



Global Advanced Research Journal of History, Political Science and International Relations Vol. 1(4) pp. 095-102, May, 2012
Available online <http://garj.org/garjhpsir/index.htm>
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Review

Impacts of Globalization on child labor in Pakistan

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Accepted 23 May, 2012

The article outlines finding of the research titled ‘Globalization and Its Impacts on Child Labor: Pakistan as Case Study’. The research objective of this study was to test the hypothesis: Globalization has left adverse impacts on child labor in developing countries. The myth that child labor is indispensable for developing countries to remain competitive in the international markets is unfounded. The hypothesis that globalization can help reduce child labor in developing countries is also supported by researches. The literature on child labor is huge and in great disorder. Media propagation has been a vital factor in bringing the child labor to the priority agenda. It has galvanized international and national organizations into action to rehabilitate working children and prevent further growth of child labor. Successful efforts also need to be targeted against all kinds of wide spread child labor in the country. Furthermore, any legislation should not only ban the employment of child labor but it should cover other aspects of the child welfare as well. Economy bound measures are the better option against child labor. Although evidence from South Asia gives glimpses of success that trade sanctions helped reduce child labor from specific sectors as per se, however, such approaches failed to address the root causes of the child labor and at times further added to the miseries of the child labor. Children also fall victims to child labor as a result of improper education facilities. Should an outright ban on child labor be imposed? Furthermore, this fall of family income added additional pressure on children to work. Our efforts and strategies to fight against child labor still need fine tuning. Surely living in a world which is free from worst forms of child labor will be a much important milestone in the over all goal of eliminating all kinds of child labor. Bringing menace of child labor to limelight is appreciable but curbing this menace still needs a strong global effort. To materialize the idealism of child labor free world, we still have a long journey to travel. The fact that increase in per capita income brings decline in child labor presents an argument that economic development, improving labor standards, and the consequent elimination of child labor could be achieved through facilitation in free trade and open markets.

Keywords: Globalization, child labour and Pakistan

INTRODUCTION

The article outlines finding of the research titled ‘Globalization and Its Impacts on Child Labor: Pakistan as Case Study’. The research objective of this study was to test the hypothesis: Globalization has left adverse impacts on child labor in developing countries. The fact that there has been no serious research work done on the relationship between globalization and the child labor (ILO,

<http://www.ilo.org/public/english/comp/child/conf/amsterdam/workshop2.htm>, (22/9/2007)) rendered it difficult to set exact parameters to deduct concrete results. Although the data was expected to support the acceptance of the hypothesis, in nutshell it did not. Impacts of globalization are not as adverse as feared, although neither very positive. The sectors examined (Carpet, Glass Bangles, Manufacturing of Surgical

Instruments, Leather Tanneries, Debt Bondage, Soccer Ball, and Child Trafficking Industries) show that once exposed to international conscience, using and exploiting children as laborers became difficult for the perpetrators, at least. International agencies including UN agencies, foreign governments, development agencies, international NGOs and big donors like the World Bank and ADB have all shown interest in the child labor issue in different ways. While the World Bank and ADB have largely confined their efforts to drafting research papers and providing the so called intellectual input to their government counterparts on a high level, many other international organizations such as ILO, UNICEF, IOM, Save the Children etc, are actively working on the child labor issues with ministries, federal and provincial departments, trade unions, employer associations and of course, the NGOs. However, the total coverage of working children of all the programs put together under the pressure and help of international society is about 75,000 i.e. barely 2% of the official figure of 3.6 million full time child workers. Benefits of the globalization should reach to the maximum rather than to handful picks. An even greater concern is often expressed on the quality of work done, its relevance to the social and economic conditions, and importantly on the lack of understanding and empathy of the project implementing agencies. While withdrawal of child laborers is a positive outcome of such initiatives, quality improvement should also be given due importance. Most of the projects have simply been reduced to replication of NFE, skills training and awareness programs at the cost of alienating working children and their families as their perceptions and priorities are rarely accommodated in project design and implementation. Fawad Usman of Sudhaar, an NGO which has implemented many Time Bound Programs of ILO, revealed that only a mere 10% of the addressed child laborers would have received any good alternative for their previous trades. Although the project based approaches have shown some results but in terms of long term sustainability projects need to be more practical and bottom to top oriented rather than otherwise where most projects are designed to meet the objectives of the donor instead of the grass root effectees. There is a definite need to link these projects to a well designed program in terms of problem solving in a twenty-thirty year perspective.

The myth that child labor is indispensable for developing countries to remain competitive in the international markets is unfounded. Although decision of foreign direct investment is not driven by the incidence of child labor, the latter does not bring in competitive edge to the developing countries either, rather it handicaps its human development in terms of unskilled labor force. The research reinforces the pivotal role of media and human rights activism in reduction of child labor under the era of globalization.

The hypothesis that globalization can help reduce child labor in developing countries is also supported by

another research in Vietnam at Dartmouth College that studied the impact of rice prices on the rate of child labor in Vietnam. The research noted 30% increase in Vietnamese rice price between 1993 and 1998 as result of trade liberalization likely reduced 9-percentage-point drop rate of child labor. "Greater market integration, at least in this case, appears to be associated with less child labor," Dartmouth economists Eric Edmonds and Nina Pavicnik said (Kaushik, Basu (1998). "Child Labor: Cause, Consequence and Cure, with Remarks on International Labor Standards, Department of Economics", (Washington, DC: Cornell University, and Office of the Senior Vice President, Development Economics World Bank.).

The literature on child labor is huge and in great disorder. Which may be otherwise empirical or descriptive, some books and unexpected papers present theoretical insights on child labor. However, there are comparatively few theoretical writings on child labor. One can find numerous empirical writings on the issue but they do not base on any theory (BBC, <http://news.bbc.co.uk/2/hi/south_asia/4974022.stm>, (23/5/2008)). To know the actual magnitude and impact of the problem, accomplishing data enrichment through comprehensive surveys is needed. This would greatly help in holistic and long term solution to the problem. What we can safely express is the fact that thanks to the wide spread global awareness campaigns; child labor has received reasonably more attention in the recent times. Football and carpet industries along with child trafficking are especially a few glaring examples of international media projection. As awareness of child labor has grown in the western countries, even the consumers have entered the fight to eliminate it. This concern is manifested in the case of the hand-woven carpet industry. Consumer groups in the west campaign against purchase of carpets woven by children effectively curtailed their sales. These actions are exerting intense pressure on producers. The threat of the loss of their export markets has convinced many producers to strive to abolish child labor. Rather than seeking sanctions against products made by children, labelling contractors of the west are encouraging consumers to buy labelled products which are supposedly child labor free. The assumptions underlying such initiatives are: it is possible to create an effective and credible international label; consumers can make a choice between identical products; consumers are aware of the issues; and there are feasible alternatives available for the children who are taken out of the production process.

Media in the western world has been instrumental in projecting the situation of third world working children to a wide-ranging audience. The media has focused on the plight of the working children vis-à-vis harsh working conditions, abusive environment and low wages. Consumer position and reaction is essentially based on media projection of the working children in countries like Pakistan. Media propagation has been a vital factor in

bringing the child labor to the priority agenda. It has galvanized international and national organizations into action to rehabilitate working children and prevent further growth of child labor. Support in form of ideological input, funds, management and ideas is flowing into the third world as child labor has become a hot topic.

However sensational coverage has brought its own problems. Incomplete information, exaggerated accounts and sensational coverage have done at least as much harm as serious coverage has contributed to the cause. Government and community reactions have become more negative and rigid following visits of media adventurers to sites of child labor because mostly, such teams disregard social norms and behave rudely with the people for whose betterment they have ventured to come thus far in the first place. While responsible journalism, serious write-ups and documentaries are essential to project the cause, sensational filmmaking and photographs cause immense harm to genuine movements against child labor in developing countries.

This is important to note that the amount of attention drawn towards the issue by the international society has brought the miseries of the child labor to the limelight and the executors of the child labor are forced to take more stringent precautions than what they used to take before this happening. It can no longer be taken for granted in many areas. This is caused due to the facts that on one hand increased globalization has eased out for academics and activists world over to access information about the miseries of child labor in different parts of the world, and on the other hand it has brought the child made products to the consumers in the high-income countries. The only [major and immediate] success in the fight against child labor has been [considered] through consumer pressure. It was only after consumer campaigns that the industries, involved in malpractices of child labor, even admitted the existence of the problem. Although economic pressure was among the major sources, however, efforts of the government of Pakistan are appreciated in eliminating child labor from the football industry and for a marked decrease in the carpet industry (BBC, <http://news.bbc.co.uk/2/hi/south_asia/4974022.stm>, (23/5/2008)). The mere essence of the intentions behind the efforts in glass bangles, surgical instruments, child trafficking and tanneries is also appreciable; we also need to ensure sustainability of such initiatives. Successful efforts also need to be targeted against all kinds of wide spread child labor in the country. Global society needs to extend its focus on non-export sectors as well including informal.

The research reveals that main policy divide is between legal interventions and what may be called collaborative interventions, that is, public action which alters the economic environment such that parents prefer to withdraw the children from the labor force. The availability of good schools, the provision of free meals,

effort to bolster adult wages, are examples of collaborative interventions. Such an intervention may be more desirable but is constraint with limitations such as lack of resources (Kaushik, Basu., Op. Cit.) etc. Legislation can only play any significant role in the elimination of this menace if it is properly implemented. This has been observed in many developing countries like Pakistan, implementation remains a big issue. The state of Pakistan has been unable to fully realize its responsibilities towards children in general and to the most vulnerable in particular. The laws banning slavery, child trafficking, forced labor and employment of children in hazardous occupations are deficient in both substance and scale as they are regulatory and their implementation is weak. Furthermore, any legislation should not only ban the employment of child labor but it should cover other aspects of the child welfare as well.

Any legislation should be based on "all inclusive" angle. Exclusive legislations such as the idea of sector based ban on child labor is weak as it does not address the danger of these children being slipped to less desirable or more hazardous work. Economy bound measures are the better option against child labor. Worst to worst, even if sector specific ban is suggested, it should be based on the issues, conditions and miseries of the sector, rather than the destination of the goods (Ibid.). Although evidence from South Asia gives glimpses of success that trade sanctions helped reduce child labor from specific sectors as per se, however, such approaches failed to address the root causes of the child labor and at times further added to the miseries of the child labor. This is also supported by the Vietnam study "Our results suggest that the use of trade sanctions on exports from developing countries to eradicate child labor is unlikely to yield the desired income," Dartmouth economists Eric Edmonds and Nina Pavcnik said. Evidence from South Asia suggests movement of child labor (at least a few of them) to more hazardous industries. Furthermore, this narrow range of trade sanctions only attract attention to a very small proportion of the over all child labor (5-7%) employed in the small and medium sized export-oriented firms or neighboring family units. Majority of the miserable labor force consisting of children employed in more hazardous industries or informal economies do not get due attention to address this menace and helping a lot greater number of children. Thus, trade sanctions are limited in approach and mostly do not cover majority of the child labor force employed in non-tradable family based businesses, urban informal sectors and rural agricultural employment.

Another strategy to fight child labor has been the social labeling system designed by the private sector in the wake of the reasonable pressure built up in the industrialized countries by the more sensitive public opinion to boycotting products made in the export industries of the third world with the use of child labor. This label gives child labor free products to the consumers, or assures that the engagement of the

children in manufacturing of the product was in strict conformity with the relevant legal provisions. These labeling systems date back to only 1994, hence a recent development. For this reason, impact of such systems on the plight of the child labor is too early to evaluate. These are not in great numbers either. An ILO report listed the following a few systems: employers in Franca, Brazil established a system for the footwear industry; the Double Income Project based on Switzerland targets textile and garment industries; for the carpet industry the Rugmark system applied in Germany, India, Nepal, the Netherlands, Pakistan and the United States, this is also the best known system in the world, the Fair and Care system in Germany, and the Step system in Switzerland are the other systems for the carpet industries. Also only a few countries are involved in labeling systems: Germany, the Netherlands, Switzerland, and the United States are among the developed countries, whereas, Brazil, India, Kenya, Nepal and Pakistan are among the developing countries (ILO, <<http://www.ilo.org/public/english/comp/child/conf/amsterdam/workshop2.htm>>, (22/9/2007)). However, this approach also needs careful drafting and implementation as it may not fall as a tool in the hands of protectionists. It is also blamed for other reasons i.e. undue external influence on the local production patterns, tarnishing the over all image of a country etc. Education is thought to be a better solution as monitoring children in schools is relatively easier. Therefore, even if the ban on child labor is desirable, a good way to implement such ban is by making schooling compulsory (Kaushik, Basu., Op. Cit.). But only quality education rather than mere stereo type schooling may give the real remedy. Although Pakistan has lately made schooling compulsory, but its weak primary education system is a significant factor contributing to the prevalence of child labor. Failure to implement compulsory primary education has impeded improvements in the existing situation. Inaccessibility and poor quality of education act as deterrent to the people, urging them to prefer informal apprenticeships and employment options for their wards instead of sending them to schools. President Oscar Arias of Costa Rica rightly pointed, "Nothing prevents the creation of decent jobs like indecent education", he said, "The educational catastrophe of today is the economic catastrophe of tomorrow" (President Oscar Arias of Costa Rica (2006). Proceedings of Global Report Under the Follow Up to the ILO Declaration on Fundamental Principle and Rights at Work.). Children also fall victims to child labor as a result of improper education facilities. In fact, argument has been presented that in very poor countries possibilities of mutually inclusive work and schooling approach should be chalked out, rather than otherwise. Only educated youth in future can reap the fruits of a good, healthy and prosperous life. Furthermore, efforts for economic growth and development of the poor factions of the

society are a must for realizing a world free of child labor. The latter developments in the recent history have shown greater results than any other factor. Furthermore, the available literature also shows that there is no unique prescription. Should an outright ban on child labor be imposed? Should the trade sanctions be implemented through WTO? Should adult's minimum wage be fixed in order to dissuade parents from sending their children to work? Context dictates the answer (Kaushik, Basu., Op. Cit.).

In the context of impacts of globalization, it is reasonable to suppose, as opposed to the hypothesis, that globalization will be beneficial in the long term, if it does not unleash the happening of ill-willed or unbridled events. Indeed, increased FDI in the third world, and better access to international markets for the goods manufactured in the developing countries should boost their exports. This would further enable them to acquire advanced techniques and skills, improve labor productivity, substantial increase in productive jobs in the high tech economies, as well as acquisition of more foreign currency.

Any endeavor to eliminate child labor should also take into account other stakeholders in the process. As evident from the football industry example, although child labor was successfully eliminated but it left other disadvantaged factions like women of the poor or single unit family at the mercy of the exploiters who rather than increasing their wages, with the inflation rate at least, enacted further cuts on the wages for risks they took for their clandestine activities. Furthermore, this fall of family income added additional pressure on children to work. We also need to see that the children withdrawn or prevented from one sector may not end up doing some more hazardous work i.e. some children withdrawn/prevented from football industry are reported to slip in surgical instruments or brick kiln industry, both of which are more hazardous than football industry (<www.pongrepublic.com>, (25/4/2008)). To demonstrate our resolute to address this issue we must extend freedom of association to all workers to afford them collective bargaining and struggle for better wages and environment. Our efforts and strategies to fight against child labor still need fine tuning (College of Business, <<http://cbae.nmsu.edu/~dboje/nike/pakistan.html#reebok>>, (20/4/2007)).

The discussion so far has revealed that the attention towards the menace of child labor itself is mainly due to the international society. The fast globalization has brought many changes, bringing human rights to the limelight is one such change. Child labor has been brought to the center of global socio-political discourse, thanks to the ILO campaign against this social evil since 1992. The UN Summit 2005 acknowledged this fact (Ahsan Akhtar (2006). Proceedings of Global Report Under the Follow Up to the ILO Declaration on Fundamental Principle and Rights at Work, (Geneva, 9 June)). This is quite encouraging to note that child labor

in worst forms declined from 171 million to 126 million since 2000 till 2004, a decrease by 26%. Maintaining this pace can guarantee elimination of child labor from the worst forms in the near future (Ibid.). The elimination of the worst forms of child labor is a major and urgent priority for national and international action. The fact that Convention No. 182 has quickly achieved a record rate of ratifications demonstrates that countries throughout the world accept this fact. Surely living in a world which is free from worst forms of child labor will be a much important milestone in the over all goal of eliminating all kinds of child labor.

It is important to systemize the globalization process for equally and equitably benefiting every one. Bringing menace of child labor to limelight is appreciable but curbing this menace still needs a strong global effort. Globalization, through an ideal spectrum (ought-to-be), presents immense potential for good. Increased interaction among the people across the globe is developing a sense of global community. This promising sense of interdependence, respect for universal values, and growing harmony among nations and peoples of the world across can help build progressive and democratic global governance to serve the interests of all. Enhanced capacity of production has resulted from the global market economy. If this is intelligently managed, can produce unprecedented material progress (Ibid.), and can generate more productive and better jobs for all. Hence, it would go long way in reducing the world poverty, the main contributor in child labor force (Haider HZ, Provide names of other author (2004). "Baseline Survey Report on Child Labor in Glass Bangles Industry Hyderabad", (Lahore, AKIDA Management Consultants), p.73. See also: Elimination of Worst Forms of Child Labor from Surgical Industry of District Sialkot, Final Output Form-Sialkot, (Lahore, Sudhaar, 1st July 2008).). Child labor, which is mainly considered a corollary of poverty does not result in poverty reduction, but perpetuates the vicious cycle. Moreover extensive urbanization, profit maximization, expansion of informal sector, and poor employment generation by the formal sectors provide an impetus for child labor to grow. To materialize the idealism of child labor free world, we still have a long journey to travel. The current process of globalization needs corrections and tailoring in order to realize the ideal of generating balanced outcomes, both between and within countries. The least developed and the developing countries need to get their due share in the world wealth and its benefits. Their voice should also be given due weight in shaping the process. Globalization, for children, at least should meet the simple and legitimate aspirations for decent living, quality education or better prospects of future.

Development of the global institutions should be given due consideration, as these are crucial for supporting and regulating the global economy. Whereas the realization is increasing across the borders and world for the need to establish market supporting systems

that are more comprehensive and more international in nature to ensure regulatory regimes to correct the market failures, ensure property rights, enforce contracts, prevent the abuse of market power, and also social institutions to dilute the ruthless impacts of market forces etc is being realized, this is also very pivotal to the hearts of child rights advocates that the new systems should also play more progressive role to enable a safer childhood for the children across the globe. The global society has to think a head of just a slogan 'We would not buy child labor'. They need to promote fair trade and perhaps a trade tilted in favor of the least developed and developing countries till the time they come relatively at par with the developed countries. The economic philosophies also favor such an argument.

Good governance in the globalization process would be the pivotal factor in realizing the true fruits of globalization. The developed countries that have spread the technologically advanced tools to make transactions easier and quicker also need to spread the technology itself. This would greatly help the poor countries to get at par with the developed nations.

In fact, for the wealth and technology redistribution a strong argument is presented by economy itself. Most people across the world and the most governments that are elected democratically agree and accept in principle that the need to improve the well being of the poor and disadvantage is far greater than the need of a rich and highly privileged. Welfare evaluation can not be sufficiently guessed by the income dividend of the economy alone, precisely because it disregards the distribution of income that the growth generates. The framework to understand a simple idea is provided by the idea of diminishing returns to increased wealth: a dollar may not cause as much welfare to a millionaire as it is expected to cause to an urban slum dweller in Latin America or to a poor landless laborer in South Asian agriculture. In fact an increase of \$1 to the income of a poor costs more than \$1 to rest of the society, we should follow such a policy for achieving long term objective of eradication of poverty. From this perspective, it seems more sensible for governments to choose such policies that generate biggest returns to the poor, even where overall growth effects are less certain (UNDP, Human Development Report, (Geneva, 2005), p.53.).

Furthermore, in order to challenge this menace Kevin Bales suggests in first place to massively propagate the problem to increase awareness within and across the borders to a level where the public no more asks questions like "what do you mean by slavery [child labor]?" ILO baseline surveys in Pakistan also support the importance of awareness (Haider HZ . Provide names of other author."Baseline Survey Report on Child Labor in Glass Bangles Industry Hyderabad", Op. Cit.). Secondly, in dealing with the problem local and global financial institutions that benefit from slavery [child labor] should be pressurized to accept the duty.

The powerful international institutions like the WB, IMF, WTO, UN, and ICJ should play their role in the fight against child labor. Finally groups that are fighting against the slavery [child labor] should be supported financially, legally, and intellectually. A new social philosophy is needed targeting human needs and projects where priority is accorded to freedom of human beings over the free market, and human rights over the property rights, in fact, a realistic society which is aware of the gross crimes that it silently participates in (Faris, Kasim. "The Reality of Disposable Kids", Op. Cit.).

There are also large gaps in education opportunities. In a global economy that is increasingly knowledge-intensive, this is really worrisome that about 115 million children are denied even the most basic primary education (UNESCO 2005, Table 3.3). This gap needs quick possible filler. In pursuit of the pro-poor growth we also need to acknowledge the pivotal role that private sector can play. Important role is also played by small and medium-size enterprises as they supply inputs, and link to markets. Private firms by empowering people, giving more choices, and providing a variety of goods and services can also contribute in poverty reduction.

Developing countries also need to believe in themselves. They need to increase the trade amongst themselves by removing barriers such as tariffs which are at times even higher on each other's imports than those imposed on industrial countries. Exports from least developed countries to other developing countries face among the highest average tariff barriers in world trade (UNDP, Human Development Report, (Geneva, 2005), pp. 127-128.). This needs to be addressed.

Human Development Index 2005 reflects extreme slit in well being and life chances that persistently divide our world that is increasingly globalized. We seriously need to think to fill this schism.

The research reveals that the recent hike in globalization having immense potential for good has not actually brought much good to the developing countries. Seen in any major context the overall beneficiaries are the already developed countries that continue to exploit developing and least developed countries through different schemes of maneuvering. These countries face too many problems in competing in international markets and hence seek to deploy every possible means to acquire as much competitiveness and market share [although short-term] as possible. Further analysis reveals that even minute shares that these developing countries receive are not equally distributed within the country leading to ever increasing schism between high and middle and middle and low class population. This uneven distribution further forces the low and low middle classes to engage their children in struggle for survival.

This unprecedented mobility of goods, services, and capital owe to transportation technology and communication advances along with the free-market ideology. Human resources skilled and unskilled alike should be extended the same freedom of mobility. This

will be useful in stabilizing the equilibrium in the outcomes of globalization. The developing countries can be compensated for their lower capacity to draw full benefits from international free trade by allowing unrestricted mobility of their relatively unskilled labor across the international borders. In principle, human development can be well supported by the international migration. It would give rise to the labor supply to the developed countries helping them through foreign exchange and the reduced labor at home would also be able to get better wages. Hence, the real wages would go up, there would be an increase in share of wages in national income, consequently income inequalities would be minimized, and difference in life standards would be reduced through migration.

Surely, reordering the international economic relations is the cry of the day where the rich countries must courageously bear the political cost of internal economic dislocation and must realize the importance of improved access to markets for developing nations, reducing the trade barriers, non-subsidized agricultural products, agree not only to a fair and balanced dispute resolution mechanism which is not primarily in their favor, but also its enforcement, and not imposing new protectionist restrictions. Even in such case, to avoid the likely perils of globalization, the poor countries would need to properly organize themselves internally for receiving the potential gains from globalization in terms of rapid economic growth and progressive poverty alleviation.

The conclusion, hence emerges, that international flows of labor and the associated remittances are more likely to promote human development, accelerate economic growth, distribute benefits directly to lower income groups, and create a more equitable society in an ideal world where people have no restrictions on their movement, rather than foreign aid and international flows of private capital. Therefore, a policy shift in international economy from foreign aid to freedom of labor mobility would be more desirable as well as mutually beneficial.

The developing countries have a low share in the global FDI, and this is further falling. Most FDI is absorbed within developed world, and investments by developed countries in third world are not a priority. This policy needs reconsideration if the international society wishes to see a world fair and free from the evils of poverty. Many people would question the sincerity of such a wish.

For a smooth transition of global era, it is important for the international monetary bodies like IMF and the World Bank to coordinate with international bodies concerning human development such as ILO, UNICEF and UNESCO and design uniformed policies which are usually in contrast with each other. The fact that increase in per capita income brings decline in child labor presents an argument that economic development, improving labor standards, and the consequent elimination of child labor could be achieved

through facilitation in free trade and open markets. Counter argument suggests policy adjustments in free trade to be fair and beneficial to all enabling smooth, equitable and at least equal benefits for all poor countries as well. Transparent and accountable democratic processes should be instilled in the process of globalization and in the conduct of governments and quasi-governments such as the IMF, WB etc.

The available studies confirm that globalization has not yet led to significantly increased growth and/or poverty reduction in developing countries like Pakistan. Such developing countries need to widen their range of export markets and export products, increased foreign direct investment in tradable sectors; formation of unbiased trade policies, development of infrastructure in certain potential growth sectors; establishment of trade risk mitigation structure to support the entry of new exporters and development of non-traditional markets. In short, they need to develop an "export culture".

Developing countries, where huge bulk of child labor exists, should position themselves for drawing utmost benefits from globalization as the pre-requisites for accelerated economic growth and poverty alleviation are alike both at domestic and global level. However, their under developed human resources and the low intensity of their skilled labor force present serious concerns. They are likely to remain handicapped in maximizing these benefits as long as they significantly improve their quality and outreach of their education, skills, literacy, training and health status.

RECOMMENDATIONS FOR THE ELIMINATION OF CHILD LABOR FROM PAKISTAN

- There is no blanket prohibition in Pakistan on child labor and children are prohibited to work only in specific industries. The Employment of Children Act 1991 is more regulatory in nature rather than being prohibitive. Poor implementation of laws has further aggravated the situation in the country. The National Policy and Plan of Action to Combat Child Labor was approved in 2000 with the aim to eliminate, withdraw, and prevent child labor; yet it still remains to be fully implemented. We should fill the gap between the words and actions. This should be done through both preventive as well as corrective strategies. The preventive strategies should aim at cutting the supply at the source through quality schooling in various forms and at various levels. The corrective measures should aim at systematic elimination of child labor through efficient monitoring, proper policy legal reforms, and effective implementation of existing laws to prevent recruitment.

- In response to the incidence of child labor in certain industries in Pakistan, the researchers have recommended about normative change leading to desired impact. ILO is using the Strategic Programme Impact Framework (SPIF) model to prepare Project

Document for accomplishment of the project goals and objectives.

- It is recommended that the interventions should be phased out in a time-bounded manner. Change strategies should be gender equitable and age specific. Furthermore, eliminating strategies should be all inclusive and chances of entering the children in the same or other sectors must be minimized.

- More attention and efforts need to be given to the informal sector which merely comes under any labor laws, let alone the overall ineffective implementation of the laws.

- It is important to fight this evil through extended awareness. Awareness seminars, advocacy workshops, and counseling sessions geared toward parents ought to be arranged for gaining their confidence and for raising their awareness about the ill-effects of child labor concerning their children. These counseling services should highlight the alternatives to child labor, including formal or non-formal education, and apprenticeship. Parents need to be educated about the benefits of schooling in terms of increased efficiency and income, and demonstrating that child labor in some cases is futile-even for meeting immediate needs, considering the meager amount of income associated with it.

- Innovative learning technique such as sharing glorified visual images of "best practices" should be used to seek change in the attitudes.

- The research reveals that employers target child laborers because they perceive children to be a cheap source of labor, as well as more malleable workers. This implies urgency in sensitizing employers about need to eliminate child labor. Hence, similar services (as in two paragraphs above) for gaining employers' confidence must be arranged for building support for struggle for elimination of child labor.

- Labor Department working with industry should work with a missionary zeal in order to accomplish an eventual elimination of child labor in a reasonable time frame. They should maintain and improve the dignity of the department by setting and accomplishing reasonable short term and long term goals. Child Labor and Monitoring Cells established in the Provincial governments should be erected as independent organs having all required full time human and other resources rather than just being tackled as part time duties.

- Coupled with assured strong monitoring, various steps aimed at family's alternative income generation and poverty alleviation should be seriously addressed by Federal, Provincial and District Governments with involvement of international and non-governmental agencies.

- This is also important to well orient each and every staff member involved about the menace of child labor and bring them to the required sensitivity level.

- The problem of child labor can be managed effectively if poverty problem is worked out effectively, through income generation projects for parents as well

as through fair and equitable access to safety nets such as zakat funds, baitulmal, and other benevolent programs. Poverty alleviation efforts of Federal and Provincial Governments' PRSP (Poverty Reduction Strategy Paper) should coincide well with and reinforce Time-Bound Program's endeavors targeted at gradually phasing out child labor from the country.

- ILO Convention 182 requires changes in legal definition of age for child labor to be raised to 18 years, instead of 14 years. However, in doing so, the implementation should be time bounded carefully, so that the labor market is not disturbed due to abrupt changes.

- Steps must be taken for proper enforcement of existing child labor laws. Till the incidence of child labor is completely eliminated, increased protection to child workers should be provided against violation of their rights and against unsafe industrial practices involving children.

- NFE schools and vocational institutes should be developed for providing non-formal education to both male and female children. In accordance with the target population of children, one NFE school for every 30-35 children in the target population should be established. The younger children of ages 5 to 9 should particularly be targeted.

- Both formal and informal schooling as well as vocational training for boys and girls should be made more attractive, affordable and accessible. This stems from research findings that the family income was among the lowest in the families of the child labor. Different interventions would work for families with considerably different incomes. Arrangements for the skill development and apprenticeship activities must be made for children who cannot afford schooling. In some cases, alternative income generating project for the poorest families should be arranged, otherwise, it may not be possible for families at extreme poverty levels to survive without the working child's income.

- Parents should be targeted for awareness raising vis-à-vis peshgy (cash advances) that diminishes their negotiation powers and increases their children's vulnerability to exploitation and unnecessary involvement in child labor to meet unreasonable deadlines given by the employers.

- Macroeconomic policies enhancing adult employment and wages are needed to reduce economic pressure on parents forcing them to put their wards to work.

- The recent global economic recession has bluntly exposed the vulnerability of the less privileged. Less privileged and more insecure factions of the society would be easily lured to send their children to work and contribute in the family income. Hence, while on one hand, recent crisis urges more proactive strategies to curb child labor, it also presents a viable scenario for further research.

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