



CHILD LABOUR IN UNORGANISED RETAIL SECTOR: FACTS AND REALITIES

(A CASE STUDY OF JALGAON DISTRICT)

Neelima P. Warke*

Dr. Parag A. Narkhede**

Abstract: One of the critical issues India facing is Child labour. One out of the six children in this world forced to act as child worker, moreover UNICEF has reported 28 million child labours in India. Employing children's below the age of 14 are entitled as child labour. In 1986 the child labour (Prohibition & Regulation) Act, 1986 was established.

The unfortunate outcomes of society i.e. child labour as exist in each and every domestic industries as well as in unorganized retail sector. The issue of child labour also has its historic links such as our social system structure when shows inequality division of labour or social norms and practices.

The present study accesses the facts and realities of child labour in unorganized retail sector with a view to check out their socio-economical status as well as implementation of human resource issues related to theses kid victims.

Key words: Child Labour, Unorganized Sector, HR issues

*Research Scholar, NMU Jalgaon (M.S.)

**Assistant Professor, KCES's Institute of Management & Research, Jalgaon (M.S.) India



1.0 INTRODUCTION

Children are gifts; they are the precious gifts presented by Almighty God to human life for filling the world with smile, happiness, and hope. Children are the future citizens; it is childhood which determines a child's future, his/her life and their worthy contributions to the world. Thus it becomes an important aspect for us, for everyone in the society, and for the Government to protect, nourish and work for the overall welfare of children of a particular Nation and the children of the World as a whole.

Child labour is an unfortunate outcome of Industrial revolution. The industrial revolution originated in England and embraced industries not only in independent countries but also the colonies occupied by Imperial power during 1760 to 1860. Child labour is today's universal problem across the world in spite of its developed, developing or under developed country. According to the International labour organization (ILO) who estimates 246 millions children's are child labours and "one out of six children in the world today is involved in child labour, doing work that is damaging to his or her mental, physical and emotional development.

Who is child labour? According to International Labour Organization, "Child means a person who has not completed his or her 15 years of age". Moreover the International Labour Organization and UNICEF defines "Child labour as work that deprives children of their childhood and their dignity which hampers their access to education and the acquisition of skills and which is performed under deplorable condition harmful to their health and their development" (**ILO/UNICEF, 1997**).

With reference to the right of the child and child labour in India, a child may be defining as one who is in the age group between 0-14 years. Different acts and institution have, however, defined child and child labour in their own ways. In case of child definitions, the factories act, 1948 specifies that "A person below the age of 15 years is to be regarded as a child" (**Government of India, 1948**). Similarly, the central children Act has defined child as "a boy how has not attained the sixteen years or a girl who has not attained the age of eighteen years" (**Government of India, 1960**)

Finally the child labour (Prohibition and regulation) Act 1986 defines "child as labour who has not completed his fourteen years of age, whether part time / full time in any



occupation, engagement of child in the labour force simply means a complete or partial denial of childhood to him. (**Government of India, 1986**).

2.0 CHILD LABOUR IN INDIA

Child labor is the practices of having children engaged in economic activity, on part or full-time basis. The practice deprives children of their childhood, and is harmful to their physical and mental development. Poverty, lack of good schools and growth of informal economy are considered as the important causes of child labour in India.

3.0 CHILD LABOUR AND UNORGANIZED RETAIL SECTOR

Indian retail industry is divided into organized and unorganized sectors. Indian retail sector is highly augmented with a major share of its business being run by unorganized retailers like the traditional family run stores and corner stores. The organized retail however is at a very nascent stage, though attempts are being made to increase its proportion bringing in a huge opportunity for prospective new players.

Indian retail sector is dominated by a large number of small retailers consisting of the local kirana shops, owner-managed general stores, chemists, footwear shops, apparel shops, paan and beedi (local betel leaf and tobacco) shops, hand-cart hawkers, pavement vendors, etc. which together make up the so-called "unorganized retail" or traditional retail. The last few years have witnessed the entry of a number of organized retailers opening stores in various modern formats in metros and other important cities. Unorganized retailers normally do not pay taxes and most of them are not even registered for sales tax, VAT, or income tax.

The Indian retail sector is one of the largest retail sectors in world who always attract the foreign investor as a huge market potential. The total retail sale of India is 32200 Cr. Dollars, out of which the organized retail sector contribute only 4%. However the unorganized retail sector encompasses 96% of Indian retail sector. The statistic shows the depth of unorganized retailing in India as well as its dominance over organized retail sector.

(www.reurbanist.com)

The unorganized retail sector is uncounted, unspecified and unaccounted in nature. According to Census 1981 to 2011 the percentage of child labour to total workers is lies in the range of 5.66 to 8.41%. Another important aspect is, as per Child Labour (prohibition & regulation) Act 1986, enforcing child labour is criminal offence, hence the maximum



possibility of child labour are always in unorganized retail sector as compared to organized retail sector. Several unpublished studies reveals that the unorganized retail sector posses maximum child labour, however the percentage is negligible in organized retail sector.

Operational Definitions

- **Labour**

In the proposed study labour means child labour as per the Child Labour (Prohibition & regulation) Act, 1986 (Act no 61 of 1986)

- **Child Labour**

Child labour refers to child labour working in unorganised retail sector of Jalgaon District of Maharashtra state. It indicates both male & female children who are below the age of 14 years.

- **Unorganized Retail sector**

Unorganized retail sector refers to the all types of unorganised retail activities including retailing of all kinds of goods & services. However the major categories of unorganised retail sector under study are as mentioned below:

- All small shopkeepers & Traders of unorganised retail sector.
- Hawkers, Feriwalias
- Tea Stalls
- Chinese Product Stall
- Road side Food Stall

4.0 RESEARCH METHODOLOGY

The methodology of research for the present research work is as follows.

4.1 OBJECTIVES OF THE STUDY

1. To know the Facts & Realities of child labour in unorganized retail sector.
2. To analyze the socio-economical status of child labour in unorganized retail sector
3. To identify Human resource issues & their implementing possibilities ... to child labour.

4.2 SAMPLE SIZE AND SAMPLING

There are more than 5000 Child Labours working under approx 1000 Employers in unorganised retail sector of Jalgaon District (Study Area). There are number of business activities entitled under unorganised retail sector i.e. from small grocery shop to tea stalls



inclusive of hawkers, fast food stalls etc. In all these professions child labour is commonly observed but silently neglected part of our civil society.

Out of total population, 50 child labours were respondent for the study. Simple random sampling techniques were used for selection of sample with the help of structured questionnaire.

4.3 ANALYSIS AND INTERPRETATION

The child labours are unfavorable outcome of civil society. The child labours of unorganized retail sector are suffering through number of difficulties & hurdles during their work profile more over they faces problem in each and every aspect of their life. During analysis several pondering facts were revealed which are as analyzed below.

1. Resident with Family:-

It is quite interesting that 46 % of them (23 out of 50) are lives with family and still they are working as a child labour. It clearly states that their family wishes them for work or either they will be no other option for survival. Out of selected sample rest 54 % are belongs to different backgrounds, they don't have parents or they are orphans and etc.

2. Status of School going :-

It is surprising to observe that 40 % of them are never visited to school and only 24 % are schools going. Nobody has aware about informal school. It shows the lacuna of so called informal schools run by various social organization under study area. Also maximum of them left the school only due to burden of parents or guardian to earn something.

3. Bad Addiction Status:-

Maximum of replied that they do not have any addiction and only few (07 out of 50) admitted that they are ghutka addicted.

4. Willingness for continuing School :-

It is quite pleasant that 76 % of them replied that they would like to continue their education if they would get opportunity. It reveals their hidden desire to learn something. But some of them replied that the school was boring and they do not have any interest in it.

5. Work starting age:-

Mostly observed age to compelling children are child labour is between 9 to 11 year. 56 % of children entering the work during 9 to 11 year where as 28 % are above 11 year.

6. Work Hours :-



The work schedule of child labours is very hectic. 60 % of them work for 6 to 8 hours a day and 24 % are work for above 8 hours. Their tendency to groom up and multinational requirements are dominated by this hectic work schedule along with fearful environment.

7. Punishment for improper work:-

Maximum children replied that their employers scold them and occasionally gives physical punishment also. They are always in fear and it adversely affect on their mentally as well as on their confidence and attitude to look towards society.

8. Salary getting Status:-

The children do not have right to collect their wages. It was found that only 16 % children took their salary at their own, rest all will collect by either their parent or so called guardians.

9. Relationship with employer:-

56 % of population replied that they have average relationship with their employer. Also 18 % replied that they have bad relationship.

10. Compelling Reasons for work:-

It is shameful to mention that 48 % of children replied that they select this work due to "forced entry, not choice selection". Also 30 % have replied that no other work was available. It clearly reveals that maximum child labours are worked by force and not by interest. Extensive pondering and keen efforts should be required to overcome on this situation.

11. Cognigence by Government:-

It is ambushing ridicules that not a single representative of government machineries never ever visited till date to these child labours. In addition it is shameful to give reference of statements made by G.J. Dabhade (Assistant labour Commissioner) that Jalgaon District do not have single child labour. That statement was made in meeting of District child labour surveillance committee program and news published in dainik Lokmat on 12 Dec. 2013.

12. Comparison with Native Place:-

Almost all i.e. 78% were replied that their native place is much better than their workplace.

13. Dream about Future:-

Interesting responses received in lieu of the question about what they would like to do when grown up, not a single of them shown interest to become a doctor or engineer (i.e.



dream of middle & above class family). More over them don't have any stagnant dream. Nearly half of them replied that they want to start their own stall, again they replies that they do not employ children their stalls. Their innocence was speechless and their question was emotional and touchy to human minds. Researcher has no answer when one of them asked "tai malech kaba kaam karne padte bakiche pore shalet jata, mi kawa jayen". Few of them replied that they want to become a police inspector; Mohalle ka Dada, Bada saab etc, but don't know the ways of achieving their dreams.

5.0 FACTS AND FINDINGS ABOUT CHILD LABOURS

5.1 GLOBAL FACTS

- 246 million children are child laborers.
- 73 million working children are less than 10 years old.
- No country is immune: there are 2.5 million working children in the developed economics, and another 2.5 million in transition economics.
- Every year, 22000 children die in work-related accidents.
- The largest number of working children -127 million-age 14 and under is in the Asia-Pacific region.
- Sub-Saharan Africa has the largest proportion of working children: nearly one –third of children age 14 and under (48 million children).
- Most children work in the informal sector, without legal or regulatory protection: 70% in agriculture, commercial hunting and finishing or forestry;8% in manufacturing8% in wholesale and retail trade, restaurants and hotels;7% in community, social and personal service, such as domestic work.
- 8.4 million Children are trapped in slavery, trafficking, debt bondage, prostitution, pornography and other illicit activities.
- 1.2 million of these children have been trafficked. (**Kharche, 2011**)

5.2 FINDINGS OF THE STUDY

It is difficult to give actual magnitude of child labours under study area due to numerous limitations. Such as predominance of informal and unorganized nature of labour market, multiplicity of concepts , methods of estimates etc. However as per the collected and analysed data the reveled facts under study area are as follows:-



1. Children lives with family are also worked as a child labour when is an extensive pondering issue.
2. The school going percentage among child labours is very less and 40 % of them never visited to school.
3. Informal schools runs by various NGO's are not so effective to streamline the child victims.
4. Addiction percentage is found very less in child labours.
5. Maximum child labours are interested to continue their education if get opportunity. It reveals their hidden desire to learn and be educated.
6. Children are compelled to work as child labour is maximally found between the ages at 9 to 11.
7. The work schedule of child labour is found very hectic.
8. The working environment, treatments given by employer, other facilities are not proper moreover it is found in worst status.
9. Crucial séance is maximum child labour are not allowed to take their wages. It was collected by somebody else.
10. All of them give preference to their native place than workplace.
11. Child labours do not have any stagnant dreams and they find their icons in moholla ka dada, Bada sahib etc.
12. Child labours are not aware, concern, as well as think about their future in any respect.

6.0 CONCLUSIONS & RECOMMENDATIONS

Child labours are the unfortunate outcome of socio economic inequality. Moreover child victims are mostly observed but silently neglected part of civil society. Children's are compelled to work due to various reasons includes socio economic, cultural, parental negligence, poverty, unemployment, illiteracy etc.

The cultivation under threat and fearful environment lack of child rights, human rights and non implementing status of HR issues produces psychological mall nutrious futures of India by virtue of child labour.

There should be deep pondering and route cause analysis required for this critical issue that is child labour. Following are few recommendation based on analysis of study area There



should be effective implementation and joint co-ordination by various government machineries for removal of child labour As it reveals that child labour are interested in education hence NGO's should take initiative. There is a staunch need to create specific awareness in society about child labour. If society will deny work made by little hands, Millions of children would be survival.

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