

Socio- Economic Conditions of Child Labour in Belagavi District: Emerging Issues and Evidences

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Abstract

The socio-economic conditions play a significant role in giving rise to the problem of child labour. Child labour perpetuates poverty, it does not reduce it as it condemns one generation after another to its vicious circle. It is generally considered that illiteracy, ignorance, low wages, poverty, unemployment, and social life all are the root cause of child labour. In the present study an attempt has been made to assess the significance of selected socio-economic variables and to suggest measures for the improvement of socio-economic conditions of the child labour in India in general and child labour in Belagavi district in particular. This study is mainly based on primary data. Simple statistical tools and techniques like averages, ratios, percentages, were employed for analysis of data. The main findings indicate that of the total sample child labour a significant proportion of are Hindus, followed by Muslims and the others. A majority of child labour having primary and higher primary level of education. It is found that the housing conditions of child labour is very poor. A majority of the child labour parents are in the informal sector activities such as agricultural labour, small and marginal farmers, coolie, construction work, petty trade and repair work. Similarly a majority of sample child labour had lowest household annual income. Finally the study suggested that strict enforcement of provisions regarding hours of work, minimum wages, better infrastructure, facilities at the work place, provisions for education and training etc., are the immediate remedial measures.

Keywords: *Child Labour, Social Status, Economic Conditions, Age Composition, Educational Status, Housing Conditions, Household Annual Income.*

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I. Introduction

The problem of child labour has been undoubtedly one of the deepest concerns of all societies. Child labour denies child hood to a person. It denies some basic human rights to children, mainly right to education, right to food and nutrition, and right to enjoy childhood. The international labour organization has involved in the fight against child labour since its establishment in 1919. Yet child labour continues to exist in a substantial size in all developing countries. Wide spread poverty forces the family to put their children to work. The existence of child labour therefore associated with survival of the family. Poverty and child labour form a vicious cycle. Child labour has become a global phenomenon in these days. It is not peculiar to a particular country irrespective of economic development, growth and prosperity has spread over all the countries of the world. Child labour has gained considerable attention at national and international level in recent years. The Convention on the Rights of Child (CRC) is an evidence of it. Consequently now it is for most duty of every nation to protect and promote the welfare of the children. But the undesired prevalence of child labour has affected the progress. The problem of child labour has become more severe problem than elsewhere. The laws so far enacted have very little effect. They have failed to identify clearly the magnitude and dimensions of child labour. Social workers, activists from the trade union re facing difficulties in helping the children due to the ambiguity in the laws in existence, the other are social and economic factors. The workers involved in fight against child labour do not get the proper data and information on the nature, causes and conditions of child labour and about their feelings and aspirations (Manas, 2014). Child labour refers to the employment of children in any work that deprives children of their childhood, interferes with their ability to attend regular school, and that is mentally, physically, socially or morally dangerous and harmful (ILO, 2014).

There are no definite estimates of child labour. This is because of under reporting of the phenomenon. Majority of the child labour working in agriculture or in informal sector in the form of ‘helpers’ ‘assistants’ does not figure into child labour statistics. Therefore it is difficult to identify the magnitude and the problem of child

labour in India. In this direction the micro level studies are useful to understand the problem. Although the incidence of child labour in Karnataka has been, comparatively low, the north Karnataka districts with high rates of poverty and backwardness showed a high prevalence of child labour. This suggests that child labour is induced more by economic reasons of poverty and indebtedness. Since, in a structurally unequal society, the access to economic mobility tends to lie in socio-cultural factors, the high incidence of child labour is found among the vulnerable castes like the SCs, the STs and Muslims. There has also been some growth of girl child labour. Agriculture and Livestock rearing has of late emerged as critical sectors employing child labourers. Also, child labourers are also found in quarrying, construction, sericulture; hotels; shops, etc. (Shivagami & Prasad, 2019). Child labour have been facing a lots of problem. So as the development of social and economic conditions of child labour families are not improved. Against this background the present study has been undertaken.

II. Objectives Of The Study

The objectives of the study are:

- To study the social status of the child labour in Belagavi district of Karnataka;
- To study the economic conditions of the child labour in Belagavi district of Karnataka
- To suggest measures for the improvement of socio-economic conditions of the child labour in India in general and in Belagavi district in particular.

III. Data Base And Methodology

The study is mainly based on primary data. The primary data were collected by canvassing the structured interview schedules among the child labour in two taluks of Belagavi District namely, Belagavi, & Khanapur. Multi stage stratified random sampling technique was adopted for collection of the primary data. Belagavi district is selected for the purpose of present study. From Belagavi district two taluks one developed (Belagavi), and one backward (Khanapur) were selected on the basis of selected socio-economic indicators. In Belagavi district child labour are working in may organized and un organized sector, out of which 5 major un organized sectors are taken for the present study, namely, Agriculture and Allied Activities; Manufacturing (Beedi and bricks industries); Construction Sector; Hotel Industries; and Street Children. The criterion of selection of sample child labour from the selected sector is done through convenience sampling method. From, Belagavi taluk 125 child labour consisting of 25 child labour each from 5 major unorganized sector were selected. Similarly, from Khanapur taluk 125 child labour consisting of 25 child labour each from 5 major unorganized sector were selected. Hence, total sample size of the study was 250 child labour. Simple statistical tools and techniques like averages, ratios, percentages, were employed for analysis of data.

IV. Results And Discussion

This section an attempt has been made to analyze the socio-economic conditions of the sample child labour in Belagavi district.

4.1. Religion & Caste of the Sample Child Labour

The data presented in Table 1 indicates that of the total sample child labour a significant proportion of 64.80 per cent are Hindus, followed by Muslims (29.60 per cent) and the Others (5.60 per cent). Across taluks the share of sample child labour belonging to Hindu (68 per cent) religion was found to be higher in Khanapur taluk as compared to that of in Belagavi taluk (66.40 percent) .Whereas the share of sample child labour belonging to Muslim religion was found to be higher in Belagavi taluk (29.60 per cent) as compared to that of in Khanapur taluk (26.40 per cent) .While the share of sample child labour belonging to Others religions was found to be higher in Khanapur taluk (5.60 per cent) as compared to Belagavi taluk (4 per cent). This implies that the proportion of sample child labour is higher in Hindu religion than that of in Muslim and other religions.

A majority of 54.50 per cent of sample child labour belong to other backward caste. While 29.50 per cent and 16 per cent of sample child labour belong to Scheduled caste and Scheduled tribe category, respectively. Across taluks the proportion of sample child labour who belong to other backward caste was found to be higher in Belagavi taluk as compared to that of in Khanapur taluk. Whereas the proportion of sample child labour who belong to Scheduled caste and Scheduled tribe was found to be significant in Khanapur taluk as compared to that of in Belagavi taluk. This implies that the share of sample child labour is higher in socio-economically marginalized sections of the society and is lower in socio- economically better of sections of the society.

Table 1: Distribution of Sample Child Labour by Religion and Caste

Religion/Caste	Belagavi taluk	Khanapur taluk	All
Hindu	66.40	68.00	64.80
Muslims	29.60	26.40	29.60
Others*	4.00	5.60	5.60
SCs	28.00	31.00	29.50
STs	15.00	17.00	16.00
OBCs	57.00	52.00	54.50
Total	100.00 (125)	100.00 (125)	100.00 (250)

Note: * Includes Christians and Jains: Figures in parenthesis indicate actual data.

Source : Primary Survey.

4.2. Gender Composition of the Sample Child Labour

The data presented in Table 2 indicates that at the aggregate level of the total sample child a majority of 198 accounting for 79.20 per cent of child labour were found to be male, whereas the minimum of 52, accounting for 20.80 per cent of child labour were found to be female. Going by taluks the proportion of male child labour was found to be higher in Belagavi taluk (81.60 per cent) as compared to that of in Khanapur taluks. Whereas the proportion of female child labour were found to be significant in Khanapur taluk (23.20 per cent) as compared to that of in Belagavi taluk.

Table 2 : Distribution of Sample Child Labour by Gender

Gender	Belagavi taluk	Khanapur taluk	All
Male	81.60	76.80	79.20
Female	18.40	23.20	20.80
Total	100.00 (125)	100.00 (125)	100.00 (250)

Note: Figures in parenthesis indicate actual data. Source: Primary Survey.

4.3. Age Composition of the Sample Child Labour

The data presented in Table 3 reveals that at the aggregate level the majority of 52.80 per cent sample child labour were in the age group of 15-17 years, while of 47.20 per cent were in the age group of 5-14 years and none below the age of 5 years. Across taluks, it has been observed that the share of child labour who fall under the age group of 5-14 years is higher in Khanapur taluk (51.20 per cent) as compared to that of in Belagavi taluk (43.20 per cent). Whereas the share of child labour who fall under the age group of 15-17 years is higher in Belagavi taluk (56.80 per cent) as compared to that of in Khanapur taluk (48.80 per cent).

Table 3: Distribution of Sample Child Labour by Age Composition

Age Composition	Belagavi taluk	Khanapur taluk	All
5-14	43.20	51.20	47.20
15-17	56.80	48.80	52.80
Total	100.00 (125)	100.00 (125)	100.00 (250)

Note: The figures in parenthesis indicate actual data. Source: Primary Survey.

4.4. Educational Status of the Sample Child Labour

Education is the first pre-requisite towards the improvement of the status of an individual. Education for all is an essential requisite for fulfilling personal and societal obligations and for leading a life of achievement. Lack of education ensures that a child remains an unskilled labourer forever. Working children are deprived of the opportunity to educate themselves. For them earning is the first priority. Absence of any provision for compulsory education is an important cause of child labour. The provision of compulsory education up to a prescribed age could compel the children to attend school so that there may not arise the question of children entering into the employment. Further, mostly children finding non-availability of school going facilities at the initial stage seek some job as an alternative. But it is observed in our country that though many children are enrolled in the initial stage, very soon they drop out. Child labour and absence of compulsory education have a significant linkage among the poorer sections (Balachandran,1986). In order to understand the role of education and magnitude of child labour , data pertaining to level of education of child labour was collected. The data presented in Table 4 reveals that out of 250 sample child labour a majority of 81.20 per cent

child labour are literates, whereas the rest of 18.80 per cent child labour are illiterates. Among the literate sample child labour, the highest proportion of 40.80 per cent child labour having the education up to primary level. While of 30 per cent child labour had higher primary level of education. Further, a minimum 10.40 per cent child labour had secondary level of education.

Taluk wise analysis indicates that the proportion of sample child labour who were illiterate was found to be significant in Khanapur taluk (20.80 per cent) as compared to that of in Belagavi taluk (16.80 per cent). Whereas among the literate child labour the proportion of child labour who had primary level of education was found to be higher in Khanapur taluk (43.20 per cent) as compared to that of in Belagavi taluk (38.40 per cent). Whereas the proportion of child labour who had higher primary and secondary level of education was found to be significant in Belagavi taluk (together 44.80 per cent) as compared to that of in Khanapur taluk (together at 36 per cent). This implies that, education and labour participation of children are inversely related. Higher educational participation means lower rate of entry into labour market. In the present study it is found that there is an association between the educational level and the age at which he starts working. The association is significantly high. As long as the child goes to school, he will not participate in economic activity.

Table 4 : Distribution of the Sample Child Labour by Level of Education

Level of Education	Belagavi taluk	Khanapur taluk	All
Illiterate	16.80	20.80	18.80
Primary level	38.40	43.20	40.80
Higher primary level	31.20	28.80	30.00
Secondary level	13.60	7.20	10.40
Total	100.00 (125)	100.00 (125)	100.00 (250)

Note: Figures in parenthesis indicate actual data. Source: Primary Survey.

4.5. Sample Child Labour by Types of Working Sector

Belagavi and Khanapur taluks are selected for the purpose of the present study. Child labour are working in various organised and unorganised sectors. Among them only five unorganised sectors viz., Agriculture and Allied Activities, Manufacturing, Construction Sector, Hotel Industries and Street Children have been selected on the basis of proportion of child labour working. Table 5 exhibits the data on distribution of sample child labour by working units. The data exhibits at the aggregate level, a good representative number of 50, accounting for 20 per cent workers from each unit that, at the aggregate level, with a view to ensure more representation the significant proportion of 50, accounting for 20 per cent workers from each sector were selected. Hence the total sample size of the study was 250 sample child labour consisting of 50 child labour each from 5 selected sectors.

Across taluks, in case of Belagavi taluk, 25 child labour, accounting for 20 per cent from each selected sector were chosen. Hence the total sample size of the Belagavi taluk was 125 child labour consisting of 20 workers from 5 selected sectors. Similarly in case of Khanapur taluk a similar, of 25 child labour, accounting for 20 per cent from each selected sector were chosen. Therefore the total sample size of the Khanapur taluk was 125 workers consisting of 25 child labour from 5 selected sectors. This implies that the convenience sampling technique have been used for the present study.

**Table 5
Distribution of Sample Child Labour by Types of Working Sector**

Types of working sectors	Belagavi taluk	Khanapur taluk	All
Agriculture and Allied Activities	25 (20.00)	25 (20.00)	50 (20.00)
Manufacturing	25 (20.00)	25 (20.00)	50 (20.00)
Construction Sector	25 (20.00)	25 (20.00)	50 (20.00)
Hotel Industries	25 (20.00)	25 (20.00)	50 (20.00)
Street Children	25 (20.00)	25 (20.00)	50 (20.00)
Total	100.00 (125)	100.00 (125)	100.00 (250)

Note: Figures in parentheses indicate percentage to column total.
Source: Primary Survey.

4.6. Length of Service in the Present work of Sample Child Labour

Table 6 depicts the data on distribution of sample child labour by years of engagement in work in selected taluks. The tabulated data gives us the responses of sample child labour regarding the years of engagement of child labour in work. It is found that of the total 250 sample child labour a majority of 99, accounting for 39.60 per cent child labour have been working 5 to 7 years in their present job. 27.60 per cent sample child labour are working 5 to 7 years. 17.20 per cent sample child labour are working 3 to 5 years. 6.40 per cent sample child labour are working 1 to 3 years. 5.60 per cent sample child labour are working 9 to 11 years. Whereas the minimum of 1.60 per cent and 2 per cent sample child labour are working < 1 year and > 11 years, respectively. A Similar trend by and large was also observed in both the taluks.

Across taluks the proportion of child labour who are working < 1 year, 1 to 3 years , 5 to 7 years, 7 to 9 years in their present job was found to be significant in Khanapur taluk (altogether at 80.80 per cent) as compared to that of in Belagavi taluk (all together at 69.60 per cent). Whereas the proportion of workers who are working 3 to 5 years, 9 to 11 years and above 11 years was found to be higher in Belagavi taluk (all together at 30.40 per cent) as compared to that of in Khanapur taluk (all together at 19.20 per cent).

Table 6
Distribution of Sample Child Labour by Years of Engagement in Work

Years	Belagavi taluk	Khanapur taluk	All
< 1	0.80	2.40	1.60
1-3	4.80	8.00	6.40
3-5	20.80	13.60	17.20
5-7	37.60	41.60	39.60
7-9	26.40	28.80	27.60
9-11	7.20	4.00	5.60
> 11	2.40	1.60	2.00
Total	100.00 (125)	100.00 (125)	100.00 (250)

Note: Figures in parenthesis indicate actual data. Source: Primary Survey.

4.7 Housing Condition of Sample Child Labour

The data presented in Table 7 shows that at the aggregate level out of 250 samples child labour majorities of 73 per cent child labourers' families were live in Katcha houses. Similarly, a large proportion of 23.50 per cent were live Semi-pucca houses. Whereas a minimum of 3.50 per cent were live in Pucca houses .Across taluks the share of sample child labourers' families who are living in semi-Pucca and Pucca houses was found to be higher in Belagavi taluk (all together accounting for 31 per cent) as compared to that of in Khanapur taluk (all together accounting for 23 per cent). Whereas the share of sample child labourers' families who are liveing in Katcha houses was found to be significant in Khanapur taluk (77 per cent) as compared to that of in Belagavi taluk(69 per cent).

Table 7 : Distribution of Sample Child Labour by Housing Condition

Housing status	Belagavi taluk	Khanapur taluk	All
Katcha	69.00	77.00	73.00
Semi-Pucca	26.00	21.00	23.50
Pucca	5.00	2.00	3.50
Total	100.00 (125)	100.00 (125)	100.00 (250)

Note: Figures in parenthesis indicate actual data. Source: Primary Survey.

4.8. Family Type of Sample Child Labour

The family structure whether it is nuclear or Joint is also another important factor which has influenced on the children participation in economic activities. Table 8 provides the data on distribution of sample child labour by family type in selected taluks. The data manifests that at the aggregate level, out of 250 sample child labour a significant number of 209, accounting for 83.60 per cent were found to be living in nuclear family and the rest i.e. 41 accounting for 16.40 per cent were living in joint family.

Across taluks, the proportion of child labour who came from nuclear family was found to be slightly higher in Belagavi taluk (85.60 per cent) as compared to that of in Khanapur taluk (81.60 per cent), whereas the proportion of child labour who came from joint family was found to be higher in Khanapur taluk (18.40 per cent) as compared to that of in Belagavi taluk (14.40 per cent).

Table 8
Distribution of Sample Child Labour by Family Type

Family type	Belagavi taluk	Khanapur taluk	All
Nuclear	85.60	81.60	83.60
Joint	14.40	18.40	16.40
Total	100.00 (125)	100.00 (125)	100.00 (250)

Note: Figures in parenthesis indicate actual data.

Source: Primary Survey.

4.9. Earning Members in Family of Sample Child Labour

Earning members in family is also one of the determinant factors of child labour. Table 9 exhibits the data on distribution of sample child labour by earning members in the family in selected taluks. The data shows that at the aggregate level, of the total 250 samples a great majority of 181, accounting for 72.40 per cent child labour have one more earner in their family. Whereas a minimum of 61, accounting for 24.40 per cent sample child labour have 2 to 3 earning members in their family. However, only 8, accounting for 3.40 per cent sample child labour have 4 and above earning members in their family.

Across taluks the proportion of sample child labour who have one more earners in their family was found to be higher in Khanapur taluk (76 per cent) as compared to that of in Belagavi taluk (68.80 per cent). Whereas the proportion of sample child labour who have 2 to 3 earning members was found to be quite significant in Belagavi taluk (together at 27.20 per cent) as compared to that of in Khanapur taluk (21.60 per cent). Similarly the share of sample child labour who have 4 and above earning member was found to be higher in Belagavi taluk (4 per cent) as compared to that of in Khanapur taluk (2.40 per cent). This noticeable variation in the number of earners was mainly due to extent of poverty in the study areas.

Table 9: Distribution of Sample Child Labour by Earning Members in the Family

Earning Members in the Family	Belagavi taluk	Khanapur taluk	All
1	68.80	76.00	72.40
2	21.60	16.80	19.20
3	5.60	4.80	5.20
4 & above	4.00	2.40	3.20
Total	100.00 (125)	100.00 (125)	100.00 (250)

Note: Figures in parenthesis indicate actual data.

Source: Primary Survey

4.10. Occupational Status of the Parents of Sample Child Labour

Table 10 presents the data on distribution of sample child labour by occupational status of the parents in selected taluks. The data indicates at the aggregate level a majority of 48.80 per cent child labourers' parents are agricultural labourers. Further of 24.80 per cent child labourers' parents are engaged in non-agricultural activities. While of 16.40 per cent child labourers' parents are marginal and small cultivators. However, a minimum proportion of 10 per cent child labourers' are engaged in others activities.

Across taluks, the proportion of child labourers' whose parents are cultivators was found to be higher in Belagavi taluk as compared to that of in Khanapur taluk. Similarly, the proportion of child labourers' whose parents have been working as agricultural labourers was also found to be higher in Khanapur taluk as compared to that of in Belagavi taluk. Whereas the proportion of child labourers' whose parents have involved in non-agricultural activities was found to be higher in Belagavi taluk as compared to that of in Khanapur taluk. While the proportion of child labourers' whose parents are engaged in others activities was found to be higher in Belagavi taluk as compared to that of in Khanapur taluk.

On the whole, it is observed in the present survey that a majority of the parents are in the informal sector activities such as agricultural labour, small and marginal farmers, coolie, construction work, petty trade and repair works. It is in general accepted that the parents of the working children are engaged in occupations that are not so remunerative and that the occupational status of these persons is rather low. The findings of the present study also support this fact, these parents with no employment, lowly employed, employed with indefinite income are compelled to send their children to work for the survival of the family. Thus low income of the parents of child workers is one of the important causal factors of child labour.

Table 10
Distribution of Sample Child Labour by Occupational Status of the Parents

Occupational pattern	Belagavi taluk	Khanapur taluk	All
Cultivators	17.60	15.20	16.40
Agricultural Labourers	44.00	53.60	48.80
Non-agricultural Labourers	26.40	23.20	24.80
Others*	12.00	8.00	10.00
All	100.00 (125)	100.00 (125)	100.00 (250)

Note: *Others comprising domestic labour, rural artisans and small business sectors.

The figures in parenthesis indicate actual data.

Source: Primary Survey.

4.11. Annual Household Income of Sample Child Labour

Table 11 provides the data on distribution of sample child labour by household annual income in selected taluks. The data shows that of the total 250 sample child labour a majority of 153 accounting for 61.20 per cent child labour had an annual household income in the range between Rs.75001 to Rs.1, 00,000. While a sizeable number of 56, accounting for 22.40 per cent child labour had an annual household income in the range between Rs.50001 to Rs.75000. Further of 18 accounting for 7.20 per cent child labour had an annual household income less than Rs.50000. Similarly, a smaller proportion of 6.40 per cent child labour had an annual household income in the range between Rs.1, 00,001 to Rs.1, 25,000. However a minimum of 7 accounting for 2.80 per cent child labour had an annual household income is Rs. 1,25, 001 & above. A similar trend by and large was also observed in both the taluks and more so in case of Khanapur taluk.

Across taluks the proportion of child labour whose families' annual household income is less than Rs.50000, and Rs.50001 to Rs.75000, was found to be significant in Khanapur taluk as compared to that of in Belagavi taluk. Whereas the proportion of sample child labour whose families' annual household income is in the range between Rs.75,001 to 100000 and Rs.100001 to Rs. 125000 and Rs. 125001 & above was found to be higher in Belagavi taluk as compared to that of in Khanapur taluk. This indicates that the share of sample child labour whose annual household income is in the highest income slabs was found to be significant in Belagavi taluk as compared to that of in Khanapur taluk .

Table 11
Distribution of Sample Child Labour by Household Annual Income

Household Annual Income (Rs.)	Belagavi taluk	Khanapur taluk	All
< 50000	5.60	8.80	7.20
50001 – 75000	20.00	24.80	22.40
75001 – 100000	62.40	60.00	61.20
100001 – 125000	8.00	4.80	6.40
125001 & Above	4.00	1.60	2.80
Total	100.00 (125)	100.00 (125)	100.00 (250)

The figures in parenthesis indicate actual data.

Source: Primary Survey.

V. Conclusion And Policy Suggestions

The foregoing comprehensive analysis indicates extremely poor levels of socio-economic conditions of the child labour, also indicated by the low quality of living and standard of living indices calculated for the child labour households using the primary data. Majority of the child labour were found to be having primary level of education, having nuclear family, living in Katcha houses, belong to socio-economically backward section of the society, and majority of the parents are in the informal sector activities such as agricultural labour, small and marginal farmers, coolie, construction work, petty trade and repair work. The annual household income of the child labourers' families was also found to even very lower. The prevalence of child labour is the manifestation of low income, landlessness, indebtedness and acute poverty .Based on the above findings the following suggestions are offered for the improvement of socio-economic conditions of child labour in general in India and in Belagavi district in particular .

The knowledge gained so far regarding the family background, socio-economic conditions, working conditions of juvenile employees and various causes for children to work and so on lead us to conclude that child labour though harmful will persist as long as low income, poverty, illiteracy of parents and dependence of parents upon children's contribution prevails. It is not an easy task to eradicate the problem of child labour, which has been perpetuated throughout history. With the onset of industrialization this practice has taken a

different shape. Child work has changed into child labour, in the sense that today children are toiling hard for long hours in inhuman conditions as a result of which there is the denial of the educational opportunity and where there is exploitation of children. Children should be provided with education and training in vocations of their interest so that they develop into productive and efficient labour force for the industries and agriculture of the next century.

The problem of child labour can hardly be solved by prohibiting the employment of children, unless the parents/the families of these children are provided with basic needs, such as food, shelter clothing, medical aid and free educational facilities. These could be provided for, by ensuring gainful employment to the adult members of the families of child workers. Creation of awareness among the parents is also an important task, as parents' apathy is also an important cause of child labour. These poor parents should be provided with job opportunities with sufficient wages, which in turn improves the socio-economic conditions of the families of child workers. Parents should be penalized for not sending their children to schools.

A good and congenial work environment boosts the efficiency of labourers and raises the productivity. In this light, there is an urgent need to improve the conditions of these children at their work place. It is, however, necessary that the working hours should be restricted, educational facilities provided and employers forced to finance the education of the children working for them. The Child Labour (Prohibition and Regulations) Act 1986 prohibits the employment of children in some hazardous activities but not in restaurants, family households and in agriculture. Even the custodians of law appear to close their eyes on the large-scale child abuse occurring right under their noses. A strict enforcement of provisions regarding hours of work, minimum wages, better infrastructure, facilities at the work place, provisions for education and training etc., are the immediate remedial measures.

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