Unraveling the Societal Dynamics that Perpetuate Child Labor in Okara District: a statistical analysis

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ABSTRACT

Child labor is a constitutionally declared crime in Pakistan yet one can see a little progress in eliminating the scourge of child labor from Pakistan. Child labor has a negative impact on a country's growth. As a developing country, Pakistan struggles with child labor laws. We need to establish strong labor and labor laws in our country to reduce the incidence of child labor. This study highlights the marginal determinants of the supply of child labor in the case of Okara, Punjab, Pakistan. To determine the effect of these factors, 1250 people were taken from three tehsils in Okara, Punjab as research samples. Statistical analysis was used to identify the determinants of child labor in Okara, Punjab. Most of the boys under the age of 17 come from rural areas in the Okara district. The test results showed that the large number of rural-based families is a significant factor forcing poor households to send their children to work. The type of household's main source of income is also a factor that encourages children to work. We do this for various employee benefits.

Key words: Child labor, labor activities, Households, Income source

INTRODUCTION

Child labor robs children of their childhood, potential and dignity and harms their physical and mental development. This activity is harmful to children mentally, physically, socially or even morally. It hinders their schooling by depriving them of opportunities to go to school, forcing them to leave school early, and trying to combine school attendance with too long and hard work (ILO, 2020).

Of these children, more than half are exposed to the worst forms of child labor such as work in hazardous environments, slavery or other forms of forced labor, and illicit activities such as drug trafficking and prostitution. Apart from the agricultural sector, our cities have also engaged children in numerous types of such labors. An increasing rate of urbanization, which is not merely a secular numerical increase in the population sizes of the cities, further spurs the rate of urban child labor. Economic and cultural pressures, as Delap puts it, coupled with blatant illiteracy force these mostly untrained and unskilled migrants to take many unwanted decisions, including child labor (Siddiqi, A. F., 2013). It is attempted here in this article to focus on this urban child labor, that is, how it is growing and what are the patterns in its growth.

The phenomenon of child labor consists of two things. First, it is the phenomenon of the children. The age of children differs from one jurisdiction to another. Various legal regimes provide for both the age of majority and the age of minority. According to Article 11 of the 1973 constitution of Pakistan, a labor performed by children under the age of 14 is categorized as child labor. Secondly, it involves a kind of exertion or labor for certain financial gains, which differentiate from child work. Hence, child labor involves the labor performed by category of people under the age of majority for some financial gains (Edmonds, 2005). The various consequences, which the child labor has for the overall development and the overall stability of society, have led to the perception that child labor is a heinous crime. The various laws and the constitutional provisions lend credence to the fact that it is a crime and must be eliminated from society. Since child labor abounds in today's world, the question whether policy should be applied to combat this phenomenon is of particular interest. In our model, child labor is inefficiently high as well. To see why, consider the following contract: parents allow their

children to study their entire childhood and, in exchange, children promise to compensate their parents in the next period, when adults. As long as the potential income of an individual who invests in human capital, her entire childhood is greater than the sum of incomes of a child and an uneducated adult, this contract Pareto dominates the competitive equilibrium.

Child labor is a persistent problem, found throughout most of the developing world, and to a lesser extent in developed countries. The availability of detailed and reliable child labor statistics and their analysis on a continuing basis are particularly important for establishing policy priorities and targets, formulating and implementing interventions, and monitoring policies, regulations and programs aimed not only at the minimization of the negative consequences of child labor in the short term, but most importantly at the eventual elimination of the practice. Child labor and low school attendance is a pervasive problem throughout the world, especially in developing countries. In this regard, a holistic, comprehensive and inclusive approach needed to be adopted to prevent child labor in the country. The prevention of child labor is not to be confined to the state only; rather a number of stakeholders must be involved so that child labor could be prevented in the country. For that purpose, the implementation of the laws could be ensured the role of NGO could be strengthened. Only that way Pakistan can ensure that "Child is meant to learn not to earn" which in the end will drive the progress of Pakistan as "What done to children, they will do to society" as has been aptly described by Karl Menninger.

Children in Pakistan are vulnerable to many forms of violence (physical, psychological, sexual) and exploitation, including economic exploitation and child trafficking. Nearly 30 years after Pakistan ratified the Convention on the Rights of the Child (CRC), no public coordinated child protection case management and referral system, as aligned with international standards, has been established. The ILO estimated in 2002, about 246 million child labors (aged 5 to 17) in the world, with 180 million referred to as the worst forms of child labor, often involving hazardous conditions. Mostly eight million children among them are working in the unconditional worst forms of child labor, which include armed conflict, forced and bonded labor, prostitution, pornography, drug trafficking, and other illicit activities (Palley, 2002).

No children below the age of 15 can be employed in factories producing for Bestseller. If the law states a higher age, the law must be followed. The supplier must have sufficient management systems in place to ensure no children are employed. Young workers below the age of 18 can only undertake light work in the factory, and all laws concerning the treatment of young workers must be followed. The use of child labor is not acceptable and we will not work with suppliers who use child labor in any of their facilities, or who do not have efficient systems in place to ensure that child labor cannot occur on the production premises. Suppliers must also take responsibility to ensure that any subcontractors are not involved in employing child labor, and that any young workers are not involved in dangerous work or work under difficult conditions (Ahamed, F., 2013).

Child Labor as Human Right Issue

More than anything else, the child labor could be defined in terms of human right in the context of Pakistan. It is evident from a number of factors. First, child labor deprives a child from his liberty. In this essence, it involves the violation of liberty. Pakistan has approved various treaties like United Nations Declaration on Human Rights according to which liberty is indispensable for the proper growth of children. Secondly, child labor deprives an individual from freedom of expression and speech.

The Convention of Right of Children, 1989, provides that there be freedom of speech and expression. The child labor stifles these fundamental rights. Similarly, the constitution of the article 11 provides that child labor is to be prohibited in the country. Hence, it also involves the violation of fundamental rights provided. The child labor deprives an individual to acquire education and other fundamental rights. For example, according to the article 25(A) of the constitution, state must provide free and compulsory education to children. Nevertheless, the phenomenon of the child labor deprives an individual to acquire education and hence amount to

the violation of fundamental right (Basu, 2003).

Child Labor as a Political Issue:-

Child labor is a grave political issue that continues to persist in many parts of the world, despite concerted efforts to eradicate it. It involves the exploitation of children through their engagement in laborious activities that are detrimental to their physical and mental well-being, and obstruct their access to education and a normal childhood. Child labor is a violation of basic human rights and represents an alarming form of social injustice. The International Labor Organization (ILO) estimates that approximately 152 million children worldwide are engaged in child labor, with 73 million of them involved in hazardous work (ILO, 2017).

Girl Child Labor in Pakistan:-

The girl-child for the same dynamics also performs child labor. The situation of the girl-child labor is more worrisome. In most cases, they are physical abused. They are at the receiving-end of every kind of abuses. In Pakistan, girl children are being kept as house cleaner. The most iconic example of the child labor and the subsequent physical torture case was the Tayyaba torture case who was physical abused and tortured by his employer. Hence, the phenomenon of the girl child labor cannot be overlooked in the country. Child labor is a widespread phenomenon in the world's economies and has been for generations. It encompasses numerous complexities, w h i c h call for elaboration and clarification for better understanding of the concept. It is often confused with child work, but in recent time it has been put in the spotlight by activists, politicians and economists alike (Basu, 1999).

Child labor refers to „work carried out to the detriment and endangerment of the child, mentally, physically, socially and morally". It is characterized by denial of the right of children to education and other opportunities; children's separation from their families; and poor working conditions that include among others long working hours, poor working environment, heavy work regardless of age and sex; and so on. Bonded labor or debt bondage on the other hand is "the status or condition arising from a pledge by a debtor of his personal services or those of a person under his control as security for a debt".

The fundamental aspect of the logic of child rights is the prioritization of a change in culture over political economy as the means of achieving justice for children. Fraser (1997) in her Justice Interrupts powerfully discusses the wider discursive context of this: Critical Reflections on the „Post socialist" Condition. For Fraser, the „post socialist" condition is marked by the absence of a credible ideological alternative to the present order, and there urgency of economic liberalism. For the purposes of this paper, however, most critical is her discussion of the „shift in the grammar of political claims-making" that accompanies these. This crisis now directly affects every continent on the globe and indirectly every one of us.

RESEARCH OBJECTIVES

1. Identify the key factors that encourage the child labors in Okara District.
2. Evaluate the relationship between income of household and area of residency of children.
3. Examine how the unemployment makes causes the child labor in mostly rural areas of Okara District.
4. Examining the effect of un-education and less-education that promote the child labor for survival in Okara District.

LITRATURE REVIEW

Basu, K., & Tzannatos, Z. (2003) surveyed the large and rapidly growing literature on this subject, focused mainly on the new literature based on modern economic theory and econometrics. It also looked at some of the broad policy implications of these new findings, with the objective of contributing to better-informed discussion and policy design.

Delap, E. (2009) influenced of economic and cultural force is a key area of debate amongst those exploring the causes of child work, and in wider discoursed on household labor deployment.

Data from Dhaka slums suggested that household poverty and income stability were important economic determinants of children's work. However, economic forces alone cannot explain child-work deployment. Key cultural determinants of children's work include gender norms, age subordination and the cultural importance of avoiding idleness.

Ahmad and Mustafa (2011) have tries to find the determinants of child labor. They use primary data having a sample of 100 children from shadman market Lahore. Study design was descriptive and cross sectional. They estimated that in south Asia out of total thirty million children aged 5 to 14 twenty in point six million are laborers. Their result shows that family size and poverty have positive relation with child labor and family income have negative relationship with child labor. It is suggested that antichild labor laws must enforced strictly by government.

ILO, (2017) highlighted the urgent need for governments, policy makers, and international organizations to prioritize its elimination and address the underlying socio-economic factors that perpetuate this issue. The International Labor Organization (ILO) estimated that approximately 152 million children worldwide are engaged in child labor, with 73 million of them involved in hazardous work.

Oberg, C. (2018) examined the United Nation's Convention on the Rights of the Child (CRC) and other international conventions designed to protect them. They are virtually "stateless", children deprived of the protective structures of state and family that they need and deserve and unrecognized by either their country of origin or the international community. This opinion piece starts with the personal reflections of its author on his recent work in Middle East refugee camps.

METHODOLOGY AND METHODS

A quantitative methodology is deemed for this study to examining the factors that encourages the child labor. We take sample to approach 1250 male (n=760) and female (n=490) child from the Okara district. The data was collected from MCS 6(2017-18).

Table 1 comprises demographic information about the children. Most of the children were male and only 39.2% were female. Most children were 10-13 years old, comprising 45.7% of the sample. Most of the children were from Rural areas (65.4%) and 34.6% were from Urban areas.

Table 1
Frequency and Percentage distribution of children's demographics information

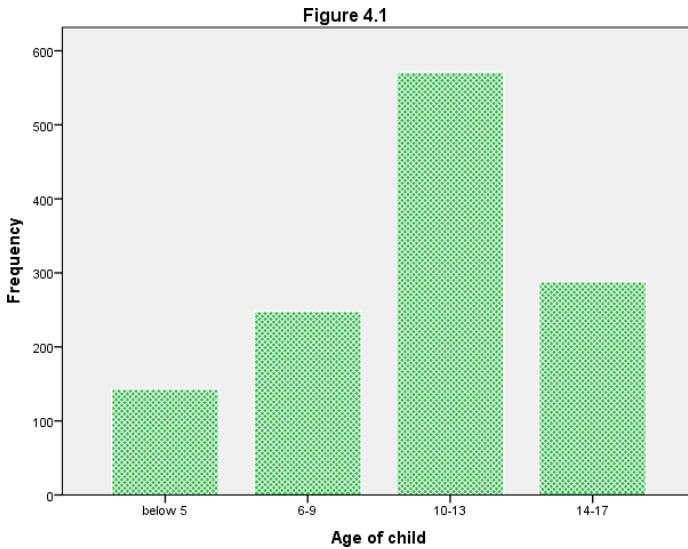| Variable	Frequency	Percentage
Age		
below 5 years	143	11.4
6-9 years	248	19.8
10-13 years	571	45.7
14-17 years	288	23
Gender		
Female	490	39.2
Male	760	60.8
Living Status		
Urban	433	34.6
Rural	817	65.4
Worked Hours		
No work	216	33.1
0-3 hours	358	28.6
4-6 hours	541	43.3
7-10 hours	135	10.8
Total	**240**	**100**

ANALYSIS AND DISCUSSIONS

Figure 4.1

Figure 4.1 shows the frequency of age categories as **below 5, 6- 9, 10-13 and 14-17** with their frequencies 143, 248, 571 and 288 respectively. It concludes that mostly children with age interval **10-13** years are involved in child labor.

R-PROGRAMMING FOR MULTIPLE REGRESSIONS

>x=lm(Work~Age+Gender,data=my thesis)
> print(x)

Call:
lm(formula = Work ~ Age + Gender, data = my thesis)Coefficients:
(Intercept)   Age   Gender 0.90198 0.34964   -0.09286

Regression Equation:-
$Y = 0.90198 + 0.34964x_1 - 0.09286x_2$

The equation $Y = 0.90198 + 0.34964x_1 - 0.09286x_2$ represents a linear regression model. It suggests that Y is influenced by two independent variables, x1 and x2, with respective coefficients of 0.34964 and -0.09286. The constant term 0.90198 represents the intercept.
Residuals:

Min	1Q	Median	3Q	Max
-1.60127	-0.50841	0.09802	0.49159	1.39873

The provided statistics represent the data ranges from approximately -1.60127 (minimum) to 1.39873 (maximum), with the median at 0.09802. The first quartile (-0.50841) and third quartile (0.49159) provide insights into the spread of the data, with 25% of values below -0.50841 and 75% below 0.49159, suggesting some variability inthe dataset.
Coefficients:

Estimate Std.	Error	t value	Pr(>|t|)	(Intercept)
	0.90198	0.06080	14.836	<2e-16***
Age	0.34964	0.02583	13.538	<2e-16***
Gender	-0.09286	0.0871	-1.906	0.0568

Signif. Codes: 0 „***" 0.001 „**" 0.01 „*" 0.05 „." 0.1 „" 1 Residual standard error: 0.8403 on 1247 degrees of freedomMultiple R-squared: 0.1314, Adjusted R-squared: 0.13
F-statistic: 94.34 on 2 and 1247 DF, p-value: < 2.2e-16

Factor analysis

Communalities		
	Initial	Extraction
Parents employment	1.000	.734
Living status	1.000	.770

Hours worked	1.000	.780
Education of child	1.000	.288

Extraction Method: Principal Component Analysis.

Component Matrix[a]

	Component	
	1	2
Parents employment	0.503	-.693
Living status	0.645	.594
Hours worked	0.883	.006
Education of child	-0.075	.531

Extraction Method: Principal Component Analysis.
a.   2 components extracted.

Total Variance Explained

Component	Extraction Sums of Squared Loadings	
	Total	% of Variance
1	1.456	36.391
2	1.116	27.892

Extraction Method: Principal Component Analysis

CONCLUSIONS
The study has emphasized the multifaceted nature of the issue, calling for comprehensive

interventions that tackle not only the economic factors but also the social, educational, and cultural aspects that sustain child labor practices. It is crucial for policymakers and stakeholders to adopt a holistic approach that combines legislative measures, educational reforms, poverty alleviation initiatives, and community engagement to create sustainable change.

This study has explored the factors that contribute to child labor in the Okara District using statistical analysis. By examining various aspects such as poverty, parental employment, education, and living conditions, we gained insights into why child labor persists in the region. These findings have important implications for policymakers and organizations working to address child labor. It is crucial to recognize that child labor is not a simple issue with one cause, but rather a complex problem influenced by multiple factors. Therefore, effective solutions must go beyond just addressing economic factors and consider social and educational aspects.

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