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**Subject: Sociology**



**Definition of Sociology: -**

The scientific analysis of a social institution as a functioning whole and as it relates to the rest of society.

**Differentiate between Macro and Micro Sociology: -**

**Macro Sociology: -**

Macro level sociology looks at large-scale social processes, such as social stability and change.

**Micro Sociology: -**

Micro sociology looks at small scale interactions between individuals, such as conversation or group dynamics.

**Introduction: -**

**Child labour** refers to the employment of **children** in any work that deprives them of their **childhood**, interferes with their ability to attend regular school, and that is mentally, physically, socially or morally dangerous and harmful.

Child labour has existed to varying extents throughout history. During the 19th and early 20th centuries, many children aged 5–14 from poorer families worked in Western nations and their colonies alike. These children mainly worked in agriculture, home-based assembly operations, factories, mining, and services such as [news boys](#)—some worked night shifts lasting 12 hours. With the rise of household income, availability of schools and passage of child labour laws, the incidence rates of child labour fell.

The work of children was important in pre-industrial societies, as children needed to provide their labour for their survival and that of their group. Pre-industrial societies were characterized by low productivity and short life expectancy; preventing children from participating in productive work would be more harmful to their welfare and that of their group in the long run. In pre-industrial societies, there was little need for children to attend school. This is especially the case in non-literate societies. Most pre-industrial skill and knowledge were amenable to being passed down through direct mentoring or apprenticing by competent adults.

### **Child Labour Definition:**

Child labour is work that children should not be doing because they are too young, or if they are old enough to work, because it is dangerous or unsuitable for them. Whether or not work performed by children is defined as child labour depends on the child's age, the hours and type of work and the conditions in which the work is performed.

Not all work done by children should be classified as child labour that is to be targeted for elimination. Children's or adolescents' participation in work that does not affect their health and personal development or interfere with their schooling is generally regarded as being something positive. This includes activities such as helping their parents around the home, assisting in a family business or earning pocket money outside school hours and during school holidays. These kinds of activities contribute to children's development and to the welfare of their families; they provide them with skills and experience, and help to prepare them to be productive members of society during their adult life.

**The term “child labour” is often defined as work that deprives children of their childhood, their potential and their dignity, and that is harmful to physical and mental development. It refers to work that:**

**is mentally, physically, socially or morally dangerous and harmful to children**

**; and/or**

**Interferes with their schooling**

by: depriving them of the opportunity to attend school; obliging them to leave school prematurely; or requiring them to attempt to combine school attendance with excessively long and heavy work.

The **worst forms of child labour** involves children being enslaved, separated from their families, exposed to serious hazards and illnesses and/or left to fend for themselves on the streets of large cities – often at a very early age. Whether or not particular forms of “work” can be called “child labour” depends on the child's age, the type and hours of work performed, the conditions under which it is performed and the objectives pursued by individual countries. The answer varies from country to country, as well as among sectors within countries.

### **International Definition:**

According to the ILO's [Worst Forms of Child Labor Convention](#), child labor is the enslavement (i.e., sale, trafficking, debt bondage, serfdom, compulsory labor) of anyone under the age of 18. The definition includes the use of children in armed conflict, prostitution and illegal activities such as drug trafficking. Lastly, any work deemed to be harmful to the health, safety or morals of a child is considered to be child labor.

## **United States' Definition:**

The [Fair Labor Standards Act of 1938](#) prohibits the employment of minors in "oppressive child labor." Oppressive child labor is the employment of a child under 16 by anyone other than that child's parent(s) or guardian(s). However, the Secretary of Labor permits the employment of individuals between 14 and 16 so long as the work is not in the manufacturing or mining industries and so long as the child's health, well-being and education are not negatively affected. Occupations that are deemed hazardous to the health or well-being of individuals between 16 and 18 years old are also considered to be "oppressive child labor."

## **Youth employment:**

Not all work done by children under the age of 18 is classified as child labour. Participation in decent work which does not affect their health, personal development or education can be a very positive experience for children or adolescents who have reached the required age. Indeed, millions of young workers around the world between the ages of 14 and 18 are desperate to find decent youth employment.

## **The Worst Form Of Child Labour:**

Hazardous work" is the worst form of child labour. It irreversibly damages children's health and development through, for example, exposure to dangerous machinery or toxic substances, and may even endanger their lives.

Whilst child labour takes many different forms, a priority is to eliminate without delay the **worst forms of child labour** as defined by [Article 3 of ILO Convention No. 182](#) :

### **all forms of slavery**

or practices similar to slavery, such as the sale and

### **trafficking of children**

, debt bondage and serfdom and forced or compulsory labour, including forced or compulsory recruitment of children for use in armed conflict;

the use, procuring or offering of a child for

### **prostitution**

,

the

use, procuring or offering of a child for

### **illicit activities**

, in particular for the production and trafficking of drugs as defined in the relevant international treaties;

Work

which, by its nature or the circumstances in which it is carried out, is likely to

### **harm the health, safety or morals of children**

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## **Hazardous child labour:**

**Hazardous work is the work which, by its nature or the circumstances in which it is carried out, is likely to harm the health, safety or morals of children.**

Guidance for governments on some hazardous work activities which should be prohibited is given by

[Article 3 of ILO Recommendation No. 190](#) :

work which exposes children to

p  
hysical, psychological  
abuse

;  
work  
underground  
, under water, at  
dangerous heights  
or in  
confined spaces

;  
work with  
dangerous machinery, equipment and tools  
, or which involves the manual handling or transport of heavy loads;  
work in an unhealthy environment which may, for example, expose children to  
hazardous substances  
, agents or processes, or to temperatures, noise levels, or vibrations damaging to their health;  
Work  
under particularly difficult conditions such as  
work for long hours or during the night  
or work where the child is unreasonably confined to the premises of the employer.

### **Causes of Child Labour: -**

According to the experts, the main reasons for the emergence of child labour in bigger cities are unhealthy family life and economic deprivation. Families strained by financial difficulties cannot cope with the increasing demands of their children and sometimes even fail to provide them with adequate nutrition.

This appears to be the main reason children look for their own sources of income. In socially disadvantaged, alcoholic or morally bankrupt families, pecuniary challenges are often coupled with destructive dynamics in the relationships. These factors combine to spur children into the street, temporarily or permanently, leading them to a vagrant existence, required too early to make independent decisions.

Economic hardships and family dysfunction can therefore be named as the main causes of child labour. Another important cause mentioned by the experts is the overall social and economic situation in the country.

Any diagnosis has to begin by recognizing the complexity of the problem. Legislators and policy-makers have to beware of oversimplified explanations for the existence of child labour.

there is a widely held belief that there is nothing much that can be done to combat child labour ? that it is a result and a manifestation of poverty and can only be eliminated when poverty itself has been eliminated; According to another school of thought, child labour only exists because unscrupulous adults exploit children in order to make quick profits and to gain an unfair advantage over competitors. All that needs to be done, according to this school of thought, is to bring the full force of the law against the offenders and to send the children back to school where they belong.

The basis of the elimination of the worst forms of child labour within a relatively short time-frame must be legislation, which keeps the total elimination of child labour as the ultimate goal of policy, but which explicitly identifies and prohibits the worst forms of child labour to be eliminated as a matter of priority. Such legislation must also provide adequate sanctions for violators and adequate compensation for victims,

and be rigorously and impartially enforced.

**For all these reasons**, even when it has been declared illegal, child labour continues to be tolerated and accepted as the natural order of things ? and much of it is invisible. It is frequently surrounded by a wall of silence, indifference and apathy. But that wall is beginning to crumble. The process of globalization and the development of modern means of communication have made the plight of working children a major issue on the agenda of the international community.

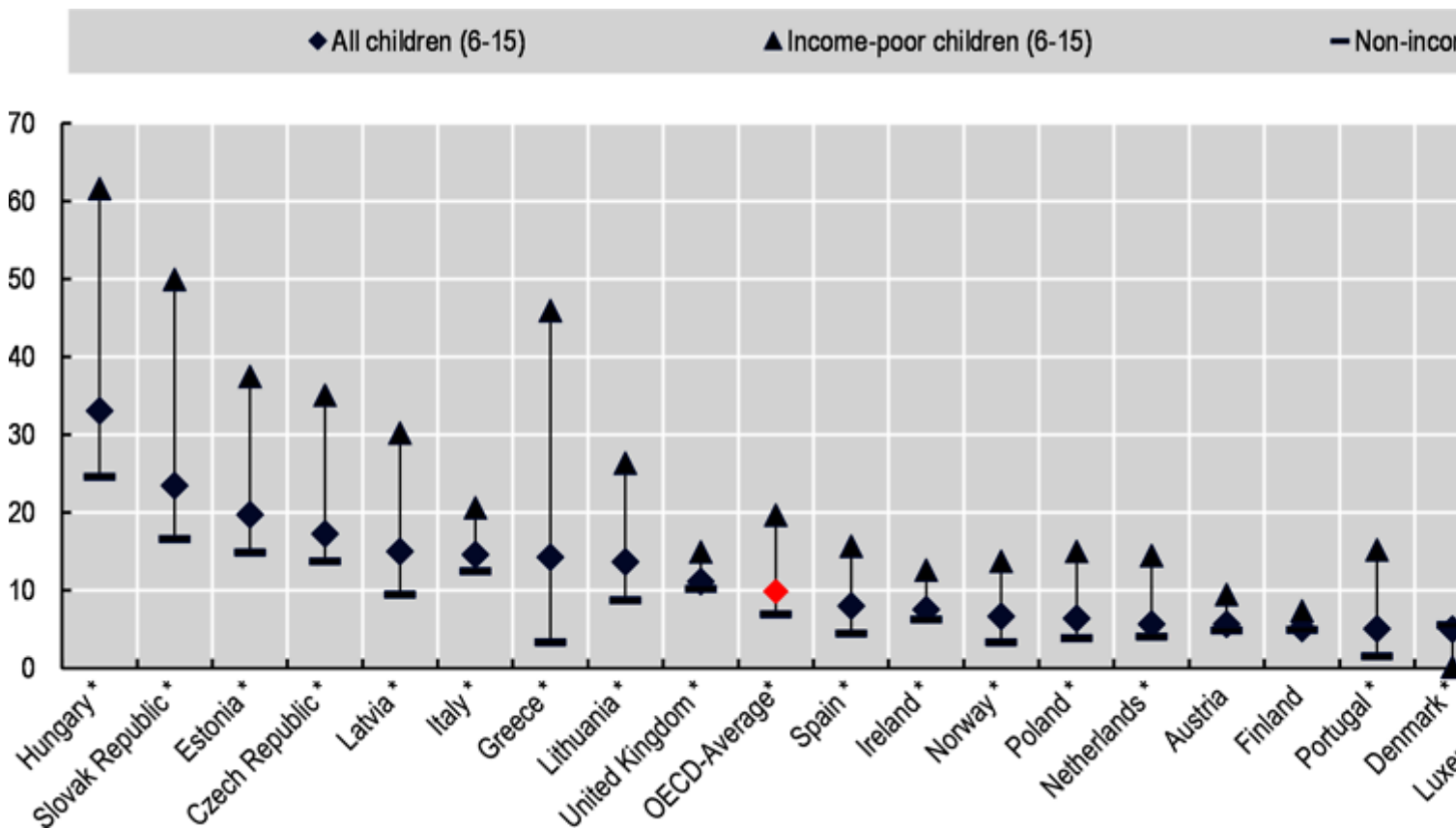
The growing international concern with the problem of child labour, reflected by these and other events, has been the result of a number of developments, notably:

The trend towards greater liberalization of trade and capital movements. This has brought about increasingly vocal demands that children should not be victims of the increased competition among countries and firms struggling to obtain a comparative advantage in world markets through the cheap and docile labour of children.

Greater transparency in the world economy and the abolition of blocs after the end of the Cold War. The indignation of consumers at the thought that the goods they purchase may have been produced in abusive conditions, including child labour

At the same time it has resulted in a fuller understanding of the complex causes of child labour, and in particular the fact that it is deeply rooted in poverty, in the lack or inadequacy of schooling and in social and cultural traditions and structures. Its elimination cannot be achieved merely by a stroke of the legislator's pen, but is recognized to be a very long-term goal.

Thus a consensus emerged in the 1990s that the highest priority should be given to eliminating the worst forms of child labour, that visible results should be achieved within a short time-frame rather than in some indefinite future, and that a concerted program of action should be launched at the national and international levels in order to achieve rapid results.



## Effects of child labour on Society:

In order to overcome our daily living needs we need to work and earn according to individual capacities. In a healthy society individual perform their role according to their age, capabilities and health condition. In contradiction to this, many of the children are deprived of their basic right of freedom and education and they are compelled to start work in a very early age.

They are paid very less so they start to work long hours in order to full fill their needs. This causes compromise in normal physiology. So it starts to affect every aspect of life from health, education and off course the socioeconomic status, thus automatically affecting the family and the whole society.

**According to Freedman (1998)**, “Child labor is... Work done by kids full-time under the age of 15. Work that prevents kids from attending school, such as unlimited or unrestricted domestic work. Work that is dangerous for kids and that is hazardous to their physical, mental or emotional health”.

There are number of children who are engaged in different kind of labours. According to International Labour Organization (2009), in Pakistan there are 40 million children age between 5- 14 years and among them 3.3 million children are engaged in labour.

The difficulty of tasks and harsh working conditions create a number of problems such as premature ageing, malnutrition, depression, drug dependency.

There are many serious social issues which are not yet addressed properly and not getting attention from the public, media and the government. Child labor is one of them.

From disadvantaged backgrounds, minority groups, or abducted from their families, these children have no protection. Their employers do whatever necessary to make them completely invisible and are thus able to exercise an absolute control over them. These children work in degrading conditions, undermining all the principles and fundamental rights based in human nature.

Additionally, a child who works will not be able to have a normal education and will be doomed to become an illiterate adult, having no possibility to grow in his or her professional and social life.

Furthermore, a child who works will be more exposed to malnutrition. These children are often victims of physical, mental.

## How to Reduce Child Labour:

Here are a few tips for helping end child labor:

### **Educate yourself.**

Use resources such as those suggested

[here](#)

, and then share what you learn with friends, family, co-workers, and others, and work together to increase your “voting” power.

### **Contact retail stores, manufacturers, and importers**

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Kindly ask them questions about the origins of their products. Let them know you want to buy products that don't involve child labor, and give them suggestions for ethical products and services they can offer instead.

### **Buy fair trade and sweatshop-free products whenever possible**

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Buy used when you can't. Or

[borrow, share, trade, make it yourself](#)

, etc. Look for certified fair trade labels such as

[Fair Trade Certified](#)

,

[Fair-trade](#)

[America](#)

, and the

[Good](#)

[weave label](#)

to ensure that you're supporting positive practices that don't involve child labor.

Also be sure to use

[Food Empowerment Project's Chocolate List](#)

to ensure that the chocolate you're purchasing wasn't made using child labor.

**Grow more of your own food**

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Buy from farmer's markets (verify their labor practices first), Community Supported Agriculture, and U-Pick farms.

**Share your time and money.**

Forgo that daily latte or expensive make-up or go out to eat a bit less, and funnel that money toward supporting reputable groups that are helping free children from exploitative labor and helping them get a good education. Volunteer your time when you can.

**Contact local, regional, and national legislators.**

Ask them to pass laws that ensure no products in your city/state/country are made with child labor, and encourage them to adopt "codes of conduct" which include concern for humane, sustainable, just practices.

**Contact businesses that do business in countries that have child labor.**

Encourage them to put pressure on government officials to take appropriate action and on businesses that use child labor to use sustainable, fair-trade practices.

**Invest ethically.**

If you're a shareholder, use your voice to ensure that your companies support humane, sustainable, just practices that don't include child labor.

## **Contact government leaders.**

Write letters to the heads of

[countries that permit any form of child slavery/forced labor](#)

and ask them to strengthen and enforce their laws, and to increase educational opportunities for children and humane, sustainable business opportunities for adults.

## **Educate others.**

Give presentations to schools, communities of faith, nonprofits, and other groups to educate them about child labor issues and encourage positive action.

Stopping such insidious practices isn't easy, but there are choices that all of us can make to improve conditions for children, to reduce our contribution to child labor, and to facilitate an end to the oppression and exploitation of children.

## **Facts about Child Labour:**

Worldwide

[218 million children](#)

between 5 and 17 years are in employment

In the world's poorest countries, around

[one in four children](#)

are engaged in work that is potentially harmful to their health

Among

[152 million children](#)

in child labour, 88 million are boys and 64 million are girls

[1 in 5 children](#)

in Africa is working in child labour

## ***Causes & Consequences:***

Poverty is often cited as the main cause of child labour. It is widely believed that families will not be able to cope if their children do not work. In practice, however, the poverty argument does not hold water. Precisely the opposite is true: child labour maintains poverty.

Experience shows that deep rooted social norms, the violation of workers' rights, discrimination against certain groups, and a poorly-functioning education system are the main reasons why children aren't attending school.

Because children are easy to exploit and are cheap labourers, they are hired in preference to adults. Child labour thus leads to lower wages and higher unemployment among adults. Children who work and do not go to school will end up in low paid jobs later, and so will their children – and so the vicious cycle of poverty is perpetuated.

## **Conclusion:**



Despite the severe limitations of the surviving evidence of child labour, some general conclusions may be drawn. First, the employment of very young children was never widespread in society.

Child labour below the age of 10 invariably formed part of the survival strategies of the poor. The demographic structure of eighteenth- and nineteenth century countries led to an increased burden of dependency among poor families and early employment might be explained as a rational response by households to structural dependency and endemic poverty.

Child labour at abnormally young ages was associated especially with lone-parent households, orphans, and children formally in the care of parish authorities. Such children were often victims of a failure of local welfare arrangements to provide adequate care to the destitute. Second, for the vast majority of people in history, the period between the ages 10 and 14 marked a major transition from childhood dependency to remunerative labour.

This near-universal transition was important for children in establishing an identity within local communities and formed a major life-cycle stage comparable with the attainment of educational qualifications among children today.

The characteristics of this transition changed over time. Many mid-eighteenth-century children made the transition to work by leaving home and entering a formal apprenticeship or farm service and the highest concentrations of child workers existed in occupations where children were required to live-in with their masters.

Concentrations of children aged 10–14 in farm service, for example, were commonly twice as high as among the agricultural day-labour force. Increases in the size of agricultural holdings and workshops, however, resulted in severe accommodation problems among farm servants and apprentices.