

## STUDY OF CHILD LABOUR, WORKING IN AUTO WORKSHOPS, THEIR ISSUES, CAUSES AND PREVENTION OF HYDERABAD DISTRICT

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### Abstract

*The phenomenon of child labour is a result of the exploitation of the socio-economic system in a society. It not only ignores the basic rights of proper development to millions of children in the world but also hinders the development process in many developing countries. About half of the world's child labour engaged in South Asia is in miserable conditions in the fields of agriculture, brick kilns, small industries, carpet weaving, domestic services and auto repairing workshops. This study was carried out to investigate child labour in auto workshops, their issues, causes and prevention in Hyderabad District. The objectives of the study were: (i) to find out the number of children working in Auto Workshops in Hyderabad District, (ii) to examine the factors responsible for child labour, (iii) to discuss existing labour laws of the country in context of child labour and (iv) to suggest measures for preventing child labour. The population of this study comprised of: (i) child workers working in Auto Workshops in Hyderabad District (ii) Employers of Auto workshops, and (iii) Parents of child workers. For choosing the sample from the population, purposive sampling technique was used. The sample consisted of 150 child workers working in Auto Workshops in Hyderabad district, 25 Employers of Auto Workshops in Hyderabad and 25 Parents whose children were working as labourers in Auto Workshops. The instruments used for data collection were three questionnaires, each for child workers, employers and parents of child workers. After pilot testing, the questionnaires were improved by modifying them. The data was analyzed and interpreted by using percentage method.*

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## Introduction

In every region of the world children are found to be deprived of basic rights and they have to work from 8 to 18 hours for their livelihood. One in every eight children is working in inappropriate and hazardous conditions.<sup>1</sup> Child labour exists not only in developing countries but in developed nations too. Child labour is very common in Latin America, Africa and Asia. In many Asian countries children are an important part of the labour force.<sup>2</sup>

It is estimated by the ILO (International Labor Organization) that more than 250 million children, between the age of 5 and 14 years, working in developing countries, are found in child labour<sup>3</sup>. Most of these children are concentrated in Asia and Africa, which together accounts for about 90 percent of total child labour in the world<sup>4</sup>. Asia alone accounts for 61 percent of total child labour, as compared to 30 percent for Africa, 7 percent for Latin America and 1 percent for USA, Canada, Europe and other nations<sup>5</sup>. The main factors behind child labour are poverty and financial deprivation which compel the parents for sending their children to work under rigorous and hazardous conditions. Child labour is a serious global issue through which mostly under developed and developing countries are directly or indirectly affected. According to the ILO, in several Asian countries 1/10 man power consists of child labour. In India the number of children between the ages of 10 to 14 is more than 44 million, in Pakistan 8 to 10 million, in Bangladesh 8 to 12 million, in Brazil 7 million, where as in Nigeria the number is 12 million<sup>6</sup>.

In this regard tables 1.1 and 1.2 highlight the information about child labour at the global and regional level.

**Table 1.1**  
**Global Estimates of Economically**  
**Active Children Ages 5 to 17 in year 2000**

Age Group	Total Population (.000s)	Number at work (.0000s)	Work ratio (%)
5-9	600,200	73,100	12.2
10-14	599,200	137,700	23.0
5-14	1,199,400	210,800	17.6
15-17	33,100	140,900	42.4
<b>Total</b>	<b>1,531,100</b>	<b>351,700</b>	<b>23.0</b>

<sup>1</sup> Shah, Nasreen Aslam (2011) Karachi Kay Nu Umar Mehnatkash Bachchey Aur Bachchiyan: Ek Jaiza Centre of Excellence for Women's Studies, University of Karachi, Karachi.

<sup>2</sup> Society for Protection of Children, Volume 17, Dec 1998, Islamabad.

<sup>3</sup> ILO-IPEC – Pakistan Report (1996). Child Labour Survey in Pakistan. Statistical Division Ministry of Labour, Manpower and Overseas Pakistani, ILO and IPEC. Islamabad – Pakistan.

<sup>4</sup> Khasnabis, R. (2001). Child Labour in South Asia, New Delhi.

<sup>5</sup> International Labour Organization (1998), Child Labour Targeting the Intolerable, Geneva.

<sup>6</sup> Weiner, M (1991), The Child and the State in India, Princeton University Press, New Jersey.

Source: ILO/IPEC & Statistical Information and Monitoring Program on Child Labour (SIMPOC) April 2002 Geneva.

It is pointed out from the table 1.1 that the child labour ratio between the age group 5-14 is 23% and between the age group 15-17 is 42.4% which is the highest ratio. The work ratio of child labour of total population stands at 23% at the global level. It indicates about 1/4<sup>th</sup> work ratio of child labour.

**Table 1.2**  
**Regional Estimates of Economically**  
**Active Children Ages 15-14 in 2000**

Region	Number of Children In (millions)	Work Ratio (%)
Developed Economies	2.5	2
Transition Economies	2.4	4
Asia and the Pacific	0127.3	19
Latin American & Caribbean	17.4	16
Sub-Saharan Africa	48.0	29
Middle East & North Africa	13.4	15
<b>Total</b>	<b>211</b>	<b>18</b>

Source: ILO/IPEC & Statistical Information and Monitoring Programme on Child Labour (SIMPOC) April 2002 Geneva.

Table 1.2 analyses regional estimates of the child labour force. It is observed that the developed countries have 2% work ratio of children. The number of children in Sub-Saharan Africa region is more as compared to other regions. It further points out that there is more poverty in the region.

Table 1.3 (no table 1.3) examines the number of children who are involved in the unconditional worst forms of child labour who are not included in child labour.

### **Definitions of Child Labour**

Child labour is defined as “work situations where children are compelled to work on a regular basis to earn a living for themselves and for their families, and as a result are disadvantaged educationally and socially; where they work in conditions that are exploitative and damaging to their health and to their physical and mental development; are separated from their families, often deprived of educational and training opportunities; and are forced to lead prematurely adult lives.”<sup>7</sup> This stricter definition throws caution to those child advocates who tend to equate all forms of child labour with exploitation, thereby hiding the real issues, through playing more on emotions rather than on reason. The types of child labour which are really exploitative should first be

<sup>7</sup> International Labour Organization – International Programme on the Elimination of Child Labour (2008).

identified instead of lumping all forms of child labour and in the process, losing sight of the forms of child labour that should be fought. What is economically exploitative, however, is essentially a cultural decision depicted in the community's daily practices. The State formalizes this decision through the formulation of national standards which is a part of its law.

Children have given a helping hand to parents even in the earlier times. With the passage of time children began to work outside their home away from their families. According to some historians during the British industrial revolution children of age 4 years were forced to work in hazardous conditions in factories and as domestic workers.<sup>8</sup> Even today children can easily be seen working in the same environment. The migration from rural to urban areas dropped the living standard of migrants. Thus the need of children to come out of their homes and join such establishments arose. Children started working at tea stalls, hotels, factories, auto workshops, etc. Children working in hazardous environments are prone to serious health problems as well. The concern over this resulted in a ban from the western countries on those Pakistani goods in which child labour had been used. The pathetic attitude of society towards child labour or economic pressures results in children going out to work on wages, apprentice workers in order to contribute towards the income of the family as well as to lighten the burden of the family in supporting them. In these circumstances children are expected not attend school either.

Child labour as work that exceeds a minimum number of hours, depending on the age of a child and on the type of work - these children are everywhere but are invisible. It is impossible to measure their definite number. One in every six children is a labourer.<sup>9</sup>

Ages 5-11: At least one hour of economic work or 28 hours of domestic work per week

Ages 12-14: At least 14 hours of economic work or 28 hours of domestic work per week

Ages 15-17: At least 43 hours of economic or domestic work per week<sup>10</sup>

According to a report more than 50 million children are devastated due to poverty and drought<sup>11</sup>.

## Background

Rapid industrialization causes child labour. The decade of 1960 which is thought to be the best economic decade of economic development has somehow caused child labour<sup>12</sup>. Most of the researches in our educational institutions count poverty as the only reason forcing children to do labour. But the latest 38<sup>th</sup> survey of the ILO reveals that only 11% of children in Pakistan go into work for economic reasons. The rest opt for labour mainly due to lack of access to education (especially for girls) as awareness and education are

<sup>8</sup> <http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/childlabour>.

<sup>9</sup> Chile Protection from violence, exploitation and abuse. <http://www.unicef.org/protection/index> child labour. html retrieved on 5<sup>th</sup> dec.2010

<sup>10</sup> UNICEF's Definition of Child Labour. (2010, October 19). Retrieved from [http://www.unicef.org/protection/index\\_childlabour.html](http://www.unicef.org/protection/index_childlabour.html)

<sup>11</sup> Shah, Nasreen Aslam (2011) Karachi Kay Nu Umar Mehnatkash Bachchey Aur Bachchiyan: Ek Jaiza Centre of Excellence for Women's Studies, University of Karachi, Karachi.

<sup>12</sup> <http://hairtradesports.com/2009/09/25/child-labour-in-pakistan/>

not a parental priority in many cases. International report on Education for life 2006 declares Pakistan home of the most illiterate individuals<sup>13</sup>. Even domestic research conducted by some local NGOs shows that over 25% of working children are in the labour market due to economic necessity. As for the rest of the 75% reasons other than economic ones are quoted as the cause for venturing into labour.

It is a fact that poverty cannot be eradicated overnight, but it must be realized that these 75% can and must be retrieved from the labour trap. It is very simple to say that as a nation we have failed to save from labour even those children who could have been saved through simple measures such as awareness, legislation and change in parental perceptions. So far, only children who work for export oriented industries including auto-workshops have a chance of leaving the labour force and this is largely because of international pressures and influence. However, this led to only a small number of children being saved in Pakistan.

It was observed that children in unsafe working environments are at risk. In 2004, more than 60% of the world's working children were deemed to do "hazardous" work in glass factories, mining, plantation, agriculture and "Auto Workshops" where health and safety regulations are often lax or non-existent.

### **Child Labour in Pakistan's Perspective**

The causes of child labour are multiple and complex, so are the forms, varying from extremely discrete to subtle openness. The working children remain among the most vulnerable members of society due to multiple factors, including impoverishment, malnutrition, socio-economic disparities and lack of awareness and lacuna in the implementation of existing laws.<sup>14</sup>

Until 1996, no authentic and reliable data was available on the situation of child labour in Pakistan. This absence of information has also been a cause, for long, of hindrance to society's recognition of the issue, not to mention the effective action against child labour in the country. The first 'National Child Labour Survey' was carried out in 1996 by the Federal Bureau of Statistics, Government of Pakistan with the technical assistance of ILO-IPEC. The survey shed some light on the nature and extent of this important issue for the first time. Thus, the reality of existing child labour could not be denied any more.

Available ILO statistics show that of the 127.3 million economically active children of 5 to 14 years of age in Asia and the Pacific, 3.3 million were in Pakistan. The working children represent above 8% of the total children's population in this age group. 73 percent are boys and 27 percent are girls in the child labour force of the country<sup>15</sup>. The gender distribution of child labour in Pakistan presents a picture, which is much in favor

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<sup>13</sup> Shah, Nasreen Aslam (2011) Karachi Kay Nu Umar Mehnatkash Bachchey Aur Bachchiyan: Ek Jaiza Centre of Excellence for Women's Studies, University of Karachi, Karachi.

<sup>14</sup> ILO-IPEC in Pakistan (2004) Achievements of a decade (1994-2004). Retrieved from [http://www.ilo.org/wcmsp5/groups/public/---asia/---ro-bangkok/documents/publication/wcms\\_100057.pdf](http://www.ilo.org/wcmsp5/groups/public/---asia/---ro-bangkok/documents/publication/wcms_100057.pdf)

<sup>15</sup> Society for the protection of the rights of child, The state of Pakistan's children 2009, Islamabad, Pakistan.

of the female child as compared to the situation in other countries, even though the same trend is observed internationally, in terms of gender aspects of child labour.<sup>16</sup>

The female child workers are estimated to represent only about one-fourth of the total working children. However, this might be to some extent, due to a general trend of under-reporting of female child work and also because they are mostly bound to work at home (own farms, family business, etc.) which is often not considered child labour by the parents. 80 percent of domestic workers are girls all over the world.<sup>17</sup>

The quantum of child labour increases with age as the large majority of working children are in the age group 10 to 14 years (82%). The rest (less than one-fifth of all), are in the five to nine years age group. Working children in the higher age group of 15 to 18 years were not covered in the 1996 survey but they are expected to be included in the next national survey planned for the coming years. It is expected that the figures for the overall working children in the country will be significantly higher once children in the higher age categories are also included in future surveys.<sup>18</sup>

Two-thirds of the working children are in the agriculture sector in rural areas. Of the rest, manufacturing, wholesale and social services around large urban and industrial centers employ significant number of child workers. Since most children work in the informal economy, it is even more difficult to control or reach out to help them.<sup>19</sup>

In addition to stealing their precious childhood, child labour in Pakistan (as the case is elsewhere), also means that these children are deprived of education and other positive learning and growth opportunities. According to the National Child Labour Survey, only about one-fourth of the total working children had a pre-matriculation education at the time the survey was conducted. The Survey indicated that working children were suffering from abuse of longer working hours: around 46% of the working children, especially in the urban areas, were putting in more than the normal 35 hours per week. The problem of work related illnesses/injuries was also prevalent (7%).<sup>20</sup>

The government also constituted a task force in March 1998 on child labour, chaired by the Minister of Labour, Manpower and Overseas Pakistanis, to formulate policies and strategies for the elimination of child and bonded labour. This Task Force approved the National Policy and Plan of Action to combat child labour in the year 2000; Different ministries have formed committees to address the issue from their perspective and mainstreaming of child labour concerns in their policies and plans of action. Prominent in this regard are the Ministry of Women Development, Social welfare and special education. Government officials, particularly the Labour inspectors of the provincial

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<sup>16</sup> ILO Report (2006). The end of child labour: Within reach. Global Report under the follow-up to the ILO Declaration on Fundamental Principles and Rights at Work, 95th Session, Geneva, 2006.

<sup>17</sup> Daily Jang, Tang Development Reporting Cell, Karachi, Tuesday 20<sup>th</sup> November, 2007.

<sup>18</sup> ILO-IPEC in Pakistan (2004) Achievements of a decade (1994-2004). Retrieved from [http://www.ilo.org/wcmsp5/groups/public/---asia/---ro-bangkok/documents/publication/wcms\\_100057.pdf](http://www.ilo.org/wcmsp5/groups/public/---asia/---ro-bangkok/documents/publication/wcms_100057.pdf)

<sup>19</sup> Ghayur, S (1996), Labour Market Issues in Pakistan: Unemployment, Working Conditions, and Child Labour (p.799). The Pakistan Development Review 35 : 4 Part II.

<sup>20</sup> Op.cit.

directorates have received rigorous orientation and training for better and more effective child labour inspections. Others who got similar support include employers and worker representatives, community volunteers, teachers and NGO staff. The first National Survey of Child Labour was carried out in 1996 by the Federal Bureau of Statistics with the collaboration of the Ministry of Labour. Other researches include a number of modular surveys, rapid assessments and several sector-related localized surveys. The capacity of the Punjab Council for the Rights of Children and Child Labour Resource Center (DOLW) was strengthened through a two-year ILO-IPEC intervention. The support consisted of development of child labour training course and the production of training materials. The Center now has the capacity to train the Government officials, Labour inspectors, NGOs and workers' organizations.

Article number 11(1) of the Constitution of Pakistan declares elimination of every type of slavery. Clause of that article also claims every type of child labour a crime<sup>21</sup>. In 1991 Child Employment Act was introduced,<sup>22</sup> but the issue is needed to be addressed more seriously.

### Hyderabad at a Glance

Hyderabad division is one of the five divisions of Sindh province. According to 1998 census total population of Hyderabad division is 6830000. Out of the total population, 4688000 are in rural areas and 111000 live in urban areas. (What about the remaining 2031000?) According to 1998 census the Hyderabad division comprised of four districts namely Dadu, Hyderabad, Badin, and Thatta districts. It includes 28 Talukas, 2090 villages, one municipal corporation, 11 municipal committees, 33 town committees, and one cantonment<sup>23</sup>. Hyderabad district comprises of four Talukas namely Qasimabad, Hyderabad city, Latifabad and Hyderabad rural, in which the socio-economic condition is more or less the same or is different, only on the basis of worker class, educated class and factory areas.

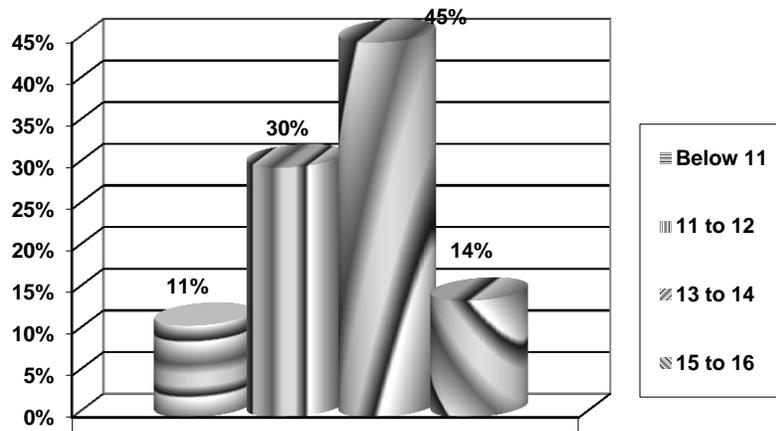
### Age Group of Child Workers in Hyderabad District

Age group (years)	Frequency	Percent	Cumulative Percent
<b>Below 11</b>	17	11	11
<b>11 to 12</b>	45	30	41
<b>13 to 14</b>	67	45	86
<b>15 to 16</b>	21	14	100
<b>Total</b>	<b>150</b>	<b>100%</b>	

<sup>21</sup> <http://hairtradesports.com/2009/09/25/child-labour-in-pakistan/>

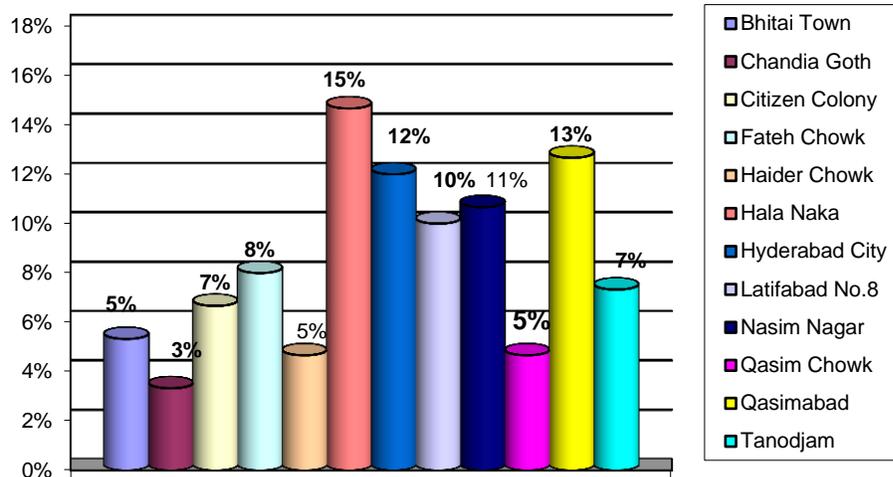
<sup>22</sup> Society for the protection of the rights of child, The State of Pakistan's Children 2009, Islamabad, Pakistan.

<sup>23</sup> Provincial Census Report of Sindh, 1998. Population Census Organization, Statistics Division, Government of Pakistan.



#### Address and Names of Areas of Child Workers in Hyderabad District

Place of work	Frequency	Percent	Cumulative Percent
Bhitai Town	8	5.33	5.33
Chandia Goth	5	3.33	8.67
Citizen Colony	10	6.67	15.33
Fateh Chowk	12	8.00	23.33
Haider Chowk	7	4.67	28.00
Hala Naka	22	14.67	42.67
Hyderabad City	18	12.00	54.67
Latifabad No.8	15	10.00	64.67
Nasim Nagar	16	10.67	75.33
Qasim Chowk	7	4.67	80.00
Qasimabad	19	12.67	92.67
Tanodjam	11	7.33	100.00
<b>Total</b>	<b>150</b>	<b>100%</b>	



### Labour Laws in Pakistan

The Constitution of Pakistan prohibits child labour {Article 11 (3) and Article 37 (e)}, and the country has also ratified ILO Conventions prohibiting and protecting child labour, the latter remains unfortunately an undeniable reality. Pakistan has adopted a series of legislative measures to ensure the prevention, protection and eventual elimination of child labour: the Employment of Children's Act 1991 and Abolition of Bonded Labour Act 1992 (other ILO Conventions ratified by Pakistan include: Conventions: 6 (Night Work of Young Persons (Industry) Convention, 1919), 29 (Forced Labour Convention, 1930), 59 (Minimum Age (Industry) Convention (Revised), 1937), 81 (Protocol of 1995 to the Labour Inspection Convention, 1947) and 105 (Abolition of Forced Labour Convention, 1957). It has also ratified the UN Convention on the Rights of the Child (CRC) in November 1990, and in August 2001 it ratified ILO Convention 182 which calls for immediate and effective measures to secure the prohibition of the worst forms of child labour.<sup>24</sup>

Child Labour is a social problem which cannot be solved by imposing a ban on the employment of child workers. In the constitution of Pakistan various labour laws are prohibited in regards to employment of children. Under Article 24, it has been stated no child labour under the age of 14 years shall be employed in any factory, mine or other hazardous occupation or work. Article 31 provides that the state shall endeavour to provide in its policy specially to ensure that children of youthful age are not abused and they are not forced to accept any employment detrimental to their age and physical ability earning to any economic compulsion. Article 45, provides for fee and compulsory

<sup>24</sup> ILO-IPEC in Pakistan (2004) Achievements of a decade (1994-2004). Retrieved from [http://www.ilo.org/wcmsp5/groups/public/---asia/---ro-bangkok/documents/publication/wcms\\_100057.pdf](http://www.ilo.org/wcmsp5/groups/public/---asia/---ro-bangkok/documents/publication/wcms_100057.pdf)

education of children under the schedule of child labour (Prohibition and regulation) Act 1986, employment of children is prohibited in 12 occupations and 51 hazardous processes. The National Commission held a national workshop on child welfare and development in March, 1987 and made the recommendation that: in order to prevent child abuse and exploitation of the existing registration, protection and welfare of children be effectively enforced and reviewed in order to bring it at par with changing needs and requirements. The Government of Pakistan is working extremely hard under that 48 ILO convention 182 Pakistan ratified in 2001 and also under the ILO convention 136 on the minimum age in 2006.<sup>25</sup>

### **Conclusion**

It is concluded that in “Auto workshops” only males are child workers and almost all of them are illiterate. They belong to poor families and their parents treat them as an asset or source of income rather than the future of the nation. They work under poor and harmful conditions and have no awareness about child rights, laws and health risks. They are less attended by their parents and owners of auto workshops. Majority of auto work shop owners prefer child workers because they work long hours with minimum wages. Child workers wanted to get free education especially vocational education. So, it is a responsibility of government, N.G.O’s, philanthropists and all stakeholders of the society to pay heed to this social menace. They should not only frame new policies but also implement them so that our country may improve its image at a global level.

### **Recommendations**

On the basis of findings and conclusions the following recommendations have been made:

1. The important thing is the conceptualization of child labour according to the socio-cultural system where it exists because cultural cognition of child labour provides the factual reason of child labour. Through this analysis, an appropriate solution can be produced. Furthermore, this will create a cooperative environment between people and all reformers who are working for the eradication of child labour.
2. Government should launch a Poverty Alleviation Programme, because poor economic conditions can be diagnosed as the major reason of child labour. For this purpose it is necessary to identify the cultural factors of poverty.
3. Labour counselors should be trained by the district government, so that they can protect the right of labourers who are working in different factories and industries/auto workshops.
4. Government should provide opportunities to get education up to matric level free of cost and should also open schools in every area of the country.

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<sup>25</sup> Ibid.

5. There exists no organization in the locality which is working for the elimination of child labour so the NGO's which are working on child labour should pay due attention in the present area.
6. NGO's should also be provided financial support so that they can conduct cultural studies of child labour for the analysis in finding out the actual causes of child labour.
7. Ministry of education should establish their evaluating system in schools so that dropout rates which lead to child labour could be controlled.
- 8.
9. Mass media campaign should be launched by the government and non-government organizations to raise awareness about the importance of education.
10. Unemployment is the most important factor of child labour in the auto workshops and there should be access for getting government job by the common people. Government should have the responsibility to give employment on merit basis for the unemployed educated youths of the country.
11. Ministry of labour should establish its country base offices to take several steps to monitor the working environment, to analyze the work wages relationship and to maintain the opportunity of appropriate earnings.