



“CHILD LABOUR AND SCHOOL DROPOUT”

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Abstract

Child labour is a Universal phenomena and it is a by-product of socio-economic structure of the society. Child labour can be classified as hazardous and non-hazardous labour. Many poor parents bear children in order to enhance family income and poverty forces child to drop out of school and find employment in order to supplement their family income.

Non-schooling of children has intimately connected with exploitation of child labour which is the consequence of social inequality, attitude of the privileged classes and lack of public involvement in the protection of basic entitlement. Lack of parental motivation and high opportunity cost of schooling also contribute to aggravation of the problems of child labour.

The empirical research on child labour shows that, the child labour has been increasing in urban areas from the last two decades. Pune is not the exceptional urban area in increasing child labour in organized and unorganized sectors.

The pune city is fastest growing city in India, especially in education, industries and hotel establishments. There are large numbers of hotels and restaurants being operated in the city Pune, all these hotel were classified in large size, medium size and small size hotels. 'A' grade, 'B' grade 'C' grade hotels. Child labourers are mostly working in 'B' grade (Medium size) 'C' grade (Small size) hotels of Pune city. The analysis in this section are mainly based on the data obtained from 300 child labour workers, which is 5% of the total child labour population of 6000 in Pune city. The present research study is an attempt to examine and describe the conditions of educational status and reasons of school dropout, which is being the problem of the child labourers engaged in urban hotels of Pune city. And the findings also analyzed the poor economic conditions, poor performance in school, less interest of parents, less interest of education, lack of school facilities, broken family, orphanage & migration of parents.

Key Word: Child labour and School Dropout

1. INTRODUCTION

Education is considered as one of the duties of modern states. The parents are required to send their children to school, children are required to attend school and the state is obligated to enforce compulsory primary education. It is the policy instrument by which the state effectively removes children from the labour force.

Pune is known as a city of education and culture but actual data shows negative result of our presumption about the level of education of child labour working in hotel establishment.

Childhood is perhaps the most blessed stage in a human life. It is that phase of life where, children are not really aware of any form of worldly responsibilities, they are free from all the tensions and they can learn lot of new things. Many children are forced to work in inhumane conditions. where a child is full of tensions and burdens and he has to perform the tough job of being primary earning member of the family. Such children lose their innocence to satisfy the needs and wants of their family. The problem of child labor is huge and is faced by many countries in the world.

Education has been defined as the “Art of developing cultivation of physical intellectual, aesthetic and moral faculties of the individual with a view to enable him to respond positively to demands and responsibilities of his social wellbeing.

The working child is designed as a child in the age of 5 to 14, which is doing work in hotels, restaurants, tea stalls, juice bars and other eating places of Pune city. The working condition and environment of the child labour in urban area were quite horrible. Exploitation of child labour is reflected in terms of long hours of working for low wages, casual nature of work, absence of holidays, absence of social security etc.

Poverty, parent’s negligence in education, shortage of buildings and equipment and defective supervision and administration in the field of education keeps them unskilled or semi-skilled which limited the opportunities of upward mobility.

2. FINDINGS:

Following are the findings based on the objectives of the study referring from the sources of Primary and Secondary data:

TABLE – 1**Educational Qualification of the Child Labour**

Educational status	No. of Respondent	Percent
Illiterate	35	11.7
Primary	192	64
Secondary	69	23
Informal	4	1.3
Total	300	100.0

The above table revealed that majority of the child labourers are in primary standard, while 23 percent are in secondary standard and very few child labourers are in an informal education. It is further observed that, these children can write their names and read simple sentences in Marathi language. But most of the child labourers who are employed in urban hotels are denying their education, which is an essential part of everybody's life. This indicates that earning for their survival has become more important than their education.

TABLE – 2**Statement showing Involvement of Child Labour**

Status of Schooling	No. of Respondent	Percent
Regularly attending school	16	5.3
Irregularly attended school	245	81.7
Never attended school	39	13.0
Total	300	100.0

It is found that 82 percent of the child labourers are attending their school irregularly, while 13 percent of the respondents had never attended their school and 5 percent had regularly attended their school. Further it is reported that, large percentage of child labourers had dropped out of their school.

TABLE – 3
Child labourers Interest in Education

Interested in Education	No. of Respondent	Percent
Continuing their education	148	49.3
Not continuing their education	152	50.7
Total	300	100.0

It is observed that 49 percent of the child labourers are interested in continuing their education and another 51 percent are not interested in continuing their education.

TABLE – 4
Educational System Expected by Child Labourer

Expectation of educational system	No. of Respondent	Percent
Residential school	40	27.0
Night school	50	34.0
Hostel	28	19.0
Learn and earn scheme	30	20.0
Total	300	100.0

Child labourers working in different type of hotels are expecting certain educational system from the government, society, and NGOs such as 34 percent are expecting to study in night school so as to earn during the day time, while 27 percent are expecting to study in residential school, another 20 percent are expecting to earn and learn system of schooling and 19 percent are expecting hostel facility.

TABLE – 5
Expected School Timing

Expected School Timing	No. of Respondent	Percent
Morning	72	24.0
Afternoon	8	3.0
Evening	68	22.0
N.A	152	51.0
Total	300	100.0

It is evident from the above table that 24 percent of the child labourers wanted to attend their school in morning shift only, while 22 percent of the child labourers wanted to attend their school in evening shift only and very few child labourers wanted to attend their school in afternoon shift only.

TABLE – 6
Reasons of school dropout

Reasons of School dropout	No. of Respondent	Percent
Poor economic condition	107	36.0
Poor performance in school	90	30.0
Less interest of parents	18	6.0
Less interest of education	48	16.0
Lack of school facilities	15	5.0
Broken families	5	1.7
Orphanages	1	0.3
Migration of parents	16	5.0
Total	300	100.0

In the present study it is found that the main reasons of school dropouts of the children are the poor economic conditions (36%), poor performance in school (30%), less interest of parents (6%), less interest of education (16%), lack of school facilities (5%), broken family (1.7%), orphanage (0.3%) and migration of parents (5.0%).

6.1. POOR ECONOMIC CONDITION:

There is no single factor responsible for school dropout in the present study. As per the government record nearly 41.2 percentage of the population is still below poverty line. This indicated that most of the child labourer's families are still under below poverty line. Inadequate income forces parents to put their children in the labour force. 75 percent of children had left their school in first and second standard due to their poor economic condition of whom they are from the rural migrants family. Those migrant's children are also being affected by their parent's shifting occupation.

6.2. POOR PERFORMANCE IN SCHOOL:

In the present study 90 children out of 300 have left their school education due to poor performance in school. As a result, children face more difficulties in studying a subject like Mathematics at primary level and English language at middle school level and failed in the respective examinations. Under such circumstances children are neither protected by their parents or their teacher, they always preferred job than the education.

6.3. LESS INTEREST OF PARENTS IN CHILD EDUCATION:

During the course of interviewing, it was found that the educational status of parents is very poor. In most of the cases the mothers are totally illiterate, yet they knew the importance of educating their children. But due to economic pressures, they were compelled to send their children out for work.

Ultimately children from poor families divert to the urban area and prefer jobs in hotel establishments. School dropout is not only because of the large size of family and poverty, but it also found due to broken family and marital problems.

6.4. LESS INTEREST OF CHILD LABOUR IN EDUCATION:

In this statement 48 respondents are showing less interest in their education. They are unaware about the importance of education as their parents do; therefore children are more attracted towards employment than schooling. Some respondents have left the school for psychological reasons, i.e., fear of the teacher, etc.

6.5. LACK OF SCHOOL FACILITIES:

Another important reason behind discontinuation of education of respondents was non-availability of school education in their respective native places. Most of the children came to Pune city from rural and interior parts of Maharashtra. In this interior part only primary schools are available. Therefore most of the respondents discontinued their middle schools and had joined in hotel occupation as a child labour.

6.6. BROKEN FAMILY:

Nearly 2 percent of the respondents belonged to broken families. It means such respondent's parents had family problems. Some respondents said that due to father's addiction and frequent quarrels between mother and father motivated in accepting employment. Under such

circumstances children lived with mother and discontinued their school education. There are so many other reasons of broken families which affected primary education of the respondents.

6.7. MIGRATION OF PARENTS:

Migration of parents is another reason of school dropout of the respondents. Every year some respondent's parents left their native place and went to another place for employment during harvest season. These families stay in the field without caring their children for more than three months. Generally their parents had to go to sugar factories which are far away from their homes. During this period either children go with their parents or left them with their relatives. It has affected regular education of children and they have started working in hotel occupation in Pune city.

3. CONCLUSIONS

Many poor parents bear children in order to enhance family income. Poverty and inadequate income forces parents to put their children in the labour force. Lack of parental motivation, high opportunity cost of schooling, broken families, orphanages, marital conflicts in a family, non-availability of school education in their respective native places, fear of the teacher and poor performance in school and also failing in a subject like Mathematics at primary level and English language at middle school level also contribute to aggravation of the problems of child labour.

Non-schooling of children has intimately connected with exploitation of child labour which is the consequence of social inequality, attitude of the privileged classes and lack of public involvement in the protection of basic entitlement.

Migration of parents is another reason of school dropout of the respondents. Every year some respondent's parents left their native place to other place for their harvesting employment.

Further it is suggested that necessary infrastructure, emotional support and environment for the same should be created by the government on behalf of civil society. If they feel that the education system is dull, unexciting, un-interesting and irrelevant the government should make sincere and earnest efforts, which should also be planned, coordinated and concerted to bring about a quantitative change and improvement in the content and process of education.

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