CAUSES AND HEALTH EFFECTS ON CHILDREN WORKING IN AUTOMOBILE WORKSHOPS OF PESHAWAR, PAKISTAN

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Abstract

Objective: To find causes and health effects of children working in automobile workshops of Peshawar, Pakistan.

Materials & Methods: A descriptive cross sectional study was carried out in different automobile workshops, Peshawar from February to July 2016. After taking consent, data was collected from 200 randomly selected children via questionnaires. The study included children less than 15 years of age who were working in automobile workshops of Peshawar, while the children unable to answer the questions were excluded. The data were analyzed using excel and SPSS version 15.

Results: Most (84%) of the children working in automobile workshops were in the age range of 11-15 years. Major (47%) proportion had below primary level education. According to study father’s income for most (44%) children was Rs.11-15,000. 58% children were living in families having more than 10 members. Poverty was the main cause of working in workshops for 63% children. As a consequence 46.77% children were suffering from GIT problems.

Conclusion: The main causes of children working in automobile workshops were poverty and large families, as a result of working conditions most of the children suffered from gastrointestinal diseases.

Key Words: Child Health; Income; Automobiles; Poverty; Parents; Employment.

Introduction

The International Labor Organization Convention defines child labor as harmful occupation in children below 18 years of age¹. Child labor is one of a major issue all over the world. About 200 million children are working in different sectors all around the world².

Asia and African region is having highest number of child workers, almost greater than 90 percent in total. Among Asian countries India is having highest number of child labourers i.e is about 44 million. About 12 million child workers are present in Nigeria. South America is also having large num-
The number of child workers. In Brazil almost 7 million child workers are working in different sectors. Pakistan has passed laws to limit child labor but the laws are completely ignored, and some 11 million children, aged four to fourteen, keep that country’s factories operating.

In Pakistan about 3.3 million children are working according to a nationwide survey conducted in 1996. In 2005 an estimated 10 million child laborers were reported according to the Human Rights Commission of Pakistan (HRCP). Children work due to a variety of reason, in which poverty is the leading cause. Child labor frequently experiences work related injuries and health problems. The health related problems of the child labor are very high in the developing countries in absent of proper knowledge and preventive actions. Children also faces various occupational injuries and other health related problems. The health related issues of such children are more common in developing countries as compared to developed because of strong legislative measures in developed countries.

Child labor creates a significant burden on the development, welfare, and overall health of children. This project would serve as improvements to past and ongoing cross-sectional studies.

The objectives of our study were to find the causes and health effects of children who were working in automobile workshops.

Materials and Methods

A descriptive cross-sectional study was carried out to assess various causes and health effects of working environment on children working in different automobile workshops of Peshawar from February 2016 to July, 2016. The study included children less than 15 years of age who are working in automobile workshops of Peshawar, while the children unable to answer the questions were excluded. A sample of 200 children were randomly selected with 95% confidence interval and 5% margin of error. Before collecting actual data a pilot study was conducted and questionnaire was modified. Data was collected from 200 randomly selected children via questionnaires, which included closed ended questions regarding causes and health related issues of children. Consent was taken from the head of workshop as well as children.

Results

Most (84%) of the children lied in the age range of 11-15 years. 47% of the children had education below primary level or none (35%) at all. 44% of children had their father’s income between Rs.11,000-15,000. Most (58%) children had more than 10 family members in their homes. (Table 1).

Figure 1 shows 63% children had to work in automobile workshops due to poverty, while 18% and 11% were due to self-interest and no education interest respectively. There was least (8%) pressure from the parents.

Most (46.77%) of the children suffered from Gastrointestinal problems, next to which were urinary tract diseases in 27.42% children. Automobile workshops caused respiratory diseases in 16.13% children. (Figure 2)

Discussion

Age group of our study sample lies between 6 to 15 years which is considered as school going age but due to poverty children are forced to work. These findings are similar to a study conducted by H khan in which children age group was similar.

Large family size is also a cause of poverty that force children to work. Majority of our study population family size was greater than 10 which is also a cause for child labour. This is similar to a case study conducted Rana Ejaz in which about 20.83 per cent of the working children come from families having 7 children.

According to a research conducted by Shahid et al on socioeconomic determinants of child labour on automobile workshop stated that about half of the children were working because of financial problems in family. About 37.5% children reported that they were not interested in studies and rest argued large family as a reason for work, same is reflected in our study in which poverty is the main reason for children to work.

According to a research conducted by Shandell et al stated that globally, children are exposed to numerous physical agents, including extreme heat or cold and diseases. Child labor can also manifest in psychological trauma due to psychosocial stressors—an emerging category of exposure agents—like verbal and physical abuses, and prolonged absence
Causes and health effects on children working in automobile work-

Table 1: Demographic Data.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>S.No</th>
<th>Variable</th>
<th>Percentage</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1.</td>
<td>Age</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>5-10 years</td>
<td>16%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>11-15 years</td>
<td>84%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2.</td>
<td>Educational Background</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Above primary level</td>
<td>2%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Primary level</td>
<td>16%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Below primary level</td>
<td>47%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>No education</td>
<td>35%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3.</td>
<td>Father’s Income</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>16,000 or above</td>
<td>12%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>11000-15000</td>
<td>44%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>5000-10,000</td>
<td>41%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>No income</td>
<td>3%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4.</td>
<td>Family members</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>above 10 members</td>
<td>58%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>5-10 members</td>
<td>25%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Less than 5 members</td>
<td>17%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Figure 1: Main Causes Of Child Labor.

Figure 2: Health effects of working conditions on children.
from school, which is especially detrimental if prior to finishing primary school. Adverse outcomes were compounded by family poverty affecting the child’s physical health. Studies cited in this review consistently documented how children of poor families are at increased risk of being involved in child labor and therefore potentially missing out on education at school or at home. Family size and number of children in a family have also been shown to increase the likelihood of a child being engaged in labor of children. Although our findings indicate that child labor may be affecting the health of children, more data are needed to develop a better understanding of the short- and long-term health problems associated with child labor.

Studies of Roggero et al with an ecological design have proven valuable in descriptive and etiological epidemiology, as well as in economics, social planning, and policy evaluation. Our study is to analyze the health effects of child showing that some health indicators are affected by child labor. We have identified a set of health indicators affected by child labor, and our data support the hypothesis that child labor affects children’s health. Although our findings indicate that child labor affecting the health of children. Most important, longitudinal studies are required to understand the short- and long-term health effects of child labor on the individual child.

Given the limited peer-reviewed work identified, more field research on child labor, with longitudinal quantitative measures on exposures are needed in lower-income countries.

**Conclusion**

The main causes of children working in automobile workshops were poverty and large families, as a result of working conditions most of the children suffered from gastrointestinal diseases.

**References**