

Article Review on Exploring the Socio-Economic Determinants Of Child Labor Exploitation, Gondar, North West Ethiopia

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ABSTRACT

Children are engaged in laborious and seriously exploitative working condition due to various socio-economic challenges. Hence, the main objective of this study was conducted to explore the major socio-economic determinants of child labor exploitation in Gondar town in the case of Arada area. In doing this, we have employed mixed research method of survey for quantitative and key informant interview for qualitative research methods. The data collected revealed that parental and communal positive attitude toward child labor, low educational status of their family, poverty, early marriage, divorce, lack of community awareness toward child rights, and illegitimacy of child labor, death of parents, migration and the presence of abusive working condition at home is the major socio-economic determinants of child labor exploitation in the study area. Child labor exploitation is the result of various socio-economic situations of children themselves, their families and the surrounding community.

Key words: Socio-Economic, Child Labor Exploitation, Gondar

1.1. Purpose of the Article

Both in developed and developing nations, children face different menaces that potentially harm their social, physical, psychological and behavioral developments. In developing countries like Ethiopia problems of poverty, malnutrition, and social instability, or disorder create problems of far-reaching impacts for the proper utilization of children as a resource requires, at a minimum adequate provision of health, education and child and family welfare services. [1]

More specifically, in the developing world (Ethiopia) belongs to have the largest bulk of child laborers. Child labor refers to labor performed by a child who is under the minimum age of 18 years which specified in a national legislation for the kind of work and labor that jeopardizes the physical, mental or moral well-being of child. (ibid) [2].

Employing children for their labor is commonly practicing in the capital and different provincial areas of Ethiopia. Among different regional places Gondar with its neighborhood rural areas, is the one in which the practice of child labor is prevailing in the form of written agreement between child's parents and the employer [5].

According to Addisu, in Gulele subcity of Addis Ababa, child labor abuse is caused by poverty, unemployment of parents, migration, the education system, HIV/AIDS and family disintegration, and affects children's health, physical, psychological and intellectual developments. Although the above studies and efforts explain child labor exploitation, they did not show the specific determinant factors of child labor exploitation comprehensively at the local context. Therefore, this paper claims its own uniqueness due to the reason that it is an initial scientific attempt that assesses the determinants of child labor exploitation in Gondar town. [1]

1.2. Method of the article

Study design

The study was cross-sectional mixed (quantitative and qualitative) research which was completed in 4 consecutive months from February up to May. From quantitative census survey method was used to get data, with little cost and short period of time, from children who are working in laborious working conditions. From qualitative key informant, interview methods were employed to get rich, detail, and qualitative information.

Study area

The research was conducted in Gondar town around Arada area, where the bus station and marketplaces are actual places where contact with informant children was made. Here, the respondents of the study were children who are working as a shoeshine, children who sell gum, bread, kolo, soft, newspaper (venders) or petty traders, and children who carry baggage and different commodities in the bus station and marketplaces (porters).

Sampling

techniques

The study used both non-probability and probability sampling techniques specifically purposive and simple random sampling techniques, respectively, were used to select appropriate informants from the study areas (child laborers) and key informants from local residents and non-governmental institutions.

Sample size

The study was conducted based on 20 children who were selected with census survey method and the remaining 5 are key informants taken from the community members (two Kebele 9 and 10 residents) and from organizations.

Source of data and method of data collection

There are two sources of data, primary, and secondary sources. Primary sources are sample respondents that are used as a source of data through questionnaire and interview. Secondary sources such as books, senior essays, newspapers, and other relevant materials also were used to get more information and for better understanding of the problem in question.

1.3. Results of the article

Parental conditions and community attitude on child labor exploitation

Table 1 indicates the age disparities among exploited children and is between the age of 9 and 15 and in terms of sex majority of them were males. In addition, the Table 1 also shows that 6 children are shoe shiners, 7 children are porters, and 7 of them are also street vendors.

Table 2 indicates respondents' parental employment condition. Accordingly, self-employed fathers accounted 35%; informally employed constitute 10%; formal employed in governmental sectors accounted only 5%, and 2 respondent children's fathers are unemployed. 7 (35%) of children's mothers are self-employed; whereas, 1 (5%) of children's mother are informally employed, besides unemployed and other cases like death and working in marginal works such as baking Enjera (Ethiopian traditional food), spinning cotton and daily work together accounted about 60%.

From this Table 2, it can be deduced that majority of parents of working children are either self-employed in their own farms since most of laboring children are from surrounding rural areas, or engaging in marginal and low-income generating jobs. Moreover, there are also unemployed parents specially mothers of child laborers which accounted 30% of cases.

Table 3 indicates the education level of respondents' father in which illiteracy accounted 45%; 6 (30%) of

respondents fathers are in elementary level; and junior secondary and higher secondary school, respectively, accounted 5% and 10%, 50%, whereas, 35% of them are within the elementary level and 15% are in other cases.

Table 3 indicates those respondents' parents are mainly illiterate in which their fathers and mothers, respectively, accounted 45% and mothers' 50%. In addition, the second highest proportion is an elementary level which accounted 30% of fathers and 35% mothers. Therefore, it can be implied educational status of parents is lower.

Table 1: Socio-demographic background of respondents

Variables	Age (in years)	Work type			Frequency (%)	Remark
		Shoe shiner	Porter	Street vender		
	9	1	-	1	2(10)	
	10	1	-	2	3(15)	
	11	2	-	1	3(15)	
	12	-	1	1	2(10)	
	13	1	2	1	4(20)	
	14	1	2	-	3(15)	
	15	-	2	1	3(15)	
	Total	6	7	7	20(100)	
	Sex					
	Male	6	7	2	15(75)	
	Female	-	-	5	5(25)	
	Total	6	7	7	20(100)	

Table 2: Respondents' parental employment condition

Item	Frequency (%)	Remark
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	Father		Mother		
Employment conditions of parents					
Self employed	7	35	7	35	
Informally employed	2	10	1	5	
Formally employed	1	5	-	-	
Unemployed	2	10	6	30	
Others	8	40	6	30	
Total	20	100	20	100	

Table 3: Parental level of education

Item	Frequency (%)		Remark
	Father	Mother	
Parents' level of education			
Illiterate	9 (45)	10 (50)	
Elementary	6 (30)	7 (35)	
Junior secondary	2 (10)	-	
Higher Secondary	1 (5)	-	
Above this and other cases	2 (10)	3 (15)	
Total	20 (100)	20 (100)	

Table 4 shows the distribution of respondents based on their answer on the local community attitude toward their laborious work. Accordingly, the community which accepts child labor as normal activity accounted about 60%. However, only 10% of respondents reported as their community do not accept child work. Besides, 30% of the

respondents indicate the community remains neutral toward children's engagement in laborious work. Hence, from this Table 4, it can be deduced that the local community is positive toward child labor or have a neutral attitude. In other words, the acceptance of community toward child labor may affect child labor exploitation either through employing them in laborious work or through not intervening on the problem of child workers along the street side in the town.

Table 4: Attitude of the local community toward child labor

Item	Response	Frequency (%)	Remark
What is the attitude of the local community towards your laborious work?	Accept it as normal	12 (60)	
	Do not accept	2 (10)	
	Neutral	6 (30)	
	Total	20 (100)	

1.4. Implications of results of the article

According to this study, the major socio-economic determinants of child labor exploitation are poverty, death of parents, migration, instability of parents living condition, low level educational attainment or illiteracy of parents and marginal occupation of parents, scarcity of arable land, drought famine and unfavorable living condition in rural areas, abusive work at home and corporal punishment by parents and the practice of early marriage that leads girls to escape out of family and migrate to towns. The study also shows the positive attitude of families and community that accept child labor

as a normal economic activity to meet their own needs and to support their family. The community as well as the family lack awareness regarding the rights children, the illegality of sending or employing children abusive work. Moreover, the community has a culture of considering work as part of socialization and upbringing without taking into account which types of work are appropriate or not.

According to ILO [9], children's work in the global south is viewed as learning attitudes, knowledge, skill and behaviors, and an integral part of the educational and developmental process of the child and of the family's obligation toward child rearing and upbringing. Hence, our study community reflects this notion in addition to children's economic value.

Moreover, the family background of our study targets, being mostly from rural area exacerbated the above conditions with the existing poor economic situation which in turn leads rural children migrate to towns and engage in laborious work. Experiencing the above problems children in our study area engaged in laborious work or exploitation work as it is determined by UNICEF [7]. They work for longer hours at their early age with minimum payment or income. Besides they work in an environment which is deteriorated with garbage, unpleasant smell and sunburn. Moreover, they work repetitive boring work in a crowded place which hazards their psychology.

1.5. Gaps of the article

The following are gaps of the article:

- ✓ Poor economic situation
- ✓ Family background of the study targets,
- ✓ Becoming family of rural area,
- ✓ Migration of children from rural area to urban and ,
- ✓ Socio - economic situations.

1.6. Concluding remarks and suggestion for future research

Child labor exploitation is the result of various socio-economic situations of children themselves, their families and the surrounding community. The main objective of this study was to explore the socio-economic determinants of child labor exploitation and in relation to this the finding revealed that children at their early age are working in a situation which threatens their personality, healthy, education, social and economic aspiration of their life. The major determinants of child labor exploitation are rooted in the family, community and the society at large and poverty and migration accounted mostly to put pressure on children to engage in laborious works. More specifically, there are other determinants which are death and instability of one's parent and family, low level of education, lack of awareness on the rights of children, divorce, land scarcity and others.

1.6.1. Suggestion for future research

Based on the finding I have suggested the following points;

- The government in collaboration with the concerned organizations and individuals is expected to intervene in the general community, particularly poor families both in rural and urban areas in the form of family welfare provision and credit for better income generating activities.
- Local government and non-government organizations should give awareness toward children's right and the consequence of child labor exploitation to the family, parents, community, and society at large.
- Community-based organization in collaboration with government and non-government organizations should try to turn migrant children to their families

by providing counseling service and transportation costs.

for the legal protection and betterment of those children who are vulnerable to hazardous working conditions.

- The local organizations, family, resident, and others have to organize street child laborers and advocate

Ethical Statement

I hereby certify that I have NO any kind of affiliations with or involvement in any organization or entity with any interest in the issue discussed in this manuscript.

I, the Author, declare that this manuscript is original, has not been published before, is not currently being considered for publication elsewhere, not presented in any conference and not utilized for academic purpose including promotion.

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