



# A Study on Causes of Child Labours in Karnataka

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**Abstract:** Poverty is a major problem in all the developing and under developing countries today. In India, in spite of all developmental efforts, all through the seven decades of long time, 34% of population is getting less than one hundred rupees per day. The numerous estimates of poverty based totally on special criteria offer different figures of poverty in India. The planning commissions envisioned by using professional institutional technique in 1993-94 suggests that 36% of population in India was below the poverty line. The 55<sup>th</sup> National Sample Survey of 1999-2000 estimate suggests that by 30 days average at countrywide level, the poverty level changed to 26.10%, in rural location it changed to 27.09% and in urban area it was 23%. As per the 7 days report at National level it became 23.33%, in rural 24.02% and in urban area it became 21.59%. The planning Commission estimates of poverty in Karnataka State in the year 1999-2000 shows that it was 20.04%. In rural region it was 17.38% and in urban area 25.25%. In Karnataka rural poverty among SC's account for 26.87% and ST's 24.78%. In urban Karnataka SC's account for 47.50% and ST's 50.93% respectively. This indicates that the extent of poverty could be very excessive in India. Poverty is the root cause of all social and economic evils. The greatest evil that produced out of poverty is child labour. It is now universally acknowledged that eradication of child labour is possible only through eradicating poverty. The distribution of child labour in Karnataka indicates that there is 19.3% increase from 1981 to 1991. It additionally shows that in Urban Karnataka optimum number of child laborers are engaged in manufacturing, trade and commerce instead of agriculture. As per the labour department Report there have been 7112 children operating in hazardous conditions in the year 2001. Children not only work in formal sectors but also in informal sectors. In addition, they also assist in domestic activities.. The labour department report reveals that there have been 3,188 children working in non-hazardous works in the year 2001. M. P. Ranganath Report (2004) has found out that the Bellary district of Karnataka state has 4185 child Laborers including both boys and girls. Hence the main cause of this study is to understand the causes of Child Labour in Karnataka.

**Key words:** Hazardous, Child Labour, Optimum, Eradication, Illiteracy.

## 1. CHAILD LABOUR IN INDIA AND KARNATAKA:

The obstacles of child labour has been surely one of the topmost priority issue of all societies. Child labour denies childhood to a person. It denies a few primary human rights to children specifically right to education, right to food & nutrition and right to enjoy childhood. The International labour organization has involved in the fight against child labour since its establishment in 1919. Yet child labour continues to exist in an enormous size in all the developing nations. Wide spread poverty forces the family to force their children to work. Therefore, the life of child labour is associated with the survival of the own family. Poverty and child labour form a vicious cycle. A huge number of studies have been under taken at macro and micro level to bring out the facts that how tough it is to get rid of the child labour. The essential studies are reviewed here to prepare the bottom for the prevailing research approximately child labour in backward vicinity.

Child labour has gained considerable interest at National and International levels in recent years. The Convention on the Rights of Child (CRC) is evidence of it. Therefore, now it is the topmost responsibility of every nation to protect and endeavor for the welfare of the children. But the undesired occurrence of child labour has affected the development. The problem of child labour has grown to be greater intense trouble than elsewhere. It is in existence in view that time immemorial in all most all elements of the world, irrespective of the extent of development and financial growth of a country.



The laws enacted so far have very little effects. They have failed to become aware of genuinely the significance and dimensions of child labour. Social activists from the trade unions are facing difficulties in assisting the children because of the ambiguity in the laws in existence, and the others are social and financial elements. The workers involved in fight towards the child labour do not get the proper data and records on the nature, causes and conditions of child labour and about their feelings and aspirations. The problem has attracted the attention of the Governments and human activists. At countrywide and worldwide, efforts are being made to fight against the child labour. Many research studies have aimed at eradication of child labour. The systematic, specific, and powerful steps must be taken from grass root level to eradicate the child Labour. Therefore, one who wishes to root out the problem has to recognize it in a better manner. Understanding the problem could assist in framing suitable policies to eradicate the problem. The assessment of problem on child Labour gives the records to frame the right policies that can help removing the child Labour. Child Labour has emerged as a worldwide phenomena in recent times. It is not particular to a specific country irrespective of economic development, growth and prosperity. It has spread over all the countries of the world. The ILO estimates (1975) shows its presence across the world.

Different countries of the world either developed or developing like South East Asia, Africa, South America Europe and North America have the menace of child labour. South East Asia has the highest child Labour with 29 million, Africa 9.7 million, and South America 3.1 million. The ILO estimate (1975) revealed that there were 52.0 million child Labours in the world. Thus, it has grown out to be a worldwide burning problem.

Karnataka state is situated in the southern part of India and has 31 districts, 176 Taluks, 270 towns and 29,483 villages. Among the total villages, 27,575 villages are inhabited and 1908 villages are uninhabited. The total population of children of Karnataka state is 68,26,168 (Census, 2001). The major occupation of the state is agriculture. Child Laborers are mainly engaged in agriculture. According to an estimate, there are 11,69,402 child labourers in Karnataka state. The census 1991 reveals that there are 11,83,943 children in the age group of 5-14 years. Among these, 5,62,033 are boys and 5,81,798 are girls. 7,824,740 young children are residing in rural areas and 32,5909 children are residing in urban areas. Karnataka state stands in fourth place having excess of child Labours. During the years 1984-85, a survey of the working in urban vicinity had been conducted by way of the Institute for Culture and Research Centre, Bangalore. This has become a base for a labour Bill in 1985 and helped the working children to acquire skills, knowledge and education..

## **2. STATEMENT OF THE PROBLEM:**

There are not any specific estimates of child labour. This is because of improper reporting of the phenomena. Majority of the child laborers are working in agriculture and informal sectors in the form of helpers and assistants. Therefore, it is hard to pick out the value and the problem of child labour in India. In this direction, the micro level studies are beneficial to recognize the problem.

## **3. OBJECTIVES:**

- To study the causes of child labour in Karnataka.
- To understand the salary and working circumstances of child labour.
- To observe the measures for eradicating child labour within the district.
- To understand the role of Government in the eradication of child labour.
- To propose suitable measures for the eradication of child labour.

## **4. METHODOLOGY:**

The present paper is basically descriptive and analytical in nature. In this paper, an attempt has been made to examine the causes of Child Labour in Karnataka. The data used in this study is only from secondary resources.

## **5. REVIEW OF LITERATURE:**

Patil, B. R. (1988) has conducted a comprehensive survey of working children in Bangalore, in the book entitled "Working Children in Urban India" expressed that working children are particularly coming from poor economic background. Both boys and girls among the age group of 6 to 14 constitute the child labour force in Bangalore. Girls start to work earlier than boys. The study also found out that large families with meagre sources make contributions greater to the problem of child labour is a myth compare to the child laborers from average families..

Murthy, S. in his study (1990) entitled 'Child Labour in Unorganized Sector'- A Case Study of Ujjain City" has tried to look at about the child labour in unorganized zone in Ujjain city of Madhya Pradesh. It is a case study which explores poverty as the major cause for child Labour. Large size of the family, death of parents and rough behavior of



the family members are also contributing to the child labour. The study reveals that due to acute poverty the children opt for working rather than education.

## 5. CAUSES OF CHILD LABOUR IN KARNATAKA:

It is a well known truth and fact that child labour is in existence since time immemorial. In the earlier days when the family was an unit of manufacturing and agriculture, children were assisting their parents in activities such as agriculture, animal husbandry and household activities. The industrial revolution and technological development has paved the way to many troubles and gave delivery to new elegance of wage earners. This era of industrialization and technological development subjected children to financial and social exploitation by means of employers whose motive was to maximize the profit. This reality turned into confirmation through the Royal Commission of 1931. Since independence there was discontent in child labour as pointed out by way of the National Commission of Labour in 1969.

**A. Poverty:** The major cause for occurrence of child Labour is an extensive poverty. Poverty compels the parents to send their children for seeking employment.. The institute of public opinion performed a survey in 1969 and disclosed that nearly 41.2% of India's population was living below the poverty line.

**B. Illiteracy and Ignorance of Parents:** Illiteracy and lack of knowledge are the major features of the Indian society. Most of the socially and economically backward people are illiterates. . They are very much worried about the present rather than tomorrow. For them, present is very important than the future.. There is a notion inside the minds of the illiterate mass that early work of young children will help them to lead better existence.

**C. Large size of the family:** The huge size of the family is one of the contributing factor for the existence of child labour. The huge families generally have meagre incomes. These families in large part make contributions for the cause of child labour. If a family is small in size and properly planned, then there is no question of sending their children to the labour work. In small families children are looked after very well.

**D. Cheap Labour:** The technological development has developed a tendency among the employers to earn short and more earnings at low value. Hence, in each country there is a growing tendency to employ children at low wages and for long hours of work in terrible working conditions.

**E. Absence of Schemes for Family Allowances:** In India there are no schemes for family allowances launched by the authorities and Governments in order that people can get good facilities for living so that parents are not forcing their children to go for working. The quantity that is paid in the form of pension or as a repayment is insufficient to hold or too less to meet out the family expenditure. Parents are not able to meet out the expenditure without the support of young children.

**F. Migration:** Migration of parents is one of the major causes for the lifestyle of child labour. Generally the parents have to leave their local places in search of employment opportunities. For a survival it is inevitable for them. It is very difficult for them to maintain their households without employment.

**G. Adult Unemployment and Under Employment:** Adult unemployment and under employment are also the major causes for the existence Child labour in our country. As India is a developing and over populated country compared to USA has been facing the problem of unemployment and under employment. The adults of the own family often do not have the opportunities for employment.

**H. Broken Families:** The children of the broken families are the child labors. The separation of parents, demise of parents within the own family leads to the emergence of child labour. In addition to these, ageing of parents force the children to go for labor. Children are considered as the best supporters of income in the broken families.

**I. Orphanage of the Child labour:** Many children expose themselves to working is due to orphanage. The death of the father or mother or both made children insecure. They may get the support of others for working, until they assist themselves by using stepping into the labour market place. Survival of children in these conditions is really tough, in such helpless situations they need to work for low wages and for long hours.

**J. Poor implementations of child labour laws:** The constitution of India has made provisions for legislative enactments on all occasions. The Article 14 of Indian constitution has forbidden the employment of children below the age of 14 years. So far, many legislative enactments have been made to provide legal protection to children in various occupations.

**K. The dimension of Child Labour:** In November 1989, the Government of India ratified the convention on the rights of child labour (CRC) drafted by using the United Nations Commission on human rights. The convention draws its attention towards the four sets of rights of the children namely, the right to survival, the right to protection, the right to participation and the right to development.

## 6. VARIOUS DIMENSIONS OF CHILD LABOUR ARE AS FOLLOWS:

### A. Concentration in Rural regions:



The estimates are primarily based on N.S.S. Data indicates that there are 214 million children in the age group of 5-14 years during 1993-94.

**B. Child labour is concentrated in Agriculture:**

Though the prevalence of child labor is declining over time, however it is concentrated in agriculture. The concentration turned to be 14% for rural areas and 5.6% in urban areas.

**C. High incidence of Child labour among SC/ST households**

Among the social group of SC/ST, the SC's report the highest number of child labour force than the ST's. The study conducted in Andhra Pradesh reports that there are maximum number of Scheduled caste child labors in Andhra Pradesh in the country.

**D. Regional Disparities:**

The report of N.S.S. Data shows that there is an even excessive number of child labour in rural areas of Himachal Pradesh. In case of Rajasthan it has not been clear, that is why NCAER statistics indicates very low level of child labour existence at the rate of 1.2%.

**E. Variations in the Estimation of child labour**

The organizations like ILO, UNICEF, NSSO, ORG, NGO's, Planning Commission and many others., have proved that the extent of child labour varies from 2 millions to 111 million in India. The ILO estimate suggests that over 250 million children are exploited over the globe every year.

**7. MEASURES TO CONTROL CHILD LABOUR:**

Since child labour problem is a worldwide problem, efforts have been taking place at countrywide and international level to check the existence of child labour. Keeping in view the effects of Labour, the constitution of India has made provisions for safety of women and children. Article 15(3) of the constitution says that nothing shall prevent the nation from making any special provisions for women and children. Article 24 states that "No child below 14 years of age shall be employed to work in any factory or mine engaged in any dangerous employment". There is also provision in Article 42 and 43 for securing just and human conditions of work. Accordingly, 13 major legislative enactments have been passed to provide safety to children in various occupations. They are

- Children (Pledging of labour), Act 1933.
- Dock workers regulation and employment Act ,1948.
- Factories Act ,1948
- Plantation labour Act, 1951
- Mines Act ,1952
- Merchant Shipping Act, 1958
- Apprentices Act, 1961
- Motor Transport Workers Act ,1961
- Beedi and Cigar Works (Conditions of employment) Act, 1966
- Contract labour (Regulation and abolition) Act ,1970
- Radiation Protection Act, 1971
- Shops and Business Status Quo Act

Many amendments have been made in most of the laws for enhancing the conditions of the child labour concerning age, nature of employment, hours of work, education and schooling and many others. International labour Organization (ILO) has passed 18 conventions and recommendations regarding labour standards for providing higher operating centers to children. Among these, India has ratified three laws. They are minimum age of children, medical exam of working children and safety of children working at night. In addition, the comprehensive regulation has been enacted in India. The child labour Prohibition Act, 1986 prohibits employment of children in hazardous occupations.

**8. CONCLUSION:**

Based on the facts, the present paper concludes that the child labour is a consequence of poverty existing in all the regions of Karnataka. There is an exploitation of children at all phases like long hours of work and meagre wages. Children are working in an awful working conditions. It has unfold over all elements of the district economy. Child labour has been discovered in all sorts of occupations.

Child Labour has badly affected the physical and intellectual development of children as they're the real wealth of our country, and they have to be protected from all sorts of evils. In this direction, Government and Non Government organizations have to join hands together to get rid of child labour from grass root level. People should participate in this warfare of eradication of child labour. The National Plan of action for children seeks to deal with the range of



problems faced by the children in the state. Government of India proposed and brought National Plan of action in the year 1994. The Karnataka state responded by launching a plan of action for the development of children at state level in the same year.. The present plan of action has been evolved by way of guidelines from CRC, UN Goals and Draft NPAC, 2003. It has gathered primary records from numerous departments and periodic surveys

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