

Role of Information & Communication Technology in Curbing Child Labour

Sawna Sharma¹ Dr. Rajender Gupta²

¹Research Scholar ²Professor & Dean

^{1,2}Department of Economics

^{1,2}University of Jammu

Abstract— Information and Communication Technology (ICT) is a term that includes any device or application like radio, television and computer network as well as various services and applications associated with them such as video conferencing and distance learning. This paper traces out the role of ICT to protect the children from various kinds of exploitations they are face at their work places where they serve due to bad economic conditions of the family or we can say that due to poverty. An inadequate income of the elder members of the family that forces little children to do any kind of work so that they can get money it hardly matters that they are getting money at the cost of their health mental as well as physical and childhood ,the most important stage which they have never enjoyed. Therefore, ICT can help a lot to provide information to parents of these children, employees and the whole society about the various laws regarding the protection of children which includes the particular age for particular kind with some conditions, free and compulsory education, mid -day meal programme, vocational trainings, skill development programmes and such other policies framed for the protection of the children below the age of 14 years. Government as well as non-government organisations are also dependent on ICT sources to collect data regarding the social evil from time to time and also arrange awareness camps in those areas where people are forced by several circumstances to push their children towards market to earn money at such tender age when they should be in schools to brighten their future.

Key words: Child Labour, Poverty, Vocational Training, Non- Government Organizations

I. INTRODUCTION

Millions of children from the poorer section of the society everyday wake up with nothing to look forward except hours of back-breaking Labour working everywhere from stone quarries to carpet factories to rice mills. Children as young as 5 years-old are kept away from school, forced to work 7 days a week for up to 18 hours a day and end up with injuries, respiratory disorders and chronic pain. Ultimately these children are left illiterate, plagued with health problems, etc. They hardly find themselves fit to find employment as and when they reach adulthood. This continued process of slavery of children is resulting in a vicious cycle of slavery, illiteracy and poverty in the developing countries like India.

Labour work is that kind of work which interferes with the physical and mental developments of the child and their opportunity for getting minimum education or their needed recreation. Child Labour is economically unsound, psychologically terrible and physically as well as morally dangerous and harmful for our society. From the point of view of various researchers, child Labour is considered as ‘an evil’ but ‘an economic asset’ for the parents of poor families

to fulfil their needs of their survival. Inadequate income and unemployment of elders in the family pushes the children towards hard Labour work of any kind even not suits their tender age but they don’t have any other option just because to get a small amount of money. With the passage of time they become habitual to do these types of work take long hours but give a very little amount of money and sometimes no money at all.

In 2012, the International Labour Organization released a report stating that 168 million children around the world are engaged in different kinds of work. Children are forced to commit commercial sex acts, forced into a system of domestic servitude, and employed in occupations that are mentally, physically, socially and morally harmful.

The child Labour is not a recent concept but a concept with which country has since long been familiar. Child Labour is widely used in India as elsewhere in many countries. In India the problem of child Labour is linked to certain basic social problems that we have been struggling with over the past five decades of the freedom: illiteracy, unemployment and poverty. Child Labour in India is to be found in almost every sector of informal economy, it has the largest number of working children in the world. The report of Human Right in U.S, Department of State (1998), ILO estimated the number of child workers as 44million, while Ministry of Labour and other NGOs estimated 55 million. According to their estimates, 25 million are employed in agricultural sector, 20million in service jobs (hotels, shops, and as servants in home) and 5 million in the carpet, handloom, making gems, and matchstick making industries.

According to the census of 2001, a total of 1,26,66,377 child labourers were serving in the country at the cost of their health & future just because of poverty, however the situation improved and as per the census of 2011, there were a total of 43,53,247 child labourers in the county.

State wise details of working children as per Census of 2001 & 2011 are as under:

State/UT	No. of working children in the age group of 5-14 years	
	Census 2001	Census 2011
Andaman & Nicobar Island	1960	999
Andhra Pradesh	1363339	404851
Arunachal Pradesh	18482	5766
Assam	351416	99512
Bihar	1117500	451590
Chandigarh	3779	3135
Chhattisgarh	364572	63884
Dadra & Nagar Haveli	4274	1054
Daman & Diu	729	774
Delhi	41899	26473

Goa	4138	6920
Gujarat	485530	250318
Haryana	253491	53492
Himachal Pradesh	107774	15001
Jammu & Kashmir	175630	25528
Jharkhand	407200	90996
Karnataka	822615	249432
Kerala	26156	21757
Lakshadweep	27	28
Madhya Pradesh	1065259	286310
Maharashtra	764075	496916
Manipur	28836	11805
Meghalaya	53940	18839
Mizoram	26265	2793
Nagaland	45874	11062
Odisha	377594	92087
Pondicherry	1904	1421
Punjab	177268	90353
Rajasthan	1262570	252338
Sikkim	16457	2704
Tamil Nadu	418801	151437
Tripura	21756	4998
Uttar Pradesh	1927997	896301
Uttarakhand	70183	28098
West Bengal	857087	234275
Total	12666377	4353247

II. CAUSES OF CHILD LABOUR

The major causes behind the child Labour are as under:

- Poverty.
- Lack of education.
- Ignorance towards laws.
- Migration from rural to urban in hope of jobs.
- Heavy debtness of the family.
- Unemployment.
- Natural calamities.
- Militancy.

III. CONSEQUENCES OF LABORIOUS ACTIVITIES ON CHILDREN

Children who are doing different kinds of work in different sectors are also facing various effects of these works on their health and also affecting the economic condition of the country. The effects are:

- Children who work often face serious health problems. It involves child injuries, abuses, cuts, fractures, tiredness, dizziness, excessive fears and nightmare.
- Their mental health also suffers badly.
- It also has negative effect on the welfare of the nation. Since these children increases illiteracy, hampering the overall economic growth of the country.
- Children who cannot find work to feed their families resort to begging and in many cases also fall prey to prostitution and even turn into thieves just to make a quick buck on which the family's survival depends.
- Emotional neglect such as deprivation of family love and affection, resulting in loneliness, and hopelessness.

IV. REVIEW OF LITERATURE

According to Ravi Kanbur (1995), Legislations against child Labour even if it could be forced, are not the only way to tackle the issue. Child Labour legislation must be combined with targeted social & economic incentives such as Forced schooling together with equitable economic growth.

For Van P.H (1998), Child Labour occurs due to selfishness of parents and for the household's survival. The people from the poorer section of the society voluntarily push their small children into work world just to increase the amount of money in the form of income for the survival of the whole family.

According to Miller (2003), Employers prefer to use child Labour because it is cheap and easy to manage. They can be coaxed, admonished, pulled up and punished for defaults without any reasons. Moreover children are not on line of trade unions which fight for their rights. Even on average, children are paid half the salary of adults and they are less troublesome.

According to Gupta (2007), in India every third child is a working child and every fourth child in the age group of 5-15 is employed. Thus considerable children are not only losing their childhood but also opportunities for education. However, whatever estimate we take, this inevitable reality remains the same that child Labour is a problem of massive proportion.

Child Labour is extensively used in India as elsewhere in many countries. In India, the problem of child Labour is inextricably linked to basic social problems that we have been grappling with over the past five decades of freedom: illiteracy, unemployment and poverty.

According to the report of ILO (2015) there were 5.7 million child workers in the age group of 5-17 years in India, out of total 168 million child workers, whereas UNICEF estimates 28 million child labourers.

V. OBJECTIVES

- To examine the causes responsible for the emergence of child Labour.
- To analyse the role of ICT to control over the social evil.

VI. ROLE OF ICT TO CONTROL OVER THE PROBLEM

In this modern day and age, information technology plays a big role. However, if you're not in the field of information technology yourself, you might not know just how information technology touches your life.

Social media is also another area of communication available because of information technology. It's now easier than ever to share photos and information about your life with people you know all over the world. This draws some families closer to family members they don't get to see as often.

Most mobile devices also offer some kind of face to face video communication as well. Using Skype or other programs like it, you can call other mobile Skype users for free to talk face to face. Apple also has Facetime, which allows iPhone users to talk face to face with other iPhone users.

ICT is an important system through which we can stop and control the problem of child Labour with the help of its various sources .So far as the most educated, civilised, richest section of the society is concerned internet can play an effective role. It should be noted that these children are demanded by high officials, politicians, and high income group's people in majority. With the help internet, messages, e-mails, conferences etc. the situation, at present is little bit under control but very far, where no child below the age of 14 years, in shops, hotels, industries to earn money to fulfil their stomach. Time to time seminars, conferences, discussions are arranged to inform the most literate section of the society about laws, new policies, schemes implemented to curb the social evil. But the most important is to provide information to those people whose children are serving at different work places to get money ,from the poorest section too, where it is not possible for them to participate even not able to understand the policies ,laws, schemes framed for the protection of the children .In order to provide proper information to these people who are illiterate, less educated, poor the other sources of ICTs can be used like radio, TV programmes on particular problems ,related laws, penalties for hiring and pushing children towards laborious activities .Information about various programmes like free and compulsory education ,mid-day meal program should be given to attract the poor parents towards education of the children. Awareness camps also can do much in providing information to the poor people regarding their children and motivate them to push their children towards schools to get education, one of the basic requirements of the life.

In nutshell, we can say that ICT is very important in every field but it can work more to reduce increasing number children working in different sectors just for the sake of money through providing information about some other areas from where they can get education and vocational training etc. which helps them to brighten their future as well as of the whole nation.

Information can change the thinking communication can give solution to various problems and ICT can change the future of the country.

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