

THE IMPACT OF GLOBALIZATION ON CHILD LABOR IN PAKISTAN ANALYZING THE ROLE OF FOREIGN DIRECT INVESTMENT, TRADE LIBERALIZATION, AND SOCIO-CULTURAL FACTORS

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ABSTRACT

This study examines the complex issue of child labor in Pakistan, focusing on the impact of globalization, specifically through foreign direct investment (FDI) and trade liberalization. These forces have intensified the demand for cheap labor, thereby exacerbating child labor in key sectors such as agriculture, manufacturing, and services. The research explores the traditional socioeconomic structures that sustain child labor and the socio-cultural and economic factors that perpetuate this practice. Utilizing secondary data from academic literature, government reports, and international organizations, the study analyzes how globalization influences child labor in Pakistan. The findings reveal a dual impact of globalization: while it creates economic opportunities, it also leads to increased exploitation of child labor due to weak policy enforcement, poverty, and limited access to education. The study recommends strengthening legal frameworks, enhancing educational opportunities, and implementing social protection programs to mitigate these effects. It also emphasizes the importance of international collaboration and corporate accountability in reducing child labor. A comprehensive approach integrating legal, educational, economic, and social measures is crucial for eradicating child labor and securing a better future for Pakistan's children.

Key Words: Child Labor, Globalization, Pakistan, Socio-Economic Factors, Foreign Direct Investment

INTRODUCTION

Globalization is the enhancement of communities' interaction and interdependence created by the international coordination of industrial, economic, and political systems alongside the rapid spread of technology. This process has occurred due to noble enhancements in technology, communication, and transport systems, making people exchange goods, services, ideas, and information at the fastest rates (Held et al., 1999). Though globalization has invited possibilities for growth and development in different parts of the world, it has also brought about a lot of problems, especially in third-world countries like Pakistan. Child labor which is a gendered problem is one of the most important social concerns linked with globalization and has social, economic, and cultural aspects (Basu, 1999).

The traditional socio-economic practices have dictated child labor in Pakistan over the decades Forums, where children have been an important component in the family income. In developing countries especially in the rural areas children have in the past been engaged in farming while the resulting changes in demographic status due to urbanization have seen children engage in manufacturing and serving industries (Edmonds & Pavcnik, 2005). Child labor has been planted deeply with the introduction of the industrial revolution and the globalization of the economy, thus remains rife in various countries even with legislative measures and commitments to ban it (Khan, 2015).

Through the process of globalization, Pakistan has been experiencing FDI, liberalization in trade, and development of the export sector industry. These developments compensated by

creating jobs and boosting economic growth but on the other side compelled the increase of demand for cheap labor. This demand frequently leads to the exploitation of children, who are considered to be cheap labor (Ray, 2000). The informal sector is particularly worst off and employs children in garment making and textiles, carpet weaving, agriculture, and Trader and domestic help (Basu & Tzannatos, 2003).

This paper also established that social and cultural characteristics are some of the reasons for the continued practice of child labor in Pakistan. Barbara Khan in his work revealed that due to social cultures and beliefs and a Lack of information on the negative impact of child labor, the issue is widely accepted in many societies. Finally, illiteracy and poverty which stem from poor education standards (Akram & Yang, 2021) and children's responsibility to contribute to the family income also support this practice. Thus, the interaction of these variables forms a vicious cycle of poverty and employment that is hard to overcome.

Pakistan has signed many international conventions focusing on abolishing child labor such as ILO's Minimum Age Convention and Worst Forms of Child Labour Convention (ILO, 2021). On a national level, the country has enacted numerous laws guarding children; for example the Employment of Children Act and the Bonded Labor System (Abolition) Act. Nonetheless, the formulation of these laws is not effective since implementation and monitoring are lacking which is why child labor is still evident (Edmonds & Pavcnik, 2005).

Consequently, there are several effects of globalization on child labor in Pakistan. On the one side, economic development and foreign investments for example can open certain perspectives for the decrease in poverty rates and improvement of the population's quality of life that, in turn, can lead to a change in child labor (Basu & Tzannatos, 2003). Whereas, in global marketplace competition the pressures force firms to reduce wage levels which in turn causes child labor, (Edmonds & Pavcnik, 2005). Thus, to arrive at the right interventions, it is crucial to get a general and clearly defined comprehension of how exactly globalization is intertwined with child labor.

This research proposal is designed with the main purpose of establishing the link between the globalization phenomenon and child labor in the context of Pakistan. Understanding the quantitative characteristics of the phenomenon of economic integration that affects child labor is done from the economic, social, and policy angles. This research will also assess the degree to which existing policies can effectively deal with the threats of globalization to eradicate child labor with recommendations.

Literature Review

The current literature review aims to analyze literature available in the form of research papers, theses, and even books related to the subject, that is Child labor, with direct consideration given to Pakistan and the influence of globalization. The considered papers show a remarkable interaction between international trade, FDI, and child labor, with globalization as its aggravating factor. As a result, the literature explains the social, economic, cultural, and policy processes that enable child labor to persist despite national and international laws. However, primarily, synthesized from these sources are findings that show both the benefits and harms of globalization as information on possible policy action that may reduce child labor.

This paper aims to explore the interrelationship of international trade, FDI, and child labor in Pakistan as done by Iram & Fatima (2008). Consequently, a cross-section of the literature on the rights of children puts child labor as being compounded by facets of globalization and economic liberalization. The importance of this study, therefore, resides in its attempt to examine the penetration of FDI and trade policies on the phenomenon of child labor in Pakistan, a social and economic problem of significant importance. Through the methods of qualitative and quantitative analysis, the authors use both econometric simulation and cases as well as data from governmental and international databases and materials. Such conclusions suggest a multidimensional picture, according to which enhanced FDI and trade can either decrease the problem or boost child labor contingent depending on sectoral qualities and legal guidelines. Consequently, the policy implications of the study are to formulate and enforce

appropriate and tough labor policies; expand education; and guarantee that freer trade and investment for growth would not jeopardize the future of children. They are as follows: This analysis gives various indications that would help in the formulation of specific measures for eradicating child labor through globalization.

In the present conflict around the subject of child labor in Pakistan caused by globalization, the work of Anwer et al. (2023) presents the problem. Regarding the problem statement, it focuses on the center of the debate about whether globalization is a cause that aggravates or reduces child labor. The relevance of this study stems from its ability to impact policy and economic procedures in developing states like Pakistan that are affected by child labor. The approach used involves; research or survey, reviewing literature and documents on globalization and child labor, and comparing this with real economic data and case studies. The findings suggest that globalization has a dual effect: though it can be an avenue through which poverty levels are decreased hence eradicating child labour, it brings about elevated economic differences hence more cases of child labour in vulnerable areas. Policies that may help bring the benefits of globalization to the foreground and protect the endangered population group should also be suggested, and here the given study points to changes in the child labor laws and guaranteed education and social services improvements.

Pakistan being part of the third world countries has also felt the effect of globalization, this is a research article that was carried out by Naseem (2012) in the Global Advanced Research Journal of History, Political Science, and International Relations. The literature review directly responds to the problem statement in the following manner how the issue of child labor has become worse in Pakistan because of globalization leading to mounting economic pressures and exploitation. The importance of the research is grounded in the emphasis given to one of the most important prerequisites for children's quality of life, their welfare, and their future in Pakistan. The approach implies the analysis of literature and data of the country being investigated and its tendencies regarding globalization and child labor. This paper also establishes that globalization has both advantageous and

disadvantageous impacts on the world as it has induced economic benefits but at the same time fueled child labor as a result of poor legislation on corporate regulation and poverty. At the end of the study, the following são suggested; first, there is the need for better enforcement of laws against child labor, secondly, children have to be educated, and lastly, the promotion of social protection measures against the evils of globalization.

Ul-Haq et al. (2020) use Pakistan's data to analyze the effect of trade liberalization on child labor in the article published in the International Review of Applied Economics. The problem background of the literature review revolves around the two-fold impact of trade liberalization on the use of child labor in Pakistan where; the financial gains outweigh the negative implications on vulnerable groups. The study is useful especially as it fills a gap in analysis of an issue that has profound policy and developmental significance for children in the developing world. The method implemented herein includes an analysis using data whereby the effects of trade liberalization and its impacts on the rates of child labor across different regions of Pakistan are compared. The study brings out the fact that while trade liberalization has had a positive effect in engorging economic growth it has also resulted in poor social standards particularly child labor in some economic activities due to poor social protection and policing of the economy. The study recommends that similar to previous research, there should be policy changes inter-alia, the improvement of labor laws, education facilities, and social protection programs must be introduced to mitigate the chances of child labor due to trade liberalization.

Following the current works of Shakil and Imran (2022), this paper seeks to discuss the impact of globalization, foreign direct investment, and trade openness on poverty within the Pakistani context. The literature review indicates the problematic area of poverty's continuity in Pakistan as an outcome of economic liberalization. The study gives centrality to its importance by connecting the economic policies to the poor, which is a general direction to help the policymakers. Specifically, the quantitative techniques adopted by the researchers included fixed effects and random effects models to estimate the results of

the time series data in the 1980- 2020 period. The results show that FDI decreases poverty levels by enhancing trade openness, thus the hypothesis is accepted. On the other hand, the study reveals that in the absence of other supportive policies, these advantages may not be accrued by the base of the pyramid. The recommendations reiterate the importance of appropriate policies to support the positive effects of globalization and FDI on poverty alleviation while suggesting measures for improved infrastructure, education (Akram et al., 2020), and institutions for the promotion of suitable investments for poverty eradication and sustainable economic development. This study adds to the literature for insights into more ambiguous aspects of poverty in light of economic policies and provides useful suggestions from Pakistan's context regarding methods to improve current strategies.

White (1996) takes on the challenging subject of child labor within the framework of globalization. The literature review explains the unprecedented challenge of vigorous child labor often propounded by globalization and the internationalization of the economy. The report therefore stresses the importance of approaching the problem of child labor in the international dimension which affects the rights of people and the economy. Analytically, White chose the qualitative analysis, conducting the case analysis of the topic, and using such data to investigate the connection between globalization and child labor. The conclusions drawn from the work reveal the fact that globalization has the property of diminishing and worsening child labor depending on economic circumstances as well as the nature of legal frameworks governing the member nations. Educationally, in some cases, FDI and the expansion of exports enhance the earning capacities of most households, thus eradicating the necessity for child labor. But as mentioned earlier, globalization mostly has its back covered by weak labor laws and social protection framework, which leads to degrading labor practices. Thus, White calls for the following broad policy measures – employment of effective legal measures to eradicate the violations of labor laws and enhance compliance with the laws, increased funding of the education facilities, and multi-nation cohesiveness to negate the impacts of globalization which boosts the exploitation of

children. As a result, this research contributes to finding ways and means of linking globalization and child labor while outlining the directions for further research among policymakers and officials of international organizations.

Methodology

This study mainly uses survey research with the method of qualitative analysis and secondary research data. In pursuance of this purpose, the study, in a systematic manner, reviews various literature reviews, research reports, government documents, and reports of international organizations to understand the dynamics of the chosen subject, globalization in terms of FDI and trade liberalization on child labor in Pakistan. The selection of these sources was taken based on the rationality of having multiple lenses or views in consideration while looking at the socio-cultural factor that supports the child labor issue as well as the policy aspect that supports child labor within the country.

Information was collected from scholarly journals, government reports and publications, ILO, and the United Nations among others. It is based on this methodological premise that this research has been able to gather a diverse set of data sources which has given an understanding of the complex issue of Child labour in Pakistan. The emphasis was on seeing correlations that exist between globalization and child labor concerning several activities such as agriculture, manufacturing, and services. Due to the conduct of the study in line with previous literature and official documents, the study was able to construct a detailed and refined picture of the structural and cultural factors that uphold child labor.

In this study, the type of analysis used was the thematic analysis which involved identifying the bigger themes linking the various findings to the effects of globalization on child labour. Specific topics that were covered included the commercialization of agriculture, the growth of the informal economy, and the real-life issues of legal enforcement. These themes were then compared and contrasted by the sector to identify how globalization affects child labor in the different sectors. Moreover, the research used cross-sectional comparison to compare Pakistan's situation with other developing countries to

identify both country-specific and similarities when addressing the challenge of child labor.

To maintain a methodological approach the study used triangulation whereby findings from different sources were cross-checked. This approach was useful in ensuring that the conclusions arrived at contained a lot of merit since it escalated the viewpoint taken on the issue to another level. Moreover, the study was cautious of aspiring bias on the secondary data collected and endeavored to capture both the benefits as well as the costs of globalization on child labor. In this way, the evaluation of the data, and the view of the results of the analysis of the situation in Pakistan in terms of globalization open up a lot of significant information about the relationship between the processes of economic development and child labor.

Data Analysis

The following part outlines the effects of globalization by FDI as well as trade

liberalization on child labor in Pakistan. It explores the social cultural and policy context for child labor to continue in countries that are members of the international children's rights conventions and parties to the different child labor laws. This discussion uses secondary sources of data such as literature reviews, research reports, government publications, and publications from international organizations to gain broad perspectives on these issues.

This paper aims at exploring the nature and effects of business globalization on child labor in Pakistan focusing on agriculture, manufacturing, and service industries. Due to the interactions between FDI, trade liberalizations, and socioeconomic characteristics, not only has the occurrence of child labor been influenced, but also the type of child labor and where it is located in terms of industry sectors.



It is established that agriculture being one of the largest sectors of Pakistan has not been exempted from the globalizing world. For many years now children particularly from the rural sectors have played an important role in agricultural activities

where they provide significant support to the family's income by engaging in arduous tasks. Through the increase in FDI and liberalizing the trade, the process of globalization has changed traditional agriculture from a subsistence

agriculture to a commercialized export agriculture. This has, quite perversely, increased the demand for cheap labor, which has in turn raised the problem of child labor.

The performance of agricultural activities through commercialization has brought changes that affect the economy of the concerned area. Since people were shifted towards producing cash crops for exports the economic exploitation of the small-scale farmers has become severe. These farmers, who mostly work on very small profits, are forced to cut expenses every time they can and that cuts across their feeding habits. Children become easy to employ since they reduce costs, thus making people prefer to employ them. In the study by Edmonds and Pavcnik, these market-oriented agricultural practices force families to engage their children in labor-intensive endeavors to increase the family's income.

Besides this, an increase in demand and competition in the global market worsens the problem. Moreover, the fluctuations that are ever present in the foreign market for crops are an additional variable that small farmers have to consider. In turn, they may be forced to use their children in the production process to make sure costs do not rise to the level of eradicating the possibility of making a profit. It is even worse in industries like the cotton and wheat industries where the absence of mechanization implies that physical work is still critical. Basu and Tzannatos (2003) observed that children working in these sectors receive dangers in the form of handling hazardous chemicals and operating heavy machinery contrary to International labor standards which affect the physical and psychological growth of the child.

Another critical area that states have defined and discussed within the framework of globalization impacts is the manufacturing sector and its global operations: During the last two decades, the manufacturing sector in Pakistan, especially in textile, carpet, and sports goods industries, has also been affected by globalization. When Pakistan strengthens the linkages with the global economy, calls for cheap manufacturing have further pushed. This has resulted in the employment of child labor since many producers aim to cover production costs without compromising the quality of their products to

sustain their market share. The two authors' work, Iram & Fatima (2008), show how globalization has exerted undue pressure on manufacturers to produce goods at a relatively cheap cost, the practice has culminated in child labor.

A relatively major issue regarding child labor in manufacturing industries is the issue of subcontracting and informality. Big manufacturing industries which tend to meet set deadlines in situations where they are under pressure to meet the expenses incurred most of the time outsource their work to secluded informal workplaces. These workshops exist in a legal no-man's land, where legal protection of workers' rights, in many instances, does not exist or is grossly violated. This lack of supervision paves the way for the exploitation of children hence coming up with child labor. According to Edmonds and Pavcnik (2005), the fact that these workshops are informal and therefore hard to regulate leads to effective violation of child labor laws and hence perpetration of child labor in the manufacturing industry.

Often, these informal car repair joints are located in garages residential areas, or in rural areas where the regulatory authorities cannot easily access them. The outputs of child labor in such workshops in the form of hand-knotted carpets or embroidered textiles find their way into the global markets with unsuspecting consumers being assured that they are using goods that were made under acceptable labor practices. The breakdown of consumers from the production floor means that tackling the issue of child labor is not easily solvable due to globalization.

Within Pakistan, especially in the services sector carrying out domestic help, retail, and hotel industries child labor has increased due to globalization. Globalization has seen tremendous growth in urbanization, hence, families have shifted from rural areas to urban areas with better opportunities. Many of these families will not achieve what they expect and what society paints a picture like. These families cannot get proper jobs; hence the parents struggle to make a living, and the family ends up living in an informal area. Alternatively, children are most likely to be forced to look for jobs to contribute to the family income.

Thus, globalization leading to the increase of the informal economy has led to the generation of numerous low-wage jobs hence encouraging child labor. Such jobs, which are most of the time insecure, low-waged, and illegitimate, place children in parlous circumstances. According to Basu (1999), in various fields including domestic work, child employees are exploited to work in different households without regard to any of these rights of child employees. Due to the inability to supervise children who operate in the informal segment of the economy, these children are often secluded in private homes where they work for long hours without necessarily attending school or getting any form of medical attention. Child labour thus rises with urbanisation which is painful given that people consider it as an element of development. Rural people migrating to the cities for employment has been higher than cities' ability to create employment opportunities for them hence increasing informal employment in the urban areas. Instead of going to school, children get into occupations and engage in low-wage employment in markets, restaurants, and homes. This practice is deepened by the absence of social protection mechanisms and rapid inflation in the urban centers thereby creating a shadow over these children and turning them into ever-hardworking cogs in the powerful wheels of poverty.

The specificity of the impacts of globalization on the problem of child labor in Pakistan is that they are both positive and negative. On one hand, it is the generator of new economic opportunities that may decrease poverty rates and increase the quality of living. On the other hand, the global competition pressures and general inefficiency in the implementation of relevant policies and enforcement alongside the reliance on cheap labor escalate child labor exploitation in the interesting sectors. The transition of agriculture into a business production sector, the incorporation of manufacturing into the global market system, and the rapid shift into the service industry are among the factors that have seen child labor remain a pending issue even with relevant authorities' attempts to get rid of it.

It can be therefore stated that combating child labor within the global environment demands interrelated measures. The situation indicates that there must be improved legislation that

safeguards children against any form of abuse. This also calls for the passing of effective child labor laws and compliance with them. Governments are required to spend more in monitoring and more especially in regulation processes that can penetrate the IFS where child labor is prevalently seen. It may include hiring more labor inspectors, adequately training and arming them with the necessary tools to perform their duties to the expected level, and equipping the relevant bodies with the ability to properly penalize the offenders.

Apart from the lawsuits, the overall labor laws being in place need enhancement of the laws into implementation reforms. This needs leadership and appreciation of the child's rights as well as adherence to the provision of those rights even in the face of economic considerations. Another aspect that has to be taken into consideration is the global cooperation. And because the materials produced by child labor often end up in foreign markets, much attention should be paid to the multinational firms. These companies need to make sure that their supply chains are not using child labor; a way to do so is by subjecting their supply company to diligent auditing and engaging the local supply companies to promote better standards of labor.

Another important means is the focus on education as the employment option that helps to avoid child labor. This therefore entails not only the provision and expansion of education facilities and quality education but also dealing with issues to do with economic hindrances to children going to school. The social protection that includes cash transfers, vouchers, or scholarships given to families could help to reduce the financial requisites pushing children into labor. Moreover, vocational training programs that can be provided to older children may help provide them with the possibility to get better-paid jobs in the future which would minimize their chances of falling victim to child trafficking and having to work in the worst conditions for little money.

Last but not least, this requires adequate and active involvement of the community in the fight against child labor which tends to influence the socio-cultural factors that fuel the problem. Those awareness campaigns that aim at enlightening parents and societies on the importance of

education and the vices associated with child labor can change the culture. Such campaigns should be supported by other advocacy campaigns that encourage families to develop other sources of income apart from engaging children in the exercise of child labor.

Therefore, it is suggested that the phenomenon of globalization has a two-sided bearing on child labor in Pakistan. As the world becomes a global village through globalization, it has opened the world's economy for development but at the same time increased child labor exploitation in important sectors. A multi-sectoral strategy that embodies higher and more effective implementation of protective legal instruments, cooperation with global organizations, and advocacy at the community level is crucial for preventing the exploitation of children and building a promising future for them. Pakistan can endeavor to comprise the economic and socio-cultural determinants supporting child labor and attain a phase for change whereby it can effectively eliminate child labor and give the nation's children a chance at a fulfilling life.

Socio-Cultural and Policy-Related Factors Sustaining Child Labor in Pakistan

Eradicating the scandal of child labor in Pakistan is not an easy task as it is rooted in the social and economic structure of the country. There are abundant international and national legal frameworks that have been enacted to eliminate child labor but these have been challenged by conventional practices, pressing economic realities, and lack of proper and strict enforcement of laws. This paper will discuss these aspects in detail to identify the roots of child labor in Pakistan by analyzing main cultural beliefs, economic impacts, and ineffective policies.

The Role of Traditional Norms and Values

Child labor is almost a norm in many regions of Pakistan, especially in the rural areas or painted in a way that makes it normal for children to engage in any form of work. The cultural practice regarding child labor is justified by the fact that children have to contribute to the family income from a very tender age and this is commonly seen in agricultural families where every hand counts. This cultural acceptance of child labor is backed

by beliefs that hold that children should work and the work they do is beneficial for the family. At times, the employment of children alongside their parents is considered to be okay since it is a figure of training or apprenticeship through which the young ones learn essential skills that they will need when they grow up. This perception, however, steers away from the fact that in many ways labor can be very harmful to children's education, health, and prospects.

The effects of such traditional norms are, therefore, evident in the following ways. Due to this thinking which prevails in many societies, parents continue to resist the education of children through school-going systems claiming that this will make them lose the work workforce which could have provided immediate income to the family. This is mainly seen in rural farming societies because the family's survival depends on the earnings of the entire household, including children. Focusing on the quick financial gains emphasizing the economic value of children's education and development traps them in a very cycle that is hard to break.

In the case of these societal values, Khan (2015) shows that they are not only a product of a rational economic calculation but are produced and reproduced due to ignorance about the positive prospects of education. In such cultures where education is given low priority or where the quality of education is low, the prospects of getting the children out of employment do not appeal to the families. Such a mindset is even cemented through the lack of positive contextual factors or spokespeople and successful role models from within the communities to portray the utility of education in changing lives. Therefore, child labor persists in being considered a realistic response to exigent economic conditions rather than a transgression of children's rights.

Economic Pressures and the Entrenchment of Child Labor

Continued poverty is considered the key reason for the child labor problem in Pakistan. To many households, remittance is not an added income source: it is the key income source needed for purchases of food, shelter, and such fundamental needs as healthcare. Huge economic forces that push children into work are most visible in the

areas where job vacancies and the welfare state are negligible. In the aforementioned contexts, it is impossible for the child's parents who are struggling to survive to practice the culture of removing the child from the labor market.

Ray (2000) further posts his opinion that, regrettably, initiatives aimed at halting child labor are not substantive because the causes of poverty have not been tackled. This is evident in the way poverty perpetuates a cycle of child labor: families need the employee's money to provide basic needs hence these children are locked out of schooling and the associated opportunities that would allow them to earn better wages in the future. Its failure [of upward mobility] guarantees that the subsequent generation remains predestined to low-wage casual work, principally maintaining the correlation of poverty and labor. The literature again and again emphasizes that economic concerns are further aggravated by the absence of any other sources of income for adults. In areas where the adults either cannot find or are forced to underemployment, families will have no other choice than to put the children to work. This is especially the case in regions where economic changes for whatever reason like natural calamities or changes in the price of a given commodity have an effect of wiping out family

earnings and thus forcing more children to go to work. With even the best attempts at the formal economy being unable to employ all of the labor force, especially the youth, the lack of strong social protection structures unfortunately leads families to resort to child labor.

Educational Barriers and the Reinforcement of Child Labor

Education is widely considered one of the means of eliminating child labor since it leads to the provision of quality education and is a firm policy in Pakistan but the reality is far from this (Akram et al., 2021). In cases where schools are available, the problem of Universal primary education remains a mere dream due to the various costs charged by schools including but not limited to; school fees, uniforms, books, and bus fares. Another discouragement is the necessitated cost of education; for families living in poverty, a young person's wage he or may start to earn is perceived to be more valuable than the probable future earnings that education will fetch (Akram et al., 2022). This short-term economic thinking is a direct outcome of the unsteady financial conditions that are common with many families these days.



Edmonds and Pavcnik, 2005 also stress the fact that private costs of schooling including the cost of books, uniforms, and other stationery for children have equally contributed to children dropping out of school, which results in increased child labor. Education in many of these regions can be characterized as inadequate: schools remain scarce and insufficient even today. This situation removes any semblance of quality in education thus reducing the perceived worth of schooling and parents end up focusing on working for their children. Therefore, lack of investment in education becomes a vicious cycle: lack of education (Ramzan et al., 2023) leads to low-skill employment and therefore poverty and child labor.

Hence, besides economic factors, cultural beliefs relating to education remain one of the biggest contributors to the perpetration of child labor. Some systems hold certain education, especially girl's education, in disesteem (Ramzan et al., 2023). The roles of the women becoming mothers and wives, having no need for school, and having to marry early. This belief system also continues perpetuating child labor as girls are withdrawn from school to babysit or engage in informal sector work. Behind this, the social justice impact that remains on the exclusion of girls from education also suffers the general economic evolution of such communities.

Weak Enforcement of Child Labor Laws and Policy Gaps

Pakistan has endorsed several international conventions designed to prevent children from being employed in hazardous work such as the International Labour Organisation's Minimum Age Convention and the Worst Forms of Child Labour Convention. At the national level these are the Employment of Children Act and the Bonded Labor System (Abolition) Act these are policies made for the protection of the children. Nevertheless, compliance with these laws is normally low, and child labor is rampant in many areas of the country.

The primary issues that arise on the issue of child labor and its approach through legislation are the lack of enforcement mechanisms. The most typical challenges include corruption, lack of resources, and political will that does not suffice. For example, agencies such as labor inspectors

whose role is to monitor are underfunded, poorly trained, and low-staffed; they are further expected to work in large regions thus making it almost impossible for them to execute their duties. It also means that many employers especially in the informal sector can easily violate labor laws and come out of it scot-free.

In this regard, Edmonds and Pavcnik (2005) suggest that it is generally true that legislation aimed at the protection of children is mostly symbolic and cannot work where there is no enforcement. Often there are no sanctions, or they are mild: fines that are hardly paid, warnings, reprimands, and so on. Meanwhile, those who use child labor risk little. Even the enforcement of legal processes becomes a challenge especially because most of Pakistan's economy is in the informal sector. More children are employed in small, unauthorized places or someone else's home, in which cases the labor laws cannot be effectively enforced.

Furthermore, the conditions in the informal sector which is home to many employees in Pakistan are nearly impossible to control. This sector is heavily endowed with child labor, especially in domestic and related services, manufacturing, and agriculture. The ILO (2021) opined that many children are used in the informal business because there is no proper inspection or monitoring in that sector. Child workers are also found working in the informal sector most of which are not easily noticed and hence the problem of enforcing the labor laws is complicated.

Current policies have also not adequately sought to ease the causes of child labor which include poverty and illiteracy (Akram, 2020). Hence, the legislation, however, is not enough on its own to fight against child labor. The government should therefore come up with comprehensive frameworks that include social protection of children, education for children as well as the economically empowered children. According to Basu and Tzannatos (2003), the policy intervention for child care must follow the legislation and include attempts to improve education opportunities, ensure social security, and offer jobs for families. With those broader interventions missing, child labor is likely to continue to exist in the countries even when there are laws against the practice.

International Pressure and the Influence of Domestic Policies

The question of child labor has become a matter of concern in Pakistan due to globalization, particularly the children's rights organizations, the United Nations, and NGOs for the promulgation of labor laws and safeguarding the rights of aged children. Nevertheless, the expectation to comply with the labor laws on the international level has been a challenge due to the financial difficulties that most Pakistani families encounter. Many international conventions lay down the political measures to prevent child abuse but social norms on economic development thwart the execution of such political measures.

White (1996) highlights how some domestic policies in Pakistan, especially those, that advocate fast industrialization and economic development, consider the social effects of such growth, which in this case equals to the employment of child labor. This conception of economic development stemming from the necessity to address economic competitiveness usually leads to the exploitation of people's needs for immediate economic returns over sustainable civilizational values. This is well illustrated in export processing industries where cheap labor resources are required and this forces the employers to use the services of children through various forms of coercion.

That conflict is deepened by the effects of power relations within the economy and its influential economic institutions and players, which have a vested interest in preserving low-cost labor. Such corporations tend to have immense clout in determining policy outcomes of their domestic governments, to the extent that the interests of the workers or children might not even be considered, for instance. This means that present policies are formulated more in conjunction with the demands of international markets than with the welfare of the neediest groups of people.

Socio-Cultural and Policy-Related Factors

Children still work in Pakistan because of social cultural beliefs, poverty, and poor compliance with existing policies and laws among others. Poverty leads to desperate efforts for families to find ways of generating income regardless of the consequences on their children and traditional culture that does not place a premium on

investing in children's education by providing them opportunities in children's development but in economic returns are some of the reasons why eradication of child labor is not easily achievable. In addition, it supports the point explaining that weak protection of workers' rights and form field, there is no efficient protection of children against child labor, especially in the informal economy due to gross shortcomings and failures in the observance of labor legislation.

Solving these issues implies going beyond legal reforms and repletion of legal frameworks, and having to focus more on raising capacities of education systems (Chen & Ramzan, 2024), employment of social protection tools, and cultivating a relevant culture that would put a premium upon education over child labor. Finally, it is imperative to note that global partnerships and corporate responsibility are also crucial in making economic development not to be a process in which children's rights and well-being are violated. The constant cycle of child labor in Pakistan can only be stopped and hinder the children to have a bright future if all the integrated measures are put into practice.

Conclusion

Finally, it can be said that child labor in Pakistan is related to globalization, sociocultural factors, and legislation and policy questions. Through this research the following main findings have been established A) er globalization there has been economic growth, opportunity and development while at the same time it has led to child labor abuse in the different key areas of; agriculture, manufacturing and service sectors. These economic forces coming with higher FDI and trade liberalisations result in higher demand for labour with lowest wages; children have turned into a force multiplier in industries.

For the agricultural sector in particular, globalization has taken the traditional form of farming, which mainly aimed at producing food crops for local needs, and turned the farming into business, export oriented. This shift has made the economic requirements for the small-scale farmers to be high hence resulting to user children to minimize on costs to remain afloat. Globalization makes this situation worse still because highs and lows of crop prices compel farmers to employ child labor to remain relevant.

The findings of the study highlight a gap in children's rights protection in this sector and the search for a response to it, namely the ministry of labor and the creation of programs aimed at giving families an alternative, legal and non-child labor source of income.

Consumer goods and especially the textile industry has also been heavily influenced by the process of globalization. Cheap labor is ever demanded due to Pakistan's integration into the global supply systems and as a result child labor is promoted. The informal economy and subcontracting pose a big issue, since manufacturers can easily avoid the labor laws, and put children to work in hidden, unofficial workshops. To—address this problem, international buyers must press for decent labor politics through more vigorous regulations and/or local organizations sufficiently aligned with international standards and requirements to monitor that workers' rights are being respected. Therefore, it is evident that the services sector such as domestic help, retailing services, and hospitality services are not exempted from the effects of globalization. The phenomenon of urbanization, which is stimulated by the need to find a better living and working conditions, has a positive correlation with child labor, and therefore, the problem is more urgent in the cities. With the growth of the more dominion of work or informal employment, several low-wage employment has been generated and these embrace children, whereas they are subjected to the hazardous working conditions. Owing to the absence of free social amenities and the impossible costs of living in cities, children are condemned to the state of poverty and labor to break free from the cycle. Anti-poverty intercessional community-based interventions aimed at educating several families and offering them other sources of income adequate to support the whole family are therefore very vital in addressing the cycle.

Child labor in Pakistan continues to exist the same way due to socio-cultural causes and bear necessities of life. Culturally induced and encouraged factors such as perceived monetized worth of children's labor over their education, plus endemic poverty push child labor to the fore as a difficult problem to solve. The educational attainment hitches especially in the rural set up

compound this practice as the cost of education and the opportunity cost of not launching in the market is often believed to be more than the gains that education brings. The opposition to child labour must thus have interventions which mitigate these socio-cultural and economic aspects for instance, awareness creation, grants for schooling among other community awareness programmes.

The lack of strict measures regarding child labor laws or serious inadequacies in the existing child labor policies' enforcement continues to pose major challenges for Pakistan in eradicating child labor. These are some of the reasons why the country has not been able to protect children and prevent exploitation despite the ratification of international conventions and the national laws enacted to protect children. This sector is easily characterized by a high prevalence of child labor and is virtually uncontrollable with the use of conventional means that entail merely establishing new laws against the use of child labor but lack proper avenues for inspection and monitoring.

Based on the findings of this paper, one can therefore conclude that the problem of child labor in Pakistan is very endemic and calls for a pluralist solution. This should involve; passing and enhancing legal measures, improving compliance with the law, multilateralism, and public participation. As both the economic and socio-cultural causes of child labor have been identified, Pakistan can work on changing the situation and help more children avoid the situations when they have to work instead of studying or just being children and freely developing. The outcomes of these initiatives shall solely be determined by the enhancement of the government, civil society, and the global society observing a conservationist attitude rather than concentrating on the speedy financial revenues at the price of children's rights and welfare.

Recommendations

Regarding the issue of child labor in Pakistan, it is crucial to extend and improve the implementation of legal measures and rules concerning child labor through increasing inspections, fresh laws, and raising fines for employers. Efforts towards increasing

educational funding and parental incentives towards education; encouraging the public through educational programs, means by which child labor can be minimized would be realized. The programs of social protection should be introduced to provide the support of low-income families, as well as vocational education for children. Furthermore, international relations and corporate governance in supply chains have to be developed to boost ethical standards. Education, community participation, and social transformation of the culture of the people towards recognizing the importance of education and children's rights are crucial for the sustainability of change.

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