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## RESEARCH ARTICLE

### THE WORK SITUATION AND WORKING CONDITIONS OF CHILD LABOUR N MEERUT CITY (U.P.)

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#### ABSTRACT

Child labour has become a big problem in India. It is no doubt a socio-economic problem. A national survey had shown that more than 16 million children between eight to fourteen are largely appointed in the informal sector, like restaurants, tea stall, motor garages etc. The main objective of the paper are:

1. To find out the factor of motivation for being engaged in such occupation, their prior status.
2. To explain the co-relation between their Socio-economic characteristics and their nature of the job and their working and living conditions.
3. To make an indepth study of their work situation income potential, employer-employee relationship, job satisfaction and exploitative tendencies.

The study purpose 100 case sample has been selected purposive randomly of the different restaurants, tea stalls, tailoring, motor garages and scissor work in Meerut city which is scattered in entire city. The Guardian/Parents and employers also too were covered of the selective sample. The primary data of the study was collected through observation and interview schedule. The main finding of the study are:

- The poverty was the most important reason for non-schooling of the child labour.
- The main reason behind the employers preference for children were suitability for odds job and create less trouble.
- The tea stalls, tailoring, motor garages and Scissors work relatively, serve and entry jobs for the child labour in those occupations.
- More educated child labour were doing odds jobs and working in tea stalls, in comparison to other occupation. Here is negative co-relationship.
- The majority of working children were employed before the got into their present job.
- The educated child get employed much later than the illiterate child who gets employed earlier.
- The general observation is that the children are put to long hours of work more than adults.
- The majority of children work more than 8 hours a day. The decreasing the working hours with increasing of literacy.
- The working children do not have fixed time of recess and relaxation it depend Marcy of employer.
- The ill-treatment by the employer of the children are decreases with increasing age. It show positive co relation between the employers relation and age.
- The majority of the child labour are maximum paid up to 2000/- per month and other are nominal allowances unpaid learner.
- The wages of child labour and their educational background do not have positive relationship between the variables.
- No discriminatory reason in tailoring, motor garages and scissors work against the low wages.
- The mode of payment of wages varies according to the nature of activity.
- The shop & commercial establishment act do not follow by the employers.
- The majority of the child laborer were dissatisfied with their jobs.
- The majority of the child labour have the health problem due to heavy work.
- Most of the child labourers were have faced several problem like ill treatment by the employers as well as customers.

The greedy employer do not care the existing law like employment act 1973 and the child labour (Prohibition and regulation)<sup>8</sup> act 1986. etc.

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## INTRODUCTION

Child labour has become a big problem in India. It is no doubt a socio-economic problem. A national survey had shown that more than 16 million children between eight to fourteen are largely appointed in hotels and boarding houses, in tea stalls, restaurants etc. There are about 12.59 million child labours in India which is quite increase from 11.28 million as census 1991<sup>2</sup> and 126.67 lakhs child labour is the age group 5-14 years is exists in India as reported in census 2001<sup>3</sup>. The number is rapidly increasing every year on the basis of industrial revolution, industrialization process leads to migration of labour, including child labour, from rural to urban areas to informal sectors. who exploits child labour to minimize their costs and maximize profit.

### Definition of the term Use

The term child labour basically means that the children below the age of 14 years. Who are employed for hired reward in occupation that are injurious to their physically, mental, intellectual, moral and social development do to oppression and exploitation inherent in the employment. For the purpose, of the study the child labour shall mean any one below the age of 14 years, who has undertaken any gainful occupation? who is working under employer or learning some trade as an apprentice. And the kind of work they undertake are injurious to their physical, mental, moral development. Thus, the term include wage labour as well as self employed children working independently.

**Restaurant:** The shop or place where the food, Snacks and tea is available to take eat or drinks.

**Tea stalls:** Road side shops where tea & snacks is available.

**Motor garage:** Where the motor car, motor cycle, scooter & trucks are to be repaired, cleaning etc.

**Tailoring:** Shop where the cloth is stitching.

**Scissor unit:** Mean such place where the scissors are manufactured.

**Employer:** Any person who is the owner of the units.

The work situations and working conditions are two important aspects which determine the employee, employer-relationship at work places. The former include the nature of jobs, the conditions of work, working environment and the employment relationship, whereas the latter emphasises the availability of human and conducive conditions of work places. The terms of work and the working condition have been regulated through the statutory provisions under different state and central legislation, but the scope of these acts are limited to the formal sectors only. It is a matter of grave concern the conditions of work in the informal sectors norms are still decided by the employers in an arbitrary manner and working condition so horrible and shocking that it becomes difficult to believe that labourer can work in such conditions.

### The main objective of the paper are

- To find out the factor of motivation for being engaged in such occupation, their prior status.

- To explain the co-relation between their socio-economic characteristics and their nature of the job and their working and living conditions.
- To make an in-depth study of their work situation income potential, employer-employee relationship, job satisfaction and exploitative tendencies.

The present paper has been attempted to understand the work situation and working condition of the child labour in Meerut city which scattered in the entire city. The study purpose 100 case sample of the child labour has been selected purposive randomly of the different restaurants, tea stalls, tailoring, motor garages and scissor works. The employers and guardian also too were covered of the selected sample of the child labour. The primary data of the study was collected through observation and interview schedule.

## FINDING

- The poverty was the most important reason for non schooling of the child labour.
- The poor economic condition and parents desire to work due to families need have compelled them to take up work of the children.
- The majority of the children have joined the work because of economic necessities.
- The main reason behind employer's preference for children were suitability for odd jobs and other followed by easily available, cheapness, create less trouble in the work.
- The most common reason their parents desire them to be employed due to economic compulsion.
- While a large number of the younger children are forced to seek employment because of the supplement of their families income, a large number of older children do so because of their poor economic conditions. Hence parents want their children to get employed at an early age.
- The relationship between the level of education of the child and the need for taking up jobs to help the family and themselves. Perhaps these children are quite sensitive to problems of their families.
- The tea stalls, tailoring, motor garages and scissors work relatively serve as entry jobs for the child labour in these occupations.
- More educated children were doing odd jobs and working in tea stalls in comparison to other occupation. Here is negative co-relationship.
- The majority of the working children were employed before they got into their present job.
- Around ¼ of the illiterate children were idle at home before they joined their present jobs. While all others were employed in different occupations.
- The working children increases with the age of 12 years and then suddenly decreases with the increasing age.
- The educated child gets employed much later than the illiterate child who gets employed earlier.
- The general observation is, that the children are put to long hours of work more than adults.
- The regulation of hours of work is freely misused by the employers and the child labour on the worst exploited in this matter.

- The majority of children work more than 8 hours a day. The decreasing the working hours with increasing of literacy.
- The children are often required to work round the clock or have highly irregular hours of work, primarily due to the absence of state regulations and the informal nature of employment relations.
- Working children do not have fixed time of recess. The relaxation was given in odd time. Although the recess had been one to half hour in all types of activities but in most of the cases, had no scheduled period for rest. It depend on customer and mercy of the employer.
- The majority of child labour felt that the employers are only interested in work increases with the increasing age. with regard to ill-treatment by the employers of the children are decreases with increasing age. It shows the positive co-relationship between the employers relation and age.
- The child labourer increases of the level of education felt that their employers have been kind to them with regard to ill treatment by the employers are decreases with increasing educational levels.
- The employer are more interested in getting work and only marginally in the child. It shows that the child labourer are exploited by their employers.
- The majority of child labour are maximum paid up to 2000/- per month and other are nominal allowances un paid learner.
- The increasing the age of the child labour are increasing their wages. The unpaid learner children are decreases with increasing age.
- The wages of child labour and their educational background do not have positive relationship between the variables. This is perhaps because of the wages of child labourers depend more on the persons skill, competence and length of service.
- The majority of the child labour doing odd job and independent work were getting better wages. The learners and helpers are ordinarily paid no wages or only nominal allowances.
- The majority of the child labourer in restaurants and tea stalls did not come out with a sharp reaction against the law wages paid to them and the discrimination practised against them in comparison with the adult labourer. No discriminatory reaction in tailoring, motor garage, and scissor work against the low wages. Eleven case were found that the child labour did not actually know how much being paid to them.
- The mode of payment of wages varies according to the nature of activity. As usual the restaurant labourer have meals included in their wages in tea stalls, the child labour would be eating at the employers houses and shop and also do some house hold chores. In tailoring, motor garages and scissor work have not been provide meals. There were no complaints of non-payment or marked irregularity in the payment of wages.
- The restaurants and tea stalls are same what more rigorous by covered under the shop and commercial establishment Act.<sup>9</sup> But no working children in this group reported he was allowed leave with pay. no medical facilities were provided when they were sick or any type of injury if the money would provided, it is also deducted in the wages. The restaurants, tea stalls and motor garages do not close any day of the week accept tailoring and scissors works.
- The majority of the child labour were dissatisfied with their jobs. This is quite natural as condition were no means satisfactory.
- As for as the impact of the health of children is concerned the majority of the children have the health problem due to heavy work.
- Most of child labours were have faced several problems at work site like harassment and ill-treatment by the employers, adult workers as well was customers, bed working condition, no facilities of sanitation more hours of work with out any additional money and continuous work staining pain of the body and health problem as well.

The greedy employer do not care existing law like employment Act <sup>7</sup> 1973 and child labour (Prohibition and regulation act 1986)<sup>8</sup>, etc.

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