

Lets raise the voice  
against child labour  
sociology essay



**ASSIGN  
BUSTER**

The aim of writing this paper is to share the prevalence of the child labour and to highlight the importance of this issue. Moreover, this paper will also discuss and analyse the factors leading to child labour. The intent of this paper is also to recommend some strategies in order to reduce the burden of this issue in the society.

## **Prevalence of child labour**

Globally, 215 million of childrens are involved in child labour worldwide (International Labour Organization, 2010). Out of which, 90% of childrens are victim of child labour in developing countries from Asia and Africa (Rena, 2009). Specifically, 3.8 million of childrens are performing labour work in Pakistan (Sahir, 2010). The labour work varies from simpler task like begging to the more complex task like drug smuggling. According to International Labour Organization, it was reported that 69% of childrens are involved in agricultural work, 22% in household work and 9 % in industrial work (Vandenberg, 2007). This result reveals that a large number of childrens are contributing in different entities of labour market regardless of their age and the type of work they do, which is against the notion of basic human rights.

## **Importance of the issue and Reason for its selection**

Though, child labour is not a new issue but still it has always been remained as a controversial and highlighted issue in every country. Childrens are considered as a future for the country growth, a twinkle light for the parents and a hope for the whole family, but what when these lights and hopes are shattered off. Child labour is one of those crimes which takes away bright future from the childrens at their early stages of life and ruins their life

completely. It also adversely impacts the society as a whole. Therefore, it is important to discuss and point out this issue.

The reason for selecting this particular topic for my assignment is to understand and discuss the determinants responsible for child labour. Secondly, this issue has always been remained core to my heart since the time I have looked the innocent childrens, doing slavery for the benefits of the others. Moreover, the consequences of child labour are extremely devastating and therefore, I think that there is a need to address this issue by writing this paper. Through this paper, I got the opportunity to share my views along with the support of literature on child labour.

### **Analysis on determinants of child labour**

Child labour is not the result of a single cause; however, there are several factors that give rise to child labour. These factors include poverty (economical factor), lack of awareness and poor educational opportunities (social factor), cultural taboos (cultural factor), natural and man-made disasters (environmental factor) and gap between laws and its implementation (Lego-political factor). Now, the upcoming part of this paper will shed light upon each factor leading to child labour.

### **Poverty and child labour**

Poverty is one of the major determinants for child labour. Globally, 878 million of people lives in poverty (Chandy & Gertz, 2011), whereas, 22% of poverty is commonly found in developing world (The World Bank Group, 2008). There is a direct positive relationship between child labour and poverty. It is considered that continents like Asia where ratio of poverty is

high, child labour exist more commonly. Families who are deprived of money make children as a source of their income. This phenomenon lead childrens to start working at their early stages of life and ultimately they get away from their basic education. In this way, it causes further increment in poverty rate as the next generation also remains poor due to lack of education and ultimately child labour reaches to its peak (Udry, 2003).

Global recession and inflated poverty particularly in the developing countries makes life miserable and raise a question that how to survive and how to fulfill the basic needs. Therefore, due to deprived conditions and lack of resources, families do not have many choices left with them. At that time, the only choice family have with them is the availability of human resources and that is their children. Thus, they direct their children to work with the aim of reducing the burden of poverty and to meet the essential needs of the family. Once, when childrens start earning reasonable amount of money, few of the greedy family members enforce childrens to continue with the same labour work for the rest of their life.

In addition, poverty also makes someone to act unethically and to do injustice for the survival. For instance, it is commonly observed that people who are poor, sold their childrens for the sake of money or in the exchange of fulfilment of their remaining loan agreements. Then, the culprit buyers of these childrens misuse them, like, for drug selling and they also enforce innocent childrens to do hazardous work. Thus, poverty seems to be one of the powerful factors for emerging public issue of child labour.

## **Poor educational system, Lack of awareness and child labour**

Child labour also exists when there is poor educational system and weak infrastructure of schools. This makes people to think that instead of wasting money on educating their children from the low profile schooling system, it is better to utilize the time of their children for labour work and earning money (Grootaert & Patrinos, 2002; Sahir, 2010). Inefficient educational system also fails to raise awareness among family about the importance of education and how it can bring happiness & success in their lives. If educational system will promote the awareness about the importance of education, then this can lead to drastic decline in the rate of child labour as education is the only way which can change the mind set of people. In this way, more educated children will have better working opportunities instead of doing hazardous labour work.

In some of the countries, there is a big hindrance to the access of educational opportunities due to lack of funds and unavailability of school in the local areas. Therefore, childrens get deprived of basic education and ultimately they involve themselves in labour work.

Moreover, it is commonly observed that due to lack of awareness, few family members prefer to educate only their male child with whatever resources they have, as they think that the male child will help them in their older age. On the contrary, female child are degraded and considered as burden on the family, which makes her away from the educational system and enforces her to keep doing labour work all the time. Hence, lack of awareness and limited

educational opportunities with poor schooling system gives birth to child labour.

## **Cultural taboos and child labour**

Some cultures have belief that childrens are the gift from GOD. This socio-cultural norm leads to increase in number of childrens within family and hence increases overall population. However, this is the fact that increase number of childrens in family also brings extra expenditure and this situation leads to survival problems, particularly when there is just one bread earner in the family. Therefore, in order to balance the family income & expenditure proportion, the family expects their children to work and become equally hand holder for raising their family income (Sahir, 2010).

In some of the cultures, it is also expected that children should always be obedient to their elders and follow their orders in every circumstances, without any question or any argument. Therefore, this norm takes away freedom from the children and enforces them to do work guided by their elders.

Furthermore, it is also noticed that society creates huge discrimination between children on the basis of race, colour, gender and mental functioning. In particular, some societies do not give respect to mentally retarded and disabled children and misuse them for labour work. Thus, societal beliefs and socio-cultural norms are also significantly contributing for increasing child labour.

## **Natural Disasters, Man-made disasters and child labour**

Globally, natural disaster on earth like floods and earthquake are the cause of massive destruction and ruins everything where it happens. The impact of this destruction is so intensive that it causes severe economic deflation and left families with nothing, but only with the hope. Therefore, families then see their child as a hope for restoring their life and for financial stability. Due to these devastating circumstances, families intend to involve their child in labour work. At times, this enormous disaster also results in loss of earning members or makes them disable, therefore, then children themselves feel responsible and starts working to fulfil their family needs.

Besides this, man-made disasters like terrorism or war is also equally responsible for giving rise to child labour. In the situation of war, need for human resources arise drastically and therefore, childrens are then used as weapon and are enforced to participate in criminal activities. In this way, childrens are not able to live a normal happy life and thus they become the victims of child labour (Sahir, 2010).

## **Inefficient legal system and child labour**

In many countries, laws on prohibition of child labour do exist which discourages children to work in their early stages of life, but what when these laws are not strictly implemented. In reality, there is a huge gap between the laws and its implementation. Therefore, immoral employers take advantage of this gap and prefer to hire children for their work as childrens easily get ready to work for the sake of little amount of salary.

Moreover, inefficient implementation of laws also gives opportunity to misuse childrens in dangerous work. In most extreme cases of child labour, male childrens are commonly used in drug dealing, whereas female childrens are enforced to sell their bodies for the sake of money. Thus, incompetent Lego-political system is also one of major determinant of child labour (Sahir, 2010).

### **Lack of technology and child labour**

Innovation in technology is always considered as worthwhile for business growth

because it helps in increasing productivity, but what happens when there is no access to technological advancement. In such deprived situations, it is commonly observed that childrens are being considered as a valuable asset for the company because childrens are more active, energetic and play a vital role for business growth. This phenomenon then diverts the mind set of children and therefore, they tend to focus more on labour work and adopt this act for their whole life.

On the contrary, sometimes there is an access to technology but still people prefer to hire children for the labour work. On the basis of cost-benefit analysis, employers consider children as a cheap source for their work as compared to investing heavy amount of money on buying technology and its maintenance. Hence, expensive technological resources and its unavailability in certain areas escalate the ratio of child labour (Galli, 2001).



## **Effects of child labour**

The effect of child labour is distressful and tearful. Alike general crime, child labour is one of the worst evil that affects not only one individual, but ruins the whole population. There are several adverse physical and psychological consequences of child labour.

Physical outcomes of child labour include deprivation from education and minor to severe forms of health problems. In one of the study, it was identified that child labour causes eye problem, backaches, skin problems, injuries and respiratory problems. In the similar study, it was also reported that rate of school dropouts inclined significantly with the increase of child labour (Bunnak, 2007).

Besides adverse physical outcomes, child labour is also responsible for psychological detoriation in children. It is noteworthy that children who are loaded with too much work regardless of their age, are often becomes the victim of depression as they are not much capable of handling pressurised work in their early stages of life. This could also leads to low self-esteem among those children because they feel themselves incompetent. Thus, child labour is a very dangerous and immoral act on the innocent childrens due to the adverse effects associated with it.

## **Recommendations to reduce the burden of child labour**

Child labour is a crucial issue; therefore, it is very essential to combat this issue from its root. In this regard, following strategies might contribute to mitigate the causes which are the reason for rising child labour.

One of the Millennium Development Goal is to eradicate poverty and provide basic education. Therefore, access to proper education and provision of funds can reduce poverty and raise awareness, ultimately decreasing the burden of child labour (Rena, 2009). Moreover, to breach the gap between laws and its implementation, it is very essential to keep check and balance from micro to meso level. In addition, strict penalty should be given to the individuals who enforce and misuse childrens for labour work. As a public health nurse, I can address this issue at different forums through presentations and publications, so that effective strategies can be planned and implemented.

## **Summary**

Child labour is one of the major public concerns resulting from poverty, lack of awareness and poor educational system, cultural norms, disasters and incompetent legal system. Therefore, it is very significant to realize the adverse consequences associated with it and take prompt action in order to reduce the suffering of innocent childrens.