

# Does child labor still exist in its worst form, across the world

Law



I have conducted research on child labor. My research topic is the effectiveness of international conventions on the rights of the child, with a special focus on child labor. The thesis of my work is Does child labor still exist in its worst form, across the world, despite the adoption of several conventions on the rights of the child? The following discussion makes an evaluation of the primary sources that were helpful in achieving the objectives of this research. In the year 1989, the Convention on the Rights of the Child was adopted by the United Nations (UN), General Assembly. This convention stipulated that children were entitled to be protected from economic exploitation and hazardous work. Furthermore, this convention restricted the recruitment of children, below the age of 15 years, into the armed forces. This convention enumerates the civil, cultural, economic, health, political, and social rights of children. For the purposes of this convention, a child is any individual whose age is less than 18 years. Upon ratification of this convention, a nation is rendered subject to international law. Subsequently, in the year 2000, two additional protocols to this convention were adopted. The first among these prohibit the engagement of children in military conflicts; whilst the second precludes child prostitution and pornography, and the sale of children.

Hence, an examination of the Convention on the Rights of the Child 1989, helped me in assessing the rights accorded to the child, by the nations of the international community, against child labor. Despite adopting this convention, child labor is rampant in most of the nations of the world.

The Organisation of African Unity (OAU), which subsequently became the African Union, adopted the African Charter on the Rights and Welfare of the

Child. This transpired in the year 1990. The African Charter on the Rights and Welfare of the Child is to a major extent, similar to the Convention on the Rights of the Child. It bestows an elaborate system of civil, cultural, economic, political, and social rights upon children.

This charter emerged due to the perception of the African Union that the Convention on the Rights of the Child had failed to address several of the economic and socio-cultural issues that were peculiar to African nations. For instance, this charter unequivocally prohibited the recruitment of individuals, whose age was less than 18 years, and the employment of children in begging. Moreover, the African Charter on the Rights and Welfare of the Child provided protection to refugee and internally displaced children.

This source helped me to make an evaluation of the prevalence of rights controlling child labor in Sub-Saharan Africa, where child labor is rampant in its most aggravated form. Although the majority of the nations of the African subcontinent, implemented the child laws in their legislation, most of it is restricted to formal labor. In addition, due to ineffective implementation procedures, the Convention proved to be unsuccessful. Survey Conducted by the United Nations In the year 2012, a survey was conducted among the brick kiln workers of Afghanistan. This was under the aegis of the International Labour Organization (ILO). It became evident from this survey that the majority of the brick kiln workers were children who were also bonded laborers. As much as 56% of these children were below the age of 18 years, while those under the age of 14 years were 47% of such children. The usual practice in this sector is to promote debt bondage, which causes workers and their families to be perpetually in debt to the brick kiln owners. This survey

focused upon the brick kilns of Kabul and Nangarhar provinces. Another disturbing fact that emerged from this survey was that 64% of the respondent families had worked in brick kilns for 11 years, while 35% had worked for two decades. The brick kiln owners made huge profits at the cost of their bonded labor, which was chiefly comprised of children. This survey of the ILO disclosed the terrible reality of bonded labor involving children, for decades in the brick kilns of Afghanistan. The distressing situation of the children, engaged in bonded labor, in these provinces has made a mockery of the Convention on the Rights of the Child, which has accorded children with protection from exploitation and danger. General Agreement on Tariffs and Trade (GATT)The Uruguay Round of the General Agreement on Tariffs and Trade (GATT) could exert a tremendous influence on child labor problems. The provisions of this round of negotiations would render it illegal to import goods that had been manufactured with child labor. This has very important consequences for the major importers and exporters of the world. A disquieting feature of child labor has been its resurgence in the developing nations that are actively engaged in the manufacture and export of goods. This source helped me to analyze the rights accorded to the child against working in manufacturing businesses, globally. An examination of the child labor situation in the manufacturing businesses in developing countries, such as India reveals the bitter truth that millions of children are employed in manufacturing units despite the norms of the GATT. UNICEF SurveyDuring the years 2000 and 2001, the United Nations Children's Fund (UNICEF) conducted detailed household surveys. The target nations were 36 in number and were of the low income earning category. These surveys

disclosed that 25% of the children in these countries, whose age was between 5 years and 14 years, were engaged in market work. In addition, it was observed that the majority of these children used to work from their homes. This survey by UNICEF enabled me to evaluate the issue of child labor in 36 low-income nations, where child labor has been proliferating in the guise of house-based work. This survey revealed the fact that child labor can be concealed or camouflaged under the guise of housework.