



Socio-Economic Causes of Child Labor in District Kharan, Balochistan

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Abstract

Child labor is an increasing global problem, especially in developing nations. In Balochistan the district Kharan is particularly affected by this issue due to a number of factors that either intentionally or unwittingly contributes to the problem. Numerous adverse impacts of child labor disrupt the social fabric of society, and the government of Balochistan is alarmed by the rising numbers and is taking all necessary steps to battle this affliction. With the goal of examining the issue through a qualitative method to extract the true substance of the study this research aims to draw attention to the socioeconomic and political factors that contribute to child labor.

Keywords: Kharan, Balochistan, Pakistan, Child Labor, Socioeconomic Causes

Introduction

The youth of any state bear the responsibility for the advancement or decline of their nation; hence they hold the key to its destiny. The state can only advance if the young people are intelligent and well-educated. If they are raised in a progressive manner, the youth may also be productive. If youngsters are educated, the nation may take off for the future. These young people of society will be able to manage the state's future in a lucrative manner to compete with the rest of the globe if they are placed in the workforce. But regrettably, children's futures in developing nations are not as secure. From the beginning of their existence, they are compelled to participate in the workforce. The International Labor Organization (ILO) estimates that 250 million children between the ages of 5 and 14 are employed either full-time or part-time. 1.20 million Children work full-time jobs and work part-time employment. They labor in a variety of industries, including houses, businesses, factories, and agriculture. Even multinational corporations are using the children's services (Bachman, 2000).

The issue of child labor is not new. The industrial development during Zia-ul-Haq's time, when there was a pressing demand for workers, is when this terrible phenomenon got its start. Children were employed in the newly constructed factories established by the capitalists,



who were more focused on their results than their future, because their wages were lower than those of adults. Following World War II, the majority of developed nations enacted legislation and took action to prevent child labor. However, the introduction of the most advanced technologies decreased the need for working personnel (Awan et al, 2011).

Rodgers and Standing (1981) distinguished at least four types of child labor. They fall under the following groups.

- i. Wage Workers
- ii. Domestic Work
- iii. Non-domestic and non-monitory work
- iv. Bonded labor

Child laborers are susceptible to health risks, especially those related to physical discomfort and harm (Levison & Murray-Close, 2005).

The majority of child laborers are employed in jobs that expose them to health risks, such as domestic work, mining, fishing, construction, manufacturing, farming, and bonded child labor. The effects of occupational and environmental factors differ from nation to nation. Age and gender also have a role in differences (Jones, & O'Donnell, 2002).

It is argued that while child labor is not always destructive or brutal, some jobs, such as babysitting and newspaper delivery, offer children effective learning opportunities. However, prostitution, trafficking, and pornography are dangerous and can cause psychological stress (Dessy, & Pallage, 2003).

In an attempt to end the scourge of child labor, international organizations passed and implemented laws that limit or outright forbid it in society. Bans on child labor are common worldwide, but they are challenging to implement in low-income nations like Pakistan. The most important and widespread aspect to combat this plague is education, which will make kids aware of the need to refrain from child labor. The affordability of child education, however, is a different issue. They struggle to attend class consistently even once they are enrolled (Zafar, Sarwar & Haider, 2016).

Child Labor in Pakistan

The Federal Bureau of Statistics, in partnership with the ILO, carried out a nationwide survey on child labor in 1996, yielding data on 40 million children aged 5 to 14. 3.3 million (8.3%) of these kids were involved in financial activities. Of these children that were employed, 27% were female and 73% were male. At the provincial level, Punjab had the largest percentage of these kids (58.6%), with the remaining youngsters spread across all other Pakistani provinces. However, when comparing rural and urban areas, children in rural areas work eight times as much as those in urban ones. One-third of these kids are literate, while the rest are not. Since they are employed as helpers, the majority of child laborers receive no compensation. When compared to adult workers, those who are paid receive extremely little. They receive seasonal bonuses from the owners of the home jobs. However, they occasionally receive more and occasionally less at the shops, stores, and other organizations. On average, 46% of kid laborers

put in 35 hours per week, but a large percentage put in 56 hours. It demonstrates that, in terms of time, they are not far behind the adult workers (Zarif, et al., 2013).

Determinants of Child Labor in Pakistan

Child labor is a persistently stigmatizing issue in the nation that impedes advancement (Kousar et al., 2005). A child labor survey conducted in 1996 found that 8.25% of children, or 3.6 million out of 40 million (almost all children), are engaged in labor. The Ministry of Labor, the ILO, and the Federal Bureau of Statistics worked together to conduct the poll. According to the survey's findings, youngsters are employed in a variety of jobs, including carpet weaving, small-scale manufacturing, domestic services, brick kilns, and agriculture. Some kids work for themselves by hawking on the streets or roadways, cleaning cars, or shining shoes (Khan, 2001).

Since children are the state's and humanity's future, they must be shielded from all socio-physical threats in order to develop normally (Swada and Lokshin, 2000). Children who work experience malnourishment, anemia, and increased susceptibility to infectious infections and these kids have too many obligations and extended workdays, which hinder their psychosocial growth and prevent them from receiving a basic education (Fassa et al.1999).

Poverty and Child labor

Children from low-income families are more likely to experience poverty. The effects and causes of poverty in adults and children are different. Childhood is robbed by child poverty, which also has an impact on a kid's upbringing, psychological composition, and lifelong impacts. Additionally, poverty has societal effects on a child's long-term, multifaceted growth and development (Ortiz, et al, .2012). Several empirical investigations brought attention to the issue and demonstrated the link between child labor and living conditions. According to Krueger (1996), children from low-income families are more likely than those from high-income families to engage in child labor. This tendency was noted by the researcher using a cross-country sample. According to Duryea, Lam, and Levison (2007), children are also compelled to labor to support the family while their father is unemployed. However, Aqil (2012) makes the assumption that child labor is a generational phenomenon, meaning that when parents work while they are young; their children will also work and become ignorant and low-skilled adults. Consequently, children's education was impacted by their parents' education. The assumption made by Fasih (2007) is that child labor results in unskilled and uneducated labor, which has an impact on the economy and development of the nation.

Problem Statement

Child labor has grown to be a major problem in the modern world, particularly in developing nations. Because there is less commitment to addressing this issue, policymaking is insufficient and these measures are poorly implemented in underdeveloped nations. Despite extensive efforts to curb child labor, Pakistan is a regrettable developing nation where the number of child laborers is rising. The purpose of this study is to identify the factors that contribute to

child labor in District Kharan Balochistan. Additionally, it will assist the government in formulating policies regarding this matter of concern.

Objectives of the Research Study

1. To look into the social factors that contribute to child labor and how economic issues may encourage child labor.
2. To describe the psychological and social issues that a child laborer in Kharan District faces.
3. To ascertain how political leadership contributes to the fight against child labor in Pakistan.

Literature Review

Due to their low cost of labor, children were compelled to work during the start of the industrial revolution. The initial laws, which were passed in 1833 and 1844, suggested that minors should be excluded from all forms of labor. However, many youngsters are still engaged in illegal labor (Bhat, 2011).

Reliable statistics on child labor are lacking, making it difficult to confirm the prevalence of child labor globally. Due to the government's inability to gather data, the majority of child labor incidents are invisible (Das, 2012). Domestic employment, particularly for girls, is the most prevalent and traditional type of child labor. Since it takes place within the confines of homemaking and is impacted by psychological, emotional, and physical abuse associated with extended work hours, it is concealed from public oversight and governmental regulation. Because the government and society at large did not view domestic employment as a serious and concerning issue, it is very difficult to estimate the precise number of child laborers. Child domestic labor is defined as child labor, whether it is paid or unpaid, performed at a third party's residence (Lyon & Valadiviva, 2010).

Numerous factors contribute to this quickly growing social issue and encourage children to work. Due to their parents' ignorance of the numerous socio-psychological and physical health risks that might negatively impact their offspring, youngsters from illiterate families are more likely to become involved. Due to their family's circumstances and need for financial assistance to meet their fundamental necessities, those parents are interested in their labor child's pay increase (OHCHR, 2014).

The phenomenon of domestic work is a result of the supply and demand law. Because their labor is covert and unprofessional and is not governed by the government or the community, they receive little pay and are taken advantage of by the owner. Our future generation's productivity is being wasted by domestic child labor. The saying "A drowning man catches at a straw" refers to child domestic work. It lowers the expenses of a child living with a third party and raises family income (Bhat, 2005).

According to ILO estimates, 215 million boys and girls between the ages of 5 and 17 worked in hazardous jobs in 2008, despite the absence of trustworthy government statistics (Aqil, 2012). Since agriculture has historically been the foundation of each developing nation's economy, the bulk of child labor is involved in this sector, making child labor a complicated rural issue (Baker, 2008).

Due to their reliance on agriculture and the prevalence of poverty in these areas, children in rural areas are generally thought to be more involved in labor activities than children in urban areas (Akarro & Tweve, 2011). In rural impoverished households, children are viewed as sources of money through their labor on farms (Serwadda-Luwaga, 2005).

In metropolitan areas, it can also be found in other forms, such as sales and housework. Despite working long hours for little to no pay, the working conditions are extremely bad, congested, and unhealthy. The prevalent idea of trafficking for sexual abuse and exploitation in metropolitan areas puts girls at greater risk. The primary cause of impoverished urban children's lack of access to social safety, education, and health care is poverty (Baker, 2008). Due to the availability of possibilities and facilities, it is clear that children from metropolitan areas have greater educational opportunities than children from rural areas. Due to the remote locations of schools, rural students confront transportation and infrastructure challenges, which can be difficult for families to manage (Hueble, 2008). Furthermore, there are other differences between child laborers in rural and urban areas, including how education and child labor are related. For example, child laborers in rural areas have poor levels of general education (Edmonds, 2007). In his study of Pakistan and Nepal, Ray (2001) made the assumption that gender bias was more prevalent in the case of Pakistan than compared to Nepal. While it was the contrary in Nepal, boys are more likely than girls to work longer hours and children in rural areas are less fortunate than those in urban areas in Pakistan.

Research Methods

This section discusses the strategies and tactics the researchers employed for this investigation. The exploratory method was chosen by the researcher. Also the researcher utilized the qualitative design since the theme and nature of the research was sensitive. The qualitative segment uses the interview schedule as a tool for data collection. The study describes the socioeconomic elements that contribute to the prevalence of child labor using the descriptive dimension of research. The interview guide was used to conduct 15 in-depth interviews. These 15 participants were chosen from three different sectors: public social sector officials, attorneys, and officials from non-governmental organizations. In qualitative analysis sections, thematic analysis is employed to establish a semantic relationship between the concepts.

Findings of the Research

- The study discovered that one of the primary socioeconomic variables causing child labor is poverty. In Pakistan's socioeconomic structure, parents often make all life decisions for their children, including those pertaining to education and child labor. When they fit in, children are viewed as contributing to the family's income. To the family that doesn't make enough money poor parents find it difficult to pay for their children's education. The study concludes that the greatest way to decrease child labor is to address poverty.
- According to the study, the threat of child labor is influenced by the size of a large family. Children from large, low-income families are more likely to engage in child labor than Children come from small, low-income households. Because it is difficult for the head of the

household, who is the only wage earner, to provide for the fundamental needs of the family members in a large, impoverished household. Not all children under the age of 14 must be child laborers in a large home. There are gender variations in children's employment as well; for example, boys are given more educational options than girls.

➤ Age is important regardless of gender; for example, older siblings are more likely to contribute to the family's income. According to a study, younger children may become less involved in the family as the elder children bear the most of the financial load. However, the survey discovered that household girls are more likely than boys to be exposed to child labor.

➤ According to the report, most child laborers who work to support themselves and their siblings after losing one or both of their parents are afflicted with serious illnesses like AIDS, HIV, or tuberculosis. Additionally, the study discovered that orphans make up the bulk of street children.

➤ According to the current study, children's involvement in the labor market is influenced by their culture. Working at a young age is customary in several subcultures within Pakistani society. The family believes that learning any kind of labor skills early on will help them in the future to make money. For the family's income. Many culturally diverse families want their kids to start working with skills at a young age.

Conclusion

A significant threat that has affected the nation's economy and economic development is child labor. The goal of the study was to examine the factors that contribute to child labor, as well as the socioeconomic factors that influence it. The investigation, exploration, and explanation of the causes of child labor in Kharan district necessitate a thorough grasp of this crucial subject; hence, a qualitative methodology has been employed for accuracy in order to achieve the study's goals. Purposive sampling was used to choose 15 respondents for the qualitative analysis. The results of this qualitative study indicated that child labor is caused by a number of socioeconomic factors.

Recommendations

1. To educate parents about negative consequences and the need for a safe workplace if family circumstances require them to work.
2. Options for sustainable income production should be provided to those who are providing for their families progress.
3. Support in the form of clothing, food, medications, etc.
4. Equality and social justice must be guaranteed.
5. Factory owners and industrialists are required to guarantee that health and safety rules are followed in the workplace and during the hiring process.
6. The government should incorporate vocational training with basic education to address the concerns of parents of children involved in child labor. This would assure a workforce that is educated in the future and prevent any disruptions in the application of the legislation pertaining to child labor.

7. Make sure that child labor rules are strictly followed.

8. To reduce child labor and employer exploitation, awareness should be raised through conferences, seminars, and curriculum inclusion. This will allow each individual to actively participate at their own level. Through education and skill-based training, a person can fully empower a youngster. It will facilitate the work of states and be helpful to policymakers.

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