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Humans change over time. The society that once was dependent upon agriculture and livestock had a significant change around the late 17th century. The old traditions where women and men combinely worked for living shifted significantly with advent of industrial revolution. This not only affected women's independent and their authosity but also lead to exploitation of children, especially those from poor families. As Gilbert F. Houngbo, ILO Director General quotes 'The antidote to poverty driven child labour is decent work for adults'. This practice has been prevalent since then. Child labour has been a prevalent issue globally. Factosies and industries exploit them for their benefit. The advantage is only taken by them as these children have no other opportunity but to work on low wages. Child labour is a neglected issue, this can be observed by tracking the records of out of school children in developing countries, rising international conflicts that ignore children, increased focus on domestic politics, rising poverty, and weak enforcement of laws. On the contrary, critics argue that child labour is not a neglected issue as there are laws against it and significant international initiatives to wash this practice. However it can be observed through data that the laws enacted for this purpose face implementation challenges and lack of exact data and enforcement hinders the application

of international initiatives.

The term child labour is used to describe the labour done by children below age 18.

According to International Labour Organization (ILO), 'child labour is the work that deprives children of their childhood, their potential, their dignity, and that is harmful to physical and mental development'.

The number of out of school children's increase shows that child labour is a neglected issue. In developing countries children feel burden to attend school as they can not see their parents struggling with cost of their living along with studies. This forces children to work in their childhood instead of attending school. This is highlighted by a report of UNICEF that in Pakistan, 25.1 million children are out of school. These children are forced by circumstances and are forced to perform rigorous labours. This indicates that child labour is a neglected issue.

Moreover, increasing international conflicts ignores the needs of children and makes child labour a neglected issue. The conflicts that took place alone in 2025 were 8. These create dismal conditions for every person including children, the children during such conflicts are forced to work as to meet their needs and help their families rebuild. According to ILO, 168m children are engaged in child labour in conflict and disaster areas. Conflicts make it impossible for children to attend school, this

puts clear that child labour is a neglected issue.

Furthermore, increased focus on domestic politics makes child labour remain a neglected issue. Governments are seen focused on securing their own power in political domain, especially in developing countries like Pakistan. As in Pakistan, governments are more inclined towards providing support to their favorites as argued by Anatol Leiven in his book Pakistan: A Hard Country. Patronage and kinship are major networks affecting the democratic domains in Pakistan. This shifts the focus from actual issues of governance (i.e. child labour) and makes children engaged in hard labour. This shows that child labour is a neglected issue.

In addition, rising poverty forces children to work and makes child labour a neglected issue. Poor families have no other option but to make their children work in order to manage basic needs. The low wages paid are not enough to manage basic needs. As by the data published by World Bank, 44.7% population in Pakistan is poor (2025). This sharp number shows that families are unable to carry out their basic needs. Therefore it is to be said that child labour is a neglected issue.

Lastly, weak enforcement of laws makes child labour a neglected issue. Despite having laws criminalizing child labour, children in developing countries are seen working

hard jobs and are being exploited. This is due to weak enforcement of restricting laws. As shown by a report of ILO, 10.1m children aged between 5-14 are involved in child labour due to weak enforcement of laws.

The weak oversight and enforcement makes it easy for children to be exploited. This therefore makes clear that child labour is a neglected issue.

On the contrary, it is argued by critics that child labour is not a neglected issue as there are laws restricting it. The labour is taken well care, the instance of such laws is The Employment of Children Act, 1991 that mandates action by authorities against those who force children to work and bans child labour. Therefore, critics argue that child labour is not a neglected issue.

Moreover, critics believe that international initiatives work effectively against child labour and argue that child labour is not a neglected issue. The ILO's International Programme on the Elimination of Child Labour (IPEC) mandates all members of United Nations to implement conventions and rectify laws. Therefore, they say that child labour is not a neglected issue.

However, the laws established face significant implementation issues. Despite having many laws against child labour, the issue persists. As highlighted in a report by International Trade Union Conference, the labour laws in Bangladesh face implementation crisis. This makes it hard

to control child labour. Therefore making child labour a neglected issue.

Moreover, the initiatives taken internationally face significant drawbacks due to lack of data and proper enforcement mechanism. There is no system of international enforcement and due to unwillingness and law and order situation in many countries, it is hard for organizations to collect exact data. This can be seen in countries like Afghanistan, where ongoing conflicts, poverty, and political instability makes it hard to even estimate a close figured data. This makes child labour a neglected issue.

To sum up, child labour is a neglected issue globally. The factors responsible for such practice are increase in international conflicts, more out-of-school children, rising poverty, and weaker enforcement of laws. Critics argue that child labour is not a neglected issue and governments are focus on curbing it as there are proper laws enacted for this purpose and many international initiatives which mandates nations to take strict action. However, the laws face problem to be properly implemented and the data provided by international organizations is uncertain. Child labour remain in practice in almost every developing country. The society that should have evolved for a better future has turned to be against bettering life of women and children.