

Impact of working children and adolescents in familiar and labor dynamics in Jalcocotan, Nayarit: A Case Study

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Abstract: *The causes of child labor are multiple, but its social, economic, and political effects are visible in the quality of life of children, their families, their communities, and in their opportunities to achieve well-being and a dignified life. The present research aims to analyze child labor from two perspectives. First, as an activity with a negative impact on childhood, and as an activity that either improves the quality of life of the child or is deemed necessary for survival. For this case study a group of boys, girls, and adolescents enrolled in the secondary school in the town of Jalcocotán, Nayarit, during 2019-2020 was selected. A nonparametric statistical analysis was performed. Relevant results include the diversity of jobs performed, that parents consent for work, and that child labor is approved by the community, as it is considered a way of learning by the children and the community. Besides, children and adolescents express that the work they perform does not prevent them from attending school nor playing. Also, some feel obligated at least to some extent, to help cover the family's expenses; for this reason, working is not entirely optional. The question is whether work becomes an obstacle for the child's development or on the contrary if it strengthens the child's personality and helps him to cope with life's uncertainty.*

Key Words: *Child labor, working children, family, culture*

1. INTRODUCTION:

Can we talk about child labor or should we refer to working children? Should we consider these as different issues or is it a way of approaching the same matter from different points of view? Instead of taking a strong stance on the subject, an effort to understand the origin of this practice should be made. It is necessary to consider the environment, customs, and economic needs of people that drive children to work, and design strategies that improve living conditions. Although it is a topic previously discussed in domestic and international literature, those who are close to children and adolescents (CAAs), are familiar with their reality and can recognize the pros and cons of both visions. The importance of this article is that it has a child-centered approach. It considers the insight of the key actors, and pretends to find out the CAAs' feelings about child labor, what they like and dislike about it, what they believe to be unfair, and above all, to determine if it affects or not their development.

2. LITERATURE REVIEW:

Child work is a subject approached in different parts of the world and can be seen as a broad spectrum including on one side child exploitation, and on the other training to learn a trade and obtain useful skills for life. Various authors have made efforts to make visible the different realities that CAAs experience. It must be considered that it is not possible to address the issue of child labor as a phenomenon independent from families, because the family system establishes limits on the health, growth, and development conditions of the child. (Silva 2013)

According to Nova, child labor violates the rights of children by affecting their physical and psychical development. Nevertheless, Nova's works also ask the reader to consider the difficult situations families have to endure and the flaws implemented by governments, particularly pointing out the degradation of social, economic, and cultural conditions and the dynamics of local progress that has not fully consolidated, added to other factors. (Nova 2008).

A different perspective formulates that CAAs are not defenseless beings and that they should have the right to decide whether or not they want to work. Keeping in mind that there are different ways of seeing childhood and recognizing inequalities between classes (Rausky 2009), also it is well-known that not all CAAs have the opportunity to decide and that they are included in the figures of children employed against their wishes.

According to Monroy, the prohibition or the restriction of child labor is not the appropriate mechanism, as it is necessary to generate important changes in national and international policies and programs that truly reduce family poverty (Monroy and Juan 2009).

The role of children in the workforce continues to be a pending agenda worldwide. A central issue to discuss is the factors that contribute to the integration of CAAs into the ranks of labor, in this sense, there are two antagonistic positions.

According to the International Labor Organization (ILO 2017), child labor is considered to be any work that deprives children of their childhood, their potential, and their dignity and therefore is detrimental to their physical and psychological development. This definition does not include voluntary participation of CAAs in paid activities that do not pose danger to their development, as would be voluntary participation in family businesses. When CAAs work in a suitable, caring environment, work can result in a positive experience, learning, and development.

The first position is held by international organizations such as the International Labor Organization (ILO) and the United Nations Children's Fund (UNICEF), joining these countries that sign agreements to reach solutions; In relation to the second that arises from the undeveloped countries and with extreme poverty, the Institute for the Training of Youth Educators (IFEJANT) and Melel Xojobal in the State of Chiapas, Mexico are in Latin America who seek to hear the voices of children who work.

For both the ILO and UNICEF, childhood is appreciated as a stage in which care must be prioritized and the integral development of the minor needs to be guaranteed, therefore they seek to eradicate child labor, while organizations such as IFEJANT recognize work as it is part of the daily routine and favors the consolidation of a positive image and seeks to recognize rights as workers in order to protect them. Both positions recognize poverty and culture as the triggering factors.

It is evident that everyone wants a better quality of life, a healthy environment, a cultural identity and, on these grounds, choose a path that allows developing the potential of each individual; However, the voice of children who claim their presence in the labor sector cannot be ignored and who are there for various reasons and many of them are valid.

First guesses: Child labor in figures worldwide

According to global estimates, carried out by the ILO (2017), 152 million children between 5 and 17 years of age are in child labor; 58% (88 million) are boys and 42% (64 million) are girls; 48% (73 million) carry out work classified as dangerous, as it endangers their integrity; However, it is present in all continents although in different magnitudes, with Africa being the one with the greatest presence, later South America and with the least presence of this situation in Europe and Central Asia, 48% of working children and adolescents are They are in an age range of 5 to 11 years and 28% between 12 and 14 years, these two categories being more than 75% of world estimates. In the second decade of the 21st century, IT continues to exist even when all countries prohibit it. It is important to note that the statistics invite us to look at this situation from the particular point of view, since the economic and cultural conditions of each country are different and within each country each region maintains its differences. Therefore, international agreements allow taking lines of work, however, the solution hardly consists only of prohibiting. Limiting itself in speaking out against child labor and changing laws in their countries is not enough, it is more a subtle way of ignoring the problem, since society knows these measures, the authorities clearly identify in which places children and adolescents work, and yet They also recognize that it is not possible to just remove them from the place, since they will return to carry out these activities, since their needs have not been resolved or simply the reason why they work does not originate from a problem. Children and adolescents are not limited to working in a single economic sector, but are present in both the primary and services sectors; agriculture is the area where more children and adolescents are working and to a lesser extent in services. It is highlighted that IT in agriculture is one of the jobs on the ILO's list to be eradicated, due to long hours, toxic products, tools and conditions that are not suitable for children. It is recognized that most countries have been working to lower the numbers of children and adolescents who are working and, if possible, they disappear; They have developed policies, plans and strategies to increase the level of schooling, they have awarded scholarships, however, the presence of working children continues.

Figures of working children and adolescents in Mexico and the state of Nayarit Mexico

Mexico is not the exception in such a situation; And as in the rest of the world, the reasons why it exists, as well as the positions before it are similar to those of other countries; However, each state also has its history and to identify it the federal government through the National Institute of Statistics and Geography (INEGI) conducted a survey entitled Child Labor Module (MTI), to assess this, the survey is carried out every two years as of 2007. According to the MTI, the population between 5 and 17 years old in Mexico, from 2009 to 2011 went from 29.3 million employed children to 28.9 million, these figures show a decrease and therefore it is expected that the

conditions of the NNA will be better, that they are being worked on and that it has been possible to lower them, however, each state has its own history. According to the figures from previous years, the number of employed children has decreased, however, it is necessary to observe that the population is also constantly changing and that it is difficult to compare only the numbers; However, based on the total population, the following graph 1 was elaborated

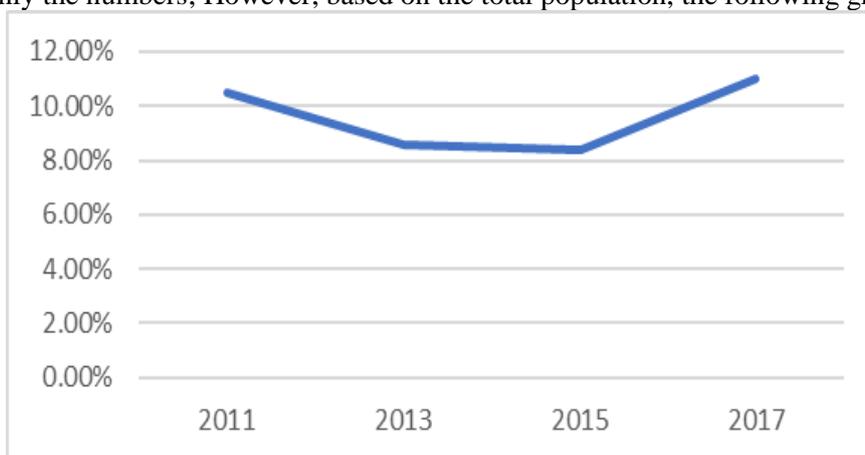


Figure 1. Percentage of employed children from 2011 to 2017. Own elaboration with data from MTI 2011, MTI 2013, MTI 2015 and MTI 2017

The INEGI reports show a downward trend, comparing the statistics with the first ITN that originated in 2007, it is also worth mentioning that in the last module carried out data were presented by occupation rate and rate per household where there are employed children The latter does reflect a downward trend, as fewer households present this situation, going from 12.4% in 2015 to 11% in 2017.

Nayarit

The state of Nayarit is located in the western region of the national territory. The main economic activities are agriculture, livestock, fishing, the service sector and industry. It has a population that exceeds one million inhabitants. According to the National Survey of Occupation and Employment (ENOE, 2015) in Nayarit there is a population of 340.9 thousand boys, girls and adolescents between 0 and 14 years old. Although the state has applied the policies proposed and required by the federation, the IT exists and the state is one of the highest rates, hence there is a reality that it must assume and a commitment to the children and adolescents who live in the state, according to the MTI, behavior in the state has been irregular, since in the periods of 2015 and 2017 it appeared as the state with the highest percentage of its child population employed in work and more than 50% in non-permitted conditions, statistically exceeding the states of Zacatecas, Puebla, Guerrero, Colima and Oaxaca. The following graph (No. 2). According to the MTI, it shows the state's situation in the latest surveys carried out (2013, 2015, and 2017).

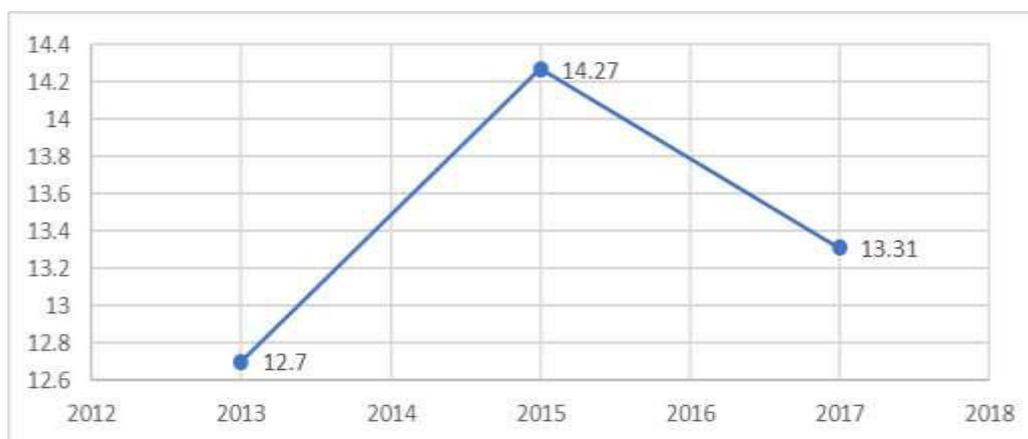


Figure No. 2 TI in Nayarit according to the Child Labour Module years 2013, 2015 and 2017. Source: own elaboration with MTI data 2013, 2015 7 2017

The results of the 2017 survey present an overview of the situation of children in the state of Nayarit, allowing to identify how many of the total child population are employed and whether they perform permitted tasks or not, which are shown in the diagram.

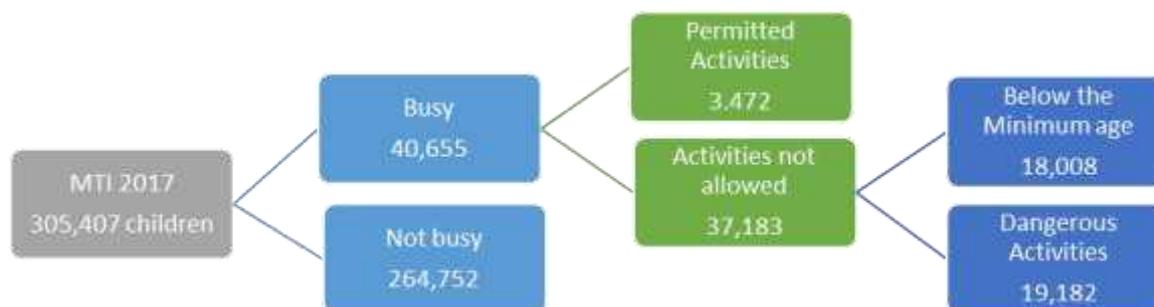


Figure No. 3 according to employed and non-employed NNA in the State of Nayarit. Source: Own elaboration from MTI 2017 in Nayarit

According to the MTI of the year 2017 in the state there were 305,407 children and adolescents of these 40.5% receive a scholarship or some type of government support, (in primary they receive support of \$ 200 pesos, uniforms and school supplies, and the same economic amount plus school supplies at the secondary level). It is important to highlight that the average of studies at the national level is 9.1 while the State of Nayarit does not reach the national average, which implies that they do not finish high school, therefore, the young population begins to be inserted in the best of cases in the workplace or join the list of young people who neither study nor work, and a harsh reality is that they also join illicit or harmful activities for their health and development. Employed NNAs in the state are incorporated into various sectors, it is recognized that approximately 10% do so in activities considered risky for their development. Thus, 37,183 children state wide are in prohibited activities; the service sector being the first and second place in the agricultural sector to occupy the child labour force, contrary to what world statistics estimate, where agriculture, as part of the primary sector, requires more minors and the service sector is one of the lowest percentages.

Economic characteristics of Jalcocotán, Nayarit

Jalcocotán is one of the oldest human settlements in the state of Nayarit, it is located in the municipality of San Blas, Nayarit, 22 km from the state capital, it is a rural town.

It has two initial education campuses, two elementary schools (one of them with a double shift), a morning shift secondary school, and a high school. The town has a medical services unit. According to the economic CENSUS (2019) that is carried out periodically by INEGI, the town of Jalcocotán has the following economic activities:

Table No.1 Registered businesses in the town of Jalcocotán

	Business number
Manufacturing industries	34
Wholesale trade (buy or sell intermediate consumer goods and capital goods in the same state)	5
Retail trade (buy or sell final consumer goods in the same state)	108
Educational services	9
Health and social assistance services	9
Cultural and sports entertainment services and other recreational services	8
Temporary accommodation and food and beverage preparation services	54
Other services, except government activities	37
Legislative, governmental, justice administration and international and extraterritorial organizations activities	9

Source: own elaboration with data from CENSUS 2019.

What is interesting is to see that agriculture is not registered among the economic activities of the place, however, within the manufacturing industry, the dehydrators and packers of the community are counted; in the Municipal Development Plan agriculture is recognized as one of the main economic activities; being tropical fruit growing the most important (mango, jackfruit, banana, avocado among the most prominent).

2. METHOD:

To achieve the objectives of the research, a non-probabilistic sampling design was used, in its unrestricted modality for convenience. Techniques were used from a qualitative perspective, which served to obtain the necessary information to be analyzed and allowed information to be crossed by the techniques and instruments that were designed. Observation, surveys and interviews were used, as explained in the following table:

Table No. 2 Techniques

TECHNIQUE	INSTRUMENT
OBSERVATION	Observation Guide
	Field diary
	Camera (if the situation allows it)
INTERVIEW	Interview guide
	Notebook
	Tape recorder
	Camera
SURVEY	Questionnaire

The design of the questionnaires was developed thinking about the different actors and the information that needed to be obtained, based on the objectives and research questions.

Table N.3

Tool	Subject to apply
First survey questionnaire	To all students
Questionnaire for semi-structured personalized interviews	Selected students
	Parents
	Teachers
	Employers
Socioeconomic Questionnaire	DIF staff
	Students
	Parents

The selection criteria were, in principle, to be students of the school, due to the time available, children who dropped out of school were not interviewed, have a proportional sample according to sex and have participated or carried out some work activity that may be considered economic or not; that is, that they allocate a defined time to carry out said activity, regardless of the schedule (either in the afternoons or weekends) and receive or do not receive pay for the work they do; Students who only work on vacation periods were also considered. Therefore, first a questionnaire was applied to the students enrolled in the Jalcocotán secondary school, during the 2019-2020 school year; The school had 203 students in its enrollment, however, it was only possible to apply 185 questionnaires, that is, 91% of the answered questionnaires were recovered, and of these, 57% of the students recognize that they perform tasks that can count as their first jobs, it was not investigated with students who do not work because they do not. Of the group of students who responded that if they work, parents were asked for written permission to carry out a semi-structured personalized interview which was granted, in the same way interviews were conducted with parents, however some parents did not show the accessibility to speak with them, and also talked to some teachers. The group of students selected made visible the conditions in which they participate in their community, in the activities they carry out and the way in which the territory is mobilized with their actions

3. RESULT:

The ages of the interviewees range between 12 and 15 years; 28% (15) are 12 years old, 30% (16) are 13 years old, 37% (20) are 14 years old and the remaining students are 15 years old (3); of the total of interviewees (54) 28% (15) are girls and 72% (39) boys; According to the degree of studies, 30% (16) are in the first year, 33% (18) in the second and 37% (20) in the third year of secondary school, the higher the age, the higher the incidence in working children and adolescents. The perception that working children and adolescents have about work To determine the perception that children and adolescents have about the work they carry out, a questionnaire was applied in the facilities of the Moisés Sáenz secondary school in the town of Jalcocotán with the due permission of educational authorities and parents, in general the 54 children who work said they carry out activities such as work in the fields, helping their parents, in the business of a relative, etc. The children of Jalcocotán are actors in their locality, they

actively participate in the economy and continue with their life plans, they seek the means to keep moving and feel useful, learning and earning. The places where they are employed in the locality are varied, however, one hundred percent of the children interviewed agreed to work occasionally in the field, depending on the harvest seasons and while these dates are fulfilled, some are integrated into other types of work during the rest of the year, which they do against the shift of their classes, on weekends or at non-regular hours (they are notified when needed). Both boys and girls recognized household chores within their normal activities as help in the family, and stated that they perform tasks such as cleaning the house, washing dishes and even doing laundry, however, food preparation was mentioned more by women, as well as support with the care of younger siblings. The following table specifies the number of children and adolescents found in each of the activities described and the percentage that they represent, which gives us an idea of the places where minors are most employed in the town of Jalcocotán (see table No. 4)

Table No.4 Activities where children and adolescents are employed in Jalcocotán

Work activity	Number	%
Work in the field	23	43%
Supermarket clerk, groceries, stationery, toys	6	11%
Restaurant Assistant	5	9%
Dehydrator	5	9%
Street vendor of bread and corn	4	7%
Baler	3	6%
Sale of chicken and shrimp	2	4%
Assistant bricklayer	2	4%
Beer delivery man	2	4%
Armed with Jabas	1	2%
Mechanic's helper	1	2%

The activities carried out by the local children and adolescents, without them labeling them as such, show a reflection of where the women and men of the same can perform, since the activities of field work and in the fruit packing plants are prepared by the children and the customer service activities in grocery stores, mini-supermarkets and the like, as well as the restaurant assistant are exclusive to girls, it is worth mentioning that the restaurants in the town are family-type and are for eating, They are not at night, nor do they handle alcoholic beverages. Among the activities they carry out, the work of a beer delivery person draws attention, both because they are intoxicating drinks and having to transport them, and especially because they are minors. The mechanic's assistant, due to the type of tool used, however, there are others that do not put their integrity at risk, such as groceries, stationery stores, work in the packing plant (they only do certain activities and are far from ovens and machinery). Definitely an exhaustive study of both the activities, the day and the tools are necessary to classify if at their age they are in danger or are developing appropriate skills for a better future. The salaries they claim to earn range from \$ 50 pesos a day to \$ 200. This last salary more frequently in the field in times of cut or harvest; Children who work on weekends in stores near the plaza earn \$ 150 a day, they also have wages in line with the sales they make (bread and corn), on the street, since they are paid by the piece, however, they said they did not feel compelled to sell everything and that if they get tired before they only return the product. The activities described are carried out at different times and according to the needs of the businesses, for example, adolescents who work delivering beer are not within the outlet, however, they are available in the afternoons for the owner to talk to them to move and deliver an order, they do not have contact with customers or charge for the product, they accompany the owner and load and unload the truck. While those who work on weekends describe days in the field from six in the morning to noon, they and those who work in stationery shop at regular times.

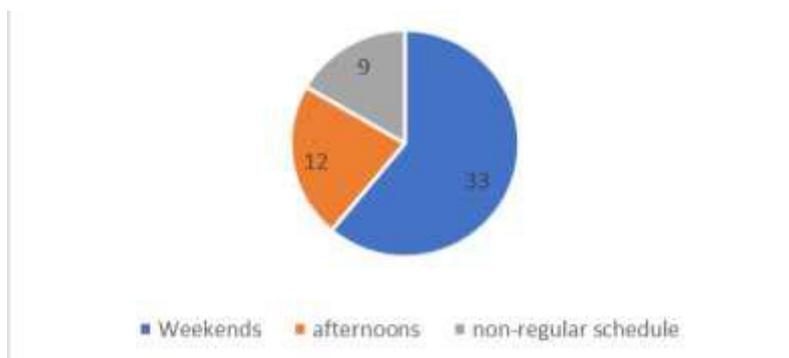


Figure N.4. Number of children and adolescents according to working hours

In this way, it is appreciated how the work they do does not obstruct the opportunity for them to attend school and have time to play, whether in the afternoon those who work on weekends or vice versa, however, it is important to highlight that according to the conversation with the teachers in harvest times shows absenteeism by some students. In the town of Jalcoctán, most families identify themselves since the grandparents and parents of the children and adolescents have lived there for generations, in such a way that they know the people with whom they work and their families, they move through the community with the confidence of feeling protected. The mistrust they have is not for the people who live there, but for strangers and strangers to the locality, they identify the personnel of educational institutions and recognize the teachers who for years have provided their services there.

4. DISCUSSION:

In our Nayarit society and in our culture, working children are considered as examples of worthy people who, from childhood, learn a profession where parents teach them a trade and are taught the value of work, in a context where, the lack of economic resources to cover the basic needs of the home is only achieved through the work of all members of the family; as well as the personal decision, especially in the case of adolescents, to acquire personal tastes and at home it is not possible to offer them or simply the parents allowed them to work to buy it with the intention of showing the value of things, in some even mentioning the poor educational system or working to complete the expenses that school implies. Even though the municipality is one of the poorest in the state, in the town of Jalcoctán, they do not recognize poverty as a determining factor, since most of the minors can decide how to spend the money they earn and do not feel the obligation to give it to contribute to the household expenses. These two positions: the one that seeks to eradicate child labor and the one that distinguishes them and calls them child laborers that seeks to be recognized as workers with rights to decent treatment, to adequate wages and conditions; Although they can be considered antagonistic, both have in common the defense of these and the care of their future. Regarding the origin of child labor, it is not better child laborers; We find ourselves in situations that need to be investigated thoroughly, like employers, since normally the least is seen as an opportunity for cheap labor, a moldable worker who will hardly demand better conditions. This idea of the offer of child labor is not only the employers who look for the minors, but also the parents who take them to their jobs as a way of keeping them close and taking care of them from their work. It seems like a game where everyone wins, the employer acquires a worker with fewer rights and less salary, the father of the family has his son close and guarded and the NNA wins for their tastes, however, something else is happening within this circle, at what point does the child distinguish whether he is actually spending his money on tastes or needs or whether he is being led to believe that contributing is normal. Because employers do not obey the laws and prohibit the entry of minors in their facilities, call it a field, dehydrator or packing plant as it is in this locality, or at what moment is the father of the family aware of the risks that the family runs minor in those places. Likewise, make a true evaluation of why only working children are observed due to the lack of resources and if government support is sufficient for this population, what the institutions in charge of protecting children and adolescents really do; Now, it is important to analyze the nuances, for example, because they focus and insist that only those who work in the field suffer, ignoring, for example, those who work for a television station, even if it is at the local level. It is definitely not the same that the minor feels an obligation to work to know that it was his initiative to work, that he was asked for an opinion before he has to meet a schedule, knowing that his salary is not the guarantee that he will have something to eat those days, on the other hand, when there is little or no cultural and sports offer in the locality, the best thing to do is learn from the hand of a relative or the parents themselves. The local government falls short in the programs that reach the localities and are lost in the continuity of state projects, factors such as staff turnover, job changes, the lack of demand for reporting do not contribute to local authorities in charge of child protection programs deliver results and only good intentions are reflected in brochures and annual campaigns. Pretending that children who live and work with their parents should be the same as those who for some reason live with another relative is a serious mistake, the programs do not reach those who need it and schools are full of truthful information to support, to work Together with the authorities, the teachers identify, but they only keep the knowledge about the situation of the students and it does not transcend, there is no cross-information. In this town, parents take their children with them to avoid bad company, as they say, then, where the guarantee of security by the government remains, as it is possible that in small communities it is not possible to be free from criminal organizations and freedom is restricted. This is another reason why minors enlist in a job, and definitely the last and not least that parents hope to inherit knowledge of the field to their children, hoping that someone will work the land, however, they send them to school with the intention of pursuing careers unrelated to it. Any of the above reasons are valid to understand a past and a present, even then it is necessary to also think that a point has not been found where the investigations carried out with their respective results converge, with the adaptation of public policies and a authority that actually applies these laws and the organizations that continue to fight both at local and international levels, that is, there are three actors concerned with helping a sector of society that silently shouts its existence and the lack of regulation in the conditions who work; collaborating for the same purpose and will allow to broaden the panorama and have a

perspective of the dimension of the problem, since each one would involve the studied sector and the situation would be seen in an integral way.

5. CONCLUSION:

The present research achieved an initial approach to the activities carried out by children and adolescents in the locality, however, it is necessary to make a deep differentiation between the activities that damage their development or not, since they practice in view of all jobs that are not safe, however, they have others to help them in their training and they are always cared for. Activities have been found within the field that must be analyzed and revalued, not just condemned. There is no approach by the authorities both in the school and in the families and the community to detect cases of exploitation and abuse. The work carried out by girls continues to be less visible, and care for siblings and support at home are not fully recognized as a work contribution. The covid-19 pandemic limited the scope of the investigation due to the suspension of classes and the temporary closure of economic activities.

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