

Day: \_\_\_\_\_

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# Child Labour: A Neglected Issue.

## Outline

### I- Introduction

A- Hook

B- Thesis Statement

Globally a very prevalent issue but South Asia holds the highest ratio in Child Labour and Pakistan's role in it is not less. The Political, social, economical and governance failure makes this issue a neglected one however through strong enforcement, legal and social protection mechanism this neglected issue can be resolve effectively.

### II- Child Labour and Pakistan

A- An Overview of child Labour Condition in Pakistan through International Labour organization report and United Nation's documents.

### III- Why Child Labour a Neglected Issue.

**A- Lack of Political will**

a- No Policies consistencies to address this issue.

**B- Role of Poverty in overshadowing Child Rights.**

b- Pakistan's 40% population lives in Poverty and 16% below extreme poverty.

**C- Dominance of Informal Economy.**

c- The agriculture, brick kilns, carpet sector's role in forced work.

**D- Failure of Educational System**

d- Pakistan educational statistics, around 25 million school going children are out of school.

**E- Weak Institutional Coordination**

e- Lack of reliable data sharing and monitoring mechanisms.

**IV- Way Forward to address this neglected issue .**

A- Strong Enforcement of laws

B- Educational System Reforms

C- Strengthening Regulatory mechanisms.

## V- Conclusion .

## The Essay

A four years old Iqbal Masih used to work under harsh conditions in a carpet factory when other children of his age goes to school. By the age of ten he escaped and dedicated his life to save thousands of children from the chains of child labour. Yet, his voice was silenced at the age of twelve. A stark reminder from Iqbal's story that how millions of children robbed of their childhood due to constant neglect. The political, social, economical, and governance failure makes this issue a neglected one however through strong enforcement of laws, educational and social reforms and by strengthening of regulatory mechanisms this neglected issue of society can be resolve effectively.

Globally this issue of child labour is very prevalent around 16 million children worldwide are victim of this menace but the highest ratio is in South Asia. Pakistan is one of the South Asian state where the menace of child labour is largely present and also a very neglected one. Despite various legal laws and bills still there is a stark difference between theory and reality. According to the UNICEF Pakistan survey in Pakistan's federal capital it comes out that nearly 15000 children are engaged in child labour in Islamabad. Many of the children work under hazardous conditions and traumatic circumstances and its only a federal picture the conditions of Pakistan's provinces wise data sharing of child labour is even more grotesque and bleak. Therefore, the condition of child labour

in Pakistan is utterly exploitative and damaging and there are many factors that are responsible in making and promoting this issue a neglected one. Some of the factors are discussed below in detail.

The lack of political will is a major contributor of making the child labour as a neglected issue. There is a stark political imbalance in the country and this political instability is a major hurdle in Policy's consistency. No political will is being seen to address this core issue of child labour. Many governments came and gone but the strong political will to address this issue is being neglected by all. Although law exists in child labour but government authorities failed to enforce them properly. Pakistan has law like the Employment of Children Act 1991 and international commitments such as ILO

conventions but many children still continue to work due to lack of priority and more focus on infrastructure, elections, political agendas and child labour is often overlooked and is not being seen as an urgent issue and that's why it turned out to be a neglected issue in Pakistan due to the lack of political will to reform in this emerging issue.

Moreover, the role of poverty in overshadowing the child rights is not less important to be blamed from promoting this issue to a neglected one. Pakistan is a state where the population rate is crossing 250 million and half of its population is in extreme poverty due to meager resource and opportunities of income. Many parents and poverty victim families then send their children to work and earn for family, so that they can

survive and this resulted in child labour. Many children are victims of child labour because their families are unable to pay the debt of the owner and as a result ended in child labour under that person in extreme exploitative and harsh conditions. Pakistan's 40% population lives in abject poverty out of which 16% lives in extreme poverty and 12-14 million children in Pakistan are the victim of child labour due to poverty and this is the Sindh-Child Labour Survey which states that out of 12 million children, 1.3 million are in Sindh. Therefore, the poverty factor is a major element of making the issue of child labour a neglected one in order to prove its legitimacy in sending many children under this menace of child labour.

Furthermore, the dominance of the informal economy further

inflames the child labour neglected syndromes in the country. There are many sectors in the country the agricultural sector, the brick kilns, the carpet weaving factories and domestic workers or garbage pickers that are operated without any official regulation, taxation and governance. These sectors play a major role in neglecting child labour because they are largely unregulated and children under these conditions exploited at great amount.

As stated by the 2023-2024 Sindh Child Labour Survey around 65%. Children are forced to work under informal economy. These small factories, vendor markets, home industries hire children at low wages than adults and under unsafe conditions and workload they robbed them of their childhood. So, this factor of hidden or invisible child labour through informal economy is a major contributor

in making the problem of child labour a neglected one in the eye's of government authorities.

In addition to that, the failed educational system of Pakistan is a very crucial area to be mentioned while addressing the child labour neglection in the notice of authorities. Despite, educational emergency in Pakistan, ~~one can~~ still the educational structure of Pakistan is fragile and on its crippling stage. When schools are often inaccessible, unaffordable, or poorly administrated than families often preferred to sent children at work as more beneficial than the school. **Pakistan Educational Statistics**, around 25-26 million school going children are out of school. This weak educational system, costly processes and poor quality of education indirectly results in the persistance of early drop out from the schools and indirect contribution in child labour and

make the child labour a persistent neglected problem.

Last but not the least the weak institutional coordinated and reliable data sharing and monitoring mechanisms also drives the children in labour and strengthen the cycle of this issue towards a neglected one.

In some areas the institutions, agencies, or regulatory bodies becomes a victim of corruption and bribe that they illegally allowed the small industries and factories to keep children under forced labour.

This results in poor data sharing and institutional coordination to show this issue as an important area to be address and ended in neglected one. **Employment of Children Act 1991, Provisional Child Labour Laws, Constitution Article 11 and Pakistan Penal Code Articles**

Still the menace of child labour is prevalent. This unveil the very problem that issues is not in laws but in its regulation and enforcement

mechanism. Although law exists still children are working under harsh conditions under the influence of informal economy and the issue is still largely neglected because of all these above mentioned factors that drives this issue to a neglected one.

Although the condition of child labour in Pakistan is very bleak but it does not mean its the destiny of the nation. The story of the Iqbal Masih also reveals the struggle of resilience and effort as he did and advocates for thousands of children and free them from enforced labour. Some of the crucial steps are discussed below if Pakistan employ them effectively there are the chances that this issue of neglecting child labour can largely be address.

The enforcement of the strong laws and their proper

regulation helps the nation to address this problem greatly. There is a need to transform all the laws from rhetoric, theory into the practical and reality form. Pakistan has the laws but there is a problem with its regulation by eliminating corruption, nepotism, bribe, institutional support and training services millions of children remain trapped under hazardous conditions of child labour can be save and an Inclusive environment will be created for them to thrive and shines under strong enforcement and monitoring mechanisms.

As the initiatives, taken by Sindh provincial government by establishing Child labour laws and surveys to curb this menace of child labour through strong monitoring and data sharing. This initiative should be employ by all government authorities under strict provisions

and rules.

Additionally, the effective educational system reforms ~~is~~ the dire need to be apply. The issue of raging child drop out and child labour surge can be effectively tackle by the strong educational reforms. Parents and families when get easy accessibility, affordable educational opportunities and quality education. They will prefer their children thrives under strong education sector instead of work and forced labour. Education reforms and increasing GDP spending from 0.8% to 2-4% as preferred by UN is a good initiative to curb the neglected issue of the child labour. The government authorities need to focus on education upgradation in the states to save the children from labour and thinks for their brighter further lies ahead through strong educa-

tional building.

The introduction of strong regulatory frameworks and authorities can help the government to handle this surging menace effectively. As many great countries thrives in all sectors efficiently not only because they are rich but by the introduction of strong institution. "Nation thrives when have institution inclusivity instead of extractive institutions" Why Nations Failed.

A strong regulatory bodies of Child labour Survey and regulations at all federal, provincial and local level will help the nation in addressing this neglected issue at its full efforts.

To conclude, the Child labour in the 21st century is becoming more and even more complex and neglected one due to governance failure and

insititutional weakness and  
socially and culturally normaliz-  
ation but the strong enforcement  
of laws, regulations and  
reforms the strong linked  
will be created between the  
masses and authorities and  
this surging and neglected  
issue will soon be eliminated  
from the fate of the nation.