

## SUPPLY SIDE DETERMINANTS OF CHILD LABOR IN PUNJAB

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### Abstract

*Children are an integral part of any society as they are not born to work but to study. Unfortunately children are facing hindrance either in economic term or in social term that forced them into labor work. Getting better idea of the real determinants of child labor can only provide the better policy options to tackle this menace. The major objective of the study is to highlight the supply-side determinants of child-labor in case of Punjab, Pakistan. Using data of Multiple Indicator Cluster Survey (MICS) 2007-08 for Punjab, the study examined the supply side determinants of child labor in Punjab. A binary logistic model was used for empirical analysis. Major findings of the study unveiled that although, low family income, family size, and physical access to the institutions are pushing children to child labor but more significantly mother's education and household head's education are the major factors that force parents to put their children to work. In line with aforementioned findings, some suitable policy implications were given for government to counter this substantial barrier to the nation's growth.*

**Keywords:** child labor, child welfare, child rights, child development, child labor in Pakistan, child protection

### Introduction

Child labor is considered a significant threat to children's rights and also amongst substantial barriers to national development. Recent decades witnessed the establishment of important standards to define child labor and prioritized its elimination. But still facts are alarming as with a conscious estimate 168 million boys and girls work as child laborers<sup>1</sup>. Among this, over 85 million are forced to do hazardous work. Moreover, it is sad that the majority of child labor is in such countries where it is banned. These children work for many reasons; firstly they work for sustaining their family economic resources, social norms deem to be acceptable, and unaffordable schools are the major reasons. As a matter of fact, it is not only children who supply their labor but in industrialized era, there are many factories, businesses and farms where child labor is demanded. Above situation needs efforts simultaneously at national and international level to deal with the complex pattern of supply and demand factors.

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There are very bad instances about child labor as witnessed that in some cases children involved in hazardous environment and often abused at their early age. These types of practice make our children more vulnerable and leave them in a state of being nonfunctional or like a burden rather they being productive part of the society.

Child labor has become a serious threat in the last decades and there are, actually, fewer researches done on its causes. Particularly, it is ambiguous how important each of the five factors is. For instance, it is known that when the educational cost is not concerned, there is a greater increase in school enrolments. It is also doubtful that whether poor guardians/parents will then shift their children from work to school, and then the question to ponder upon it is to know how significant the social norms are in affecting such a hard decision. Yet, we are aware of the major factors that influence the parent's decisions for children but still there is a need to know the combinations of these factors which cause child labor.

Against this background, this study will bring into light the supply side determinants of child labor in Pakistan by using the data taken by Multiple Indicator Cluster Survey (MICS) 2007-08. Section II informed about conceptual and empirical understanding along with deliberate discussions aligned with latest estimates of the severity of the problem.

Section III turns to a discussion of existing literature of the relevant problem that is child labor and then it particularly focuses on supply side perspective of child labor. Section 4 will put forth the results of Binary Logistic model and estimates of the supply side determinants, while section 5 contains conclusion and some policy recommendations.

### **The Enormity of Child Labor**

It is necessary to know the answer of the question what is the exact prevalence of child labor in the globe. The answer lies on the facts what we mean by child labor first. Just for building an argument, it may be non-leisure time; all non-educational to individuals lower to a particular age group can be included as child labor. On the other side, only full-time service in monetary activity would be measured as child labor. The previous includes light work that may be a child do after school or vacations, which supports in skill attainment, while the latter excludes part-time engagement in such awful activities for instance child prostitution.

The term child labor has a broader concept which may catch up ethical, economic, and legal responses in different ways. In the beginning, it is ambiguous to get consensual definition of "child". In the West, it is in their culture that is inherited from their forefathers; likewise, in many societies culture supports such work (Rodgers, 1981). The development of a child to adulthood moves towards two major stages; biologically and socially distinct, over which the amount of reliance and the requirement to protect the child slowly moves downward. For instance in many societies even if only less than eight or nine years old children are not considered under the bracket of a child age instead of willpower that is mainly based on social status in spite of age. Likewise,

numerous societies, particularly rural children, do not see child work as “bad”. Instead, it is one of the major stage of child socialization that he is introduced to work and is taught to learn life skills for his survival in future. This view is still present in numerous African nations (Agiobu, 1992). However, In other aspects, child labor can also be well thought-out exploitative, like when the child begins full-time work at early age, or does hectic work for many hours, when the work puts extreme physical, social and psychological burden on the child and hinder the child's development in these crucial areas (ILO, 1992).

### **Child Labor in Pakistan**

Major social problems of the developing countries like Pakistan are Illiteracy, expenditure on education unemployment, and child-labor. It is often hard for a developing country like Pakistan to cope effectively or in a short time with such social problems because people of such nations are financial not so stable and they need extra earnings to ensure their existence or sustain their existence. In such circumstances, child labor may be multidimensional and a complex phenomenon that is correlated with other major factors that cannot only be severe but also needs urgent attention to end a single problem. This complex patterns and correlations of various social problems with each other must be understood to curb a single social problem that is child labor. In addition, Child labor is a serious menace and considered a important global issues through which all developing nations of the world are directly or indirectly affected but unfortunately it is more common in Pakistan. Child labor has severe outcomes as it affects mental health of the person, affects religious physical life, but it also hampers economic growth of the country. Considering mental health of a child working somewhere, it is an obvious fact that a child has an innocent brain and has not much maturity. This developmental stage may be used by someone as there are frequent cases of child rape being reported or of sexual harassment. Along with, a child as being in its developmental stage needs proper care and should be pampered at every stage but putting him out on the hard life of society and working in extreme conditions may leave a severe impact on the brains of the children. These effects may lead them to an unstable mental state or also push him towards antisocial behavior. Then, in economic terms, we are living in a capitalist world, where economic growth is central to the survival of any state. But in child labour the nation's economic growth hampers and faces severe problems as it produces unskilled and illiterate labor force. Unskilled and uneducated labor not only contributed in extending poverty, illiteracy but also encourage micro and macro level problems of the country. All this adds to the already-existed problem of a developing country like Pakistan. In Pakistan children (aged 5-14 and above) are 40 million; 3.8 million kids are doing work outside among 40 million. The Human Rights Commission of Pakistan (HRCP) assessed that 11 million kids were indulge in working in 1990s. In 1996, the middle age for a kid entering the work power was seven, down from 8years old 2years former. Starting 2005–2006, it is assessed that 96 percent of children involves in work were utilized in urban regions, trailed by 22% in the manufacturing and 22% in assembling. With respect to the girls 48 % were utilized in the manufacturing and other 100 % were utilized in assembling. In rustic zones, 68% of boy children and 82% girl children are working. Work in Pakistan is congesting the typical limits by chance in a north-eastern city called Sialkot, which is an imperative generation community for fares

goods, for example, sporting goods. Like different countries, the Government of Pakistan is likewise finding a way to take care of this real issue. The Government of Pakistan executed Employment of Children Act (EOCA), the most grasping law in the historical backdrop of Pakistan against child labor in 1991, subsequent to passing the Convention of United Nations on the Rights of the Child in 1989. In The National Child Labor overview in 1996 led by the statistical data of Federal Bureau of Statistics in Pakistan, It was found that 33 lacs of the 40 lac children (in the 5-14 year's age) were monetarily dynamic on a full-time premise. 73 for every penny (2.4 million) were young men and 27 for each penny (0.9 million) young ladies, of these 3.3 million working youngsters. The rate of kid work in provincial territories is more prominent than the rate in urban zones. The quantity of monetarily dynamic children in the 10-14 years age gathering is more than four times the kids in the 5-9 years age group.

### **Learning from the relevant literature**

Literature review is important to understand what has been done so far on the phenomenon of child labor. Insufficiency of primary literature available on child labor led numerous researchers to target on the determinants of school presence. But as it is earlier stated that, one cannot consider as the opposite of the child labor, but this account of knowledge is vital to hypothesized that whatever promotes the school attendance is likely to impede child labor. In empirical analysis, child labor and hours dedicated to schooling are inversely proportional (Rivera-Batiz, 1985).

Overall, it could be a strong reason that educational system can be strong factors on the supply of child labor. This fact takes into account the role of the state. So far, many factors influences the household's behavior in the context of child labor affected by governmental initiatives particularly level on the level of social expenditures, the social infrastructure, and the overall economic development. At time when economic progress is relatively low and society is tarnished by poverty, it is more likely expected to have child labor that is exploitative in nature.

Bonnet (1993) believes that the downfall of the education system in African countries forced many parents to put their children to work rather than to educate them. Education has no guarantee to get a diploma which in response, helps them to get a job which seems appropriate for current economic scenario. In a scenario where survival is mainly based on work in informal sector parents of the children hold the belief to let their children out of school and indulge them in work is the most suitable solution for respectable livelihood. As one African commentator put it "Education broadens your mind but it does not teach you how to survive" (Agiobu- Kemmer, 1992).

The extent, to which the state can sway child labor behavior of the households, specifically the fertility effect and bigger size of the household, is discussed in a study conducted in Malaysia (Shreeniwas, 1993).

Present view of the evidence about relationship among developing countries suggests that bigger household size is more likely to reduce educational participation of the

children and overall development of the school and also reduce parents' participation in schooling (Lloyd, 1993).

Nevertheless, considering maximizing household, apart from the intra-household decision making procedure aimed at attaining maximization, there must be existing challenges desires of the members' time. A baby's busy time is for attending the schooling, or income-generation work in the market. Family, the way, will distribute the kid's opportunity depends on the family unit size and particularly the structure, the beneficial capability of the children and its guardians (chiefly its mother) in home and outside, and the level of substitution conceivable between the child and its parents (again, predominantly the mother). The time given choice is normally seen as a collective choice with the choice on quantity of kids, in light of the fact that the last decides the pay potential from child labor, however this potential in turn decides the coveted family measure. Child's salary transfer to the parents when they got old. In country regions, the relationship between maturity, family size, and type of work depends additionally on the extent of area property.

It is evident that children with vulnerable farm households mainly engage in wage labor while those children who are in larger farms are busy in agricultural tasks. So, greater engagement in child labor increases with larger farm size. These tendency inverses where larger farm households give their own lands on rent (Sharif, 1994). In a nutshell, both the farm size and the mode of operation will affect the fertility and family size on child labor.

Child labor is not the opposite to enrollment of the school, it is argued that likewise substitution and income influence but with diverse effects, deal with children.

The process is more likely affected by the similar social factors mentioned above named as level of development, social expanses level, cultural determinants and the demographic transition.

Majority of the studies about child labor identified poverty of the household and less education of parents as significant factors in defining child labor (ILO, 1992).

On the other hand, earning source of parents also important and is considered pivotal; if parents are engaged in daily wages employment then it encourages the need to addition in income. More often, parents work in the same occupation where children do<sup>1</sup>. Moreover the supply of child labor is also traced by the nature of the society where a family lives, particularly the social context. It has been clearly indicated in Srilankan and Philippine villages that establishment of day care center in an areas is more likely to decrease the engagement of the children busy in doing work at home (DeGraff et al., 1993; Sarwar et al 2009).

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<sup>1</sup> See the case studies of K. S. Jomo, 1992

**Objectives of the study**

1. To highlight the supply side determinants of child labor in the Punjab.
2. To explore the reasons pushing children towards child labor in Pakistan
3. To suggest suitable measures for future policy implications in child labor.

**Research Questions**

RQ1: what are the supply side determinants of child labor in the Punjab?

RQ2: what are the major reasons pushing children towards child labor in Pakistan?

RQ3: what can be suitable measures for future policy implications in child labor?

**Statement of the problem**

Child labor is an undeniable fact in our society as it has been existed since long and many times we as nation face embarrassment on a global level due to indulging child into work. In this grave situation, this study aims at showing the major reasons that push the child toward hard work or take him away from the studies that is his/her basic right being a citizen of a civilized state and this right is also invested in the country's constitution.

**Rationale of the study**

It is commonly said that children are the future of any nation. Therefore, children should be brought out in a healthy environment to become a productive part of the society. In this way, this study focuses on child labor that is the most crucial problems of Pakistani society. Specifically, this study brings some existing literature on the phenomenon that would increase the reader's understanding of child labor. Moreover, it highlights supply side determinants of child labor that is no doubt vital in policy making regarding child labor in Pakistan and also assist researchers to bring into light some other dimensions of child labor in Pakistan. Moreover, Child labor is one of the persistent social problems of Pakistan. It has been existed in any form since inception. Efforts were made time to time to reduce or end this menace. Results may be admirable to some extent but as a matter of fact we as a nation are still facing the threat of child labor. It is important to trace where we are lacking in coping with this problem. Therefore, this study tries to figure the major reasons that push a child towards work and what are the major supply side determinants that are causing child labor in the Punjab. In this way, by tracing the roots of the problem we may be beneficial in introducing its curbing strategies or even would fruitful in making awareness among individuals about the pressing factors of the child labor and in the long run it may play major role in policy initiatives.

**Data and methodology**

This portion deals with the major methodological approaches and also informs about the statistical techniques used in the study for making inferences and also drawing the empirical findings of the study. In order to identify the supply side determinants of child labor in Punjab, the study utilizes the data of MICS 2007-08 and run a binary logistic model on the data. Child labor was selected as a dependent variable while,

family size, mother's education, education of household head and family income was the independent variables. Significance level is also tested by controlling omitted variable biasness effect.

## Results and discussion

**Table No. 01**

Coefficients<sup>a</sup>

Model		Unstandardized Coefficients		Standardized Coefficients	T	Sig.
		B	Std. Error	Beta		
1	(Constant)	.002	.000		6.544	.000
	family size	.015	.000	.298	239.844	.000
	Mother's education	5.583E-005	.000	.000	.376	.707
	Education of household head	.000	.000	.003	2.504	.012
	Income	-4.226E-009	.000	-.002	-1.537	.124

a. Dependent Variable: child labor

Researcher used the Statistical Package for Social Sciences (SPSS) v.16. For testing the hypothesis, multiple regression model is used  $\text{Child labor} = .002 + .015(\text{family size}) + 5.583(\text{education of the mother}) + .000(\text{qualification of the household head}) - 4.22(\text{income})$ . The *p* value of family size is .000 is the insignificant. Moreover, the family size has less affect on child labor and the coefficient of family size .015 shows the positive affect on child-labor. If the family size is increase the child labor also increase. The *p* value of family size is .707 is the significant. Then, it is found that mother education highly effect on child labor and the coefficient of mother education 5.583 shows the positive affect on child labors. If the mother education is increase the child labor also increase. The *p* value of education household is .012 is the significant. We find the education of household head is effected on child labor and the coefficient of education of household .000 is show that there is no effect on child labor. The *p* value of family size is .124 insignificant. We find the income is less effect on child labor and the coefficient of income -4.22 shows that the negative affect on child labor. If the income is increase the child labor also decrease.

## Conclusion and Policy Implications

The major purpose of the study was to trace the determinants of Child labor. Multiple indicator survey 2007-08 was used and empirical analysis indicated that child labor mostly involves work, with lower or none of mothers and house head's education, low family income etc. are the factors of child-labor which impede the development of the children. Child labor is strongly associated with household poverty. With lesser economic independence of the household mainly produce the need of children's income

to live or even survive and may be prepared for unforeseen financial losses. Thus, admirable poverty alleviation steps would tend to eliminate or even reduce the child labor. Moreover, poverty alleviation is generally a long-term objective in most of the countries and short term goals are mainly concerned with reducing income risks for poor families that would ultimately strengthen the child labor reduction initiatives. Major instances are the provision of micro credit for agriculture lands or providing insurance for unforeseen losses of income. Likewise, these programs will have the capacity to break the bonds which caused child labor. In a nutshell, child labor is persistent in Pakistani society and cannot be tackled with sole policy but it needs deliberate efforts to put forward a multidimensional strategy modern by equipped so that an indigenous policy will come forth.

### **Limitations of the study**

This study has certain limitations; there is bulk of literature available on child welfare but this study is unique in nature as it is focused on child labor and more specifically to highlight supply side determinants of child labor with special reference to Punjab. In this way, this study brings out some key determinants to child labor that will assist in policy initiatives in future regarding child labor.

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