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Essay Writing

Child Labour :

A neglected Issue

Outline

• Introduction

- Hook
- Background
- Thesis statement:

Child labour is an acute disease of the third world countries that remained unchecked despite of legal framework and actions due to poverty, poor governance, illiteracy, large family size and economic crisis that leads to disturbed physical health of a child, loss of childhood, crime, drug addiction and long term effect on economy by producing unskilled workers.

• Literature Review

- Historical perspective of Child Labour
- Forms of child labour.

- Perspective of Islam on child labour
- Formulation of Legal laws
 - ILO convention of 138
 - ILO convention 182
 - UN convention on Rights of children
 - Constitution of Pakistan
 - Article #11
 - Article # 25 and 25(A)
 - Article # 37 B
- Child Labour in Pakistan
 - Tayyab case
 - Rizwana Torture case
 - Atlanta Agreement

Causes of Child Labour

- a poverty
- b large family size
- c poor administration
- d illiteracy and cheap labour
- e cheap labour
- f economic crisis and conflicts

Impacts of Child Labour

- a poor physical and mental health
- b most of children are out of school

- c loss of childhood
- d increase in unemployment and decrease in rates of daily wage
- e increase in crime and drug abuse
- f negative impact on international community.

• Why is this issue remained neglected?

• Role of Stakeholders

• Role of government

- a) strict legal action against child labour and promotion of education

• Role of NGOs

- a awareness programs and skill development programs.

• Role of media

- a advocacy of rights of children

• Role of international community

- a providance of financial aid.

• Comparative Analysis

• Brazil's Bolsa Familia Program

• Bangladesh's education-linked cash

- transfers
- Way Forward to Pakistan

Conclusion

- Concluding Thoughts
- Restate thesis statement.

"There is no trust more

so sacred than the one

the world holds in

children"

(Ban Ki moon).

Which countries allow its children to work in factories, brick kilns and farms at the cost of loss of childhood and innocence, depriving children from their legal rights of freedom, justice, equality and education? Of course, the under developed countries of Asia, Africa and Latin America. Where imagine a 10 years old girl, instead of

holding pencil in her hand and shouldering a bag, having aches in back and blistered hands, going to factory and farm, what an exploitation of children rights! Children are the innocent creatures of God but they lost their childhood and innocence in harshness of social and economical conditions. Child labour is an issue of every developing country which is neglected due to various factors. In Pakistan alone almost 12.5 million children which is 16% of the total population with 5-17 years age gap children are forced to do work to support the family. Alone Sindh has 1.6 million children who are compelled to child labour and Punjab has 13% of total population of children involved in child labour. 40% of them only get chance to go school while remaining 60% children deprive of education because they do not manage studies and jobs at the same time.

"Child labour is an acute disease of the third world countries that remained unchecked despite of legal framework and actions - due to poverty, poor administration, illiteracy, large family size and economic crisis that leads to disturbed physical and mental health of a child, loss of childhood, crime, drug addiction and long term effect on economy and by producing unskilled workers."

In historical perspective, child labour started from industrialization and urbanization in the European society. According to International Labour Organization (ILO), any kind of labour that can harm child's mental and physical health at the cost of education, freedom and equality is considered as child labour. Light work increases the confidence and capabilities of a child. It also develops the personality

of a child but agricultural, domestic, industrial, bonded and street labour shatter the personality of child drastically. It had been started with the progress of industry where children were recruited at low cost due to high labour demand. But many organizations declared it illegal like United Nations and International Labour Organization. So, the child labour from developed countries vanished but still remained an ~~une~~ a neglected issue in countries of Asia, Africa and Latin America. There are many forms of child labour. The first one is informal child labour where child is compelled to do work in small shops and roadside shops. Street labour is another form where child sells products ~~or~~ in streets, washes cars and bikes and many other works.

Bonded labour is also a type of child labour in which parents force their children to work in houses of feudals to pay their debts. Next is industrial labour, children work in industries at low wages and it may prove

hazardous by involvement of chemicals. Last type of child labour is agricultural labour in which children go to farms because of their illiterate parents. They want their children to be farmers as they themselves are. It is especially in the rural areas where children work in farms and involve livestock activities. No country or religion support child labour. Every religion speaks about equality and ban of serfdom. Islam has also given the right of education, freedom and equality to children. Islam has focused on promoting education as prophet has said "Seeking knowledge is obligatory to every Muslim (girl and boy)". Islam has also strictly prohibited forced labour and slavery. So morally, legal and religiously, child labour is condemned by every nation.

To reduce child labour, international community has played role by formulating many laws. No it is depended on the countries to implement strictly on it. ILO convention 138 describes minimum age

ILO convention 182 describes the worst forms of labour. UN convention on the rights of children has described the rights of children and penalties against child labour. Now it is up to governments of every country that how they tackle this disease that is engulfing the economy, morality and ethics of a nation. The Constitution of Pakistan 1973, talks about the ban of slavery in article #11. It also highlights equality of every citizen under article 25 and right of education of every child in article 25(A). Under Article 37(B), the Constitution of Pakistan gives the right of social justice to everyone. So, it is impossible to justify the act of child labour. Govt. should take legal action against violation of laws of article 11, article 25, 25(A) and article 37(B).

The countries like Pakistan has shattered economy, so children have to do work to meet the expenses of their family. A large number of people are living under the line of poverty. So parents force their children to do work and carry the burden of

livelihood among their parents. Bonded labour is the worst type of child labour in which children bear torture physically. Tanyaba case is the famous child labour case that was highlighted in the media. Tanyaba was a 10 year old girl, laboured in the house of a judge. His wife tortured him severely that she went to hospital due to acute injuries on the body. She was laboured to pay the debt taken by their parents. Same case was seen in 2023 when Rizwana Torture case appeared in television. Again it was a bonded child labour case, Rizwana did work in the ^{house of} civil judge and she remained in the pathetic condition due to mental and physical torture. This is the violation of law under article 11 that is in regard of slavery. This also highlights the shameful aspect of our society that due to deep small debts we steal the innocence and childhood of a child and in return our so-called illiterate middle class families torture her/him due to their own mental illness. There is also

an Atlanta agreement, not a court case, but a legal action taken by football company, involving Pakistan, to take legal action against child labour.

Child labour is caused by many factors. One of them is poverty. About 5.9 million people are unemployed in Pakistan. In the fiscal year 2025-2025, unemployment rate has increased up to 7.1%. About 44.7% of population of Pakistan is living in poverty according to World Bank. Parents cannot fulfill the demand of their children. So they exploit the rights of children and force them to do jobs on low wages. Poverty is such a factor that has effect on all the issues. Parents are also not responsible as they have no other option. Government has to take ~~low~~ action to reduce the inflation rate so that the basic necessities can be accessible to everyone and children have pen and pencils otherwise other than tools and machineries.

Second cause of child labour is large family size. In rural areas there are 5 to 7 children a couple have, therefore it is impossible to fulfill the demand of every child and give them the basic necessities easily. Mostly, the elder children have to sacrifice their childhood and education for their younger sisters and brothers. Elder children become the support system of their parents. There is also a mindset that work in juvenile age helps the juvenile to improve confidence and personality building.

Thirdly, underdeveloping ^{countries} face issue with administration and governance. Poor administration is also also paves way child labour. Countries like Pakistan, India, Bangladesh, Afghanistan they have less resources but large population. Pakistan, a country with 241.5 million population according to census 2023, has only 4 provinces which makes difficult for the government to resolve all issues. We have laws but weak enforcement structure. There is a wide gap between legislature

and enforcement institution. Our legislature has prohibited the slavery but enforcement institutions are incapable to execute and implement.

Fourthly, people living in rural areas are mostly illiterate, they do not know the importance of education. Our education system has also flaws ^{due to} weak infrastructure, less number of teachers and poor governance. Feudals have also strong influence on people, they do not allow people to send their children to school. These factors set the children to remain illiterate. In the shape of child labour, industrialists get cheap labour because children do not know their rights and cannot protest. So if people remain uneducated then it will be a gain for industrialists and feudals in the shape of children as a cheap labour and in return they save their huge capital.

Fifthly, armed conflicts, pandemic and economic crisis also lead to creation of child labour. In case of crisis, rather it may be armed, or natural disasters, parents lose

their jobs, business or any other stable earning source. Then they force their children to do work and help them financially. In any economic crisis the cost of living increases, inflation increases the prices of fuels, food and education. In this critical situation, people trapped in debts that urges children to work at low wages. Govt. should have strong policies to handle any crisis efficiently that reduces the possibilities of closure of school and increases the employment opportunities.

Child Labour has drastic effects on physical and mental health of children. Two cases Rizwana Torture case 2023 and Tayyaba child labour has already discussed which show that people do oppression on these innocent children due to debt taken by parents. That is unfair, it leaves the children in life term trauma and long lasting injuries. Children also suffer mentally. This leads to depression, sleeping sickness, insomnia and anxiety. So legal actions should be taken against child labour.

The unfettered child labour also hinders the way of education to children. In Sindh almost 1.6 million children are out of school. Education is an important tool of progress and prosperity of any nation. If we give labour instruments in hands of children instead of pens and pencils then how can we flourish? Education is a weapon against the traditional mindset that promote feudalism. If we keep our children away from education then how can we stand against slavery? So child labour should be condemned to promote education, to open the gates of schools and colleges for children.

Thirdly, children lose the innocence and happiness. Instead of collecting memories of youth and early age, children are earning and saving money for their families and their own expenses. Child labour steals smile of a child and gives him/her tension and burden of finance. That directly impacts the personality of a child.

Child labour not only destroys the present happiness but also future opportunities and turns the formative age into a struggling phase of life.

Fourthly, due to a large number of labour, the unemployment rates increases and compell individuals to do work at low wages. This further exploit the right of citizens. Due to unemployment and low wages, children find it easy to do crime and fulfill their dreams. Children, coming in the small age, are ^{trapped} influenced by the drug dealers and they make their future dark and darker.

Fifthly, this deteriorates the image of the country in the international community that affects the diplomatic relationship between bilateral countries, also faces negative impact on trade and trade tariffs by the superpowers in not taking legal actions against this social disease which eats the whole sectors of the country. Economically a country gains ⁱⁿ short term by child labour due to production of unskilled workers. Children do not have any

skill and education that produce unskilled and uneducated labour that is a great threat to country's economy. So, no foreign investor will be agree to invest in the country which has no skilled labour. So child labour affects country's reputation greatly which in return shatters the economy.

This issue is remained neglected due to poverty in the third world country. Government is unable to promote education and social justice in the society. The wide gap between legislature and enforcement structure makes adds fuel to fire. High inflation rate and poor administration further tense this situation. There are a lot of issues of third world so in which child labour is remained unchecked despite of governing laws. Our administration does not consider it a social and legal evil. It does not know the how the drastic effect it can cause on the economy, social and moral values. Feudals also don't want our children to learn and write to stop their kingship. Society has accepted child labour due to

socio-economic benefits.

Government should have taken legal actions against the child labour. If government improves the educational system of the country then it will cause positive effect on preventing child labour. This will also create a positive environment in the society and positive image in the international community.

Role of NGOs is also very important here. Different NGOs are working in Pakistan like caretaker, ICF which helps the needy by providing them education and training them various skills like in different departments like IT, graphics, web development, stitching, hand embroidery to make them skillful citizens of the society. NGOs of this kind would be more to stop child labour. Media can also play role by advocating the rights of childrens through both electronic and print media. Media has great influence on our society. Media teaches and motivates a society. YouTubers, Tiktokers influence youth so there content should be

meaningful based on life learning themes. World famous organizations like UN, European Nations and developed countries should also provide financial assistance to developing countries to promote education and reduce the cost of living.

Brazil and Bangladesh are good examples in controlling child labour. Brazil has initiated Brazil's Bolsa Familia Program, through which it supports the poor, needy and destituted families financially. In return which family doesn't pressurize their children to work for their financial assistance. Bangladesh's linked cash transfer program transfers the cash to the needy family to support the education of the children.

In Bangladesh BRAC organization is also working to support education of children countrywide. Pakistan has to learn from these two countries that how positive administration can help in prevention of a chained illegal act. Our government can take advises pieces of advises from other countries that are successful in preventing child

labour because if it remains unchecked then it can cause great economic crisis by producing unskilled workers.

By concluding the whole debate, I would say that it is the high time to take strong legal action. Child labour leads to ~~drive~~ child to criminal activities that will be proven disastrous for the country and indirectly it harms the peace of the society. There will be no law and order. Government has to take this issue seriously and enforce strictly implementation on article 11, 25(A) and 37(B) of constitution of 1973. Hence it is proven that child labour is due to large family size, high inflation rate, poverty, illiteracy, bad administration that ^{results in} disturbed the physical and health of a child, loss of childhood, increased criminal activities, drug addiction and long lasting effect on economy.