A STUDY ON CHILD LABOURERS WORKING IN UNORGANISED AUTO-REPAIR SECTOR IN HARYANA (WITH SPECIAL REFERENCE TO DISTRICT ROHTAK)

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Abstract
The paper is an attempt to throw light on the child labour problem in the state of Haryana from different angles and for the purpose a sample of 100 respondents was selected randomly out of total child labourers working in auto-repair workshops in district Rohtak of Haryana. The study is purely based on primary data and disclosed that the majority of the respondents were belonging to the poor families and the poverty emerged as a big reason behind child labour and their illiteracy. Similarly, it is established through the results of the study that low income groups have low facility of houses, electricity connections, cooking fuel and household articles, and vice-versa. Hence, poverty plays a significant role in the existence of the problem of the child labour. It was suggested through the study that it is the need of the hour to implement the related laws and Acts honestly at one hand and to make understand the child labourers including their parents as to how they would be more benefited more by leaving the profession and adopting the stream of education for a better living, on the other hand, for curbing the problem in the state.

Keywords: Child Labour, Auto-Repair Sector, Cooking Fuel, Poverty, Haryana.

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INTRODUCTION

Children are a wonderful gift to humanity and the childhood is an important stage of their development and holds the potential for developing the society. Children, who are brought up in an environment of intellectual, physical and social health, grow up as responsible and productive members of society. Every nation’s future is linked with the present status of its children. The children sequeze their present welfare or their future income earning capabilities by doing work at too young age. Under extreme economic distress, they are compelled to surrender their educational opportunities for exploitative jobs which are underpaid and hazardous in nature. Even the parents send their children for such jobs due to poor economic conditions. There is a sufficient effect of child labour on school attendance and the length of a child’s work day is negatively associated with his or her capacity to attend the school. Hence, child labour handers the rights of children to education and adversely affects their health and safety.

The child labour is a blot and slur on modern state which bound to promote the all-round development of its citizens. It is a curse to the society and mankind which may wreck the economic backbone of a country. The future of the human world very much depends on the rights of the children and the fate of a nation inextricably interwind with the welfare of its children. Governments in developing countries have failed to achieve desired objectives set up for promotion of universal child immunization oral rehydration therapy for prevention of 2.5 million deaths every year, combating acute respiratory infections and major opportunities provided through various welfare programmes for the children.

Jan Marteson, Under Secretary-General for Human Rights, U.N. has rightly observed, “respect and protection of all children’s rights are the starting point for the full development of the potential of the individual in an atmosphere of freedom, dignity and justice.

REVIEW OF LITERATURE

Vaid (1959) exhibited through his study that children formed 6.2 per cent of the total factory labour before the First World War and in the tea plantation child labour ranged between 11-22 per cent which was highest in Darjeeling area. Chandra, K (1961) expressed that unemployment among adults surged and rate of wages
decreased due to engagement of child labour and consequently they become poorer. Pant (1965) asserted through his study based on secondary data of national sample survey (NSS 1955-56) that the elimination of child labour is the problem of elimination of mass poverty.

Mendeljevich (1979) concluded through his study of 11 nations- Argentina, India, Pakistan, Italy, Greece, Thailand, Mexico, Latin America, Chile, Indonesia and Nigeria through analysing the laws, living and working conditions, consequences and causes amongst these nations, that developing and developed nations have maximum instances of child labour and the fundamental causes for child labour in these nations are poverty and lack of infrastructure. The child labourers were found working in match stick making, carpet weaving, gem polishing, diamond cuffing, glass making, etc.; in developed nations child labourer provided extra hands needed during sowing and harvesting seasons and worked part time in order to earn some pocket money.

Ontario (1999) studied child labour and suggested that it must be condemned as a human rights violation. The practice is prevalent in Asia, Africa, the Middle East and Latin America. The study argued that the industrialised nations must take an active role in ending this practice rather than expanding their market share in third world countries. The literature on child labour focusing on India and assesses was examined and the impact of historical, cultural, social and religious variables as contributing factors were observed. After estimating the loss of income and social return per child, it presented an overview of the progress of a school for orphans that were established to combat child slavery. It ends with recommendations to government for discontinuing the practice.

Singh (1999) studied the socio-economic conditions and problems of 150 child rag pickers, aged 6-15 and their 100 parents, randomly selected from slum dwelling units in Kurukshetra by focusing on their physical outlook, factors forcing them to engage in the work and behavioural and other changes. Two case examples highlight health problems and occupational hazards faced by these children.

Rather (2000) conducted a survey of child labourers in a carpet industry of Kashmir and found that in 100 per cent cases, parents of these children were illiterate. In carpet industry, child labour was prevalent primarily due to low wage structure. Since, the adult weavers cannot expect to earn more than Rs. 30/- a day, they generally avoid
this profession and instead, send their children for employment. In most cases, the economically backward section of society involved their children in this job. Though, legislation has been against child labour both at central and state level, this has not been implemented in the state of Jammu and Kashmir. The person engaging labour must be taken into cognisance and prosecuted under the law of the land.

Sinha (2000) examined child labour and its impact on education. It was noted that girl’s work patterns were largely determined by tradition/culture factors and the huge amount of household work done by young girls was not considered as child labour. An alternative approach was suggested that identifies all children who are not in schools as child labourers, rejecting the distinction between “child work” and child labour as well as, the approach is the only way to connect the dual goals of universalising elementary education by eliminating child labour.

**OBJECTIVES OF THE STUDY**

The study was attempted to realize the following objectives:

1. To know the socio-economic background of the children working in the auto repair workshops,
2. To look into the circumstantial factors responsible for the children to take up the economic activity,
3. To orchestrate the aims and aspirations of the children working in auto repair workshops.

**RESEARCH METHODOLOGY**

**Research design**

The study is descriptive-cum-exploratory in nature and based on survey schedule.

**Sample design**

A sample of 100 respondents was selected through convenient sampling technique from child labourers of district Rohtak of Haryana, who were categorised according to income level and residential status.

**Universe and Population**

All the children working in auto repair workshops in Haryana and in district Rohtak of Haryana constitute the Universe and population of the study respectively.

**Sample unit**

The child labour between 6-14 years of age, working in different unorganised auto-repair workshops in district Rohtak of Haryana, was taken as the sample unit.
Data collection
The study is purely based on primary data which were collected through structured schedule duly filled with the help of child labourers in district Rohtak of Haryana.

Statistical techniques
Crosstab technique of SPSS, tabulation, graphic presentation, percentage and correlation were used to analyse the collected data and to reach at the conclusion.

RESULTS AND DISCUSSION
When data collected from respondents was analysed through analytical Table 1(a), it was found that 62 per cent respondents were belonging to income group of below Rs.2000 and out of them a maximum (approximately 63 per cent) were residing in rented houses and only 37 per cent were having their own houses.

Twenty eight respondents were having the monthly family income of Rs.2000 to Rs.4000. out of these 54 per cent were having their own houses, while remaining 46 per cent were living in rented houses. Similarly, when the level of income of respondents increased to Rs.4000 to Rs.6000, only 7 respondents were belonging the category, out of which 2 (29 per cent) respondents were living in rented house and remaining 5 (71 per cent) residents were having their own houses. Only 3 child labourers were belonging to the income group Rs.6000 and more, all of them were having their own houses.

The fact has been confirmed from the Table 3 that the level of income and number of own houses are highly and positively correlated (0.99), since the number of own houses went on increasing with an increase in the level of income group.

Similarly, it was found through the Table 1(a) that out of total respondents belonging to the lowest income group 39 (63 per cent) used kerosene as cooking fuel and none used L.P.G; approximately 46 per cent respondents related to next higher group used kerosene as cooking fuel, 32 per cent fire wood and only 6 (21 per cent) used electricity as cooking fuel, but none used L.P.G. But, when the income level surged to Rs.4000-6000, out of total 7 respondents belonging to the category, 2 each used kerosene, fire wood and electricity and only one respondent used L.P.G as cooking
fuel. When the level of income increased to Rs.6000 and more, 67 per cent respondents were found using L.P.G. as cooking fuel.

Hence, it may be concluded through and with the help of Table 3 that the level of income and number of L.P.G. users have high degree positive correlation (0.802). While, the level of income and number of kerosene users have high degree of negative correlation (-0.8947).

Similarly, the respondents belonging to income group below Rs.2000, a maximum (approximately 73 per cent or 45) were having no electricity connections; 18 (64 per cent) respondents of next higher income group were having electricity connections; and when the income level increased further to Rs.4000-6000 & 6000 and above, 100 per cent respondents were found to have electricity connections. It is clear from the Table 3 that income level and numbers of electricity connections have high degree of positive correlation (0.943).

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Family monthly Income (Rs.)</th>
<th>House</th>
<th>Cooking Fuel</th>
<th>Electrical Connectivity</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Own</td>
<td>Rented</td>
<td>Kerosene</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Below 2000</td>
<td>23 (37.09)</td>
<td>39 (62.9)</td>
<td>39 (62.90)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2000-4000</td>
<td>15 (53.57)</td>
<td>13 (46.4)</td>
<td>13 (46.43)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4001-6000</td>
<td>5 (71.43)</td>
<td>2 (28.57)</td>
<td>2 (28.57)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>6001 and Above</td>
<td>3 (100)</td>
<td>0 (0.00)</td>
<td>1 (33.33)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Total</td>
<td>46 (46.00)</td>
<td>54 (54.00)</td>
<td>55 (55.00)</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Note: (i) Source: Primary data collected.
(ii) The figures in brackets show the percentages.

Figure: 1
Income, House, Cooking fuel, Electrical Connectivity and House Articles of Respondents
Table 1(b)
Income and House Articles of Respondents

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Family monthly Income (Rs.)</th>
<th>Bicycle</th>
<th>Radio Or Transistor</th>
<th>Table Or Ceiling Fan</th>
<th>Tape Recorder</th>
<th>Television</th>
<th>All</th>
<th>Total</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Below 2000</td>
<td>25</td>
<td>26</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>62</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2000-4000</td>
<td>6</td>
<td>14</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>28</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4001-6000</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>7</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>6001 and Above</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Total</td>
<td>34</td>
<td>41</td>
<td>6</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>7</td>
<td>10</td>
<td>100</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Note: (i) Source: Primary data collected.
(ii) The figures in brackets show the percentages.

Likewise, it was found through the Table 1(b) that respondents belonging to income category below Rs.2000, a maximum 42per cent (26) were having radio or transistors, only 3per cent (2) were having all household articles; out of 28per cent respondents who were belonging to income group of Rs.2000 to Rs.4000, maximum 50 per cent (14) were using radio or transistors and only 15per cent (4) were using all the...
household articles; out of total 7 respondents (income is Rs.4000-6000) used bicycles and all articles in equal proportion; and 2(67 per cent) respondents (income Rs.6000 and more) were using all the household articles. It is evident from analysis that there is high degree of positive correlation (0.955) between level of income and all household articles which is further confirmed by Table 3 that lower the income group, more use of radio and as the income increased, the use of other articles like Bicycle, Television, Table or ceiling fans etc. also increased significantly.

Hence, it is established through the results of the study that low income groups have low facility of houses, electricity connection, cooking fuel and household articles, and vice-versa. Hence, poverty plays a significant role in the existence of the problem of the child labour.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Family monthly Income (Rs.)</th>
<th>Level of Education</th>
<th>Drop Out Reason</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Prima-</td>
<td>Middle-</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Below 2000</td>
<td>43 (69.35)</td>
<td>19 (30.6)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2000-4000</td>
<td>18 (64.29)</td>
<td>8 (28.5)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4001-6000</td>
<td>4 (57.14)</td>
<td>3 (42.8)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>6001 and Above</td>
<td>3 (100)</td>
<td>0 (00.00)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Total</td>
<td>68 (68.00)</td>
<td>30 (30.0)</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**Note:** (i) Source: Primary data collected.
(ii) The figures in brackets show the percentages.

**Figure: 2**
The further analysis of data through analytical Table 2 (a) exposed that out of the total respondents (income group of below Rs.2000) 70 per cent (43) were having education up to primary-level only; as income increased to Rs.2000-4000, 64 per cent (18) respondents were having primary-level education; and such when the income level increased to Rs.4000-6000, the maximum proportionate remained of that of having education up to primary-level. All the child labourers belonging to the highest income group (Rs.6000 & more) were having primary-level education only. Table 3 also shows that there is moderate degree of positive correlation (0.58) between income level and primary level education and the income has a low significance as far as the level of education of child labours is concerned.

It was indicated through the analytical Table 2 (a) that the poverty has been the main reason (62 per cent respondents) behind the drop out of the child labourers from the schools as 51 per cent of the total, left the schools on this particulars ground where as maximum 67 respondents belonging to the lowest income group and 13 to the income group from Rs.2000-4000 and only 1 subsequently income group. The need for earning emerged out as the second important reasons for the school dropout (29 respondents, 18 belonging to the lowest income group and 9 to the next income group). Besides that, lack of interest in education of the child labourers had been one of the reasons for the problem (14 per cent respondents). Table 3 exposes that there is a high degree of negative correlation (-0.985) between poverty and income...
Hence, the poverty acts as big reason behind the drop out of child labourers from the schools.

Table: 2(b)

Income and Preference for the Profession of Respondents

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Family monthly Income (Rs.)</th>
<th>Preference For the Profession</th>
<th>Total</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Family Advice</td>
<td>Previous Contacts</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2000-4000</td>
<td>18 (64.29)</td>
<td>8 (28.57)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4001-6000</td>
<td>6 (85.71)</td>
<td>1 (14.29)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>6001 and Above</td>
<td>2 (66.67)</td>
<td>1 (33.33)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Total</strong></td>
<td>65 (65.00)</td>
<td>25 (25.00)</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**Note:** (i) Source: Primary data collected.
(ii) The figures in brackets show the percentages.

Table 3

Correlation of family income of respondents with socio-economic factors

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Particulars</th>
<th>Correlation with family monthly Income</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>House</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Own</td>
<td>0.991</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Rented</td>
<td>-0.991</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Cooking Fuel</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Kerosene</td>
<td>-0.8947</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Fire Wood</td>
<td>-0.8362</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Electricity</td>
<td>-0.07</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>L.P.Gas</td>
<td>0.802</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Electrical Connectivity</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Yes</td>
<td>0.943</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>No</td>
<td>-0.94</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Household Articles</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Bicycle</td>
<td>-0.224</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Radio or Transistor</td>
<td>-0.891</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Table or Ceiling Fan</td>
<td>-0.1603</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Tape Recorder</td>
<td>-0.7746</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Television</td>
<td>-0.27</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>All</td>
<td>0.955</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Level of Education</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Primary-Level</td>
<td>0.58</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
It was highlighted through the table 2(b) that a majority of the respondents belonging to the lowest income slab adopted the profession on the advice of their families, while remaining adopted it at their own. The family advice has been the main cause of child labour in case of higher income groups as well as 64 per cent from income group Rs.2000-4000; 85 per cent from income group Rs.4000-6000 and 67 per cent from Rs.6000 and above. The previous contacts and craze towards the work were reported as secondary reasons (25 per cent and 10 per cent respectively) by the respondents. Table 3 exhibits that there is high degree of negative correlation (-0.95) between income levels and preference for the profession due to family advice. Hence, the poverty emerged as a big reason behind child labour and their illiteracy.

**CONCLUSION AND SUGGESTIONS**

The study which was conducted on child labourers of auto-mobile sector of district Rohtak in Haryana found that the majority of the respondents (62 per cent) were belonging to the lowest family incomeslab of below Rs.2000 per month, 28 per cent to Rs.2000-4000, 7 to Rs.4000-6000; and only 3 to income group of Rs.6000 and more. The level of income and number of own houses were highly and positively correlated (0.99), since the no. of own houses went on increasing with an increase in the level of income group. The levels of income and number of L.P.G. users have high degree positive correlation (0.802).While, the level of income and number of kerosene users have high degree of negative correlation (-0.8947). The income level and number of electricity connection have high degree of positive correlation (0.943). It was disclosed through the analysis that lower the income, more use of radios and as the income increased, the use of other articles like bicycle, television, table or ceiling
fans, also increased significantly; and low income group respondents have low facility of houses, electricity connections, cooking fuel and household articles, and vice-versa. Hence, poverty plays a significant role in the existence of the problem of the child labour. There is moderate degree of positive correlation (0.58) between income level and primary level education and the income has a low significance as far as the level of education of child labours is concerned. There is high degree of negative correlation (-0.985) between poverty and income level. Hence, the poverty acts as big reason behind the drop out of child labourers from the schools and there is high degree of negative correlation (-0.95) between income levels and preference for the profession due to family advice. Hence, the poverty emerged as a big reason behind child labour and their illiteracy.

On the basis of finding of the study we suggest that the child labourers and their families must be convinced by law implementing authorities, social workers and with the help of other NGO’s that, it is the education which can change their fate from poverty to riches and their living standard with the use of all possible amenities can be increased only with help of application of laws meant for them. Besides that, the law enforcing agencies should see to it that no one is allowed to have child labourers for his own interest and if it is so, the person responsible for breaking the law should be punished severely. Since, the poverty emerged out as the fundamental reasons of the problem of the child labourers, therefore the various poverty alleviation programmes initiated by the central and state Government should properly be implemented and advertised, so as to get the maximum number of poor people into its gambit.

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