

Occupational profile of child labour in Chikankari industry

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ABSTRACT

Child labour is a global phenomenon and harsh reality arised out of the fact that in the present state of development in the country, parents on account of poverty have to send their child to work in order to supplement their incomes. Thus any work, whether manual or mental, which is under taken by a child who is below 14 years of age under monitory consideration is called child labour. To assess the nature and the extent of this social evil it was necessary to study the character of the jobs in which the children are engaged. Chikankari industry is one of the many industries in which involvement of child labourers is popular. To assess the extent of involvement of child labour in chikankari related works, the present study was taken up with an objective to determine the occupational profile of child labour in chikankari industry. The study was conducted in Lucknow district of Uttar Pradesh. Multistage random sampling technique was adopted in the present research. The sample of 120 child labour including 60 boys and 60 girls were selected from Kasbas to study their occupational profile. A self developed questionnaire was used to collect the information. The reason for work was revealed to be the economic burden in the families. Majority of the girls prefered to study and work comparitively to boys. Government has to adopt strict procedures in implementation of the policies to eradicate the child labour.

INTRODUCTION

Child labour involves every working child, irrespective of whether the child is engaged in wage or non-wage work or whether he or she is working for the family or others, employed in hazardous or non-hazardous occupations, employed on a daily wage or on a contract basis. Child labour became a global phenomenon today and is a harsh reality. The harsh reality of child labour arose out of the fact that in the present status of poverty, parents have to send their children to work in order to supplement their income and the income derived from the child labour, however meager is essential to sustain the family. Any work, whether manual, which is under taken by a child who is below 14 years of age for monitory reason is called child labour. According to child labour (Prohabitation and Regulation) Act, 1986 the act defines a child as any person who has not completed his fourteenth year of age. It prohibits children from working in any occupation like catering at railway establishments, construction work on the railway or anywhere near the tracks, plastics factories, automobile garages, etc. the act also prohibits

children from working in places where certain processes are been undertaken, like beedi making, tanning, soap manufacture, brick kilns and roof tiles units, etc. the act also emphasizes that children are not permitted to work for more than three hours stretches and must receive an hour break after the three hours. Children are not permitted to work for more than six hour stretches including their break interval and cannot work between the hours of 7 p.m. and 8 a.m. No child is allowed to work overtime or work in more than one place in a given day. A child must receive a holiday from work every week.

Previous literature has focussed on examining child labour under various dimensions working at various places like petty shops, food industry, mechanic shops, household labour handicraft industries etc. But the present study focuses to see the differences between exclusive workers and who work and go to school across gender. Homer Folks, the chairman of the United States National Labour Committee has defined child labour as any work by children that interfere with their full physical development, their opportunities minimum of education and their needed recreation.

The International Labour Organization estimates that number of children aged 5-14 year in the year 2000 who went economically active was 211 million, while the number classed as child labourers was 186.3 million of these 120 million were estimated to be in full time work. According to their estimates there are 25 million children employed in agricultural sector. 20 million in service jobs, hotels, shops, and as servants in home and 5 million in the handloom carpet making, gem cutting and match box making industries. As many as 91 per cent of child labour in India are in rural areas, while one per cent are in the urban areas. In India every third child is a working child and every fourth child in the age group 5-15 is employed. Child labour is concrete manifestation of violations of a range of rights of children and is recognized as a serious and enormously complex social problem in India. Working children are denied their survival and development, education, leisure and play, and adequate standard of living, opportunity for developing personality, talent, mental and physical abilities, and protection from abuse and neglect.

Chikankari industry which is mainly concentrated in Lucknow district of Uttar Pradesh involves most of the families. The major community involved in this work is Muslim Community. All the family members of a family are involved in this work inclusive of both male and female. It was also seen that children were not sent to school but were involved in chikankari work. The industry where lakhs of people were involved, comprised almost 50 per cent of the child labour. Hence, the present study was taken up to study the occupational profile of the child labour in chikankari industry and to compare the profile between exclusive workers and who works and go to school across gender.

METHODS

The present study was conducted in Lucknow city, U.P as Lucknow is the base for the chikankari industry. The child labour involved in chikankari industry was selected as sample using multistage random sampling technique.

The desired sample size for this study was computed by taking the child labour involvement (P) as 60 per cent (from previous studies), Permissible level of error (E) as 15 per cent at 95 per cent confidence level, using the given formula-

$$n = \frac{z^2 pq}{E^2}$$

by substituting the values in the formula, the sample

size was determined to be 120.

Children working in chikankari industry partly going to school (category of work and school) and completely stopped going to school (work exclusively) of both the gender, in the age group of below 14 years were included in the research. 60 boys and 60 girls were selected as the sample, from which the sample was further divided into, two categories-work and school –Children who were part timers and worked exclusively

–chikankari who were full time workers and the differences in the work profile of these two groups was studied and differences across gender, within these groups was also seen. A self-developed questionnaire was constructed to collect the information and a pilot study was conducted on the 10 per cent size of the sample to finalize the questionnaire.

OBSERVATIONS AND ANALYSIS

Child labour is a global phenomenon and a harsh reality. Child labour is both an economic and a social evil. In assessing the nature and the extent of the social evil, it is necessary to take into account the character of the jobs in which the children are engaged. The present research on child labour in chikankari industry was conducted to study the occupational profile across gender.

Occupational profile of the respondents:

Children engaged in chikankari work were identified as the respondents for the present study. The occupational profile of the respondents was studied by understanding their type of work, profile of work, source of training in work, reason for choosing work and mode of payment.

The table above indicates that 61.66 per cent of the girls and 46.66 per cent of the boys were continuing education along with work. 53.33 per cent boys was engaged in school and work, whereas, 38.33 per cent girls were engaged only in work. 38.33 per cent girls had stopped going to school. The data clearly indicated the extent of involvement of children in chikankari industry. It can be seen that majority of boys were involved in the category of work exclusively in comparison to only 38.33 per cent of girls. The data indicates that majority of the girls preferred to study and work.

Table 1: Distribution of respondents according to working status (n-120)

Educational status	Boys (N=60)	Girls (N=60)	Total
Work and school	28 (46.66)	37 (61.66)	65 (54.16)
Work exclusively	32 (53.33)	23 (38.33)	55 (45.83)

Figures in parenthesis indicate percentages

It is seen from Table 2 that 20 per cent of the girls and boys, worked and went to school did printing in comparison to 47.27 per cent of girls and boys, worked exclusively. 69.23 per cent of girls and boys did stitching worked and went to school in comparison to 45.45 per cent girls and boys worked exclusively. 6.15 per cent of the boys and girls, work and went to school did designing and 1.81 per cent of the girls and boys, worked exclusively. 4.61 per cent of the girls and boys, worked and went to school did all type of work in comparison to 5.45 per cent of the girls and boys, worked exclusively. It can also be noted that none of the children were involved in finishing and designing and the adults were involved in the work.

Type of work	Work and school (n=65)		Total	Work exclusively (n=55)		Total
	Boys (n=28)	Girls (n=37)		Boys (n=32)	Girls (n=23)	
Printing	13(46.42)	0	13 (20)	25 (67.56)	1 (4.34)	26 (47.27)
Stitching	8 (28.57)	37 (100)	45 (69.23)	3 (9.37)	22 (95.65)	25 (45.45)
Designing	4 (14.28)	0	4 (6.15)	1 (3.12)	0	1(1.81)
Finishing	0	0	-	0	0	-
All type of work	3 (10.71)	0	3 (4.61)	3 (9.37)	0	3(5.45)

Figures in parenthesis indicate percentages

Profile of work	Work and school (n=65)		Total	Work exclusively (n=55)		Total
	Boys (n=28)	Girls (n=37)		Boys (n=32)	Girls (n=23)	
Group	26 (92.85)	11 (29.72)	37 (56.92)	30 (93.75)	11 (47.82)	41 (74.54)
Single	2(7.14)	1(70.27)	28 (43.07)	2(6.25)	12 (52.17)	14 (25.45)

Figures in parenthesis indicate percentages

Source of training in work	Work and school (n=65)		Total	Work exclusively (n=55)		Total
	Boys (n=28)	Girls (n=37)		Boys (n=32)	Girls (n=23)	
Parents help	3 (10.71)	19(51.35)	22 (33.84)	3(9.37)	10(43.47)	13 (23.63)
Workshop	14(50)	0	14 (21.53)	26(70.56)	2(8.69)	28 (50.90)
Friends	4(14.28)	8(21.62)	12 (18.46)	1(3.12)	8(34.78)	9 (16.36)
Developed as a hobby	7 (25)	10(27.02)	17 (26.15)	2(6.25)	3(13.04)	5(9.09)

Figures in parenthesis indicate percentages

The profile of the work is divided in to two parameters group work and individual work. The data elicited that 56.92 per cent of boys and girls, who worked and went to school worked in groups, but 74.54 per cent of boys and girls, who belonged to work exclusively worked in groups. 43.07 per cent of the boys and girls, who worked and went to school worked in single, but 25.45 per cent of the boys and girls who belonged to work exclusively worked in single. A clear cut difference was observed in the profile of work where in boys belonging to both groups preferred to work in groups where as girls work in single (Table 3).

The Table 4 and Fig. 1 divided into four parameters, one was parents help, second one was workshop, third one was friends and last one was developed as a hobby. It can be observed that 33.84per cent of the boys and girls were trained by parents who worked and went to school, but 23.63 per cent of the boys and girls, who worked exclusively, were trained by parents. Majority of the boys worked exclusively (70%) and who worked and went to school (50%) learned work from work shop. 18.46 per cent of the boys and girls were trained with friends help who worked and went to school. 26.15per cent of the boys and girls worked and went to school. In comparison to only 9.09 per cent of the boys and girls worked exclusively developed it as a hobby.

The data in Table 5 and Fig. 2 clearly indicates that majority of boys (50%) and girls (52.17%) worked exclusively and worked

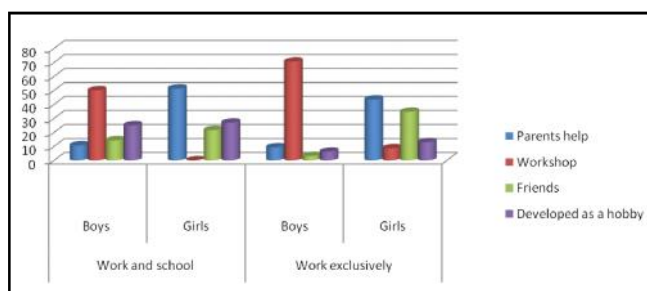


Fig. 1 : Source of training in work

because of economic burden. This also indicates that majority of the children did not attend school due to economic burden. The result of the present study are at par with the findings of the study conducted by Satapathy *et al.* (2005) on child labours

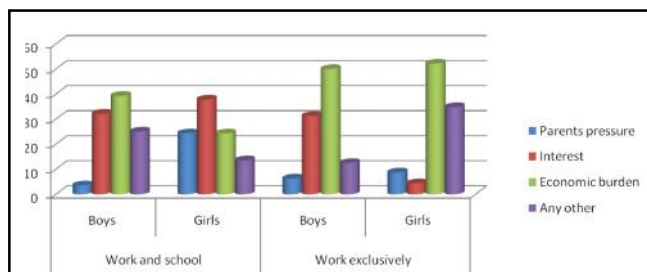


Fig. 2 : Reason for choosing to work

Table 5 : Reason for choosing to work						(n=120)
Reason for choosing to work	Work and school (n=65)		Total	Work exclusively (n= 55)		Total
	Boys (n=28)	Girls (n=37)		Boys (n=32)	Girls (n= 23)	
Parents pressure	1(3.57)	9(24.32)	10 (15.39)	2(6.25)	2(8.69)	4 (7.27)
Interest	9(32.14)	14(37.83)	23 (35.39)	10(31.25)	1(4.34)	11 (20)
Economic burden	11(39.28)	9(24.32)	20 (30.77)	16(50)	12(52.17)	28 (50.90)
Any other	7(25)	5(13.51)	12 (18.46)	4(12.5)	8(34.78)	12 (21.81)

Figures in parenthesis indicate percentages

Table 6 : Mode of payment						(n=120)
Mode of payment	Work and school (n=65)		Total	Work exclusively(n= 55)		Total
	Boys (n=28)	Girls (n=37)		Boys (n=32)	Girls (n= 23)	
Daily	2(7.14)	0	2 (3.07)	0	0	–
Weekly	13(46.42)	6(16.21)	19 (29.23)	7 (21.84)	4(17.39)	11 (20)
Fortnight	7(25)	9(24.32)	16 (24.61)	14(43.75)	10(43.75)	24(43.63)
Monthly	0	0	–	0	0	–
Piece basis	0	22(59.45)	22 (33.84)	0	9(39.13)	9 (16.36)
Contract basis	6(21.42)	0	6 (9.23)	11(34.37)	0	11 (20)

Figures in parenthesis indicate percentages

which revealed that the major reason for doing work was income. It can also be noted that majority worked and went to school. They worked due to interest and almost one fourth of the respondents worked due to parents' pressure. A study conducted by Mitra (1995) also revealed that major factor responsible for the involvement in child labour was financial reasons followed by pressure from parents.

The data presented in the Table 6 indicates that majority (40%) of the girls worked exclusively to get a payment on piece basis. Equal percentage of the respondents got weekly payment. None of the girls and very few percentages of boys get daily payment belonging to both the categories. It can also be seen that only boys worked on contract basis.

Conclusion:

Children's neglecting school is not because they are not interested in education, but it is due to the pressure of filling the stomachs though there are various acts which clearly speak about severe punishment but we can see many of the industries openly employing the children below 14 years of age and the parents say that there is no other ways except for working. The study clearly indicates that there are part timers as well as full timers but worked for earning, to support the family. Government has to take initiative in not only framing the policies but also should take keen interest in their implementation strictly. The reason for child labour is economic burden. This area may be looked into, so that child labour may be eradicated, the future citizens may be saved from the clutches of labour.

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