**“Show a child love and care, Child labor is not just fair”**

**Child Labour**

**Introduction**

According to the International Labour Organization (ILO) a new generation of children is being deprived of the chance to take their rightful place in the society and economy of the 21st Century. The ILO has proposed that ‘child labour’ will disappear in a decade. If this happens well and good. But in reality the situation is worsening. One in eightchildren in the world is exposed to the worst forms of child labour which endanger children’s physical, mental health and moral well-being.

**The Problem**

In many countries children lives are plagued by armed conflict, child labour, sexual exploitation and other human rights violations. Children living in rural areas have fewer opportunities to obtain good quality education. They have less access to services than children living in cities. The UN Convention on the Rights of Children (CRC) has explicitly prohibited person under age 18 being recruited into the armed forces or direct participating in hostility. In spite of this special provision under CRC, many countries still involve children below 18 years in hostilities.

Child labour keeps children out of school and is a major barrier to development. To make the anti-child labour law a reality, poverty and unemployment need to be eliminated. Unless the standard of living improves at the lower levels of the society, children will be forced to work. Many middle and upper class families do not hesitate to engage young boys and girls to help them with household cores. The middle class family feels by employing a child below 14 years they are helping poor families to increase their earnings for daily livelihood.

More specifically, hazardous child labour is work in dangerous or unhealthy conditions that could result in a child being killed, or injured and/or made ill as a consequence of poor safety and health standards and working arrangements. Some injuries or ill health may result in permanent disability.

**“Child is meant to Learn, Not to Earn”**

**Child Labour in Pakistan**

Child labour in Pakistan is the employment children for work in Pakistan, which causes mental, physical, moral and social harm to children. The Human Rights Commission of Pakistan estimated in the 1990s, 11 million children were working in the country, half of which were under the age of ten. In 1996, the median age for a child entering the work force was seven, down from eight years old in 1994.

****

It was estimated that one quarter of the country’s work force was made up of children. In a city of Pakistan, Hyderabad children enter work force at the age of 4 or 5 years old making bangles and bracelets. They make around 12 sets (per set containing 65 bangles) and only receive Rs.40 which takes around 2 to 3 days. This is not just a situation of Hyderabad but all other Katchi Abadis of Pakistan.

As of 2012, it is estimated that 96 percent of working boys in urban areas were employed in the wholesale and retail industry. The following 22 percent in the service industry and 22 percent in manufacturing. As for the girls, 48 percent were employed in the service industry, while 52 percent were employed in manufacturing. In rural areas, 68 percent of working boys were joined by 82 percent of working girls. In the wholesale and retail industry the percentage of girl was 11 percent followed by 11 percent in manufacturing.

****

Child labour in Pakistan is perhaps most rampant in the city of Multan, which is an important production center for export goods? For children working at brick kilns in Punjab, a survey was conducted by the Punjab Labour Department. According to the latest figures of the survey, the department identified 10,347 brick kilns in Punjab and a total of 126,779 children were identified at these sites. Identified that 32,727 males and 5,687 were females.

**Child Labour in Other Countries:**

There are loads of different countries that use child labour. A lot of children are trafficked. There are a lot of children are trafficked to do child labour.

The percentages of child labour in some countries are as follow

|  |  |
| --- | --- |
| Countries | Percentage Of Child Labour |
| Central and Eastern Europe | **2.5%** |
| Middle East and North Africa | **7.8 %** |
| Eastern and Southern countries | **18.6 %** |
| West and Central Africa | **20.8 %** |
| South Asia | **36.7 %** |
| East Asia and Pacific | **8.7 %** |
| Latin America | **2.8 %** |

**Causes of child labour**

Some causes of child labour are listed below:

* Poverty
* Parental illiteracy
* Social apathy
* Ignorance
* Lack of education and exposure
* Exploitation of cheap and unorganized labour
* Low income levels
* Deprivation of basic needs

1. **Poverty**

Poverty is main cause of child labour. Poor parents send their children to work, not out of choice but reasons for economic expediency. The hunting grounds for child traffickers are invariably areas of most extreme poverty where families have exhausted all other strategies for survival. Economic setbacks arising from recession, climate disaster, long lasting civil conflict, lack of education and unemployment. Excess population , you must have observed that poor families have more number of children it usually become very difficult for them to survive on the income so they make their children to work , hawking. Poverty leads to the mentality of ‘more hands, more income’

1. **Parental illiteracy**

Parental illiteracy is causing children to work instead of study. They want their children to earn for family instead of carrying books in their hands. This is their mentality according to their circumstances, all the situations they are facing. They didn’t get education and they don’t know about the importance of education. Their children born with the fate of child labour and they produce another illiterate parents.

1. **Ignorance**

Our society is living in 21th century but ignorance to lower class causing child labour. Parents ignore their children and their basic needs. As they grow up and enter in adolescence their parents want them to earn for family whatever work they have to do. This ignorance leading to social problem of child labour. Child labor is destruction of our future youth and our country is paying cost of this social problem in the form of other social problems.

1. **Lack of exposure**

Child labor arises from low exposure to society. It is 21th century and we all know the progress in all fields of life. Our rural areas have low exposure to this environment as people living there are living in the world of ritual, traditions and other previous thoughts. They don’t know that children are born to hold books not for holding things for sale. Our government needs to work on this issue.

1. **Social apathy**

Apathy is state of indifference or the suppression of emotions such as concern, excitement, motivation and passion. An apathetic person has absence of interest. Socially it is associated with society in which people not care for each other’s. This is avoiding an opportunistic callings and desensitization of human involvement where society is concerned. Social apathy is causing child labor and society is not caring about their children future.

1. **Exploitation of cheap and unorganized labor**

There is lack of division of labor in our country and this is crating many problem in our society. Child labor is one of them. Some families are forcing their children to work even for very less money and our society is exploiting this class.

1. **Low income levels**

Some families are earning very less they want all the members of family to work. And children are victims of this thoughts and child labor is encouraging in these societies. They want their children to work and forget about education. This is becoming social problem in Pakistan and our child population is not going to school.

1. **Deprivation of basic needs**

30% of our country’s total population is living life below poverty line, in which people are deprived of basic necessities of life like clothing , shelter, food , education and medication, the children of these of these people are forced to become laborer’s or workers in order to survive. Our government has not put its laws into practice to stop child labor in our county that’s why it is increasing day by day. our children are working in different places to fulfill their needs and their study is ignored totally.

**Consequences of child labor**

Sitting at home in a city, we have no idea of the terrible conditions that these children are made to work in and for more than ten to twelve hours a day. In many cases, these children are offered by the parents in lieu of a loan that they may have taken from the factory owner. So it is a barter deal loan in cash that is repaid in kind through the child. Not all are barter deals. Some work for money where the pay is as little as ten rupees per day.

* **Mental health**

Mental health of children is disturbed by early age labour. It can cause inferiority complex in children when they see their age fellows are playing, studying and enjoying. They think their fate is to work from dawn to dusk. This mental disturbance leads to serious disasters in their future life. Many other mental health presentations such as migraines, insomnia, irritability, enuresis and asthenia.

* **Prevailing diseases**

Children working in worst environment often face many diseases. Digestive, respiratory and skin problems are seen. These diseases lead to other dangerous health problems. Skin lesions cause cancers. The other issue is that their parents don’t care about them and their health. Than this health problem become worst. A descriptive survey on child labour in automobile workshops of Peshawar, Pakistan, randomly selected 200 boys (age 6–15 years) from 32 workshops, 40% of whom were engaged in mechanical work. Watery eyes (31%), chronic cough (29%) and diarrhea (22%) were the commonest symptoms reported by the children, while 38% had suffered major.

* **Physical illness**

When children work for 12 to 14 hour for very less money they often face fatigue . Because of bad eating habits it leads to physical illness. They are physically weak and lean. Their body structure is irregular

* **Depression**

While working with these children, it has been observe that these children have many physical as well as psychological problems, including depression, anxiety, restlessness, helplessness, worthlessness and low self-esteem etc. the result of current study indicated that children working in different places suffer from depression and anxiety and increase in depression causes increase in anxiety and vice versa.

* **Impaired memory and lack of interest**

Child labor cause impaired illness among the children. They suffer many disturbances in them and this leads to lack of interest. They lose interest in all that things that suits their childhood. They only show concern about work and money with which mentality their parents raised them.

* **Illiteracy**

For poor parents, losing the advantage of any earnings opportunity open to children far outweighs the money, time and effort spent towards school education. The benefits of child labor usually outweigh the costs of schooling, for poor parents**.** The children remain illiterate and our youth is about to destroy**.**

* **Behavioral and psychological problems**

The psychological effects of child labor in third-world countries are considerably intense as compared to the rest of the world due to poverty, low literacy rates and improper conduct with children. Depression, hopelessness, shame, guilt, loss of confidence and anxiety are some of the horrible emotional effects of child labor, leading to a high risk of mental illness and antisocial behave.

**Solutions to eradicate child labor**

Followings are some suggestions to reduce this this social problem:

1. Increase family income
2. Increase literacy rate.
3. Provide social services to help families in the situation of disaster and disease
4. Laws: Bringing in laws that makes it illegal for children to work until they reach a certain age makes it much easier to combat a culture of child labor. In addition, laws can be brought in that ensure that when teenagers do begin to work, they are not allowed to work beyond a certain maximum number of hours and they are paid a minimum wage
5. Reduce poverty by offering employments
6. Keep your eyes open and if you see any examples of child labor occurring do not be afraid to report them
7. Donate your money to charities that help children to escape the trap of child labor.
8. Abolish child trafficking
9. Promote fair trade Fair trade practices guarantee a fair price to small-scale producers.
10. Replace child workers by adult worker.

**Conclusion**

Child labor is an issue in our modern day world that not only harshly ravages the lives of millions of innocent children, but also affects all of us through its effects on the economy, family, and trade along with its connections to poor education and poverty. Letting this horrific and inhumane practice go on for so long has brought on an unexpected problem that we must solve together in order to protect our children and safeguard our future. With the development of human rights child labor should also banned.

