS pandemic. Therefore, eliminating child labour is particularly relevant to achieving millenium development goal 1 (eradicate extreme poverty and hunger), millenium development goal 2 (ensuring that all boys and girls complete primary schooling) and millenium development goal 6 (combat HIV/AIDS, malaria and other diseases). Achieving millenium development goal 7, which seeks to reverse the loss of environmental resources, would help reduce environmental disasters – which devastate households and significantly increase conditions that foster child labour. Child labour is a significant problem in India. The prevalence of it is shown by the child work participation rates which are higher in Indian than in other developing countries. The major determinant of child labour is poverty. Even though children are paid less than adults, whatever income they earn is of benefit to poor families. In addition to poverty, the lack of adequate and accessible sources of credit forces poor parents to engage their children in the harsher form of child labour -- bonded child labour. Some parents also feel that a formal education is not beneficial, and that children learn work skills through labour at a young age. These views are narrow and do not take the long term developmental benefits of education into account. Another determinant is access to education. In some areas, education is not affordable, or is found to be inadequate. With no other alternatives, children spend their time working. The Constitution of India clearly states that child labour is wrong and that measures should be taken to end it. The government of India has implemented the Child Labour Act in 1986 that outlaws child labour in certain areas and sets the minimum age of employment at fourteen. This Act falls short of making all child labour illegal, and fails to meet the ILO guideline concerning the minimum age of employment set at fifteen years of age. Though policies are in place that could potentially reduce the incidence of child labour, enforcement is a problem. If child labour is to be eradicated in India, the government and those responsible for enforcement need to start doing their jobs. Policies can and will be developed concerning child labour, but without enforcement they are all useless. The state of education in India also needs to be improved. High illiteracy and dropout rates are reflective of the inadequacy of the educational system. Poverty plays a role in the ineffectiveness of the educational system. Dropout rates are high because children are forced to work in order to support their families. The attitudes of the people also contribute to the lack of enrolment -- parents feel that work develops skills that can be used to earn an income, while education does not help in this matter. Compulsory education may help in regard to these attitudes. The examples of Sri Lanka and Kerala show that compulsory education has worked in those areas. There are differences between Sri Lanka, Kerala and the rest of India. What types of social welfare structures do these places have? What are the attitudes of the people?

Is there some other reason why the labour market for child labourers is poor in these areas? These are some questions that need to be answered before applying the concept of compulsory education to India? India is making progress in terms of educational policy. The DPEP has been implemented only four years ago, and so results are not apparent at this time. Hopefully the future will show that this program has made progress towards universal education, and eradicating child labour. Child labour cannot be eliminated by focusing on one determinant, for example education, or by brute enforcement of child labour laws. The government of India must ensure that the needs of the poor are filled before attacking child labour. If poverty is addressed, the need for child labour will automatically diminish. No matter how hard India tries, child labour always will exist until the need for it is removed. The development of India as a nation is being hampered by child labour. Children are growing up illiterate because they have been working and not attending school. A cycle of poverty is formed and the need for child labour is reborn after every generation. India needs to address the situation by tackling the underlying causes of child labour through governmental policies and the enforcement of these policies. Only then will India succeed in the fight against child labour.

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