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SOCIO-ECONOMIC AND EDUCATIONAL PROFILE OF GIRL CHILD LABOURERS IN GULBARGA DISTRICT



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ABSTRACT

Child labour is a social problem and it is observed that compared to males, more females are working outside at an early age. As such, to study the problems of girl child labourers, socio-economic and educational background of girl child labourers working in Gulbarga district is studied. Primary data is collected through interview schedules from 400 girl child labourers. The collected primary data is revealed that poverty and negligence of parents are major reasons for the girl child labour. Majority of the girl child labourers are interested to get education and it is suggested to provide free and compulsory education to girl child labourers.



KEYWORDS : *Socio-economic , Educational Profile , Girl Child Labourers , Girl Child Labourers*

INTRODUCTION:

Child labour is done by any working child who is under the age specified by law. The word, "work" means full time commercial work to sustain self or add to the family income. Child labour is a hazard to a Child's mental, physical, social, educational, emotional and spiritual development. Broadly any child who is employed in activities to feed self and family is being subjected to "child labour". Child labour is a conspicuous problem in India. Its prevalence is evident in the child work participation rate, which is more than that of other developing countries. Poverty is the reason for child labour in India. The meager income of child labourers is also absorbed by their families.

The 2001 census reported a shocking over 5 lakh children working below the age of 5 years and 13 million children in various forms of work. It is heartening, though, that numbers of working children have been declining steadily in the last two decades. The latest available estimates from NSSO (2007-08) report around 5 million children economically active in the labour market, accounting for more than 2 percent of the total child population of India in the age group 5-14 years. This proportion shows a continuous decline, from more than 6 per cent in 1993-94, 5 percent in 2001, to more than 3

percent in 2004–05 (HDR, 2011). Child labour among the SCs/STs has fallen, but is still higher than the national average.

Children who work as domestics outside the family home are amongst the most vulnerable and exploited. They begin work at an early age, shoulder excessive responsibilities such as caring for babies/infants, handling fuel, stoves, sharp tools amongst others, work for long hours with no rest period, with little or no remuneration, work at the mercy of the employer and frequently suffer from gender and sexual violence. They are deprived of access to schooling, play and social activities and the affection and support of their family and friends (Save the Children, 2006).

Child labour is regarded as a worst form of child labour as too often the conditions they work in fall within the international criteria for child labour (World Education, 2009):

- Slavery or practices similar to slavery including debt bondage
- Physical, psychological or sexual abuse
- Work with dangerous machinery or goods
- Work under difficult circumstances including long hours and during the night
- Unreasonable confinement to the employers' house
- Work that is likely to harm health, safety and morals of children.

Female participation in work is more among children. They engage in different types of occupations and works. They are of weak gender and as such, suffering from many of the work place problems. It is essential to look into the socio-economic and educational background of girl child labourers so as to address their problems to work outside and for this purpose, an attempt is made to study the socio-economic and educational profile of girl child labourers in Gulbarga district.

OBJECTIVES OF THE STUDY:

The present study is made:

- 1.To look into the nature of work or employment of girl child labourers.
- 2.To study the socio-economic background of the girl child labourers.
- 3.To find out the educational qualifications and interests of girl child labourers in education.

METHODOLOGY AND LIMITATIONS:

The secondary literatures such as books, research journals, conference proceedings, etc were searched to get theoretical background to the study. Based on theoretical background, it is decided to interview girl child labourers working in Gulbarga district. As the geographical territory is vast to cover and interview all the girl child labourers, the study is made on the basis of sample survey. Hence, totally 400 girl child labourers were interviewed to collect the primary data. The collected primary data is analyzed and discussed as under.

ANALYSIS, INTERPRETATION AND DISCUSSION:

Occupation or nature of work is significant to determine the socio-economic status of girl child labourers. As discussed above, the girl child labourers are working in different sector such as domestic service, construction, commercial organizations like shops, agricultural lands, etc. The numbers of the girl child labourers working in these different organizations are shown as under.

Table No. 1. Nature of Work/ Organization

Particulars	No's of Respondents	Percentage
Construction Work	91	22.75
Domestic Work/ Service	126	31.50
Family/ Caste based Occupation	43	10.75
Worker in Shops	52	13.00
Agriculture	81	20.25
Any Other	07	1.75
Total	400	100

It is observed from the above table that of the total 400 girl child labourers surveyed, 126 (31.50%) are working in domestic services or work followed by, 91 (22.75%) are working in construction work, 81 (20.25%) are working in agricultural activities, 52 (13.00%) are working as worker or servants or sales representatives in shops, 43 (10.75%) are engaged in their family or caste based occupations and the remaining 07 (1.75%) are working in other types of works of unorganized sector. It is highlighted that domestic work and construction including constructions of buildings, roads, bridges, etc are most favoured works for girl child labourers and a few of the respondents are also working in their family based or caste based works.

Age is most significant criterion in the present study as the labourers are of children. If these labourers are of more than 16 years, then there should be knowledge and even they may be employed. If these labourers are working less than 12 years, then it is strictly restricted. Age is the significant factor and it is stipulated by law, that children of more than 15 years of may be employed in non-hazardous work and other laws such as Minimum Wages, etc are applied to these labourers. Hence, only a few of the girl child labourers aged more than 15 years are surveyed. The age-wise distribution of the respondents is presented in the following table.

Table No. 2. Age of the Respondents

Particulars	No's of Respondents	Percentage
Less than 10 Years	83	20.75
11 to 14 Years	268	67.00
15 to 16 Years	42	10.50
16 to 18 Years	07	1.75
Total	400	100

As discussed above, age of the respondents disclosed that, majority that is, 268 (67.00%) are in the age group of 11 to 14 years followed by, 83 (20.75%) are of less than 10 years, 42 (10.50%) are in the age group of 15 to 16 years and the remaining 07 (1.75%) are in the age group of 16 to 18 years respectively. Based on the legal age, the respondents were selected to collect the primary data. Hence, more respondents were selected belongs to less than 15 years of age.

Caste is playing significant role in assessing the social culture of the girl child labourers. In this regard, the information was collected from the respondents on their castes and tabulated as under.

Table No. 3. Caste

Particulars	No's of Respondents	Percentage
Scheduled Caste	111	27.75
Scheduled Tribe	13	3.25
Other Backward Class	224	56.00
Others	52	13.00
Total	400	100

The castes of the respondents disclosed that, 111 (27.75%) are belonged to scheduled castes, 13 (3.25%) are belonged to scheduled tribes, 224 (56.00%) are belonged to other backward classes and the remaining 52 (13.00%) are belonged to others or forward castes. It is highlighted that backward sections and castes such as scheduled castes, other backward classes and minorities are dominated in girls' children work.

It is observed that a few of the girls are also going to schools along with their outside work. Further, a few of the respondents are drop outs after a few years of schooling. Hence, information was collected from the respondents and tabulated as under.

Table No. 4. Education

Particulars	No's of Respondents	Percentage
Illiterate	82	20.50
Up to 4 th Std (Lower Primary)	221	55.25
5 th to 7 th Std (Higher Primary)	64	16.00
8 th to 10 th Std (Secondary)	33	8.25
11 th to 12 th Std (Pre-University)	--	--
Total	400	100

It is highlighted from the above table that, level of education of all the respondents depicted that, 82 (20.50%) have not went to schools and are illiterates, 221 (55.25%) have completed up to 4th standard or lower primary education, 64 (16.00%) have completed 5th to 7th standard or higher primary education and only 33 (8.25%) have completed 8th to 10th standard or secondary education. Hence, it can be summarized that though majority of the respondents have gained education, still education level of majority of the respondents is lowest.

To assess the size of their families, the information was collected on size of their families in terms of number of total members from the respondents and tabulated as under.

Table No. 5. Total Number of Members in Family

Particulars	No's of Respondents	Percentage
Less than 04	28	7.00
04 to 06	165	41.25
07 to 10	144	36.00
More than 10	63	15.75
Don't Know (Orphan)	--	--
Total	400	100

Above table revealed that, as stated by all the girl child labourers covered under the study, only 28 (7.00%) have less than 04 family members, 165 (41.25%) have 04 to 06 total family members, 144 (36.00%) have 07 to 10 family members and the remaining 63 (15.75%) have more than 10 family members. It shows that the family size of almost respondents is big and due to this reason, the girl child labourers are forced to work outside.

It is essential to look into the reasons for working outside at an early age. In this regard, the primary data collected is presented as under.

Table No. 6. Reasons for Outside Work at Early Age

Particulars	No's of Respondents	Percentage
Poverty	186	46.50
Lack of Economic Support to Family	107	26.75
Family Indebtedness	68	17.00
Family Disorganization	27	6.75
Any Other	12	3.00
Total	400	100

The reasons furnished by the respondents for their outside at an early age revealed that, 186 (46.50%) are working outside due to poverty of their family, 107 (26.75%) are working outside as they don't have economic support to their families, 68 (17.00%) are working outside due to family indebtedness, 27 (6.75%) are working outside due to their family disorganization such as separation of their parents and the remaining 12 (3.00%) are mentioned other reasons for working outside at an early age. It is highlighted that poverty and lack of economic support to their families are the major reasons for the respondents for their outside work at an early age.

The amount of salary in terms of money shows the rewards earned by girl child labourers for their work. As such, information was collected from the respondents on their monthly salary and tabulated as under.

Table No. 7. Monthly Salary

Particulars	No's of Respondents	Percentage
Less than Rs. 500	42	10.50
Rs. 501 to Rs. 1000	174	43.50
Rs.1001 to Rs. 2500	93	23.25
More than Rs. 2500	--	--
Only Food & Accommodation due to Parents' Borrowings	48	12.00
Family Employment	43	10.75
Total	400	100

The monthly salary of all the respondents depicted that, 42 (10.50%) are getting less than Rs. 500 per month, 174 (43.50%) of the respondents are getting monthly salary between Rs. 501 to Rs. 1000, 93 (23.255) are getting monthly salary between Rs. 1001 to Rs. 2500, 48 (12.00%) are getting only food and

accommodation as their parents were borrowed loans from their employers and 43 (10.75%) are employed in their family employment. It is highlighted that the monthly salary earned by the girl child labourers is lowest. Even many of these labourers are suffering from exploitation as their parents were borrowed loans and till settlement of such loans, these girl child labourers have to work with the employers.

It is noted that work of many of the girl child labourers is not limited to fixed hours as they are working in households. Further, many of girl child labourers are working in shops or agriculture or in construction activities have limited number of working hours. Hence, information was collected from the respondents on their daily working hours and presented in the following table.

Table No. 8. Daily Working Hours

Particulars	No's of Respondents	Percentage
Less than 04 Hours	47	11.75
05 to 06 Hours	92	23.00
07 to 08 Hours	125	31.25
08 to 10 Hours	29	7.25
Unlimited/ Stay in Employers' House	64	16.00
Family Employment	43	10.75
Total	400	100

On their daily working hours as expressed by all the respondents surveyed, 47 (11.75%) are working for less than 04 hours daily, 92 (23.00%) are working for 05 to 06 hours daily, 125 (31.25%) are working for 07 to 08 hours daily, 29 (7.25%) are working for 08 to 10 hours daily, 64 (16.00%) are working for unlimited time as they are staying in their employers' house only and 43 (10.75%) are working in their family employment. It is noted that many of the respondents are working for more working hours in the employers' households or shops.

It is essential that the labourers must be satisfied on the working conditions, so as to work efficiently and productively. As such, there should be comfortable or satisfactory working conditions at their work places. The level of satisfaction of the respondents on their working conditions at their work places are shown as under.

Table No. 9. Extent of Satisfaction on Service Conditions

Particulars	No's of Respondents	Percentage
Happier & Comfort	84	21.00
Satisfactory	121	30.25
Not Satisfactory	152	38.00
Not Applicable/ Family Occupation	43	10.75
Total	400	100

The extent of satisfaction on the service conditions of the respondents disclosed that, only 84 (21.00%) of all the respondents are happier and comfortable on their service conditions, 121 (30.25%) are feeling satisfied with their service conditions, 152 (38.00%) are not satisfied with their working and

service conditions and the remaining 43 (10.75%) are working in their own family based occupations and the question of satisfaction on their service conditions does not arise here. Hence, it can be concluded that, though majority of the respondents are satisfied or comfortable at their working and service conditions, still a considerable number of respondents are not satisfied with their work and service conditions.

CONCLUSION:

It is summarized from the above discussion that poverty and negligence of family members resulted in girl child labour in Gulbarga district. Now, it is essential to provide free and compulsory education to these girl child labourers. For this purpose, it is needed for the self-employment for the families of girl child labourers, so that these families can get income and send their girl children to schools to get education. Further, there is also need for strict legislations to restrict child labour. There is also need of helpline with counseling and guidance facilities for girl child labourers to protect their interests.

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