

Knowledge on Legal Provisions and Welfare schemes: A study on parents of Girl Child Labor

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Abstract

Child labour is an extensive human right issue. Child welfare has been engaging the attention of the world community. Twentieth century has been a landmark in the history of child welfare to the extent it has brought about greater awareness regarding the rights of children as independent entity. The main objective of the study is to study the knowledge level of Parents on welfare schemes provided by the Government for girl child labour. 46.3% of the respondents agreed that child labour compels children to lead premature adults and there is a chance to exploit by reason of their docility. 33.5 percent of the respondents agreed that inferiority complex among the children will suppress their courage and creativity. Creation of more employment opportunities to the unskilled Unemployed will help to economical growth in rural areas. Through Awareness generation programmes related to the Child Labour Laws with involvement of convergent departments, youth associations, SHGs, Civil Society members will be help to decrease the number of child labours.

Key words: Child Labour, Welfare, Girl Child, Economic, Legislation

Introduction

The general nature of child labour in India is more prevalent in rural areas. The problem of child labour has been tackled to certain extent through legislation and countries of the world have enacted certain laws and regulations restricting the employment of children below certain age and specifying the conditions allowing minors to work in certain profession. Laws that are meant to protect children from hazardous labour are ineffective and not implemented correctly. Many children are helping their family members in the field. Some work as part of contracts family labour where as other works in plantation work. In rural India, girl child workers are readily available for work and it is found very common for school aged children to be involved in agricultural works as part of family labour. The implementation of the Child Labour Laws at the State and district levels has been lacking.

In this study an attempt is made to present the way the parents and employers on the child labour matters and also information skills and understanding them through learning experience on the conditions and prevalence of child labour in the study area. The situation of the girl child labourer is particularly alarming due to the gender discrimination in large parts of Indian societies. As we know, three fourth of the national income comes from agricultural sector and more than 75 per cent of the people are depending on agriculture for their subsistence. Poverty and lack of social security are the main causes of child labour. The type of work and the working conditions are such that they rebuff opportunities for physical, social and mental development of the children. Both the girls and boys engage in the worst forms of child labour. However, it is important to realize that due to certain societal expectations, duties and responsibilities placed on girls, they are often more vulnerable to exploitation. The problem of female child labour is a highly complex one. Female children work in large numbers and for long hours in and outside the household, but their labour is unacknowledged or under-represented in formal labour statistics. Lack of quality universal education has also contributed to children dropping out of school and entering the labour force. A major concern is that the actual number of child labourers goes un-detected.

Welfare schemes for female child labour

Child labour is an extensive human right issue. Child welfare has been engaging the attention of the world community. Twentieth century has been a landmark in the history of child welfare to the extent it has brought about greater awareness regarding the rights of children as independent entity. Article 18 of the United Nations Convention on the Rights of the Child 1989, recognizes the rights of the child (i)to be protected from economic exploitation and performing any work that is likely to be hazardous; or (ii) interfere with his education; or (iii) be harmful to the child's health or physical, mental, spiritual, moral or social development. The International Labour Organisation also opposed to child labour in situations where children are disadvantaged educationally and socially, where they work in conditions that are exploitative to their health, etc. The Indian Government perceives child labour as a necessary evil, a concomitant of poverty, which cannot be done away unless poverty itself is eradicated from society. Thus the government in its continuing firm and untiring efforts to find out some suitable remedy to prohibit the engagement of children at least in certain types of employment, passed another Act in the year 1986, the Child Labour (Prohibition and Regulation) Act 1986. This is a step towards concretizing the labour conditions of the child work force repealing thereby the Employment of Children Act 1938. The 1986 Act does not completely ban child labour but only seeks to 'project' working children. The government of India launched the programs to remove or eradicate child labor working in dangerous or hazardous occupations and to rehabilitate them by setting up unique schools. The government has worked to put them in unique schools where they are furnished with education, vocational training, monthly stipends, and nutrition and health checks.

Government of India stands committed to the elimination of child labour in the country. Our Constitution provides for protection of children from involvement in economic activities and avocations unsuited to their age and this is provided for in the

Fundamental Rights (Article- 24). Directive Principles of State Policy in the Constitution also strongly reiterate. The Central Labour Service (CLS) was constituted with on 1987 to ensure better industrial relations, labour welfare and enforcement of labour laws. Consequent upon the Cadre Review, the Central Labour Service (CLS) was notified as an Organized Service in the year 2004. A number of schemes providing medical, housing, educational, recreational, water supply and family welfare benefits are being implemented for workers.

Material and Methodology

Objectives

The present study broadly aims at studying the socio-economic and social participation, employment support and knowledge on welfare schemes available to female child labours. The following are the main objectives of the present study:

- To study the level of knowledge on welfare schemes provided by the Government for girl child labour.
- To study the level of knowledge on girl child rights
- To examine the economic and social conditions of female child labour in the sample district.

Sample design and study area

The researcher has purposively selected the Kurnool district due to its proximity and familiarity. Stratified random sampling method was used in selection of study sample. The study has conducted in six mandals of three revenue divisions of the Kurnool district. Four villages from each mandal were selected. 20 respondents each were selected at random in 24 villages and the total sample is comprises of 480 female child labour residing in agricultural families in the Kurnool district for the present study.

Results

Socio-Demographic Characteristics of the respondents

A study of the background characteristics of sampled population is an important task in the study. Several studies have been shown that there is a strong relationship between socio-economic status and Girl Child Labour in Agriculture Families.

Table No.1: Percentage Distribution of the respondents by their Socio-Demographic Characteristics (N=480)

Socio-Demographic Characteristics of the respondents	Frequency	Percent
Age of the Respondent		
5-8 Year	47	9.8
9-11 Years	115	24.0
12-14 Years	318	66.2
Religion		
Hindu	242	50.4
Muslim	59	12.3
Christian	146	30.4
Others	33	6.9
Education		
pre-school	137	28.5
Primary	98	20.4
Upper-Primary	177	36.9
High School	68	14.2
Work Experience (Years)		
≤ 2 Years	151	31.5
2- 4Years	223	46.5
≥ 4 Years	106	22.1
Girl Child Income		
≤ 5000	16	3.3
5001 and above	464	96.7
Source of Family Income		
Agriculture	177	36.9
Allied Labour	155	32.3
Business	45	9.4
Others	103	21.5

Age plays an important role in measuring the respondent's perception on their present working condition. Data has been collected on the girls who involved in the agriculture labour to analyze the girl's working condition in the agriculture field. In the study area nearly two-thirds (66.3 %) of the respondents were in 12-14 years age group. One-fourth (24.0 %) of them were in 9-11 years and the remaining (9.8 %) were in the age group of 5-9 years. One half (50.4 %) of the respondents were Hindus, less

than one-third (30.4 %) of them were Christians, 12.3 percent were Muslims and 6.9 percent belong to other religions. It is observed from the above table that more than one third (36.9 %) of the respondents have completed upper-primary education in the study area. More than one-fourth (28.5%) the girls had pre-school education and two-fifth (20.4 %) had primary education and 14.2 percent of the respondents had high school education. More than two-fourth (46.5 %) of the respondents were having ≤ 2 years of experience in the agriculture field, less than one-third (31.5 %) of them were working experience of 2-4 years and more than one-fifth (22.1 %) of them were working 4 years and above in the agriculture field. Almost all (96.7 %) of the respondents were getting a monthly income Rs. 5000 and above the study area. More than one-third (36.9 %) of the respondents parents were having agriculture background, followed by allied labour (32.3%) and other types of activities (21.5 %).

The data was collected on parents opinion on child labour, sociological and economical aspects of the girl child labours in agricultural families namely on 1) fulfillment of social obligation 2) prone to habits like smoking, gambling and extravagancy 3) loss of potential intellectuals and thinkers in 4) prone to exploitation 5) violation of human rights 6) enforcement of laws 7) punishment under child labour laws 8) parents knowledge on girl child welfare schemes etc.

Table No. 3: Percentage distribution of the respondents by Parents opinion on Sociological and economical aspects of female child labour

Sociological aspects		Agree	Disagree	Un- Decided	Total
GCs need proper nurture and nourishment to make them best fits in future life	N	355	71	54	480
	P	74	14.8	11.3	100
CL has no rationale as it is the decision of the parent who are second to none as well wishes of children	N	256	160	64	480
	P	53.3	33.3	13.3	100
CL is not unethical rather fulfillment of social obligation by employers towards poor of whom government fails to take care of	N	199	173	108	480
	P	41.5	36	22.5	100
CL keeps children away from education and breeds illiteracy in a society	N	209	187	84	480
	P	43.5	39	17.5	100
Working children are prone to the habits of smoking, gambling and extravagancy	N	209	200	71	480
	P	43.5	41.7	14.8	100
Child labour compels children to lead pre-mature adults lives	N	222	161	97	480
	P	46.3	33.5	20.2	100
CL has high opportunity cost as it leads to loss of potential intellectuals and thinkers	N	225	188	67	480
	P	46.9	39.2	14	100
Inferiority complex suppresses courage and creativity of children	N	161	95	224	480
	P	33.5	19.8	46.7	100
Children as workers are prone to exploitation by reason of their docility	N	164	157	159	480
	P	34.2	32.7	33.1	100
Child labour is an off school of poverty which is the result of unequal distribution of wealth	N	288	141	51	480
	P	60	29.4	106	100

In the table no.3 shows that 33.5 percent of the respondents agreed that inferiority complex among the children will suppress their courage and creativity. 46.3% of the respondents agreed that child labour compels children to lead premature adults and there is a chance to exploit by reason of their docility. 43.5 percent of the respondents agreed that child labour leads to

children keep away from education and breeds illiteracy in society. 46.9 percent of the respondents agreed that child labour is one of the opportunities to forego the potential intellectuals and thinkers of nation. Nearly three-fifth (60 %) of the respondent's parents opinioned that unequal distribution of wealth is one of the reasons for child labour as it leads to more dropouts. Nearly three-fourth (74 %) of the parents agreed that girl child require proper nurture and nourishment to make them best fits in future life.

Table No. 4: Percentage distribution of the respondents by Parents opinion on Sociological and economical aspects of female child labour

Knowledge on Legal aspects		Agree	Disagree	Un- Decided	Total
Employing CL is a violation of human rights	N	235	211	34	480
	P	49	44	7.1	100
Employment of children in hazardous work is a crime	N	201	200	79	480
	P	41.9	41.7	16.5	100
Child labour is a moral crime against humanity	N	217	183	80	480
	P	45.2	38.1	16.7	100
Hazardous nature of job coupled with excessive work load and long hours of work are so heinous crime	N	138	226	116	480
	P	28.8	47.1	24.2	100
Child labour is a punishment to tender hands for no fault of theirs	N	111	267	102	480
	P	23.1	55.6	21.3	100
CL laws fail as these are unacceptable to people with unsound financial position	N	148	251	81	480
	P	30.8	52.3	16.9	100
Weak enforcement of laws leads to child labour with impunity	N	141	209	130	480
	P	29.4	43.5	27.1	100
The parents of child workers shall be booked under the relevant laws	N	144	166	170	480
	P	30	34.6	35.4	100
Child labour shall be completely banned in all aspects	N	202	205	73	480
	P	42.1	42.7	15.2	100
The employers of CL shall be dealt with stringent punitive measures	N	136	243	101	480
	P	28.3	50.6	21	100
Enforcement of child labour laws shall be strictly observed	N	155	275	50	480
	P	32.3	57.3	10.4	100
Child labour is subject to punishment under child labour laws.	N	167	112	201	480
	P	34.8	23.3	41.9	100

In this study an attempt is made to assess the parents' opinion on the sociological and economical aspect of the child labours related aspects. Nearly one-half (49 %) of the respondent's agreed that working as a child labour is violation of human rights. 45.2 percent of respondents accepted that child labour is moral crime against humanity and 41.9 percent of the respondents agreed that employment of child in hazardous work is crime and 28.8 percent of respondent's expressed that excessive workload and long hours of work in hazardous Work is heinous crime. Only one-third (29.4 %) of the parents were having knowledge on child labour laws as they expressed that the Child labour laws are failed in implementation and weak enforcement of law were the causes of child labour. Nearly one-third (32.3 %) of parents expressed that they have observed strict enforcement of child labour laws. 30% of the respondents were agreed that parents of the child labour should be punished under the child labour laws. More than one-third (34.8 %) of the respondents were aware that child labour is subject punishment under child labour laws. 42.1 percent of the respondents agreed that child labour shall be banned in all aspects. It is interesting to note that more than two-fifth (41.5 %) of the parents agreed that child labour is not an unethical and the employers of the child labour were giving an opportunity to get the financial source for those who are neglected by the governments.

The findings from the above table shows that majority of the parents were aware of the ill effects of the child labour and also the laws and functioning of law enforcement authorities related to child labour.

Parent's knowledge on various welfare schemes implemented by the government to avoid Child Labour is presented in the table no. 5. Cent percent of the respondents (100 %) in the study area agreed that free education for girls up to higher education will help to eradicate the child labour. Higher proportion (85 %) of the respondent's expressed that balika samrakshana scheme is very useful to balance sex ratio and prevent gender discrimination and the scheme is also encouraging employment

skills, opportunities and creates awareness on health and family life education to girl Child. More than one-half (51.7 %) of the respondents felt that Apni Beti Apny Desh scheme is providing rehabilitation services for those who were rescued from child labour and brothel home. Similar percentage (62.5 %) of the respondents agreed that strict implementation of prenatal diagnostic technique act helps in reducing female feticides and the gender discrimination. The girl child agreed that Implementing the constitutional provisions and human rights for girl child reduces gender discrimination (60 %) and welfare measures are sufficient to improve the girl child status provided by the government and non-government organizations (60.2 %). More than one-half (52.5 %) of the respondents agreed that national policy for children and legal enactment facilitates the development of girl child.

Table No. 5: Percentage distribution of the respondents by Parents knowledge on welfare schemes for female child labour

Parents knowledge on welfare schemes		Agree	Disagree	Total
Free education for girls up to degree level is very beneficial for girl education	N	480	0	480
	P	100	0.0	100.0
Balika samrakshna pathakam is very useful to balance sex ratio and prevent gender discrimination	N	408	72	480
	P	85	15	100
The KB scheme is encouraging employment skills, opportunities and health awareness of girl children	N	290	190	480
	P	60.4	39.6	100
KB scheme is providing awareness on family life education to girl children	N	290	190	480
	P	60.4	39.6	100.0
ABAD programme is very useful to rehabilitate the girls who are rescued from CL and brothel home	N	248	232	480
	P	51.7	48.3	100.0
Strict implementation of pre –natal diagnostic technique Act, 1994 helps in reducing female feticides	N	300	180	480
	P	62.5	37.5	100.0
Constitutional provision and human rights for GC reduces gender discrimination	N	288	192	480
	P	60	40	100.0
National policy for children and legal enactments facilitate development of GC	N	252	228	480
	P	52.5	47.5	100.0
The present welfare measures taken by govt, NGOs are sufficient to improve the girl child status	N	289	191	480
	P	60.2	39.8	100.0

Conclusion

Equality of opportunities is the foundation of modern welfare states. The crucial role that education can play in the reduction of child labour and improvement in the economic well being of individuals can go a long way in achieving such ends. However, in a country like India, poverty remains the key determinant of children not being sent to school. Equality of opportunities is the foundation of modern welfare states. The crucial role that education can play in the reduction of child labour and improvement in the economic well being of individuals can go a long way in achieving such ends. However, in a country like India, poverty remains the key determinant of children not being sent to school. Equality of opportunities is the foundation of modern welfare states. The crucial role that education can play in the reduction of girl child labour and

improvement in the economic wellbeing of individuals can go a long way in achieving such ends. In India, poverty remains the key determinant of children not being sent to school. Most of the parents are not able to afford to send them to school. The path to progress in terms reducing the number of girl child labourers by taking into consideration the cultural and economic measures, their future will continue to remain bleak. The study suggests that promotions of non-agricultural economic activities like micro and small industries and self-employment with the support of SHG groups (Women Groups) are the best alternatives to improve employment and income generation for the rural poor. Creation of more employment opportunities to the unskilled Unemployed will help to economical growth in rural areas. Through awareness generation programmes related to the Child Labour Laws with involvement of convergent departments, youth associations, SHGs, Civil Society members will be help to decrease the number of child labours. Educate the parents of girl child on importance of sufficient nutritious food and proper education for the growth of girl child and its impact on future generations.

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