

Child Labour in Beedi Making - At a Glance

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Abstract: *Education is a key factor for the wholesome development of an individual as well as our Nation building. Education is a powerful weapon to eradicate poverty, unemployment and underemployment and hunger from our country. Children who are drawn to child labour are basically driven because of economic deprivation and lack of schooling and engagement of family for their daily needs. Child comes in many forms. It can be visible or invisible many children work at dumpsites, cut stones, work in small factories, car workshops or as a carrier in ports or on construction sites, parents also sent their out to go begging on the streets, other work as prostitutes or domestic slaves. Over 1.7 million children work as laborers in India's beedi-rolling. This information was released on children's day by public health organization, NGOs and there are some studies which have found that there is low enrolment in schools with increased rates of child employment. School education is the most important platform for early intervention against child labour. The National Child Labour Project (NCLP) scheme was launched in nine districts which are observed to have a high prevalence of child labour in the country. Under the scheme funds are given to the district collectors for running special schools with the objective of eliminating child labour. Most of these schools are run by the Non-Governmental organizations in the districts. Under the scheme those children are provided formal and informal education along with vocational training at a stipend of Rs.100 per month and health check-up are also done for them. Few abuses of human rights are so universally condemned, but at the same time so universally practiced as child labour. This issue should rank high on the global agenda but in practice, it is surrounded by a wall of silence and perpetuated by ignorance. Child labour continues to be an affront to the conscience of the world community.*

Keywords: Education, children, labour, act, parents, wage, ignorance, poverty, income, gender, compulsion.

Introduction

The beedi enterprises in India were established initially as cottage or family business houses and grew in to a massive production with high turnover and enormous employment potential in India. Beedies are made up of tendu leaves hand rolled with shredded tobacco. Nearly 4.5 million workers are engaged in beedi making. Mostly the economically and socially backward populations are involved in beedi making. The tendu leaf collection is one of the profitable livelihood works for tribals. It is believed that poor families very often send their children to work in order to increase household income. This is perhaps because child workers may make significant contributions to the family survival strategy. Another dimension is that the parents may send their children to work as part of a survival strategy to minimize the risk of interruption

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Child Labour in Beedi Making - At a Glance

in the income stream. Interruption in the income stream is naturally severe for poor households and hence child labour seems rational, since it increases the variety of their income sources. School children are forced to become child laborers as their households are characterized by irregular savings and lack of assets. The ban on the use of forced child labour is one among the labour standards. In India, Article 24 of the Constitution prohibits employment of children below 14 years in a factory, mine or any other hazardous employment. Article 39 states that the health and strength of workers, men and women, and children should not be abused and that the citizens are forced by economic necessity to enter into vocations unsuited to their age or strength. This Article also states that children should be given opportunities and facilities to develop in a healthy manner and in freedom and dignity that childhood and youth are protected against exploitation and against moral and material abandonment.

Child labour is the practice of having children evange in economic activity on part or full time basic. The practice deprives children of their childhood and is harmful to their physical and mental development. Poverty, lack of good schools and growth of informal economy are considered as the important causes of child labour in India.

Expenditure "between" 2005-2007 under the National Child Labour Project (NCLP)

S. No	States	2004-2005	2005-2006	2006-2007
1	Andhra Pradesh	23,22,20,831	21,16,10,829	14,16,35,611
2	Assam	6,86,500	12,46,800	1,24,03,500
3	Bihar	2,82,05,834	4,33,86,910	14,26,79,960
4	Chattisgrah	2,30,80,814	3,68,57,738	3,11,07,540
5	Goa	5,92,000	0	0
6	Gujarat	21,53,500	4,404,800	1,55,49,200
7	Aryana	4,58,500	17,18,000	0
8	Jammu & Kashmir	4,58,500	5,92,000	0
9	Harivana	1,92,85,773	3,72,80,078	1,83,82,939
10	Karnataka	3,31,01,388	5,06,51,674	5,28,28,784
11	Madhya Pradesh	44.54,226	3,68,26,745	2,94,09,567
12	Maharastra	1,68,48,418	1,92,55,655	2,78,28,784
13	Orissa	13,12,64,355	13,44,19,118	11,07,92,590
14	Punjab	1,84,04,902	1,55,28,577	90,20,900
15	Rajasthan	4,43,03,713	6,86,13,939	11,62,69,919
16	Tamil Nadu	72462692	15,18,92,537	18,66,47,881
17	Uttarakhand	61,368	5,92,000	0
18	West Bengal	7,42,36,099	8,31,28,311	9,41,40,687
	Total	81,30,82,789	10,07,63,112	10,56,16,774

Source: The National Child Labour Project Yojana- 2008 Page-17

In most economically disadvantaged families, the girl child is denied educational, nutritional and health care, and her growth and development are further restricted by the process of socialization. Despite their significant contribution to the family income, the girls' economic participation goes unnoticed as they are employed in either family labour or domestic work or in the unorganized sector. The predominance of girl child labour is reflected in the inks of various studies conducted in the government industry in India, match industries and in many other industries. For better understanding of the issues of child labour the first important step is to understand the specific situation in depth and the complexities involved in its various

manifestations. Social-economic and social-cultural factors responsible for most girl child labourers are lack of self-esteem and lack of support and encouragement from their parents. Child development minister recently shared experiences from their sectoral interventions on improving the sex ratio at birth, initiatives undertaken to encourage girl child education and to strengthen the advocacy initiatives. The need of key stakeholders and involving local champions and prominent local personalities to ensure effective mindset would be to change girl child education, child labour, school dropout, and street children in the community. Collectors should monitor community mobilization, effective implementation of PCPNDT Act, promoting girl child education and effecting monitoring of BBBP and also appointing special Mahila Police Volunteers can lead to the implementation of the programme. The SMPVs will act as eyes and ears of the district administration and help provide essential information regarding child marriage, girls being prevented from going to schools, toilets for girls in schools, violence against women. The minister added that the NGOs can become another important partner in BBBP and their involvement can be beneficial since they operate even in the remotest parts of the states.

Proportion of child population in the age group 0-6 in total population

S.No	State	1991	2001(Percentage)
	Group-A		
1	Kerala	13.19	11.48
2	Tamil Nadu	13.33	10.98
3	Andhra Pradesh	16.49	12.77
4	Orissa	16.89	14.11
5	Karnataka	16.63	13.94
6	West- Bengal	16.98	16.88
7	Chhattigarh	16.34	16.88
8	Assam	19.73	16.33
9	Punjab	16.30	12.58
	Group-B		
10	Gujarat	16.48	14.58
11	Maharashtra	17.11	13.63
12	Harkhand	20.17	17.82
13	Madhya Pradesh	19.94	17.58
14	Uttar Pradesh	20.88	15.56
15	Haryana	18.88	15.56
16	Rajasthan	20.13	18.51
17	Bihar	20.13	19.59
18	India	17.94	17.42

Source: Compiled from census of India 2001.

Worldwide as many as 168 million children have jobs. There are facing trafficking, sexual exploitation of children, abuse and humanitarian aid in their work places. They earn a few cents an hour and they simply do not have enough time to go to school and improve their future prospects. About 13, 40,000 children below 5 die in a year that is 3671 under 5 child deaths per day. Nearly half of all child deaths less than 5 in India are attributed to under nutrition. 1 in every 11 children in India is working, when they should be at school. More than half (56%) of the under 5 deaths occur within the first 28 days of life. Beedi manufacturing is one of the important

Child Labour in Beedi Making - At a Glance

occupations employing large number of children in Tamil Nadu and mostly they work in their homes on a piece-rate basis with the raw material supplied by contractors. The nature of beedi rolling is very monotonous and hazardous in nature. After entering in to the beedi works at an early age, the children not only sacrifice their childhood but also run the risk of health hazards.

The Factors influencing for Children Working in the Beedi Industry

S. No	Major reasons	Male	Female
1	Not interested in education	14	3
2	School is far off	11	2
3	Unable to cope up with studies	3	8
4	Parents forced to involve	4	2
5	Other reasons	3	1
	Total	37	13

Source: Data collected from the responded

Poverty is one of the important factors for this problem. *Investment trade and labour productivity influence every aspect of economic growth as well as child labour. Children are involving in beedi making as it is part of a survival strategy to minimize risk of interruption in the income stream. Irregular savings and lack of assets is another important factor.* Beedi making are Labour intensive. Therefore, large number of children is engaged in beedi processing. Most of the parents are ignorant about the importance of their children's education and poor economic conditions of the family situation were a major reason for child labour. Gender bias is also one of the most important factors for child labour. Huge number of families is working as bonded laborers and they have pledged their children in the beedi making. Drug addiction and irresponsibility of male members in the family especially father and frequent migration of families on account of debt and accumulation, improper treatment and teasing by teachers and friends respectively are the other reasons that have lead to the practice of involving children in beedi making in the study area.

State Wise Minimum Wages Prescribed for Beedi Workers

S.No	State	Minimum wages per day (1000 Beedies) (Rs)	DA (Rs)	Total (Rs)
1	Andhra Pradesh	114.50	12.5	127.20
2	Bihar	123.00	9.00	132.00
3	Gujarat	130.00	-	130.00
4	Karnataka	118.00	10.00	128.00
5	Kerala	93.60	47.93	141.53
6	Madhya Pradesh	134.00	-	134.00
7	Maharashtra	114.62	10.38	125.05
8	Orissa	129.00	-	129.00
9	Rajasthan	129.00	-	129.00
10	Tamil Nadu	37.20	84.50	121.70
11	Uttar Pradesh	136.00	-	136.00
12	West Bengal	112.78	26.22	139.00

Source: Labour Bureau (2016)

Beedi making is a major revenue source in many parts of the country where five lakh million beedies are manufactured every year and its worth is close to 65 million. According to Government reports it is observed that children are also working in labeling and packing jobs in factories and in beedi rolling in homes. But their employment was not shown in the regards for the employees of child workers are admitted them as workers on the pretext that they were helping their parents. Beedi production units exploit the loophole by giving work to families, who in turn also use children in beedi making. Most of the beedi rolling work is carried out in continuation at home. The subcontractors pass on the raw materials to the family's beedi workers who in turn involve their children. Beedi workers were getting low wages due to merchants determining the prices of the beedi workers. Therefore, the children are forced to work along with them.

Objectives of the study

1. To study the importance of education and healthcare of the children.
2. To analysis the factors influencing children are involving in beedi work.
3. To enable the method of motivational factors needed for their parents.
4. To educate parents to prevent the next generation from ending up in the vicious circle of poverty.

Method of data collection

The data base for this study consists of both primary and secondary in nature. Primary data was collected from the parents and their children involved in beedi making by administering personal interview schedule. In addition, case study method and observation techniques were also employed to supplement primary data.

Sampling method

The total number of child workers in the study village is 100 as per the estimate made and supplied by study village. Out of this, a sample of 50 per cent was drawn by adopting simple random sampling technique and the size of sample is rounded to fifty for the purpose of analysis.

Selection of Universe

The child labour who is engaged in beedi works on full-time basis form the universe of the study. Majority of the working children (30 per cent) come under the age group of 8-12 with regard to family size.

Process in Beedi making

There are four important processes pertaining to beedi industry in India. They are tendu leaf procurement, tobacco procurement, beedi rolling and packaging.

Importance of the study

The present study has been analyzed after studying the beedi workers at an early age, the children red not only sacrifice their childhood but also run the risk of health hazards. Their constant exposure to the tobacco dust and tend leaves leads to diseases like asthma, allergy, tuberculosis, back- pain, Body-ache, Joint pain and problem of eye irritation. Apart from the above mentioned problems at the individual level, families involved in beedi rolling are ruthlessly exploited by contractors and hence the crying need of the hour is to focus on the root

Child Labour in Beedi Making - At a Glance

and branch causes of the problem in the direction of offering possible solutions. It is in this respect a study among child labour engaged in beedi works was conducted in Keeranoor village of Madurai District with a view to study the Socio- economic status of child worker family's circumstances and factors associated with educating child labour dredger of beedi rolling and dimensions of exploitation.

Major findings of the study

Child population

The study revealed that child population accounts for 30 percent among sample households and pronominally leading to supply Child labour in beedi making.

Age and family size

Majority of the working children (30 percent) come under the age group of 8-12 with regard to family size, category of small family size (3-5 members) and the average family size estimated (4-10 members)

Occupational status and Income

It is found in the study that majorities (68 percent) of the male adult members were coolie workers and invariably all female adults in the family engaged in beedi rolling. Therefore, beedi rolling has been feminized leading to unconscious induction of child labour in beedi works.

Indebtedness and land holding

The study revealed that a vast majority (57 percent) of the families resorted to borrowing to conduct social ceremonies, meet medical expenditures and repay old debts. Moreover on account of lack of occupational diversification the people were trapped in unemployment leading to borrowing of money with a view to ensure their survival. Further, the study indicated that majority (67 percent) of the sample households possessed no land assets. Even among land holders, the extent of holding ranged between 0-2 acre which is neither economic nor productivity put in to use due to lack of irrigation facilities. As a result, the families in the study area were living under poverty leading to child labour beedi works.

Educational status

The study indicated that vast majorities (60 percent) of the family members among sample households were literate and supply of child labour in beedi works is not correlated with the level of education of parents. With regard to educational attainment, majority (64 percent) of working children purged education up to 8th standard so as to make them eligible to get benefit from the Government.

Reasons for school drop-out

The reasons attributed to drop-out of child labour are: Disinterest in studies, compelled to supplement family income and importance of education is not properly perceived by parents. It is also understood from the study that children were not properly motivated and oriented towards learning.

Work Experience, work burden and income earned.

Majority (80 percent) of the children has less than 2years of experience. Further unskilled on the part of child labour in beedi rolling is being promoted simultaneously even while going to school as part time workers. In respect of work burden in terms of hours, half of the children interviewed worked 5.30 hours on an average per day. Further; it is observed that children were also attending to other house hold works by compulsion apart from that engagement and beedi making. Hence the centre nature of children imposes additional burden on them which goes either unnoticed or unrecognized in rural context. With regard to number of beedies produced income earned ,it is found the study that on an average a child produced one thousand beedies per day for Rs.50 rupees and the average monthly earnings by children is estimated at rupees Rs.1500.

Determinants of child labour in beedi works

Besides poverty, unemployment and other reasons attributed to the problem of child labour included death of bread winners in the family, beedi rolling by child labour is considered as one of the criteria in their marriage as it offers vast scope for earning income through beedi rolling in their husband's residence.

Production process and Exploitation

It is found that majority of the respondents (80 per cent) were supplied with poor quality raw materials or damaged leaves. It means shortage of leaves to roll the beedies proportionate to target fixed. Shortage of tendu leaves results in a reduction in the beedies rolled and the worker is held responsible for this. In order to avoid the shortage of raw materials, the workers often resort to purchase such materials on their own to replenish the shortage. It is very well established in beedi production were imposed additional burden in terms of finance in the process of replenishment which further deteriorate them economically leading to mental agony. However, the workers have no option but to accept the situation since there is no alternative employment in the area and the contractor take undue advantage of this situation resulting in widespread exploitation.

Conclusion

In the context of child labour, it is important to emphasize that policies relating to population, gender bias in education, investment trade and labour productivity influence every aspect of economic growth as well as child labour. Absence of demographic transition, static or inferior technology and absence of child focused effective public policy leads to the vicious spiral where demand and supply of child labour grows through mutual dynamic, spiral type reinforcement. Therefore, the system of contract that exists in beedi production can be replaced by encouraging the formation of 'Beedi workers co-operatives.'" So that they get a better deal compared to being in the clutches of the exploitative contractors. In this context that we have to take a relook at the landmark passing of the rights of children to free and compulsory Education (RTE) act 2009 which marks a historic moment for the children of India.RTE provides a ripe platform to reach the unreached with specific provisions for disadvantaged groups such as child laborers, migrant children, children with special needs or those who have a disadvantage owing to social cultural and economical geographical linguistic. Gender or such other factors successful implementation of the act would certainly so a long way in eradicating child labours in India. Further it is understood from the analysis that the parents envisaged a better future for their children in the

Child Labour in Beedi Making - At a Glance

beedi sector since the art of beedi rolling enhances their matrimonial alliance in terms of added qualification and this is also one of the reasons why child labour were drawn to beedi work. Therefore, it is necessary to change the attitude and perception on the part of parents towards education and prevention of child labour and its impact in future society.

References

In respect of recreation, children hardly find time to play unlike other activities such as watching of T.V., listening to radio and visit friends. Therefore, it is derived from the study that balanced personality development on the part of children is critically.

The Government has been laying a lot of emphasis on the rehabilitation of these children and on improving the economic conditions of their families.

Many Non-Governmental organizations like care India assets that child labour can be stopped when knowledge is translated into legislation and action and moving good intention and ideas into protecting the child's health.

Focusing on grassroots strategies to mobilize communities against child labour and reintegration of child workers into their homes and schools has proven crucial to breaking the cycle of child labour.

A multi-disciplinary approach involving specialists with medical psychological and socio-anthropological level is needed to curb this evil.

National Child Labour Project scheme should have special training centers to mainstream child laborers into regular schools.

Monitoring of mid-day meals to ensure quality food to all children in beedi workers areas and supplementing nutrition to mal-nourished children in schools.

As in the mandate of providing education to all, Integrated Child development Services (ICDS) scheme should be expanded in beedi workers to send their children to school.

The Government should establish additional Children's homes and observation homes in the locality.

The Government should extended regular medical check-up for beedi workers and their children. Establish mobile health units can also be used in beedi workers children. It would facilitate early detection of diseases.

Panchayati Raj Institutions have to be involved in monitoring of the child labour situation in their respective villages.

Elimination of child labour in beedi industry should be included in state action plan for eradicating child labour and living it with RTE.

Task force on elimination of child labour in beedi industry to monitor the identification of child labour, pre-rescue planning, rescue operation, interim care, repatriation, rehabilitation, social reintegration and follow up and prosecution of employers or violators under all relevant laws would be needed in future.

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