

GLOBALIZATION, LEADERSHIP AND EDUCATION A STUDY OF RURAL CHILD LABOUR SCHOOLS IN AGRA

Dr. Sharmistha Bhattacharjee,

Senior Lecturer, Jaypee Institute of Information Technology, Noida

Abstract

“A Child is a father of the man”. This famous line quoted by William Wordsworth refers to the importance of the child in a society for the development of society as well as for the development of the whole nation. For welfare and development of the nation, a child should be introduced to education and should be devoid of several social evils.

Even though there is no empirical evidence that globalization per se increases child labour but in developing countries globalization has paved way to such an evil practice by creating opportunities for all which generates fast money.

Poor family and less income leads to engage children in the workplace for earning money. The child is forced to work and earn at a very lower age. It becomes a compulsion for them to work and earn livelihood for themselves and their families. Thus a child for the sake of his family is compelled to work in several places. Ignorance of parents towards education results in lack of education of child and he have no other options but to work and earn his livings. This paper focuses on how globalization has created opportunities in Agra district and children are exposed to the work place. It also throws light on the leaders who have helped by holding hands of these poor children by introducing rural child labour schools in the district. The introduction of the schools has not eradicated child labour in the district but has shown a path towards prosperity.

Key Words: Globalization, Child labour, Education

1. Introduction

India is a functioning democracy in Asia. For this democracy to continue, all odds against it need to be removed, one of which is the eradication of child labour which is a result of globalization. Globalization means integration of economies and societies through cross country flows of information, ideas, technologies, goods, services, capital, finance and people. Cross border integration can have several dimensions – cultural, social, political and economic. In fact, some people fear cultural and social integration even more than economic integration. The fear of “cultural hegemony” haunts many. Limiting ourselves to economic integration, one can see this happen

through the three channels of (a) trade in goods and services, (b) movement of capital and (c) flow of finance. Besides, there is also the channel through movement of people.

Globalization and structural adjustment programmes not only reinforces greater integration in the world economy but is a veneration of the market as the only mediator of efficiency and growth. It has resulted in renunciation of the state responsibility towards the welfare of its citizens. Evidence shows that along with new opportunities, globalization has led to marginalization of the poorest and has enhanced inequality and economic insecurity among the poor. The impact of globalization and economic reforms is particularly significant in a diverse and plural country like India, where different communities are placed in a social hierarchy with iniquitous access to production and other assets. This in turn increases in child labour and school dropout rates

2. Nature of Problem

This paper attempts to state the idea that despite of such a paradox due to globalization, the government has provided a package of education which is not accessible to working children. It focuses on how the *Uttar Pradesh Gramin Kissan Mazdoor Sangathan* has shown their leadership qualities in introducing rural child labour schools in Agra The paper analyzes the situation of the children and gathers explanatory qualitative data.

Child Labour is an universal problem and prevalent through ages. The government has enforced that every child has a right to get educated and enjoy the benefits of education, learning and play. This fact is further supported by Article 28 of the United Nations convention that, ‘All children under 14 deserves free educational benefits and making this available is the state’s duty’.

In schools of today children get an opportunity to invoke themselves in curricular activities and group interaction, but all this is available to the fortunate few and despite legislation benefits of education are not available to the deserving. A few scholars have studied the relationship between child labour and education. Kaul, (2001) points out that in the Indian context there is an non availability of educational

facilities which is due to lack of basic infrastructure facilities such as classrooms pedagogy etc [03]

Mandelievich, (1979) points out those children cannot attend schools because they cannot combine work and school. Sometimes, even if schools are present and even through they are not working children do not prefer to go to school because of the fear of not being able to cope up with the curriculum. She also points out that there is a major gender bias in the education of the children. Female children are deprived of education so that they can become helping hands for the families. [04]

Kanbargi, (1991) commenting upon the relationship between schooling and work participation of children points out that there is a higher dropout rate among working boys and schooling for girls is governed more intricately by factors such as caste, religion, family occupations, productive and domestic roles of girls, marriage and kinship patterns. . [02]

Jaiswal, (1995) discussing between child labour and literacy points out that working children are deprived of education because of socio economic compulsion of parent, parents disinterest toward school education, lack of schools failure of school to attract children and lack of compulsory enforcement of education for children [01]

According to Md. Talib, (2000) in a class divided society the suggestion of a typical primary education promising universal amelioration is mystical. The child labourers setting in modern economy suggest that labouring children usually find themselves locked up in one work experience that does not allow them to make choices in alternative skill acquisition. Elaborating on this Talib points out that children work for wages in factories due to external necessities, the child is not provided with appropriate educational skills to make choices in the range of occupations that can support livelihood. Due to not having alternative occupational skill children have to stick to a particular production unit. This turns them into labourers bonded to an occupation. Educational strategies seeking to remove children from labour end up providing schooling as a safe device to overcome physical and mental debasing from wage work but, these strategies also do not provide alternatives to children to come out of the work sphere and the problem remains the same [05]

Gandhi provided a solution through his method of *Naitalim* where the central idea was to educate children aged between 7-14 years through the medium of craft. He advocated learning through productive work, which made children self reliant and enabled

them to pay the cost of their education. He selected cotton spinning to teach various subjects through the medium of craft. Talib (2000) stressing on the Gandhian way of teaching arithmetic pointed out that according to Gandhi children would learn counting by measuring the number of yards of yarn one had produced on the takli or number of standard rounds for which a takli is made. Through this the child can learn the figures, addition, subtraction and division at the time of production. Gandhi primarily advocated that the basic objective of education was to impart an all round and integrated type of education for children. Purposive work with child's own hands is necessary for education

He reiterated the education should start with teaching of handicraft, which will make children productive, and through which the children can pay their own tuition fee. He stresses that medium of instruction be the mother tongue because due to language problem many children from lower strata are denied education.

3. Education and Child Labour

Working on the same lines of Gandhian ideas the *Uttar Pradesh Gramin Kissan Majdoor Sangathan* was found by Shri Tula Ram Sharma worked as leader and introduced rural child labour schools in Agra. The aim of the union UPGKMS is engaged in total elimination education of child labour and making Uttar Pradesh a child labour Free State. It also aims at welfare organization establishments and development of rural men and women. It also attempts to organize sectors like brick kiln workers, quarry workers building, construction, wood, forestry and agricultural workers. These schools provide regular permanent education to children who are child labourers, children who are on the verge to become child labourers and children who live much below the poverty line.

These rural child labour schools are situated in No. 1 school Dhanouli, Agra under the kind financial assistance of ILO/IPEC for a project period of one year with a target education of 40 children. Now it is a government recognized school. No. 2 is situated in *Nagra Daru Etah* with a financial assistance of IFBWWICFMEK. No. 3 schools are in *Mandi Mirza Khan Fetehpur Sikri* established with the financial assistance of IFBWW/BAT-KARTEL. No.4 school is situated in Fatehapur Agra established with kind financial assistance of IFBWW/FNV

As shown in the table1, No 1, 2, 4 are primary school (1-5) but No. 3 has up to 3rd class. They also aim to impart alternate or technical education to the children.

Children from neighbouring villages like *Shankar Lal Ka Nagra Mulka Ki Piyan, Vida Nagar Nagk*. Children of *Banjara* caste come to study in these schools. The timing of the school is from 9.30 to 3.00 pm. Children of Dhanuoli, Etah, Nagar Daru, MM Khan Rural school for child labour had a warm welcoming and encouraging approach and was motivated to attend school and learn but on the other hand children of Fatehpur has a hostile attitude.

They were scared and started running away leaving their work. The schools mainly have students who come from backward and lower caste. Children from lower caste primarily attend the school such as peasant's *dhobi, Kumar Koori (Brush makers), Pandits* and Muslims also educated their children from this school. These schools have taken major steps to eradicate illiteracy, making the parents conscious about literacy and encouraged full time education. In the 1st year the teacher taught without salary. This school always tried to maintain a balance between the family members and school. They had parents meeting every month. The principal of the school pointed out that the school provided mid meals like banana and biscuits but after some days the mid day meal system was stopped and children continued to come to school. The school has decided to take rupees five from students.

Some case studies of children who are engaged in pottery, shoe making, brush making and carpet making portray that children contribute to the family occupation and also attend school. Children narrate that if middle school is not started they have to leave their studies. They say the school provided all the facilities and they wish to continue with their education. They consider their familial occupation as important part for their livelihood and try to manage the same with their education.

Discussing about children working as quarry workers also attend the school and work with their parents. There is a high rate of absenteeism. They primarily belong to the *Banjara* caste. Education helps the child to undergo social transformation and upward mobility. The children being interviewed are not working in the eyes of law. But is an economic asset to their parents.

It was found that despite the laws and measures dealing with child labour and the measures taken up by the Uttar Pradesh *Gramin Kissan Majdoor Sangathan* as a leader has a far reaching effect. The presence of education system in the district has enhanced good quality and accessibility to the existing schools, the curricula reflects the educational needs

of children in order to prevent school dropouts. The system existing fails to give almost benefit to the children due to lack of infrastructure, economic compulsion, formal school timing not being adjusted with working hours, poor relation with students and teachers. Some children and skill away from education because of an unattractive proposition for children and parents and the major agricultural cycle especially for sowing and harvesting does not enable children to pick up the lost educational threads in schools

4. Conclusion

It would be more appropriate to deal with the issue in wide spectrum a broader perspective development schemes. It must also evolve and implement laws and corrective measures especially for parents of the child labour with the view of making the families sound and in turn it will pave the way for withdrawing of children from hazardous occupations.

The moral issue has solution in universalization of primary education in its letter and sprits with intention of ensuring balanced human resource development in the contemporary Indian society. In an environment where children's time has an economic value and employment opportunities for educated workers are scarce, parental investments in their children's education may not be driven entirely by poverty and credit constraints. Children's participation in child labor and schooling responds to economic returns to education in India, which suggests implementing policies that raise the economic benefits of education - such as creating more high-skilled jobs and improving the quality of education - in order to lower child labor and increase schooling.

5. References

- [01] Jaiswal, P. (1995). Child labour-A Sociological Study, New Delhi: Shipra Publications pp 65-66
- [02] Kanbargi, R. (1991) Child Labour in Indian Subcontinent Dimensions and Implications, New Delhi Sage Publications. pp125
- [03] Kaul, R. (2001) Accessing Primary Education: going beyond the class room: Economic and political weekly, Jan13-19, Vol. XXXVI No. 2 pp155-162
- [04] Mendeilievich, E (1979) Child at work, Geneva International Labour Office.
- [05] Mohammad, T. (2000) Learning for Labour VS learning to Labour-Two experiences from India. pp 62-63

Table 1: Sample Size for Research

No. of Students	Name of the School
195	No. 1 Dhanouli (1-5)
182	No. 2 Etah, Nagar Daru (1-5)
110	No.3 MM Khan ,Agra (1-3)
63	No 4 Fatehpur ,Agra (1-5)