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ISSUE OF CHILD LABOR: A STUDY OF NEWSPAPERS COVERAGE IN PAKISTAN

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Abstract

This research study aimed to assess the coverage of child labor exploitation in Pakistan's leading print media and the public's understanding of the issue. Quantitative content analysis was used for data collection, providing descriptive answers to research questions. Purposive sampling was employed to examine content from The Daily Jasarat (Urdu) and Daily Express Tribune (English) on the first, last, and city pages in the Karachi region from October 1st, 2021, to December 31st, 2022. The analysis revealed that the topic received limited attention, with Urdu newspapers featuring more news on child labor compared to English publications.

Keywords: Child labor, Newspapers, Issue, Coverage, Karachi

Introduction

Child labor entails the exploitation of underage boys and girls through various forms of employment that disrupt their formal education, rob them of their childhood, and have adverse effects on their moral, mental, and physical well-being. While all nations consider such exploitation a crime, not all child labor is adequately addressed by existing laws. Some children, like Amish children, engage in specific forms of labor, while others, often from indigenous communities, are involved in different types.

In the 21st century, child labor is considered a form of child abuse, persisting in many parts of the world, with a higher prevalence in countries like India and Pakistan. Pakistan, in particular, faces a significant number of child labor cases. Child labor constitutes an infringement upon a child's innocence, compelling them to endure the harsh conditions of labor during their formative years. It encompasses various working conditions that are unsuitable for children, forcing them into labor at an age when they should be learning and playing, depriving them of their childhood.

The root cause of child labor in Pakistan can be attributed to prolonged poverty that has plagued certain economically marginalized segments of society. This phenomenon has its origins in an unequal social structure marked by capitalist conditions. Among the most vulnerable groups are the rural poor.

It's crucial to distinguish between different forms of child work. In general, when children and teenagers under 18 engage in work that doesn't harm their education, development, or health, it is viewed favorably. This can include assisting in family businesses or earning extra income during the summer or after school. However, when referring to employment that hinders children's mental and physical development, robs them of their childhood, potential, and dignity, the term "child labor" is commonly used.

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It disrupts their education, either by preventing attendance, compelling early departure, or attempting to combine school with strenuous work. Whether a specific type of "work" qualifies as "child labor" depends on factors such as a child's age, the nature of the work, the working conditions, and the country's objectives. While variations exist between countries and even within a single nation, addressing this issue is of paramount importance.

Despite the inherent dangers associated with child labor in its various forms, studies reveal that it is not equally prevalent worldwide. The statistics on child labor raise grave concerns. In developing nations, Asia accounts for 61% of child workers aged 5-14 years. Africa follows with 32%, while Latin America represents 7%. Moreover, Africa reports the highest prevalence of child labor, while Asia has the largest number of child workers. Although policies to combat child labor exist, the absence of stringent enforcement perpetuates child labor. In response to the high incidence of child labor in nine districts of Pakistan, the National Child Labor Project Scheme was initiated. To effectively combat child labor, community-based strategies aimed at reintegrating child workers into their homes are essential. The International Labor Organization has published a guide for addressing child labor in fish markets and aquaculture, emphasizing policy and practice. Numerous challenges and potential health issues associated with child labor underscore the need for action (Srivastava, 2011).

Despite conforming to international norms, Pakistan has not yet established a publicly coordinated childcare case management or referral system, even 30 years after ratifying the CRC. Such a system could help prevent child marriage, child labor, and protect children from being treated as adults in the legal system. The Child Protection Program formally assists the Government of Pakistan in improving the realization of children's rights to protection from violence and exploitation. This includes addressing the absence of a case management or referral system for childcare. In 2016, Balochistan adopted a Child Protection Bill with the support of UNICEF, aligning with international recommendations and UNCRC criteria. Data collection focuses on the worst forms of child labor and economic exploitation using the SIMPOC methodology, aiming to overcome environmental gaps by developing a comprehensive, evidence-based "civil registry" (Society for Protection of Rights of the Child - The State of Pakistan's Children, n.d.).

The increasing number of child laborers in Karachi may be attributed to the abundant employment opportunities and growing population. A literature review in 2007, which included published and unpublished literature from 2000, revealed common health issues among child laborers in Karachi, such as fever, generalized pains, respiratory illnesses, and experiences of drug or sexual abuse. Child labor organizations can be categorized into three main types: those providing legal advice and advocacy, those generating statistics, and those offering interventions. Children themselves identified poverty as the primary driver of child labor, regardless of the underlying cause. Evening schools and drop-in centers for working children were deemed effective, providing primary healthcare and skill-based education. There is an urgent need for more of these centers (Nafees et al., 2012).

In 2020, Pakistan made progress in addressing child labor. The National Commission on the Rights of the Child was formally established in February, with two

new members appointed. The Federal cabinet banned domestic labor and abuse for children below 14 years old, in response to the tragic death of an eight-year-old domestic worker. The Employment of Minors Act of 1991 now includes domestic work in its list of prohibited hazardous occupations for minors. In Pakistan, young children are often coerced into domestic employment and subjected to sexual exploitation, sometimes under the guise of human trafficking. Other prevalent forms of child labor include forced labor, agriculture, and brick kilns. Despite international norms, neither the Pakistani government nor the province of Balochistan has set age or hazard-based limits on child labor. The failure to publicly report cases hampers efforts to combat corruption, including accepting bribes from alleged child labor offenders and refusing to initiate criminal investigations ("Findings on the worst forms of child labor - Pakistan | U.S. Department of Labor," n.d.).

Children who should be learning from teachers and attending school are instead forced to work, missing out on the joys of childhood. Parents who compel their children to work and then exploit their hard-earned wages raise questions about our society, including the laws related to guardianship and enforcement. The COVID-19 pandemic exacerbated child labor as schools closed and economies suffered, leading more children into the workforce. Child labor is an undeniable part of Pakistan's economy with far-reaching consequences. Children subjected to this harsh reality often work in hazardous conditions, such as brick ovens, which contribute to health risks. They may suffer cuts and injuries from equipment not meant for them, leading to respiratory issues and early exposure to toxic chemicals, increasing the risk of leukemia. The emotional toll of child labor can result in depression, anxiety, and other mental health issues. Eradicating this issue requires collaborative efforts between governments and citizens, with constant policing and regulatory checks to hold those responsible accountable. Every citizen has a role to play in ending child labor and protecting their communities for the greater good ("The plight of child labor in Pakistan," 2022).

Despite the existence of laws and standards aimed at eliminating child labor, the problem persists. Global child labor is driven by the same root causes as it was a century ago in the United States of America, including poverty, inadequate education, suppression of workers' rights, and limited regulations. Families living in poverty may resort to child labor to meet their basic needs. Many children in Latin America, Asia, and Africa are forced into child labor due to increasing poverty levels. The fact that 75 million children did not attend school in 2006 posed a significant problem for their future. Complex production and outsourcing networks often make it difficult to track who is working at each stage of production. Extensive subcontracting can be used intentionally or unintentionally to conceal child labor. Many countries have laws against child labor, but they are not effectively enforced, or they include exceptions that allow child labor in specific industries, such as agriculture or small-scale enterprises. Labor departments, inspection agencies, and courts are often underfunded or understaffed, even in countries with strict child labor laws. Limited resources at the state level further hinder the enforcement of child labor laws. While there is a minimum age for work, it does not regulate domestic or agricultural work. The ability of workers to organize unions has a significant impact on the global protection of fundamental labor standards, including the eradication of child labor. The inability of workers to organize makes it difficult to improve living and working conditions and eliminate child labor. The International Confederation of Free Trade Unions reported 2,500 arrests and 5,000 workers dismissed

in 2010 due to union activities. As multinational corporations expand globally, nations compete for business, jobs, and industries, sometimes leading governments to seek low labor costs and companies to flout international rules, undermining efforts to combat child labor. Child labor regulations and labor laws are now incorporated into several U.S. statutes as requirements for preferential trade or government contracts. However, international free trade rules may prohibit the consideration of child labor and workers' rights. High interest rates on development loans can exacerbate scarcity in developing countries, as these loans often allow governments to restructure basic services like education and healthcare. This puts additional pressure on children to work (causes of child labor | The University of Iowa labor center, n.d.).

Child labor is a widespread crisis that hampers children's potential. It violates children's rights and can endanger their physical and emotional well-being, subjecting them to risks and preventing them from attending school. Some forms of child work may not be considered child labor if they do not pose a threat to health, education, or well-being. For instance, older children may engage in chores, small jobs for daily income, or gain work experience, preparing them for adult employment. However, millions of children worldwide engage in various forms of child labor, including factory work, mining, agriculture, domestic service, street vending, and involvement in criminal industries like prostitution or drug trafficking. Many of these children do not receive compensation but may have access to food and shelter. However, they often do not receive compensation for missed work due to illness or injury. Child labor can make it challenging for children to attend school, hindering their potential. Education is proven to reduce child labor, breaking the cycle of poverty, exploitation, and illiteracy, allowing children to access better opportunities and escape the cycle of low-wage jobs as adults. Access to education is key to breaking the cycle of child labor and poverty (Child labor, 2022).

A clear definition of child labor is crucial in discussing the issue. Child labor is often associated with images of children enslaved, chained in factories, or forced into prostitution. While many children work in impoverished countries, very few are subjected to such extreme forms of exploitation. According to the International Labor Organization (ILO) in 2006, there were 218 million child laborers worldwide in 2004. These child laborers often work for their families at home, on farms, or in businesses. Due to their prevalence and the availability of data on such activities, economic research on child labor tends to focus on these more common forms of child labor. There is a debate about whether these activities are beneficial or harmful, which is explored in section 3. This section discusses the various definitions of child labor in the literature and provides an overview of the typical types of work performed by children in low-income countries. It emphasizes that researchers need to consider a wide range of activities when studying how children allocate their time. Children often do not participate in the formal paid labor market, so researchers estimate the shadow value of child labor market time, taking into account children's involvement in household chores, family businesses, education, and other activities. To gain a comprehensive understanding of child labor dynamics, researchers should consider various types of work (Edmonds, 2007).

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Problem Statement

This study aims to identify the primary cause of the problem at a regional level in Karachi. Specifically, it seeks to determine whether the main issue lies in the awareness regarding child labor. This will be accomplished through the analysis of daily newspapers in the Karachi region of Pakistan.

Research Questions

1. How does the media cover child labor issues in both English and Urdu newspapers?

2. What are the differences in the extent of coverage between English and Urdu newspapers regarding child labor issues?

3. Which specific aspects of child labor receive more coverage in the media, including children working in hotels, factories, households, agricultural sectors, brick kilns, and as scavengers?

4. How extensively do federal and provincial governments' actions for the abolition of child labor get reported in newspapers?

Objectives of the Study

The objectives of this study are as follows:

- To examine the media coverage of child labor issues in both English and Urdu newspapers.

- To compare the extent of coverage between English and Urdu newspapers concerning child labor issues.

- To identify which specific aspects of child labor receive more coverage, including:
    - Children working in hotels
    - Children working in factories
    - Underage children working in households
    - Underage children in the agricultural sector
    - Underage children in brick kilns
    - Underage children working as scavengers

- To ascertain the steps taken by federal and provincial governments for the abolition of child labor and report on these actions as covered by the newspapers.

Literature Review

The inaugural World Summit for Children, held on September 30, 1990, established goals for the year 2000, including reducing child mortality and addressing hunger. While the goals emphasized basic education for all children and primary school completion for at least 80% of them, they did not provide clear objectives regarding child labor. However, achieving these education-related goals can contribute to the reduction of child labor.

Research presented in this study unequivocally demonstrates the importance of educational interventions in preventing and ultimately eliminating child labor. Additional measures, such as fertility treatments, technological advancements, improved employment opportunities for adults, and labor market reforms, are necessary. These actions should be accompanied by advocacy for working children and empowerment of families.

International agencies dealing with child labor increasingly agree that effective action should prioritize the protection of children and improvements in their working and living conditions. Child labor should be destigmatized and acknowledged as a condition that can be used to target children for interventions related to education, health, and nutrition.

A comprehensive approach involving economic and social incentives, along with legislative measures, is essential to achieve the long-term goal of eradicating child labor. The implementation of such a package should consider a country's institutional and administrative capacities and the specific types and arrangements of child labor (Kanbur & Grootaert, 1999).

Analyzing data from two Latin American countries regarding child labor reveals a significant contribution to the labor force by children who are below the legal working age or should be in school. Child labor leads to a reduction in educational attainment by approximately two years compared to non-working children. Child labor is closely associated with grade repetition, a common phenomenon in Latin America. However, working children's households often have significant income from their labor. Beyond the concerns about the physical and educational impact on children, child labor also hinders the accumulation and return of human capital. These factors provide strong justification for the implementation of anti-child labor policies.

For instance, it is well-recognized that child labor control policies are ineffective without household incentives to keep children out of the labor market. Therefore, additional measures like targeted subsidies for low-income families are necessary to encourage school participation. This ensures that the country can develop a high level of human capital, ultimately reducing poverty in future generations (Psacharopoulos, 1997).

Child labor is a significant public health issue with adverse effects that require special attention and multidisciplinary approaches. According to the International Labor Organization (ILO), poverty is the root cause of child labor, as children are forced to work due to a lack of access to affordable education. Some cultural beliefs support child employment as a means to develop character and skills. Juvenile labor is a result of socioeconomic inequality, poor governance, and inadequate enforcement of international

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agreements. Informal, low-paying economies also encourage child labor.

Child labor has detrimental effects on children's overall well-being, stunting their physical, intellectual, and emotional growth. Merely enforcing child labor rules and regulations is insufficient to address this public health issue. Comprehensive policies should include educational initiatives for children and their families, funding for early childhood development, and public education campaigns in rural areas. Policies that raise adult wages and discourage forced child labor should also be implemented. Protecting all children's rights and establishing policies in line with ILO standards are essential for ethical practice (Filip et al., 2018).

Recent attention has been given to the issue of child labor, particularly in 3rd world countries where child labor is prevalent, especially in rural areas. This research aims to empirically determine whether child labor has any negative consequences later in life. While this study cannot conclude the effect of child labor on future wages due to limitations in available data, it does find that child labor is associated with higher living standards and a greater likelihood of earning a wage. However, there is no evidence to suggest that child labor harms children's health.

These results highlight the need for continued research on child labor and provide directions for future studies. Future research could expand the time frame and collect data on agricultural productivity and wage rates to enable a more in-depth analysis of child labor costs and the economic returns from work experience for young children (Beegle et al., 2009).

Established international legal principles necessitate the harmonization of global trade rules with fundamental human rights and labor policies that prohibit extreme or exploitative forms of child labor. Peremptory norms, also known as jus cogens, prohibit certain forms of child labor and are not subject to treaty derogation. These norms are designed to protect both children and adults and encompass slavery, slavery-like practices, and the sale of children. Jus cogens also cover other forms of child labor involving cruelty, violations of human rights, degrading treatment, or arbitrary detention. International law mandates that child labor cases must adhere to these fundamental norms.

Peremptory norms may also apply to severe forms of child labor not initiated under threat or coercion, including situations that pose risks, harm, or disruption to a child's education. These obligations are enshrined in international labor and human rights conventions, such as the Convention on the Rights of the Child, the International Covenant on Civil and Political Rights, and the International Covenant on Economic, Social, and Cultural Rights. Additionally, they prohibit the use of child labor in specific industries and under certain conditions. Many regional treaties within the African, European, and Inter-American systems outline obligations consistent with global standards. These limitations apply regardless of whether state officials or agents commit offensive behavior (Diller & Levy, 1997).

This paper presents the results of an innovative method for investigating the effect of child labor on learning attainment. It is based on comprehensive data on schooling, work, and test results. These findings highlight the significance of this analysis

and the importance of gathering such data. When work is performed outside the home, the results indicate that it significantly impacts learning achievement in critical areas such as reading and math. This is crucial for assessing the detrimental effects of child labor. Notably, the numerical significance of the impact is considerably higher than that reported by either Patrinos and Psacharopoulos (1997) or Akabayashi & Psacharopoulos (1999). While differences in statistical methodology and sample characteristics may contribute to this variance, it could also be attributed to more precise achievement measures, the separation of work from home activities, and the control for innate abilities. This underscores the need to consider data from other countries to gain a better understanding of this topic. While work is indeed important, it was not found to significantly bias the estimates of returns to schooling. These results reaffirm the existing understanding of the impact of work on learning achievement and provide fresh insights into the mechanisms at play. Importantly, these effects are significant, even though Section 2 revealed that work did not affect children's school attendance. Section 5 further describes that these effects are not indirect but direct, challenging the prevailing focus of research on the indirect effects of child labor on schooling. The reasons behind these direct effects could range from exhaustion or diversion of attention away from academic matters to the possibility that some underage children have less interest in education. Further investigation is needed to explore this last possibility, which suggests that it may not be working itself that affects academic achievement but rather a lack of motivation to learn and work. If valid, this finding emphasizes the importance of designing school curricula that not only discourage children from working but also stimulate their interest in learning. Additionally, it is worth noting some details in Section 5 and the main conclusions: mathematics was found to be more influential than reading, highlighting the greater significance of schooling; advanced tests had less impact on children's work than whether they were engaged in work; and gender did not emerge as a significant factor, with girls performing worse on all tests, even when controlling for lower Raven scores, and girls' math scores being further reduced by increased housework (Heady, 2003).

There is no evidence to support the claim that child labor rates increase as a result of exposure to global trade and economic integration beyond national borders. In fact, the evidence suggests the opposite. The theoretical explanation is as follows: the decision of parents to put their children to work or not depends on the costs and benefits of education. However, capital market imperfections can limit investments in education due to household liquidity constraints. Consequently, globalization may raise wages for uneducated workers in countries with large labor forces, reducing the incentive for parents to educate their children and increasing their motivation to put them to work at an early age. However, increasing relative wage rates for unskilled workers would positively affect the demand for education. Therefore, the net effects of globalization on child labor are unclear. Another issue arises for countries with unfavorable conditions. A new trade theory suggests that countries with large workforces of unskilled workers may be excluded from intermediate trade with more developed nations, which form exclusive clubs. This could further impoverish countries with unfavorable conditions due to globalization. These factors imply that child labor may increase in countries with a low proportion of literate workers, but it could decrease globally as they become more integrated into the global economy. These two types of countries have differing perspectives on the role of national policies in addressing increasing global integration. Countries with abundant unskilled workers need to create incentives for both parents and children to pursue education, while countries with a high proportion of educated workers

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need to alleviate household liquidity constraints for parents who are not literate. Despite its limitations, cross-country data appear to support these theoretical points. The Sachs-Warner index measures trade openness as the proportion of trade to GDP, and the composition of skills and health policy affects the relative importance of trade. For example, a lower child labor rate is associated with a literate workforce rather than the number of children attending educational institutions. Child labor is negatively correlated with the GDP share allocated to public health spending. It is important to note that causality cannot be inferred from statistical associations, and the claim being made is more modest. The argument is that countries with a large number of unskilled workers may be excluded from the globalization process, and all citizens, including children, will suffer. The issue is not globalization itself but a country's inability to participate effectively (Cigno et al., 2002).

Transnational activism and RugMark's success can be measured in three ways: (1) the number of licensees with RugMark, as well as the exports of RugMark-certified carpets; (2) the quantity of RugMark-certified carpets imported; and (3) its norm-setting effects. In India, there are 218 registered exporters with RugMark, and many former members of AICMA split and formed CMAWCL. RugMark licenses its members and also registered many former AICMA members who are still in operation. Currently, there are 27,968 registered looms under inspection by RugMark in India. RugMark continuously monitors these looms to ensure that child labor is not employed. During the 1998-1999 period, only 794 looms were found to be using child labor out of the 54,416 RugMark inspections conducted (RugMark India 1998-1999). There are nine RugMark schools in India that provide education and social support to approximately 1300 children. RugMark Balashrya is a rehabilitation center for children rescued from the textile industry. Additionally, RugMark has established four adult education centers to provide education for 120 weavers, following an initiative by the weavers themselves. RugMark's presence in the market was evident in 1999 when the 1.5 millionth RugMark rug was introduced in Germany, with RugMark sales reaching DM 118 million (RugMark 1999). While RugMark has not completely eradicated child labor, nor has it gained universal acceptance among exporters and importers, it has successfully diffused norms related to human rights and child labor in India's Mirzapur Carpet Belt. In the 1980s and early 1990s, carpet manufacturers justified the use of child labor in the industry on grounds of poverty and industry welfare. While the transnational movement against child labor has led to changes in the Indian carpet industry, it has not resolved all issues. The success of transnational movements in influencing behavioral change can be described as norm-driven rather than interest-driven. Fear of losing material benefits played a role in the reported increase in child labor employment in the carpet industry. Importantly, RugMark's reported changes in child labor employment were not solely due to the influx of human rights policies into India; instead, the RugMark issue was influenced by the efforts of social activists within India. As progress continued, a coalition emerged that included both Indian and German actors. This engagement cannot be reduced to Western states promoting liberal values as human rights advocates (Risse, Ropp, and Sikkink, 1999). The movement challenged Western citizens' self-image as human rights promoters by implicating them in child labor exploitation through their carpet purchases. International aid organizations and individuals concerned about human rights sought to become politically involved in the new business practices promoted by RugMark, reclaiming their liberal identity (Chowdhry & Beeman, 2001).

Research Methodology

Whether it is a thesis, a dissertation, or a research project, if you have just started your first formal research, you might find yourself overwhelmed by all the practical jargon. Terms like "research methods" and "data collection and analysis" can seem endless. Research methodology refers to the actual "method" of a particular study, specifically how researchers systematically structure their research to ensure valid and reliable results in line with the research's goals and objectives. You can typically find a research methodology chapter in a thesis, dissertation, or research journal article. A well-crafted methodological chapter in a thesis or dissertation is crucial as it explains the methodological choices you made and justifies those choices.

In other words, the methodology chapter should provide a rationale for the design choices, demonstrating that the selected methods and techniques are well-suited to achieve the research's aims and objectives and will yield valid and reliable results. A sound research methodology is essential for drawing scientifically valid conclusions, whereas a poorly designed methodology can compromise the research's quality.

Various research approaches, such as qualitative, quantitative, and mixed methods, focus on different aspects of research, such as words, numbers, or a combination of both. Quantitative research emphasizes measurement and testing using numerical data, while qualitative research centers on collecting and analyzing textual data, including "soft" data components like body language or visual cues. Qualitative methodologies are often employed for exploratory research when the research's goals involve understanding people's opinions or experiences, such as public perceptions of events or presidential candidates. On the other hand, quantitative methodologies are primarily used for research with a positivist orientation, such as examining the relationship between variables or testing hypotheses.

Combined methodologies, as the name suggests, combine the strengths of qualitative and quantitative methods to offer a more comprehensive perspective and explore ways to create a richer understanding of the research topic.

Sampling, as previously mentioned, refers to the process of selecting the data source. There are various sampling methods to choose from, but the two main categories of sample design are probability and non-probability sampling. Probability sampling involves selecting a completely random sample from a defined population, ensuring that the sample represents the entire population and allowing for generalizability of the results. Non-probability sampling methods, on the other hand, do not provide the same level of generalizability, as the samples are not randomly selected and may not accurately represent the entire population. Convenience sampling, for instance, involves interviewing or surveying individuals who are readily accessible but may not be representative of the broader population.

When it comes to data collection methods, there are numerous options to consider. The choice of data collection method should align with the research's overarching goals and objectives, practicality, and available resources. For exploratory research, qualitative methods like interviews and focus groups may be suitable. In contrast, extensive surveys that generate large amounts of quantitative data may be more

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appropriate for studies focused on measuring specific variables or testing hypotheses.

Data analysis methods can be classified based on whether the research is qualitative or quantitative. Qualitative data analysis typically involves processes such as data coding and thematic analysis, leading to a narrative interpretation of the findings.

As you may have gathered by now, the research's aims and objectives play a significant role in shaping the research methodology. When developing a research methodology, it's crucial to step back and consider the big picture of your research before making methodological decisions. Start by asking whether your research is exploratory or confirmatory. Exploratory research often leans towards qualitative methods, while confirmatory research is typically quantitative. The choice of methods and analyses should align with the research's overarching goals and objectives.

Designing a study and refining a methodology is a broad topic that requires thorough consideration. The key takeaway is that you should always begin with your research goals and objectives in mind. This post is part of a mini research writing course that covers everything you need to start a thesis, dissertation, or research project (Jansen & Warren, 2020).

A free press is typically taken for granted as being essential to a strong democracy. However, this freedom does have its limitations, with some restrictions arising from national security and defamation concerns. In certain situations, news blackouts or information restrictions have occurred during times of war. In the modern world, the press has the incredible potential to draw attention to topics that the public has previously shown little interest in. Social issues, though important, have not received as much media attention as political, economic, and scandal-related matters. Press coverage of an issue can increase public awareness, prompting the state to engage more actively in addressing social concerns (Shaheen et al., 2021).

The primary focus of this study is the front page, back page, and city page of the Daily "JASARAT" and the Daily "EXPRESS TRIBUNE" for the period from October 1, 2021, to December 31, 2021. The study aims to investigate and assess the role of the press in raising awareness of and addressing the issue of child labor in Pakistan. It examines how child labor difficulties are covered and portrayed in the media through content analysis.

Sample

The research sample consists of two national newspapers published in Karachi, Sindh region of Pakistan, namely the Karachi edition of Express Tribune and Daily Jang. The study covers a three-month period of newspaper issues, with a specific focus on the front, back, and city pages.

Findings

1. Inadequate Coverage: The findings reveal that due to the inadequate coverage of child labor concerns, the media is unable to effectively inform the public about children's rights or influence the enactment of laws that protect children.

2. Lack of Sensitivity: One of the reasons for this inadequate coverage is the writers' lack of personal sensitivity to the issues surrounding the elimination of child labor and legal requirements. This highlights the need for intentional measures to educate media professionals about these regulations and why they should be emphasized in child labor stories.

3. Suppression of Voices: The results indicate that the media, which should provide child labor victims with a voice, often suppresses their right to speak for themselves. This exacerbates their situation and leaves them without a platform to express their concerns.

Conclusion

The media's failure to adequately cover child labor issues is a significant obstacle to addressing this pressing concern. Without proper coverage and awareness, child abuse and the denial of children's rights will persist. To address this, several key conclusions can be drawn:

1. Media Sensitization: There is a pressing need for intentional efforts to sensitize media professionals about child labor regulations and the importance of highlighting these issues in their reporting. This education can help bridge the gap in coverage.

2. Inclusion of Victim Voices: Media outlets should establish editorial guidelines that prioritize including the voices of child labor victims in their articles. This can provide a more accurate and empathetic portrayal of their experiences.

3. Government and NGO Involvement: The government and non-governmental organizations (NGOs) should play a more active role in educating the public and encouraging print journalism to shed light on child labor concerns.

4. Priority in English Press: The study underscores that even English-language print media, typically considered more sensitive to pro-social and developmental issues, needs to improve its coverage of child labor.

5. Raising Awareness: Media outlets should recognize that raising awareness about child labor is essential, even if these stories may not be as popular as other topics like crime, politics, or sports.

Recommendations

Based on the findings and conclusions, the following recommendations are suggested:

1. Media Training: Organize workshops and training sessions for media professionals to raise their awareness about child labor laws and the importance of reporting on child labor issues.

2. Editorial Guidelines: Encourage media outlets to develop and implement editorial guidelines that emphasize the inclusion of child labor victims' voices in

their reporting.

3. Advocacy: Government and NGOs should engage in advocacy efforts to promote awareness of child labor issues and collaborate with media organizations to enhance coverage.

4. Public Awareness Campaigns: Launch public awareness campaigns to inform the general public about the prevalence and consequences of child labor, aiming to increase demand for such stories.

5. Awards and Recognition: Establish awards and recognition programs for outstanding journalism in the field of child labor reporting to incentivize media outlets and journalists to prioritize these stories.

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