

An Analysis of Contributing Factors to Child Labor: A Case Study of Rajshahi City

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Abstract— Child labor is regarded as one of the most common problems in Bangladesh where 93% of child laborer are employed in the informal sector such as small factories and workshops, on the street, in home-based business and domestic employment which cannot be ignored. Many families rely on the income generated by their children for survival, so the problem child labor becomes worthy. Rajshahi is the main city of its division and so the opportunity of work is more available here. The study finds out the push factors behind child labor with their families' lifestyle and tries to eradicate this problem. In this study, 90 families have been interviewed from different slum areas of Rajshahi (e.g. Padma Residential Slum, Vodra Railway Slum and Talaimari Slum). To collect primary data, a well-organized questionnaire has been prepared and face to face interview has been taken with that questionnaires. Simple random sampling technique has been used for the study. After completing the survey and collecting data, an analysis has been done and a conclusion of an overview of child laborer's demographic condition has come out. Various socio-economic and demographic variables have been considered at the time of data collection. In addition, secondary data has been used from various child labor's relevant books, articles, documents and officials through internet browsing. This survey finds out that the major factor behind child labor is poverty and also the family background of these laborers is also another worthy factor of child labor. And finally some suggestion, like providing school amenities and economic help has been designed to eradicate this problem as possible. As this study captured all possible causes behind this curse so, considering the causes the study will be an eyewitness account for policy makers as well as corresponding authority to demolish the name of 'child labor'.

Keywords — Child Labor, Demographic condition, Eradication, Push factors, Questionnaire survey, Simple random sampling, Socio-economic condition.

1 INTRODUCTION

CHILD labor is acute and most challenging issue especially for developing countries in today's world. Many countries have established laws and incentives to eradicate the child labor but it spreading with the span of time. According to Suda (2011) the term child labor refers to when children is working in any type of work that is dangerous and harmful to children's health or the work hinders their education (Osment.L 2014). According to UNICEF, "Child labor is work that is likely to interfere with a child's education and development; labor that exceeds a minimum number of hours, labor that is hazardous; and/or labor performed by a child who is underage according to state legislation. (UNICEF 2009). It is an old phenomenon in our country to send a child to work in this sense that they will acquire new skills. It harms not only the welfare of individual children but also national and economic development. Bangladesh is the eight largest populous country and Rajshahi is one of the most densely populated cities in Bangladesh. This increasing population creates poverty and other problems that generate child labor. The study was held to find out the overall condition and factors behind child labor with a view to improving their social, economic and household condition. This study will help to find the way that reduces the problem as well as improve the socio and economic conditions of child labor's household. This study will also

help to know the financial and housing conditions of child labor. It will represent a clear view of child labor's background. It will be helpful to create the attention of the concerned authority to reduce the child labor as early as possible.

Objectives of the study:

- To explore the push factors behind the child labor
- To know the lifestyle of child laborer's family
- To recommend some possible solutions of child labor

2 LITERATURE REVIEW

In the study on 'Child labor; the effect on child, causes and remedies to the revolving menace' Lana Osment showed a comparing between the child labor in India and in Nigeria and thus explain the reasons which force children to work and finding possible ways to solve the adverse consequences of child labor.

A study was on 'Causes and Consequences of Child Labour in Bangladesh: An In-depth Study' conducted by Md. Masudur Rahman, attempts to focus on different issues, historical perspective, current situation, causes and consequences of child labor with special reference to Bangladesh.

A study "The Child Labor Situation in the Commercial and Construction Sectors in Bangladesh" conducted by Dr. A. H. M. Z. Karim. The major findings of this study were age and education, income, information on children's parents' income, residential status of the respondents, family heads and their types, types of accidents and sufferings, reasons behind the issue.

Another study on "Child Labor and Education in Bangladesh: Evidence and Policy Recommendations" which major findings were linkages between child labor and education in Bangladesh, percentage of child labor according to the age, house-

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hold, social and cultural determinants of child labor, specific initiatives to combat child labor, percentage of dropout children, and role of non-government organizations.

3 METHODOLOGY

In the present context of Bangladesh, child labor is a burning question to all concerned people and government & non-government welfare organizations. To solve this problem, we need to know the causes of child labor. In this regard, their family background is a major concern. That's why the topic is selected for the study. Some literature reviews are held for acquiring more specific concepts and more proficiency. Formulation of objectives is held after literature reviews. This particular social survey is constructed by collecting data from primary and secondary sources. Primary data like financial, household, social etc. are collected through field survey and secondary data like geographical location, statistics etc. are collected through relevant books, articles and website. These collected data help to find out a concrete result based on the tentative objectives. After gathering and analyzing all these data, specific factors are found out to a solution which is capable of further uses.

4 STUDY AREA PROFILE

The total number of slums in the rajshahi city corporation area is approximately 45 (Source: RCC). Most of the slums are situated in Motihar, Boalia, Binodpur, Katakhal, Railgate, Padma residential area and laxipur area. Because of increasing slums, the economic & social improvements are break down in Rajshahi city. As a result, child labors are increasing day by day.

Selected study areas are a possible place of living child labor in Rajshahi city. Vodra Residential Slum, Vodra Railway Slum, Talaimari Slum, Kedur Mor, Hadir Mor were chosen as study areas. In this study, the most authentic reasons behind the child labor and their family, social and economic conditions that they face were tried to find out. In the rest of the report some recommendations are exposed to eradicate the curse named "Child Labor" from the society.

5 AGE AND GENDER DISTRIBUTION

Age Range of child labor

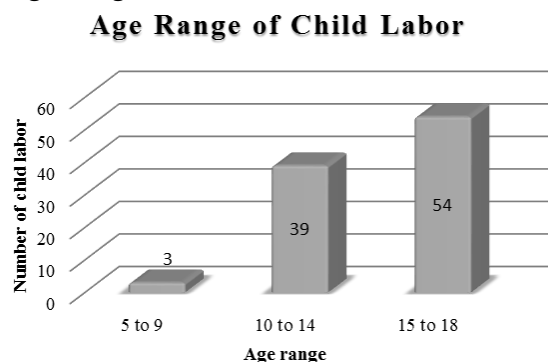


Fig1. Age Range

According to this survey it is seen that the children whose age are 15-18 year involved with child labor in a large number (56%) than any other age. Among the 90 sample 54 children (age of 15-18) are involved with child labor. From this it is understood that parent prefers to send their children to work after being a little bit matured as they earn more money than others. Beside many parents have some dream to educate their children so they send their children to school. The children are continued their study until their parent can manage the cost. But when their parent cannot fail to manage the cost children are bound to drop school and go to work for earning. Actually those are that child labor whose age are 15-18 this type of child labor has some educational qualification. After that the children having the age of 10-14 engage with work less number of the children having the age range 15-18. This number is 39 out of 90 (41%). The most important findings of this survey is that little-aged children (5-9) are involved with any work in a small number (3%) Reasons behind this they are not suitable for work.

Gender Distribution of Child Labor

From the study, it is found that male children (91%) are engaged with various work more than female (9%). Reasons behind this are that female child are not capable of outdoor works. Female mostly work as a house servant. Besides most of the place male children are preferable than female. In our country it is very common occurrence that a boy work in a tea stall or other shop or a mechanical workshop.

Educational Qualification

Many child laborers are deprived of their rights like education because they do not get the opportunity to go to school or to study. Due to the poverty, the percentage of dropout children has been increased day by day and at the same time the literacy rate decrease. As a result, working children get stuck in low paying, low-skilled jobs, thereby perpetuating the cycle of poverty.

Table1 Educational Qualification of Child Labor

Illiterate	48
Class 1 to 5	42
Class 6 to 8	12
Class 9 to 10	3

From this survey it is seen that 46% (48 children out of 90 sample) child labor have no educational qualification. The figure also shows that 40% of child labor have got the opportunity to study at class 1-5. But after class five the decreasing rate of school going children is greatly noticeable. The number of school going children of class 6-8 is 12 out of 90 (11%) where within class five the number was 42 (46%). It is a clear indicator of dropping out children after primary school. After that 3% of child labor studied at class 9-10. This figure gives a view that child labor is a great hindrance to illiteracy as every child labor do not continue their study because of extra earning for their family.

Educational Qualification of Child Labor's Family Members

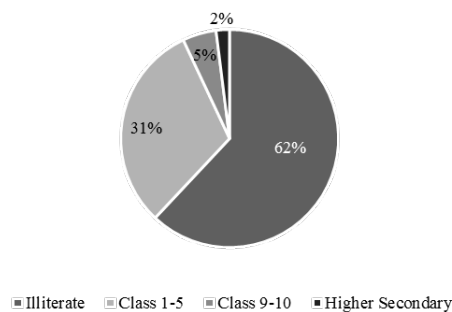


Fig2. Educational Qualification of Child Labor's Family Members

Lack of awareness of parent and poverty is the main reason behind the child labor. Only education can grow the awareness among the people. So the educational qualification of child labor's family members is also very important. This figure shows that about 62% of members are illiterate.

Working Type of Child Labor

Working Type of Child Labor

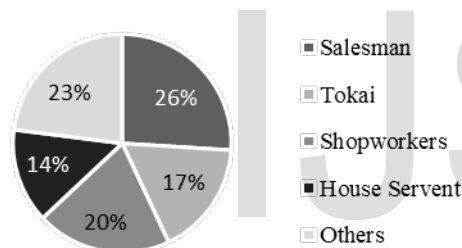


Fig3. Working Type

This pie chart represents the variation of work of child labor. Most of the child labor work as a salesman as it is available in Rajshahi city. About 26% of child labor work as a shop worker, 17% are tokai. But one noticeable thing is that there is no child labor who involve with risky work, so it is a good sign that the working environment of child labor of Rajshahi city is good enough. But they face many kinds of rough behave from their master.

Working Hour of Child Labor

Working hour of child laborer



Fig4. Working Hour

In our country the wage of child labor is very cheap according to their work. The average working hour of child labor that has come from this survey is 8.57 hours. From this figure it is seen that 37% (57 out of 90) of child labor work about 9-12 hour that is about half of the day. Besides 29% (36 out of 90) of child labor work about 6-8 hour that is the standard working hour in our country. It is a matter of sorry that there is some child labor who work about 13-15 hours which is not expectable and that is about 14 %. Tokai have no any permanent workplace, generally work 3-5 hour or more that is 11% and 9% of child work as a permanent worker who work at home and live there.

Working Hours of Child Labor's Family Members

From this study, it is seen that most of the member's work for a long time about 9-12 hour. 57 members (47%) works 9-12 hour. Though they work more hour they cannot fulfill their family needs so they send their children to earn more. Besides this figure represents that about 30% (36 out of 90) members work 6-8 hours and 13% work 3-5 hours. The average working hour of child labor' family members is about 9 hours that has been founded on this survey.

Living Condition of the Child Labor's Family

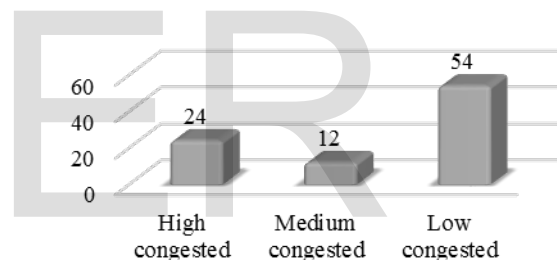


Fig5. Working Hours of Child Labor's Family Members

6 HOUSING CONDITION

Living Condition of Child Labor

Living Condition of the Child Labor's Family

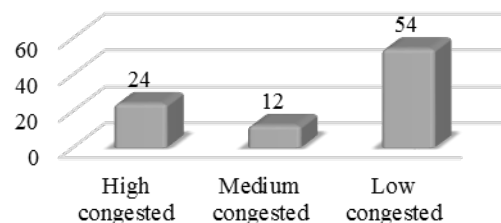


Fig6. Living condition of child labor

Experts say that 50 percent of the total population of Rajshahi city live in slums with inadequate facilities. Most of the house contain maximum 2 rooms with 6-7 members which is very small and unsuitable to live. From this figure it is seen that

most of the child labor's family live a very miserable life. Among the 90 sample 54 family live in a very congestive situation. 24 family live in a medium congested place, only 8 families live the low congestive way that have sufficient room space proportion to family members.

Family type

From the study it is found that about 67% child laborer belong in the nuclear family and 33% are joint. Most of the slum people have migrated to another city in Rajshahi in searching for work. For this reason, the nuclear family is more than joint family.

Types of home ownership

The study finds that 60% families are lived in a governmental house that means without giving any rent. 23% families are lived in a rental house by giving different amount of money. 17% families have their own house. Most of them build their house on the bank of the Padma River being cheap.

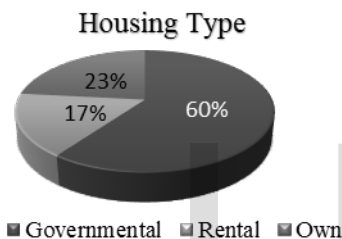


Fig7. Housing types of Child Labor's family

House rent and size

The study finds that 23% of child labor's families are lived in the rental house. That's mean 15 families lived in the rental house. 12 families give more than 900 takas as their house rent and 3 families give 300-600 taka as their house rent. The size of the houses is generally small. Build of own house is so difficult due to lack of place and money. Most of the house contains only 1 or 2 rooms and 3 is very rare.

Housing Structure

As child laborers are lived in slum area so their housing condition are generally poor and very congested. It varies from place to place. Maximum houses are constructed of tin, bamboo and fence that include 1 or 2 rooms mainly. The house is so small that people cannot live properly and makes congested environment.



(a) (b)
Fig8. Housing structure at Talaimari (a)

and Kedur Mor Slum (b)

Toilet type

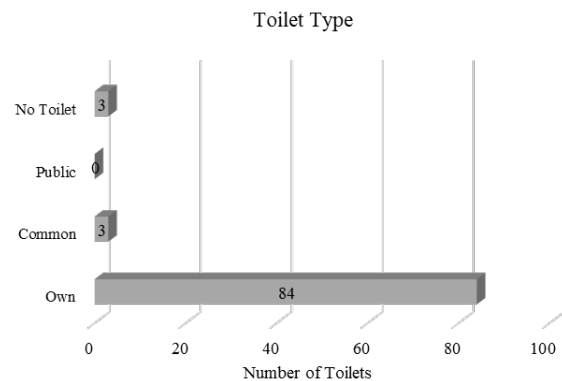


Fig9. Toilet type at child laborers' family

From this survey 3 types of the toilet are seen. This figure shows that maximum families have their own toilet. But those toilets are given by RCC to develop the sanitation condition. The figure shows that 84 families have their own toilet, 3 family has a common toilet, 3 family has no toilet and there is no family which has a public toilet.

Sanitation

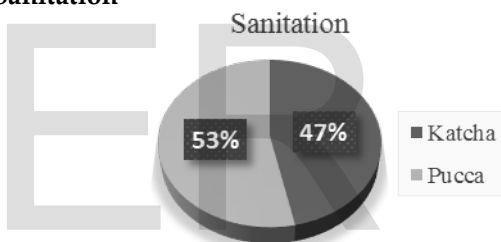


Fig10. Sanitation condition of child laborers' family

Sanitation means the condition of the toilet. From this figure it is seen that 53% of child labor's family have a pucca toilet and 47% have katcha toilet. The percentage of using pucca toilet has increased because RCC has constructed many pucca toilets for the people.

From this figure it is seen that 53% of child labor's family have a pucca toilet. And 47% child labor's family have katcha toilet. The percentage of using pucca toilet has increased because RCC has constructed many pucca toilets for the people. It is a clear indication that RCC is very much conscious about the people health.



(a) (b)

Fig11. Pucca toilet (constructed by RCC)

problem for the slum people. .

7 FACILITIES

7.1 Utility facilities

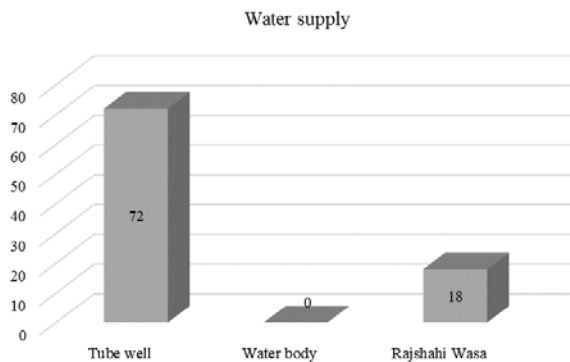


Fig12. Water supply of child labor's family

The present condition of the public services, the slum dwellers are getting, was the main concern of this section. Pure drinking water, gas supply, electricity connection, transportation availability information was taken in this section.

Water is an essential part of survival lives. Access to clean water sources is a challenge in the slum of Rajshahi areas. Water is used for not only drinking also for another purpose such as bathing, cooking, washing etc. This water is collected from tube-well, supply water, etc. Most of the slum dwellers use the tube-wells water for drinking, cooking or bathing. It is a matter of sorrow that slum's peoples collect their water from distance place as they don't have any tube well of their own.

Tube well: About 80% of people use tube well as their water supply system. Slum people collect their drinking water from tube-wells in the different distance. They use the tube well water for drinking, cooking or bathing or other purposes.

Rajshahi WASA: About 20% of people have the facility of WASA to collect water. It is really small in number.

Waterbody: No family uses the water of water bodies like a pond, river etc.

Electricity Supply of Child Labor's Family

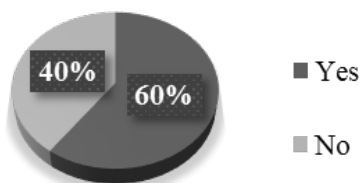


Fig13. Electricity supply in child labor's family

From the chart we can see that about 60% of people have the electricity supply on the other hand 40% have not.

There is no gas supply in the surveyed area. But for the cooking purpose they used straw, wood, dry leaf, bamboo etc. It is a big

7.2 Working Facilities

Above all they have some facilities in there working places. These are:

☐ Work own willingly

Some of the child labors have this kind of facilities like work at his own will. They work as their wish.

☐ Extra time for lunch

Some child labors get extra time for lunch and others.

☐ Extra facilities during occasion

Some child labors get extra facilities during occasion like religious festivals and others. About 12.16% of them get this kind of facilities

☐ Don't do any extra works

About 15.20% don't have to do any extra works. They work enough and get enough wages.

☐ Extra money for lunch

About 6.8% get extra money for lunch. Some child labors can't go to home within the break time so they get the facility that is money for lunch.

☐ Get affection

Some child labors get affection in their working places from their masters.

☐ Don't do any risky works

About 12.16% do not have to do any risky works because of masters having a good mentality.

☐ Enough time for relaxation

Some of the child labors get enough time for relaxation and refreshment. For that some can attend to school and can continue the studies.

☐ Enough wages

About 1.2% of them get enough wages.

8 PROBLEMS

Causes behind the Child Labor

Most of the literature revealed that poverty is one of the basic causes of child labor in Bangladesh. Currently, there are an estimated 31.5% people who live under the upper poverty line and 17.6% who live below the lower poverty line (BBS, 2010). The latter population is generally not able to fulfill their basic needs and often relies on their children's labor and work (Nasir, 2009). Sometimes children as well as their parents have no interest in education and think education is not a real-life necessity. Furthermore, poor schooling is often attributed to child labor in Bangladesh, particularly in the rural areas (Khair, 2005)

Child labor is a curse of Bangladesh because these children cannot continue their study. Behind the child labor various kinds of cause play the vital role. By this figure it is seen that poverty is the main reason behind the child labor. When a parent cannot manage the daily necessities for their family they bound to send their children to work though they may have a dream to make their children an educated person like others. On the other hand, lack of concentration on the study is also the main reason behind the child labor that comes out

from this survey. Many parents want to send their children to school but their children do not go to school. Engaging with bad company, lack of awareness of parents are also some reasons behind the child labor.

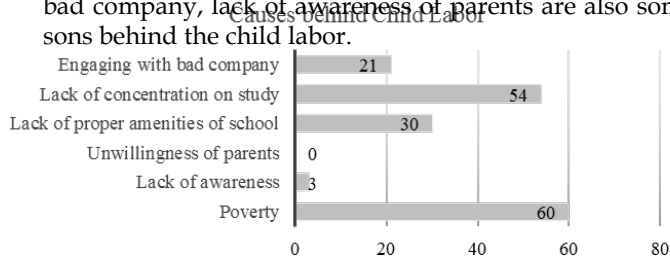


Fig14. Causes behind the child labor

Problems they face

Family Problems

As the family of child labors lives in the slum so they face many problems. These are:

☐ Absence of planned drainage system

The area which was surveyed has lack of proper drainage system sometimes it is open, all facilities aren't well distributed. Due to the dumping of waste into drains, lack of maintenance and irregular or no cleaning, drains have become breeding grounds for mosquitoes, also disrupts the normal flow causing flooding and overflowing during rainy season, inundating roads and low lying areas causing havoc and environmental hazards for city dwellers. The bad smell from drains is also a major problem as claimed by slum people.

☐ Bad weathering condition

The weathering condition of the slum is so hot and uncomfortable for living. Because of it children can't concentrate on their study and leave it.

☐ Forceful migration

As they live there illegally so sometimes they are forced to leave the place. So they have to face tremendous trouble. It makes the waste of their money.

☐ Disturbance of train sounds

People of the slum around the railway station have to face this kind of problem. The train has no timetable to arrive. The tremendous sound of the train had to bear the slum people.

☐ Carry water from far away

A great problem, lack of pure water is here. In the surveyed area there is no surrounding water source. So people have to carry water from far away. Their water sources are mainly tubed well, ponds that contain impure water, causes them disease like diarrhea, cholera etc.

☐ River water flooded

Rajshahi is located beside the Padma river which contributes to flooding. The river is considerably covered by wastage and water don't have the right way to flow, so when it rains, water is over flooded to the river and then it comes into the living places. The slum people are great victims of it.

☐ Insufficient income

In Bangladesh, social class is introduced for income discrimination. Maximum portion of the total population is suf-

fering from insufficient income. Rajshahi is not out of it. About 22.29% of slum people suffering from insufficient income.

☐ Deprive of daily necessities

The slum dwellers live from hand to mouth so they can't afford their daily necessities because of their poor income.

☐ Unhealthy living place

They can't afford healthy living places for their family because of poor income. Surrounding environment influence to child labor. About 12.16% people are living in unhealthy places.

☐ Lack of enough food

Because of insufficient income they can't afford enough food.

☐ Lack of nutrition

Insufficient income leads them malnutrition and sickness. Health concerns included a variety of acute and chronic conditions both in the respondents and their families.

☐ Lack of medical treatment

About 20.27% low-income people can't afford their medical treatment timely. Hence they remain sick and can't attend their work time and it makes their income poorer.

Working Problems

They are in poor condition because of their poor working condition. Problems are:

☐ Get rare holiday

The child labors and their family members who work get rare holiday hence they can't attend any family occasion and needs. About 13.17% child labors get a rare holiday.

☐ Do not get extra facilities

The workers (child labors & family members) don't get extra facilities in their needs like; enough wages, relaxation time, bonus on occasion, leave work on illness etc. About 15.19% child labors don't get extra facilities.

☐ Victim of rudeness

Child labors are mostly victims of rudeness and its about 12.15%.

☐ Do not get enough wages

About 23.29% child labors do not get enough wages in spite of hard working. The labor of the child is cheap in the sell market.

☐ Bound to work whole day

The workers are bound to do work all the day. This is a cause of not attending school. Because of poverty they are bound to do work whole the day.

☐ Forced to do risky works

Many children are forced to do risky works by bad masters who don't have good mentality

☐ Bound to do extra works

Many child labors are bound to do extra works but after that they don't get enough wages.

9 RECOMMENDATION

Required Facilities

The respondents were uneducated, lived in unhygienic and difficult conditions worked in the informal service sector.

Some recommendations are established to facilitate their better living and to send their children to school. These are the following:

☐ ☐ Scholarship

If the govt. provide a scholarship for the school going children their parents will influence to send their child to school. They can also utilize the money in their education as well as their other needs.

☐ ☐ Free reading materials

If reading materials is provided freely, they will eager to send their children to school. As they live hand to mouth, so avail the cost of education is really a hard task for them. So this kind of purpose is really effective.

☐ ☐ Free schooling

If the education cost is free, then attendance of students will increase day by day. The respondents mostly want this facility because they all have the willingness to educate their child but it is unlucky of their fate that they can't.

☐ ☐ Free medical treatment

If any earning members will sick he can't attend work and have no income for those days. As a result, their income becomes poorer. So they greatly recommended for free medical treatment.

☐ ☐ Enough food

Because of insufficient income they can't afford enough food for the family. They are greatly in need of "Food for Education".

☐ ☐ Healthy living places

Living below the poverty line, living in the unhygienic environment which impact on their health greatly understand the impact of it on health. So a fixed and healthy living place is most wanted for their better living.

Required Economic Help

Because of their overall condition the slum people want some kind of economic help. These are the following:

☐ A fixed amount once

About 34% people want fixed amount type help like giving a great amount of money that will help the living condition of the slum people by using this money in making business and other financial activities like buying an auto rickshaw, van, shop etc.

☐ Yearly payment

If economical help like yearly payment is provided by which they may utilize this amount in effective sectors. About 13% of people want this kind of economic help.

☐ Monthly payment

If the monthly payment is provided they will be able to provide all necessities of every day. It will help them to send their children to school. About 53% people want this kind of economic help. Child labors are bound to do extra works but after that they don't get enough wages

4 CONCLUSION

The study strongly discourages the practice of child labor. Galli (2001) found that child labor reduced household income by lowering human capital of the child as the child struggled or failed to manage both schooling and work. Child laborers are more likely to send their children to work as well. In this way, poverty and child labor is passed down from generation to generation [Galli & Rossana, 2001]. Law enforcing agents and the parents and guardians of children themselves, must be sensitized to the provisions of the Convention on the rights of the Child and the law protecting children in Bangladesh. Today's children are the citizens of future. They will lead the nation tomorrow. If they are not provided a chance to prepare themselves as a responsible citizen of the nation, the nation can't develop. Especially the poor families can't provide proper schooling to their children. Finding the reasons behind this, this problem should be minimized or should be solved if possible. This is a demand of time for the development of that families as well as the nation.

ACKNOWLEDGMENT

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