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## Child Labour - A bird view.

Dr. C.V. Kalburgi\*

Associate Professor in Rural Development, HKE'S SP & JMB Degree College ShorapurPage

### INTRODUCTION:

Children are the greatest gift to humanity and Childhood is an important and impressionable stage of human development as it holds the potential to the future development of any society. Children who are brought up in an environment, which is conducive to their intellectual, physical and social health, grow up to be responsible and productive members of society. Every national links its future with the present status of its children. By performing work when they are too young for the task, children unduly reduce their present welfare or their future income earning capabilities, either by shrinking their future external choice sets or by reducing their own future individual productive capabilities. Under extreme economic distress, children are forced to forego educational opportunities and take up jobs which are mostly exploitative as they are usually underpaid and engaged in hazardous conditions. Parents decide to send their child for engaging in a job as a desperate measure due to poor economic conditions. It is therefore no wonder that the poor households predominantly send their children to work in early ages of their life. One of the disconcerting aspects of child labour is that children are sent to work at the expense of education. There is a strong effect of child labour on school attendance rates and the length of a child's work day is negatively associated with his or her capacity to attend school. Child labour restricts the right of children to access and benefit from education and denies the fundamental opportunity to attend school. Child labour, thus, prejudices children's education and adversely affects their health and safety.

India has all along followed a proactive policy in addressing the problem of child labour and has always stood for constitutional, statutory and developmental measures that are required to eliminate child labour. The constitution of India has relevant provisions to secure compulsory universal primary education. Labour Commissions and committees have gone into the problems of child labour and made extensive recommendations. India's judiciary, right up to the apex level, has demonstrated profoundly empathetic responses against the practice of child labour. Despite several proactive legislations policies and judicial pronouncements, the problem of child labour persists as a challenge to the country.

**II) Magnitude of child labour in India:****State-wise Distribution of working Children according to 1971, 1981, 1991 and 2001 Census in the age group 5-14 years**

S.No	Name of the State/UT	1971	1981	1991	2001	2011
1	Andhra Pradesh	1627492	1951312	1661940	1661940	404851
2	Assam	239349	**	327598	327598	99512
3	Bihar	1059359	1101764	942245	942245	451590
4	Gujarat	518061	616913	523585	523585	250318
5	Haryana	137826	194189	109691	109691	53492
6	Himachal Pradesh	71384	99624	56438	56438	15001
7	Jammu & Kashmir	70489	258437	**	**	25528
8	Karnataka	808719	1131530	976247	976247	249432
9	Kerala	111801	92854	34800	34800	21757
10	Madhya Pradesh	1112319	1698597	1352563	1352563	286310
11	Maharashtra	988357	1557756	1068427	1068427	496916
12	Chhattisgarh					63884
13	Manipur	16380	20217	16493	16493	11805
14	Meghalaya	30440	44916	34633	34633	18839
15	Jharkhand					90996
16	Uttaranchal					28098
17	Nagaland	13726	16235	16467	16467	11062
18	Orissa	492477	702293	452394	452394	92057
19	Punjab	232774	216939	142868	142868	90353
20	Rajasthan	587389	819605	774199	774199	252338
21	Sikkim	15661	8561	5598	5598	2704
22	Tamil Nadu	713305	975055	578889	578889	151437
23	Tripura	17490	24204	16478	16478	4998
24	Uttar Pradesh	1326726	1434675	1410086	1410086	896301
25	West Bengal	511443	605263	711691	711691	234275
26	Andaman & Nicobar Island	572	1309	1265	1265	999
27	Arunanchal Pradesh	17925	17950	12395	12395	5766
28	Chandigarh	1086	1986	1870	1870	3135
29	Dadra & Nagar Haveli	3102	3615	4416	4416	1054
30	Delhi	17120	25717	27351	27351	26473
31	Daman and Diu	7391	9378	941	941	774
32	Goa			4656	4656	6920
33	Lakshadweep	97	56	34	34	28
34	Mizoram		6314	16411	16411	2793
35	Pondicherry	3725	3606	2680	2680	1421
	<b>Total</b>	<b>1075398</b>	<b>1364087</b>	<b>1128534</b>	<b>1128534</b>	<b>435324</b>
		<b>5</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>9</b>	<b>9</b>	<b>7</b>

Note : \* 8 1971 Census figures of Assam includes figures of Mozoram

\*\* Census could not be conducted

\*\*\* Census figures 1971 in respect of Mozoram included under Assam.

\*\*\*\* includes marginal workers also

The magnitude of child labour in India has been witnessing enormous decline in the last five decades, both in terms of magnitude and workforce participation rates. Evidence drawn from the census data suggest that India's working children during 2011 was estimated 43,53,247 or against 1,07,53,985 in 1971. During this period, the number of child labor has declined by 40.48%. There is considerable fall in child labor is observed among boys than girls. The above table shows us that there is considerable decline in the states and union territories also. During this period 67.57% in Uttar Pradesh, 50.27% in Maharashtra, 45.80% in West Bengal, 30.84% in Karnataka, 24.87% in Andhra Pradesh and 21.32% decline in Tamil Nadu.

The latest global estimates indicate that the number of child labor has risen to 160 million worldwide i.e., an increase of 8.4 million in the last five years. The number of children aged 5 to 17 years in hazardous work which will harm their health. Additional economic shocker and school closing due to COVID-19 forced into the worst forms of child labor due to job and income losses among vulnerable families.

### III) Causes and consequences :

Over population, illiteracy, poverty and debt are some of the common causes for child labour. According to UNICEF children are employed because they can be easily exploited. Some of the important causes of child labour are-

- 1) Poverty
- 2) Unemployment and under employment
- 3) Illiteracy and ignorance
- 4) Lack of quality and skill based education
- 5) Demand for child labour
- 6) Disintegration of joint family

### Consequences -

The some of the major effects of child labour are-

- a) Loss of childhood
- b) Health issues
- c) Mental trauma
- d) illiteracy

#### **IV) Government Measures:**

The government had initiated various legislation policy and programmes to eradicate child labour, they are-

- 1) Child labour (prohibition & regulation) Act 1986
- 2) Child labour (prohibition & regulation) Amendment Act-2016

National policy on child labour-1987

Juvenile justice (care and protection of children) Act 2000 and amendment Act –in 2006

Pencil.gov.in to ensure effective enforcement of childlabour laws and eradicate child labour.

The right to education Act 2009

Also many NGO's like Bachpan Bachao Andolan, child fund, CARE India, Talash association child right and you, Global march against child labour, Kailash satyarthi children foundation etc have been working to eradicate child labour in India.

#### **V) Conclusion :**

Children are the greatest gift to humanity and future for development of any society. Every nation links its future with the present status of its children. Therefore child labour should never exist. However, It is still noticeable that people around the country hire children because they will work with low wages which will give more benefit to them. So It is the responsibility the every citizen of the country that one should not encourage and let others to hire child labour.