

ASSESSMENT OF CHILD LABOUR IN SPORTS GOODS INDUSTRIES

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Abstract:

The study was an endeavour to cover all the reports by government and non government organisations about the pervasiveness of child work in the sports goods industries. The study accentuates the world intervention which took their fascination for controlling the child labour in the developing nations particularly in the Indian sub continent. The attempt highlights the horrible conditions of the children which they face during their work. After analysis of the reports, we come to realize that the children that ought to have been engaged in playing and schooling were found under the savage work on making these playing things. By working long hours, under the harsh conditions the children earn only small amount of money, which was low as contrasted with the ordinary pay. Untiring efforts by different social worker organisations on restricting the child labour had gained momentum but, could not prove fruitful as, it had taken the deep roots due to the socioeconomic backwardness and dependency of family on child income. The banning of sports goods industrial equipments was not considered the best choice for forestalling child labour, as the children of low socioeconomic families get involved in more hazards work.

KEY WORDS:

Assessment , Child Labour , Sports Goods Industries , organisations.

INTRODUCTION

The sports goods industry of India finds its origin in Sialkot, Pakistan. On the occasion of division of India in 1947, a large portion of Sialkot's talented Hindu specialists left the Sialkot and resettled over the borders of Punjab. With the passage of time they occupied the area of Jallundhar, where the Indian sports product industry is currently based. The Industry has extended to incorporate the ranges of Meerut, (Uttar Pradesh) and Gurgaon, (Haryana). The greater part of India's games products are exported to the England, The USA, Germany, France and Australia. The business is mostly gathered in Jallundhar and Meerut. The Industry exports nearly about 318 items, among them are cricket bats and balls, inflatable balls, boxing gloves, hockey sticks, carom and chess boards and other type of protective equipments (Indian Sports Industry, 2008). The industry is laboured oriented in which country's weaker sections are employed. The industry provides employment to about 500000 people. Most of its production units nearly about 75% are situated in Jallundhar (Punjab) and Meerut (up) with 3000 manufacturing units and 130 exporters (Sports Industry in India, 2014). There were great changes in Sports Goods Industries on manufacturing its items. Initially work was done only in factories and stitching centres, workers stitch the items only in the factories and stitching centres where the workers stitch in groups. At that time working conditions of the workers was very well when it can be compared to other industries. The shift of stitching work from stitching centres to home based units came after 1997 (Sobin George 2008) and it was the first step towards the engagement of Children in stitching activities. Since the demand at that time was very high and the numbers of workers were not sufficient so that they can meet the manufacturing requirement that indulged the available family

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members i.e. Women and Children onto to stitching work. The child labour then takes its roots deep in the sports manufacturing goods. Child labour can be defined as work that bereave children of their Childhood, their potential and their dignity, and that is harmful to physical and mental development (ILO) 2014. It is such type of work that is socially, mentally, morally and physically horrible to children, obstructs with their schooling, obliging them to leave school prematurely, compel them to join school with extremely heavy work for long hours, take away the liberty of the children and restricts them to take part in playing activities. Child labour in sport picked up specific consideration in the 1990s, (Exploitation and Child protection in Sport, 2013) especially, when broad media reported that sports industries were utilizing underage kids within different nations, who were paid the lowest fares to produce footballs, pieces of clothing. The claim created trouble to the Sports Goods Industries that they are using children for manufacturing of Sports equipments. Children thus face the danger of being misused not just in the game they may be included additionally by living up to expectations in the divisions of the games but also are exploited at Sports Goods Industries that are generally in unregulated form.

REPORTS RELATED TO CHILD LABOUR IN SPORTS GOODS INDUSTRIES

Ted case studies (n d) reported Child labour is scattered all over Pakistan, has the best effect in the north-west of Punjab region that is Sialkot. Sialkot is in this manner one of the world's most important hub for manufacturing of sports goods. Child labour exists in Sialkot both in the export sector and the domestic sector. Nearly half of production of soccer balls is associated with Pakistani sports industries. The fact is that the manufacturing of these balls are done at a very cheap rate, as they are made by the small children who work on less wages as compared to adults. On June 1996 issue of Life magazine (Academics Studying 2006) conveyed an article about Child labour in Pakistan. The article demonstrated photo of 12 year-old Tariq encompassed by the bits of a Nike soccer ball which he would use the vast majority of a day sewing together for the fabulous total of 60 cents. Practically 7,000 Children were said to have been working at home for hours sewing footballs, and despite the fact that they were not by and large utilized in risky conditions, but were passing up a great opportunity for their pivotal years of education. From the study, on the Sialkot District (Sehar Hussain khaliq. 2004) 7,000 Children aged 7–14 years were found stitching footballs on a full-time basis. The children were spent 10–11 hours per day for the small amount of Rs20 and Rs22 per ball and the rest of the children work part-time and after the School. The English NGO in 1997 (Imran Naseem, 2010) had estimated that nearly 81% of Children, who does the work of football stitching, to meet the basic necessities of life. About 23% of total income of the family had a contribution of the children below 14 years of age.

Christian aid report published on may, 1997 (Big Names in Football 2001) found Indian children up to the age of seven sewing footballs for their exportation to Britain. It publicized that large numbers of children were working as stitchers in Sports Goods Industry in India. There were nearly 25,000 to 30,000 children working in the regions of Jallundhar-Batala and Meerut. The South Asian Coalition on Child Servitude (SACCS) and Christian Aid also found boys as young as ten doing work in home based workshops makes gloves for cricket and boxing. The Children face the health consequences working in supplying tanneries to the Sports Goods Industries. The report, asserts that British importers should work with Indian producers to enhance adult pay and conditions and to eliminate Child labour. The report's co-author do not favour in cutting down the supplies as it will worsen the conditions and force the Children to move towards more risky and debasing work. Stitching an official Eric Cantona souvenir football by 11 year old girl earns 12 pence. In the study 12 year old boy was found to work for six hours in a tannery to assist his father, the leather of which is utilized in making England test match Cricket balls. In the report Indian sports goods industry was stressed only not for the elimination of child labour, but also to work for better conditions of adult labour in their sports goods industries because, Child labour prevails due to the low wages given to the adult labour.

The report of NLI gives (ICN 2000) a definite record of Child labour in Jalundhar and evaluates that around ten thousand Children are working in Sports Goods production units. Of these around 1,350 are full time workers (and not going to class) while the rest are both working and school going. 92% children are only involved in football stitching activities and the rest 8% are involved in other products, like shin pads, cricket balls, rackets and shuttles. Three out of the four families surveyed had Child labour present either full time workers and not went to school or do both work. The NLI reports that large portion of the respondents say that money related issues or the need to support in family work constrained Children to leave school and begin working full-time. More than a quarter of the respondents reported absence of enthusiasm toward school as the primary explanation behind dropping out. The age group of 5-12 constitute nearly 37% and rest 63% were thirteen or fourteen. The time spent on football stitching varies according to the age group from seven hours to thirteen hours in a day. 42% of the 'main working Child stitchers' and

29% of the working and school going Children report health problems. Likewise the occurrence was higher among girls than boys, perhaps on the grounds that girls are more loaded than boys, particularly with extra family unit tasks. The most well-known issues are joint torments and spinal pain, representing just about two third of the reported wellbeing issues. Headache was the most common problem reported by 15% Children. Children experience the ill effects of aches in their knee joints and finger joints, coming about because of sitting in a squatting position and utilizing needles for extended periods. There was common room both for living and working to stitch footballs. It make the conditions of the workers more worse. The report describe the wages of stitchers are below the official wage. The daily income of the adult labour was up to Rs. 18-25 which is much below the prescribed that was 80-90 Rs per day. India ranks second only after Pakistan in making footballs and other inflatable materials. The other types of sports equipments produced in India include hockey sticks, cricket balls and bats, badminton rackets and shuttle cocks. The Netherland and Great Britain import the footballs stitched in India. The aggregate estimation of Indian games products fares exceeds the amount up to Rs. 3000 crore a year, the greater part of which come from Jallundhar (Punjab). Gerard Oonk of the India Committee of Netherlands went to this major football production region and they found Child labour with low wage engaged in the manufacturing of these sports equipments. Sobin George (2008) interviewed with workers engaged in football stitching told them the miseries which they face. They don't want their children to engage such activities but they have no option. When told about the working of their Children in football stitching activities, the response was that they had to work until our fate changes. In the survey George found the fresh cuts of fingers of children indicating the sign of their hardships of life.

As per report of global march against Child labour 2002 entitled Child labour in sports goods, Child labour in football sewing is still predominant today, particularly in Pakistan and India while sports clothes and shoes are sourced from other nations including Indonesia, China and Vietnam. There are evidences that Child labour is pervasive in these nations too yet correct figures are not known. Kids have likewise been discovered working in distinctive nations in the sports shoes and sports clothing sector. The report estimates, there are around 10,000 Children in Punjab, India alone who stitch footballs. The detail from the ILO Sialkot Project recommends that there may be more than 15,000 Children in stitching footballs in Pakistan. The Mahashak, 'the conventional stitchers' group begun the football stitching work in the areas of Jalandhar, Batala and Ludhiana in India. The Mahashak of Jalandhar and Batala are profoundly occupied with football sewing. The study demonstrates that large portion of the Stitcher's in India exist underneath the poverty. Nearly about 90% of Child labour was found in schedule castes (especially in dalit community). The Stichers face many health compulsions like eyesight problem, chronic back and neck pains, deformed fingers. The daily earning of an adult Stitcher was only 20 rupees in a day, even the Children's get less than that amount. Child Stitchers are of two types one who stitch footballs part time basis and go to school and other work at full time basis without going to school. Despite the fact part time child workers cannot focus on their studies because of exhaustion and time limitation. Among the Children that work on full time basis 5-12 years old constitute 37%. The daily earning of an adult was about 30 rupees, while the children get less than that amount. The Sports Goods Industry had taken many initiatives to prevent the Child labour in football stitching and have achieved success. The Sports Goods Foundation of India was established by the world federation of Sports Goods Industry to look the matter of Child labour in Sports Goods Industries.

The article by Ravi Dhaliwal(2002) in The Tribune revealed that Football making industry of Jalandhar, which represents more than 90% of football export, has been gotten in a mess as a non-government associations has brought the multimillion dollar industry to its knees by affirming that child work is overflowing in the business. Over 10,000 children work as stitching footballs, the industry.

As per the report of ILRF (2008) Child labour is found in the two districts of India namely Meerut, Jalandhar, failed to pay of the debuts of parents Children are suffering by proving assistance to the financial necessities of the family. The initiatives taken by the Sports Goods Industry to restrict the use of Child labour did not prove substantial results. Children can be found on every morning to deliver Sports items made by them in Meerut district. Working for the whole day nearly 8-12 hours they get nothing only the pennies. The Children work is present in almost in every aspect of soccer ball making like the waxing of thread, hardening of thread, stitching the individual leather, stitching half balls all these processes are done by women and Children. Cuts on hands, injuries overuse body parts, strenuous back pain are the common ailments faced by the Children. They showed the lust for going to school but bonded labour doesn't permit them to do so.

Bachpan Bachao Andolan BBA (2008) reported about 5000 Children were found sewing footballs and other brandishing items including baseball, cricket balls, volleyballs, tennis balls in Meerut region of Uttar Pradesh. It was carried out in Meerut district in which 79 households, 203 children and 11 contractors in the city. The study found about 63% of the households surveyed had presence of Child labour, 9% of boys

and 18% girls of the age group of 6-17 years work on full time basis in football stitching while, 57% of girls and 43% of boys were doing both stitching as well going to school. The Children work nearly about 7 hours in stitching activity. The study on Meerut shows that household which have income less than Rs, 3000 per month were found involved in football stitching activity. While the families having less than Rs. 1000 income monthly involve their Children the football stitching and even less their children do the work of football stitching on full time basis. On stitching of football the Children earn only 3-5 rupees per football. The report indicated that most of the stitchers belong to the Muslim community and other backward classes of Hindu community like Dalits. There was much higher girl Children percentage engaged in football stitching activities. Huge numbers of Children and their families are compelled to work under harsh conditions because of the debt which they have taken from the contractors, As a result of which the health condition and education suffers. The workers showed finger cuts and injuries on different parts of their body whereas 35% still have the fresh cut on their fingers. Another 35% have problem with their eyes, 50% face continuous back ache during and after working and 85% have regular pain in their hands and fingers. There were no safety measures, compensation and medical care given by contractors to the workers. The absence of public health care centres worsens the condition of the workers; even they can earn only Rs. 3-5 per ball.

A study was on "Child work in the sports manufacturing Industry"(Pratibha goyal, 2004) carried out in Jalandhar, to figure out the frequency of child labour in the Sports Goods Industry. Around 100 labourers were found in the Chose family units, of whom 96 were children. Consequently, 9.6% of the aggregate work occupied with football sewing where child labourers, 70.83% were male children and 29.16% were female children. The Study demonstrated that 64.58% kids were in the age group of 13-14, 26% were in the age bunch 11-12 years, and around 9% in the age group of 8-10 years. Around 49% had completed the primary education and just 6.25% had done basic education. 25% Children have left the school; the only reason behind it was to boost the family income. The reason was to boost the family income. In the Eric fair trade report (July 2011) the adult stitches 4 footballs in a day. While the children makes 3 balls in a day.

CONCLUSION

The study after examining all the research reports, we come to know the presence of Child labour in the Sports Goods Industries. The first intervention on the matter was highlighted by the media reports on the eve of European football championship. The first report came during 1995 about the Child labour existence in Sports Goods Industry of the Sialkot region of Pakistan. After that media looked into the Indian Sports manufacturing equipmental units present in the two districts of Jallundhar of Punjab and Meerut of Uttar Pradesh. The U.K based NGO Christian Aid and South Asian Coalition on Child Servitude reported the Child labour in Sports Goods Industries of India on 1997. Huge number of Child labour was found, estimation of about 25, 000 to 30,000. Looking into the matter seriously, Sports Goods Foundation of India was formed in 1998. Indian committee of Netherlands (ICN) reported the Child labour in football stitching industry in Punjab on June 2000, global march against Child labour reported Child labour in 2002 before the advent of football world cup 2002. Bachpan Bachao Andolan survey was conducted on 2008 to know the situation of child labour of Meerut household manufacturing units, the report clearly indicate presence of Child labour. Even the best efforts by sports goods foundation of India on the elimination of labour of children in Indian sports goods industries but, the problem was not solved fully. All the reports on the Child labour in sports goods industries depict the atrocious conditions of the Child labour stitchers. Children were found spending long hours 7- 14 on manufacturing the sports equipments, taking away them from schooling and paying. It was found that stitchers were given wages that was below the official minimum wage and the children were given even less. Children face the many health problems like back pain, pain of knee and finger joints, eye sight problem, deformity of fingers due to overuse and headache.

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