



Working Condition & Extent of Child Labour: A Case Study of Ghaziabad District

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Abstract:

The issue of working children has however caught a fresh momentum recently after a threat from some of the western nations to ban the import of those goods in which the child labour is used in production process. Unfortunately, India is also one of those countries, where child labour is employed in abundance in various productive activities and that too under miserable working conditions. According to geographical distribution among Indian states are concerned, the child labour is highest in Jammu & Kashmir, where it is 10.3 percent of total child population. The population of child labour in Kerala is lowest because the same has highest school enrolment 81 percent in age group of 5-14 years.

Most of the child labour comes to labour market between the age group of 9-11 years. Mostly children are employed on fixed payment basis and that too through agents. As regard the working conditions of these working are concerned, children do work under great miserable conditions.

Keywords: *Child labour, Child population, Productive activities, Working condition,*

Introduction

The issue of employing children in various activities has been one of the main concerns of social scientists, social workers, bureaucrats and politicians. They have been constantly trying to find out ways and means to eliminate child labour from the work force for the long-time, at least since the inception of welfare state. Now a days in the modern world the employment of a child is considered as a stigma on any nation.

The issue of working children has however caught a fresh momentum recently after a threat from some of the western nations to ban the import of those goods in which the child labour is used in production process. This threat has kindled a new awakening on this issue. There was widespread reaction of this threat all over the world, particularly in the developing countries, where children constitute a sizeable part of their work force and produce many important items for exports and mass use in the country.

Unfortunately, India is also one of those countries, where child labour is employed in abundance in various productive activities and that too under miserable working conditions. Many of these

activities are so hazardous that thousands of the children even lose their life before attaining adulthood or get their life span sizably cut-short. If not so even then, they get their childhood completely lost. They are put into so hard work and so long working hours that they are deprived with even witnessing childhood or adolescent dreams for a better life.

According to geographical distribution so far as Indian states are concerned, the child labour is highest in Jammu & Kashmir, where it is 10.3 percent of total child population. Jammu & Kashmir is followed by Madhya Pradesh where the same ratio is 7.9 percent. This is followed by Sikkim (6.8), Himachal Pradesh (5.8), Rajesthan (5.6), Bihar (3.7), Manipur and Tripura (3.0), West Bengal (3.8), Meghalaya (7.9), Karnataka (7.6), Maharastra (6.4), Nagaland (5.6), Gujrat (4.7), Punjab (3.6), Haryana (3.6), Utter Pradesh (3.0) and Kerala (1.0) percent. This shows that educationally backward states have much higher percentage of child labour than those, which are educationally advanced. The population of child labour in Kerala is lowest because the same has highest school enrolment with 81 percent in age group of 5-14 years.

Research Methodology

Ghaziabad district was selected purposively in the first stage. In order to have best representation to entire child labour of Ghaziabad City, stratified random cluster sampling method was restored in the present study and a sample of 500 children from different occupation was drawn.

Result & Discussion

Table No. 1. Distribution of child labour according to their present age in various industries

Industries	Present age in Year						Total	Mean	S.D.
	6-8	8-10	10-11	11-12	12-13	13-14			
1. Auto workshop	11	18	25	29	17	13	113	11.19	2.01
2. Carpet	2	4	8	27	36	21	98	12.49	1.39
3. Dhaba	6	11	17	21	10	12	77	11.40	1.96
4. Marble	1	2	4	20	27	18	72	12.67	1.26
5. Shoe	3	6	18	39	59	15	140	12.27	1.35
Total	23	41	72	136	149	79	500	11.99	1.72
%	4.6	8.2	14.4	27.2	29.8	15.8	100	-	-

Table No. 2. Distribution of child labour according to starting age of joining labour force in various industries

Industries	Age of starting work in the child labour						%	Mean	S.D.
	5-7	7-9	9-11	11-13	13-15	Total			
1. Auto workshop	18	26	36	20	13	113	22.6	9.72	2.44
2. Carpet	16	30	35	9	8	98	19.6	9.24	2.22
3. Dhaba	3	19	27	15	13	77	15.4	10.42	2.22
4. Marble	3	11	18	27	13	72	14.4	11.00	2.16
5. Shoe	8	51	28	33	20	140	28.0	10.09	2.36
Total	48	137	144	104	67	500	100.0	10.02	2.37
%	9.6	27.4	28.8	20.8	13.4	100.0	-	-	-

Table No. 3. Showing to whom wages are paid

Industry	Child		Parents		Middlemen		Not paid		Total
	No.	%	No.	%	No.	%	No.	%	
Auto	71	62.8	16	14.2	3	2.7	23	20.3	113
Carpet	6	6.1	3	3.1	89	90.8	-	-	98
Dhaba	52	67.5	9	11.7	6	7.8	10	13.0	77
Marble	6	8.3	11	15.3	55	76.4	-	-	72
Shoe	4	2.9	8	5.7	128	91.4	-	-	140
Total	139	27.8	47	9.4	281	56.2	33	6.6	500

Table No. 4. Distribution of periodicity of wage payment

Industry	Daily		Weekly		Monthly		Not done		Total
	No.	%	No.	%	No.	%	No.	%	
Auto	25	22.1	53	46.9	12	10.6	23	20.4	113
Carpet	6	6.1	89	90.8	3	3.1	-	-	98
Dhaba	7	9.1	6	7.8	54	70.1	10	13.0	77
Marble	9	12.5	51	70.8	12	16.7	-	-	72
Shoe	20	14.3	112	80.0	8	5.7	-	-	140
Total	67	13.4	331	66.2	89	17.8	33	6.6	500

Table No. 5. Mode of wage payment

Industry	Cash		Kind		Cash & kind		Not done		Total
	No.	%	No.	%	No.	%	No.	%	
Auto	90	79.6	-	-	-	-	23	20.3	113
Carpet	87	88.8	-	-	11	11.2	-	-	98
Dhaba	26	33.8	9	11.7	32	41.5	10	13.0	77
Marble	68	94.4	-	-	4	5.6	-	-	72
Shoe	131	93.6	-	-	9	6.4	-	-	140
Total	402	80.4	9	1.8	56	11.2	33	6.6	500

Table No. 6. Working condition in different Industries

Working conditions	Satisfaction		Normal		Un satisfaction	
	No.	%	No.	%	No.	%
Adequate light	173	34.60	191	38.20	136	27.20
Adequate air	207	41.40	207	41.40	86	17.20
Dust and smoke	67	13.40	215	43.00	218	43.60
Temperature	40	8.00	342	68.40	118	23.60
Humidity	47	9.40	287	57.40	166	33.20
Safety	48	9.60	245	49.00	207	41.40
First-aid	47	9.40	124	24.80	329	65.80
Drinking water	91	18.20	360	72.00	49	9.80
Sanitation surrounding	73	14.60	206	41.20	221	44.20
Sanitation within	78	15.60	227	45.40	195	39.00
Food facilities	89	17.80	296	59.20	115	23.00

(See Appendix I-IV for Working conditions in different Industries)

Most of the child labour comes to labour market between the age group 9-11 years. It means when they should have been in primary classes they come and join labour market. It shows the failure of system of compulsory primary education.

An important feature was also observed that the child labour is demanded through the agents and their wages are paid to them through these agents. Mostly children are employed on fixed payment basis. Wages are mostly paid in cash on weekly basis.

As regard the working conditions are concerned, children do work under great miserable conditions. Since most of them work in the unorganized sector, no rules and regulations regarding working conditions are followed. In the units where child labour work there is high level of humidity and temperature, lack of proper light, cleanliness, no provision for adequate ventilation, no first aid or medical facilities. These working units also lack in pure drink water, recreation facilities and provision of toilet.

Conclusion

All the above facts reveals that some special programmes are required to remove the child labour from the labour market and the government will have to be vigilant to implement them. Yet, one should always bear in mind that the problem of child labour is directly an outcome of poverty and backwardness and thus this can be removed completely and permanently only when we come out of poverty and backwardness. It is suggested that when the Government is giving so much emphasis on adult education, it should take more care for the faithful implementation of compulsory primary education. The attendance rules in the primary schools should be strictly enforced. Recently government has started a mid-day meal programme in schools, which may go a long way in the successful implementation of primary education the programme on one hand and reducing the child labour on the other.

One should never forget that in a close-knitted economy of modern age, no single section of the society can remain problem free for very long if entire economy in general is backward and depressed. When development process is accelerated, if some specific programmes are to be launched for welfare of different segments of the society according to the need.

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APPENDIX – (I)
Working conditions in Auto-repair Industry

Working conditions	Satisfaction		Normal		Unsatisfaction	
	No.	%	No.	%	No.	%
Adequate light	74	65.49	30	26.55	9	7.96
Adequate air	88	77.88	17	15.04	8	7.08
Dust and smoke	12	10.62	55	48.67	46	40.71
Temperature	7	6.20	91	80.53	15	13.27
Humidity	6	5.31	97	85.53	15	13.27
Safety	-	-	95	84.07	18	15.93
First-aid	9	7.96	26	23.01	78	69.03
Drinking water	14	12.39	87	76.99	12	10.62
Sanitation surrounding	23	20.35	56	49.56	34	30.09
Sanitation within	18	15.93	69	61.06	26	23.01
Food facilities	16	14.16	77	68.14	20	17.70

APPENDIX – (II)
Working conditions in Carpet Industry

Working conditions	Satisfaction		Normal		Unsatisfaction	
	No.	%	No.	%	No.	%
Adequate light	9	9.18	55	56.12	34	30.61
Adequate air	10	10.20	58	59.18	30	30.61
Dust and smoke	31	31.63	37	37.76	30	30.61
Temperature	14	14.29	56	57.14	28	28.57
Humidity	21	21.43	32	32.65	45	45.92
Safety	27	27.55	54	55.10	17	17.35
First-aid	6	6.12	15	15.31	77	78.57
Drinking water	10	10.20	82	83.68	6	6.12
Sanitation surrounding	7	7.14	49	50.00	42	42.86
Sanitation within	12	12.25	51	52.04	35	35.71
Food facilities	34	34.70	52	53.05	12	12.25

APPENDIX – (III)
Working conditions in Dhabas.

Working conditions	Satisfaction		Normal		Unsatisfaction	
	No.	%	No.	%	No.	%
Adequate light	60	77.92	10	12.99	7	9.09
Adequate air	65	84.42	8	10.39	4	5.19
Dust and smoke	3	3.90	18	23.38	56	72.72
Temperature	-	-	66	85.71	11	14.29
Humidity	4	5.19	61	79.22	12	15.59
Safety	-	-	12	15.58	65	84.42
First-aid	7	9.09	36	46.75	34	69.03
Drinking water	22	28.57	55	71.43	-	-
Sanitation surrounding	10	12.99	31	40.26	36	46.75
Sanitation within	8	10.39	33	42.86	36	46.75

Food facilities	13	16.88	64	83.12	-	-
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APPENDIX – (IV)

Working conditions in Marble Industry

Working conditions	Satisfaction		Normal		Unsatisfaction	
	No.	%	No.	%	No.	%
Adequate light	11	15.28	39	54.17	22	30.55
Adequate air	13	10.06	44	61.11	15	20.83
Dust and smoke	4	5.56	15	20.83	53	73.61
Temperature	6	8.33	56	77.78	10	13.89
Humidity	-	-	64	88.89	8	11.11
Safety	3	4.17	47	65.28	22	30.55
First-aid	9	12.50	27	37.50	36	50.00
Drinking water	15	20.83	45	62.50	12	16.67
Sanitation surrounding	7	9.72	36	50.00	29	40.28
Sanitation within	8	11.11	31	43.06	33	45.83
Food facilities	12	16.67	43	59.72	17	23.61

APPENDIX – (V)

Showing working conditions in Shoe Industry.

Working conditions	Satisfaction		Normal		Unsatisfaction	
	No.	%	No.	%	No.	%
Adequate light	19	13.57	57	40.71	64	45.72
Adequate air	27	19.29	80	36.43	25	44.28
Dust and smoke	19	13.57	92	59.29	36	27.14
Temperature	12	8.57	72	65.72	53	25.71
Humidity	15	10.71	37	51.43	85	37.86
Safety	18	12.86	37	26.43	85	60.71
First-aid	16	11.43	20	14.29	104	74.28
Drinking water	30	21.43	91	65.00	19	13.57
Sanitation surrounding	26	18.57	34	24.29	80	57.14
Sanitation within	32	22.86	43	30.71	65	46.43
Food facilities	14	10.00	60	42.86	66	47.14