

CHILD LABOUR : A NEGLECTED ISSUE

Int Outline:

I. Introduction:

Thesis statement,

Society, once a barrier to immoral and illegal acts has now become a fuel to ignite some vices that are as drastic as natural disasters, poor GDP growth, or terrorism by neglecting and tolerating them and sometimes normalizing them as done with the child labour.

II. Child Labour : A neglected issue

III. Factors leading to the negligence of child labour

- a. Cultural trend (many poor parents still happen to send their children to schools instead of sending them at work)
- b. Poverty (Nearly 40% of Pakistan's population is below poverty line; making this a reason to child labour.
- c. Society's tolerance is the major contributor to child labour
- d. High expenses of education (Despite a constitutional promise of free education,

- the practical implementation is
- e. Lack of Government attention (No policy for combating or penalizing child labour)

IV. Impacts of child Labour:

- a. Poor performance of the country (wasting youth in labouring rather than utilizing excellent minds)
- b. Low literacy rate (already low at 60% compared to other countries)
- c. Child suffers from untreatable health issues at a young age
- d. Violation of children rights
- e. Bad portrayal of country's image

V. Way forward:

- a. Free and quality Education (Article 25-A)
- b. High penalties on the promoters of child labour
- c. Increasing social safety nets
- d. Society's role to combat child labour

VI. Conclusion.

Child Labour: A neglected issue

Chai cafes have a special connection to 'chotus' (a name used for a young child). Last week, I visited a cafe and unconsciously a thought struck in my mind. How easily we ask young children to serve us, crushing their dreams in uncountable pieces. It is not only the issue of a cafe but there are numerous industries, factories, and markets labouring children and taking the work of an adult. The condition is threatening. Many nations struggled with the issue and have combat it unlike Pakistan. Indulgence of fresh young minds in the curse of child labour is a catastrophe to the country. Society, once a barrier to immoral and illegal acts has now become a fuel to ignite some vices that are as drastic as natural disasters, poor GDP growth or terrorism by neglecting and tolerating them and sometimes normalizing them as ^{done} happened with the child labour.

Child labour is more of the result of poverty and expensive education. The direct contributor to child labour is that society has neglected it as something to be worried for. How often we see ourselves

served by children in hotels. Clothes markets have employed young children as well as there are children in tailor shops. Children are working everywhere but we never questioned their masters neither their parents about them doing an illegal act. This way, we are tolerating it. Thus, this is a fact that child labour is a neglected issue. No government has made any policy to combat it neither any NGO has raised voice against it.

One of the foremost reasons behind child labour is the parents' priorities. Many parents send their children to schools working for their future while many others excuse their poverty being a reason of their child's employment. Therefore, it can be deduced that child labour is a varying trend that differs from society to society, mentality to mentality. Some parents think of their child's future while others prefer the present.

Poverty is a common issue of many Pakistan is struggling with poverty since ~~her~~ its inception. Nearly 40% of the country's population is below poverty line. This huge population means a huge population of child labour. Seeing children employed everywhere has normalized it and diverted the attention. When something gets normalise society accepts it. Poverty has ~~etc~~ not left any option to the parents except taking work from their child.

Moreover, even if some parents manage to earn the bread without letting their child work, the high expenses of education become an obstacle. A school as small as a 2 room house, poor quality of education still charges a high fee to the students. Pakistan failed to fulfil its constitutional promise of free and quality education. This limits many students to get education posing their future at stake. One can do to things only learn or earn. When children are made deprived of learning they are forced toward earning.

Government, the guardian of its people do not actually take care of the people. Government of Pakistan has not taken any step so far in order to prevent the child labour.

In the recent, flyovers are being built, electric buses are moving, scholarships are being granted and pensions are being increasing yet hardly any step taken to prevent child labour.

Such pathetic condition where the innocent youngs are being exploited by the cruel adults, guarantees failure. This evil has drastic impacts at the child himself, the society and the country.

Among the worst impacts of child labour is the poor health conditions, of the children. These young children are made to do a work equal to many adults. The stakeholder take the benefit

of their innocence and unawareness and exploit them in all possible ways. Burning of child's body, fractures, muscles weakening, poor growth, mental health problems and death all are the common impacts of workplace exploitation. Many children get diseases that are incapable of being treated due to two possible reasons:

Another ~~impr~~ drastic impact of child labour is the poor performance of country. A country whose ~~pe~~ youth is indulged in lifting the loads of bricks and cement, creates a technology void. Youth is the actual wealth of a country and Pakistan, a country with 60% of overwhelming population is wasting all its potential of growth by neglecting the serious issue of child labour.

Additionally, child labour is a factor that increase the illiteracy rate of a country. Pakistan having a literacy rate of 58% only is already failing the race with its competitors. When children are sent to work rather than at schools, this would increase the illiteracy rate of the country.

Child labour is also a violation of children rights. In the 1973 constitution of Pakistan, it is explicitly mentioned that no child should be taken work from, but in practice this right has no implementation.

In addition to that, child labour worsens the image of the country Pakistan, already struggling for its image, once having been in the FATF grey list has another threat to its image. Child labour ruin the country's image in front of the fast paced world with high protocols for children and their rights.

However, this condition demands pragmatic measures. Free and quality education, promised in the article 25-A of the 1973 constitution should be made mandatory. The country should step out of its paper phase and start implementing the paper promises.

Along with that the people who send their children to work should be ~~penal~~ punished. Alongside parents, the other stakeholders who put child at employment and exploit them should be charged with high penalties including fine, closing of that firm and imprisonment.

Governments can play their role in combating child labour by increasing social safety nets. There are numerous schemes like Benazir income support ~~program~~ (BISP) and various others. Their uninterrupted flow should be made easier and along with that new schemes for poor families should be introduced. Poor families should be given monthly stipend and all the

obstacles that prevent the child from getting education should be eradicated.

Along with that

In compulsion to that, society should play its role to fight with the evil of child labour. Society members should act as a watchdog and report any case of child labour and child exploitation. Society should see child labour as an evil just like they do of any deviant behaviour.

Another part that society could play in this regard is that it can fund the expenses of a child as per what it ^{can} afford. These measures would help in the eradication and combating of child labour.

In conclusion, children are innocent and delicate. They are the asset of any country. They are the ones who are loved the most. But still certain situations such as lack of society's attention, government's diversion, poverty, high expenses of education, directly or indirectly cause child labour. Society is the factor that is usually criticizes deviant acts of people, but its negligence toward child labour is contributing to an increased rate of child labour. Employing children at dhabas, markets, or factories, have increased risks of health problems, and putting the future of

such children at stake. Significant measures such as governmental policies, society's role as a watchdog, social safety nets and providing free and quality education could help secure the future of the children as well as the country.

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