Prevalence and factors leading to child labourers at tharamangalam in salem district

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ABSTRACT

The objective of the study was to assess the prevalence of child labour and identify the factors leading to child labourers at tharamangalam in Salem district. A cross-sectional interview study of 300 randomly selected child labourers aged 5 to less than 14 years was conducted in tharamangalam block, Salem district. The overall prevalence of child labour was well documented. The results showed that 33.33% of child labourers were in the age group of 10 -11 years, 60% of the child labourers were males and 40% of them were females. In relation to children attending school shows that 67.67% of the children never attended and 63.33 % of the child labourers stated that the reason for not attended school was due to poverty. It is concluded that the poverty of the family was the reason to engage their children in labour activities.

Keywords: Prevalence, Child labour, Salem district.

1. INTRODUCTION

"Today's children's are tomorrow's citizens, a well developed child contributes to the nation's welfare and children are the precious resources of the nation." Children are the most precious resource of any country should be protected against all forms of exploitation and victimization. Each new generation offers humanity another chance for survival, a child is regarded as the future hope of the family and as an individual he will determine the kind of status, the family would acquired in the future [1].

According to International Labour Organization (1990) Child Labour is defined as "children permanently leading adult lives working long hours for a few wages under conditions, damaging to their health and to their physical and mental development child labour is a complex as it is prevalent, it may be the only source of income and survival a cheap alternative contributes the adult employment [2].

Child labour is a significant problem in India [2]. India has the largest number of children employed than any other country in the world. According to the statistics provided by the Government of India around 90 million out of 179 million children in the six to 14 years age groups do not go to school and are engaged in some occupation or others. This means that close to 50 percent of children are deprived of their right to free and happy childhood [3].

The idea behind the child care is on three aspects, prevention of illness due to child labour, maintenance of healthy children at a tender age, restoration of health in all dimensions [4]. The objective of the study was to assess the prevalence of child labour and identify the factors leading to child labourers at tharamangalam in Salem district.

2. METHODS

This presentation was part of a broader study on child labour among children in tharamangalam block in Salem district. It was found that the estimated number of households was 3685 and estimated numbers of population were 30,222. A total of 300 child labourers were selected to participate in the study. Descriptive design and pre-experimental design was adopted in the study. The child labourers were selected by convenience sampling technique and assigned to two different phases. Relevant background information on age, sex, family background, involvement or otherwise in after-school economic activities were obtained. Information on

parental education, occupation/income was obtained through requests accompanying letters to parents and guardians asking for their consent. The occupation/income and educational attainments of the parents were used to determine socioeconomic index scores of the children using modified criteria described by Oyedeji [5].

Table - 1: Frequency and percentage distribution profile of the child labourers (N=300)		
Demographic variables	**N**	**%**
Age (In years)		
5-7	59	19.67
8-9	59	19.67
10-11	97	32.33
12-14	85	28.33
Sex		
Male	180	60.00
Female	120	40.00
Ever attended school		
Yes	97	32.33
No	203	67.67
Highest level of school attended		
None	203	67.67
Primary school	75	25.00
High school	22	7.33
Reason for not attending school		
Poverty	190	63.33
Lack of interest	66	22.00
Lack of facility	44	14.67

3. RESULTS

The data presented in table 1 shows that the majority 32.33% of the child labourers were in the age of 10-11 years, followed by 28.33% of them were 12-14 years, 19.67% of child labourers were found to be in the age group of 5 - 7 years and 8-9 years. It is well documented that majority of child labourers in the age of 10 -11 years. Child labourers percentage of males were expected to be higher than females. The data of the present study also showed that majority 60% of the child labourers were males and 40 % of them were females.

In relation to school attended shows that majority 67.67 % of the children never attended and remaining 32.33 % of the children attended school. Hence the majority of the child labourers does not attend the school. Regarding the highest level of school attended shows that majority 67.67

% of the child labourers never attended school, 25 % of the child labourers were attended up to primary school and 7.33 % of the child labourers were attended high school. Hence the majority of the child labourers were never attended the school.

The reason for not attending school was studied by various researchers over the past two decades, the most findings revealed that poverty as the most predominate reason. The data of the present study also revealed that the majority 63.33 % of the child labourers not attended school due to poverty, due to lack of interest 22 % of them were not attended school and 14.67 % of child labourers were not attended school due to lack of facility. Hence the majority of the child labourers stated that the reasons for not attended school due to poverty.
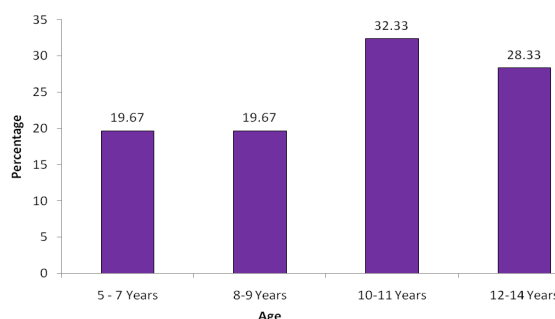

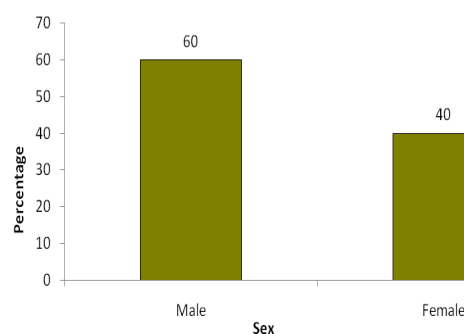**Figure - 1: Percentage distribution of age of the child labourers.**

Figure - 2: Percentage distribution of sex of the child labourers.
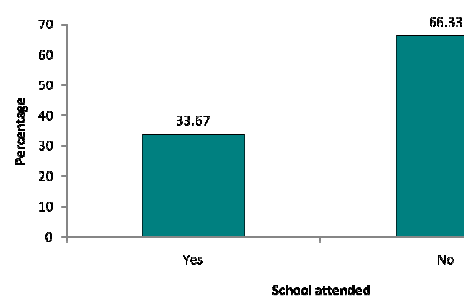

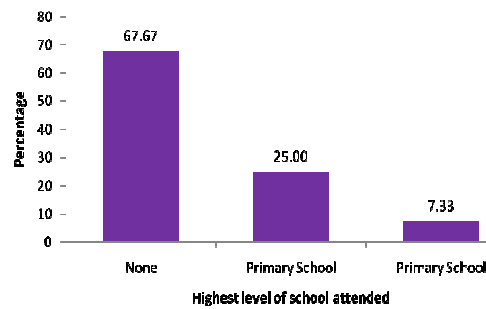**Figure - 3: Percentage distribution of school attended child labourers.**

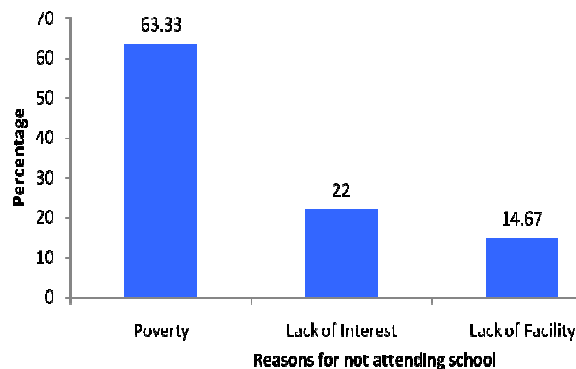**Figure - 4: Percentage distribution of level of school attended child labourers.**

Figure - 5: Percentage distribution of reasons for not attending school of child labourers.

4. DISCUSSION

The socio-demographic variables of the subjects show that the majority (32.33 %) subjects were in the age of 10-11 years and (28.33 %) of them were in 12-14 years, 19.67 % of child labourers were found to be in the age group of 5-7 years and 8-9 years. The age of 10-11 years child labourers were bound to be the majority and it is well documented. As Tharamangalam area is situated in Salem district, majority of subjects (60 %) of the child labourers were males and (40 %) of the subjects were female. The educational status of the subjects revealed that the majority (67.67 %) of the children never attended school, (33.33 %) of the children attended school. In the present study, the most findings revealed that poverty was the most predominate reason (i.e) majority 63.33 % of the child labourers not attended school, due to lack of interest 22 % of them were not attended school and 14.67 % of child labourers were not attended school due to lack of facility.

5. CONCLUSION

Children are recognized as producers, it is often perceived as the result of a combination of poverty and their weak economic and social position. This approach helps to prevents child labour from determining the magnitude, scope and characteristics of problems, identifying the risk factors that are potentially modified assessing what measures can be taken to prevent and implementing the most promoting interventions in community based approaches. There is also a need to study all the ramifications of child labour for proper planning and for the protection of children to improve on child survival, development and protection indices in the near future.

6. REFERENCES

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