

## Child Labor : A Neglected Issue

### Outline:

A. Introduction + Thesis statement

B. Child labor is a neglected issue

1. Persistence of child labor despite laws reflects failure of governance.

Evidence: Pakistan's Constitution - 1973, Article 11

Employment of children Act and provincial child labor laws prohibit hazardous child work, but not implemented properly. ILO states: child labor persist due to weak or absent inspection.

2. Weak ~~in~~stitutional capacity allows child labor to thrive unchecked

Evidence: According to ILO, effective child labor control requires one labor inspector per 15000 workers, but in Pakistan ratio is severely inadequate, resulting in negligible monitoring and shortage of budgetary allocation towards child protection.

3. Children working in informal settings remain statistically and legally invisible, reinforcing neglect

Evidence: World Bank recent reports shows that over 70% child labor globally occurs in informal

economy. In Pakistan, child labor in brick kilns, auto workshops and home-based work continues because state has failed to formalize and regulate, allowing exploitation of child.

4. Failure to address poverty structurally turns child labor into survival strategy rather than a crime, so neglected by state

Evidence: Empirical studies by World Bank shows that child labor increases sharply during economic crises, inflationary period, and joblessness of adults. Families resort to child labor as income-smoothing strategy rather than disregard for law. Converts illegal act into survival necessity due to state's failure

5. Weak education delivery indirectly pushes children into labor, but neglected by governance

Evidence: UNESCO and ILO joint studies establish that children who drop out of school are three times more likely to enter labor markets than those who enrolled. High dropout rates are not accidental, but resulted from poor school governance.

6. Child labor is socially tolerated, so neglected by state

Evidence: ILO sociological studies show that in societies where child labor is culturally framed as "helping family or learning a skill, enforcement agencies face little or no social pressure <sup>for</sup> ~~that~~ child labor as exploitation, then state neglect or deprioritize the issue.

7. Politically weak constituency of child labors keep them neglected in policy agenda

Evidence: Theodor Lowi said; Public Policy responds more to organized interests than to moral urgency.

8. International obligations treated symbolically rather than practically

Evidence: ILO rely on voluntary compliance and issues observation and recommendation, not penalties. Countries continue to receive aid and trade access despite persistent child labor. Pakistan still ratified ILO Convention yet child labor persists. This is known as

isomorphic mimicry "adopting global forms without functional change."

### 9. Gender bias deepens neglect by keeping female child labor hidden

Evidence: ILO Gender and child labor reports "Girls' labor remains hidden in plain sight because it is mislabeled as household duty."

ILO and UNICEF recent report: Girls constitute majority of child labor in domestic work globally.

### c. Conclusion