

# Introducing “Child Entrepreneurs”: A Study on Poor Children Owned Businesses in Bangladesh

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## Abstract

Concerning the income generation of children, studies on developing nations are almost exclusively concentrated on child labor. Nonetheless, this research extends the view by revealing how a number of poor children were engaged in businesses to maintain their subsistence in the context of Bangladesh. Thus, it introduces ‘Child Entrepreneurs’ in the extant literature with the diversities and complexities of their ventures. Further, it discloses the reasons for and the consequences of entrepreneurial efforts in the personal lives of the children. It should be highlighted that these children were less than 12 years old, when they were not legally allowed to be engaged in any form of employment. Nevertheless, whilst apparently, the entrepreneurs are essentially adults, this study potentially contributes to the prevailing knowledge by introducing these children as entrepreneurs.

**Keywords:** Child Entrepreneurs, Entrepreneurship, Child Labor, Developing Nations, Bangladesh.

## 1. Introduction

Regarding the income generation of children, the extant literature (Swaminathan, 1998; Kambhampati & Rajan, 2006; Esteven & Baland, 2007; Basu & Zarghamee, 2009) presents child labor as a pressing social issue, particularly in developing countries. Whilst it is recognised that child labor is intricately associated with poverty (Basu, 2002; Basu, et al. 2010; Webbink, 2012), a number of studies is concentrated on the relationship between economy of the country and child labor (Swaminathan, 1998; Basu, 2002; Kambhampati & Rajan, 2006; Bandara, et al. 2015) and specifically, the impact of family hardship on child labor (Basu, et al. 2010; Hilson, 2012). Some studies are conducted to explore other aspects, such as, the consequence of child labor on education (Esteven & Baland, 2007) or the social norms in relation to child labor (Goto, 2011). In this regard, few research articles (Swaminathan, 1998; Dammert and Galdo, 2013) draw attention to the health hazard of children. Concern has been also raised regarding the lack of enforcement of child labor laws in developing nations (Dammert and Galdo, 2013). Nonetheless, it can be contended that regarding earning issues of children, the existing literature almost exclusively revolves around the aspect of child labor, whereas it is under explored whether there exists self-employment for children.

In relation to the livelihood of children, it is also important to consider hidden forms of child labor because children, who are apparently idle, are productively employed (Amin, et al. 2006; Webbink, 2012). Along with pointing out the domestic labor, the literature (Webbink, 2012) reveals the engagement of many children in farm work or family businesses. In the case of working for family businesses, society considers that children gain the opportunity to have apprenticeship (Hilson, 2012). It is recognized as the part of the socialization process, whereby children imitate adult roles and hence, it is not deemed as child labor in society (Agbu, 2009). Even though it is evident that children are involved in family businesses, perhaps for apprenticeship (ibid), again, it is under researched whether they own and operate their businesses at such immature ages.

In some developing nations, like Bangladesh, many children are revealed to be engaged in self-employment (Jaim, 2013). It is important to note that children, doing businesses, is not a unique feature for developing nations. Some children of developed countries are identified to own and successfully operate their businesses; they are often called young entrepreneurs (<https://it.pinterest.com/pin/482940760011170443/>). Academic research rarely enquires into this issue but media presents these children with heroic images as they are gifted with exceptional talent to develop creative products. With the support of the family and community, they run their businesses, whilst they are not stressed to earn for maintaining their lives (ibid). Hence, these children are essentially different from that of developing countries where under the extreme poverty, with a notion of earnings, some children engage themselves in ordinary businesses. Moreover, in developed nations, the creative children, engaged in businesses, are seldom found but in developing nations, there is a large number of children in self-employment (Jaim, 2013). Although the children in businesses of developed nations have received attention of the media, the children, doing businesses in developing countries are largely been under explored. Given the number of children in businesses in developing nations and their nature of engagement, the children of such contexts deserve attention to investigate their ventures. Rather than solely concentrating on child labor issue, exploring children in businesses can provide valuable insights of the poor class children of developing nations.

Researching children in doing businesses for livelihood can be also important from the perspective of entrepreneurship theory. It can be argued that entrepreneurship is essentially considered as an adult domain

where all entrepreneurs are assumed to be adult. Against this background, it is important to uncover how the children enter into this adult territory for their businesses, how they fit themselves there and whether they can maintain their lives with the earnings generated from their ventures. Furthermore, unveiling the nature and operation of businesses of children and more specifically, bringing to light the children as business-owners can add to the existing knowledge of entrepreneurship where so far there is no space for children. It is worth noting that in order to highlight the immaturity of children, instead of the term ‘Young Entrepreneurs’ (that also includes young adults), this paper coined the term ‘Child Entrepreneurs’. This research aims at introducing these unrecognized child entrepreneurs of a developing nation.

The contribution of the article is to explore child entrepreneurs and accordingly, to bring to light this special cohort of entrepreneurs in the context of entrepreneurship. In other words, it can significantly add to the existing knowledge of the entrepreneurship theory by introducing a new form of entrepreneurs. In response to the research aim at first, this paper investigates the background of doing businesses in the context of a developing nation, Bangladesh. This section explores the reasons that instigated the children to initiate businesses rather than considering jobs. Taking into account the immature age, it also attempts to reveal how they managed the human capital or financial capital, that were essential for businesses. In order to provide a good understanding of the background, it started with unveiling the age when the children commenced their businesses. Second, this paper provides an overview of the businesses of the children that contributes to the understanding of what businesses the children could manage to carry on at their ages. It seeks to unpack the nature of businesses and in terms of operational issues, it analyses the time of working for the ventures. Third, the study concentrates on revealing whether the children were able to support their basic needs with the operation of businesses. Thus, it draws a form of conclusion regarding the success of children’s entrepreneurial efforts. In brief, for introducing child entrepreneurs, this study unveils *why* the children are engaged in businesses rather than jobs, *what* are those businesses and *whether* they meet their subsistence with businesses or not.

## 2. Methodology

The context of the research is Bangladesh, a South-Asian developing nation. In this country, child labor is a common issue (UNICEF, 2015); the laws related to this issue are not properly enforced (UNICEF, 2016). Nearly 12.6% of children aged 5 to 14 (4.7 million) are in the work force (UNICEF, 2015). Almost all the children (93%) are employed in informal sectors, such as workshops or small factories, home-based businesses and domestic activities (UNICEF, 2016). Against this background, there is an evidence of a number of children, engaged in entrepreneurship, particularly in the capital city, Dhaka (Jaim, 2013). Hence, Dhaka was considered as the appropriate context for this study.

The participants were selected, considering the research aim that is linked to children and entrepreneurship. This study took consideration of children at the age of less than 12 years. The reason is that, according to International Labor Organization (ILO), 12 years old children are allowed to be employed for light work. Hence, it is forbidden to have children, below that certain age, engaged at any form of employment. Nonetheless, many children, who have not attained the age of 12 years, are explicitly employed in Bangladesh (Jaim, 2011). Therefore, this study concentrates on children, of the age of less than 12 years, to explore their entrepreneurship related issues; it was the age, when they were so immature that they were not even expected to be involved in any employment. In addition, while selecting respondents, the minimum business experiences of 6 months were considered in order to confirm their continuity in this sector. In sum, the age of the children of the sample was less than 12 years, whilst they had at least 6 months of experiences of doing businesses.

Total 50 children were recruited for this research. Majority (66%) were at the age of 11 years. The youngest respondents were only 7 years old. Table-1 maps the age distribution of the sample. In this regard, it should be mentioned that almost all the children were males (except 3 females). Besides, nearly half of the respondents (48%) had around 1 year of experiences of doing businesses, whilst some children (28%) did businesses for more than that period.

**Table-1: Age of the Respondents**

Age (in years)	Frequency	Percent
7	1	2
8	3	6
9	1	2
10	12	24
11	33	66
<b>Total</b>	<b>50</b>	<b>100</b>

Prior to the extensive data collection, there was a pilot survey that played a potential role in developing the questionnaire for this study on the under explored field. In March, 2012, the researcher had face to face informal interviews of 3 child entrepreneurs (engaged in different types of businesses) in Dhaka. Semi-structured

interviews were conducted for exploring the insights of child entrepreneurship. Based on the interviews, a structured questionnaire was developed to administer for the extensive survey. The questionnaire included mostly closed ended questions with some open ended questions.

The extensive field work was undertaken in Dhaka. Some areas were well-known to the city-dwellers where children were found regularly to sell their products. The researcher selected few of these spots, for instance, specific parks or shopping areas. It took three months (May-July) in 2012 to complete the field survey. It is important to note that the questionnaire was developed in English for the convenience of analysis. Nevertheless, while having the questionnaires filled-up, the researcher needed to translate the questions to the children in Bengali (the native language of both the respondents and the researcher). It also ensures proper attention to the children that might encourage them to respond to the questions properly. Based on their responses, the researcher filled-up the questionnaires by herself while communicating with the children.

The quantitative analysis was conducted employing SPSS software. Simple statistical tools, for instance, percentage, frequency distribution etc., were utilized. It is worth noting that, in the paper, while presenting the output of analysis, in general, the data is presented in a comparatively detailed form. As the study is conducted on an under researched area, such presentation of data provides the opportunity to more precisely understand the overall scenario of the child entrepreneurs.

### 3. Background of Businesses

Before going into the detail of the businesses, the background of commencing ventures can provide a useful platform for the discussion. It needs to have an understanding of why the children initiated entrepreneurial activities rather than considering employment. Nevertheless, it is important not only to consider the issue of their interest to start a business, but also to scrutinize the preparation to have necessary human capital or financial capital for such initiative. In so doing, at first, the section brings to the fore the age, when the children started their businesses, to highlight their immaturity. Based on that understanding, the overall background of the businesses is explained.

It can be argued that the field of entrepreneurship is discussed with the notion that all persons, doing businesses, are adults but Table-2 considerably challenges that underlying assumption. In the sample, the earliest age, when the children started their businesses, was only 7 years. In other words, in this context, the child entrepreneurs can be found at the age of 7 years. Nonetheless, majority children (88%) launched their ventures at the age between 9 to 11 years. It evidently presents how immature they were at the age of commencing their ventures. It is important to highlight that as per Bangladesh Labour Code, 2006, in this country, no children of the age of less than 12 years are allowed to be engaged in employment of any form.

**Table-2: Age while Starting Businesses**

Age (in years)	Percent	Cumulative Percent
7	6	6
8	6	12
9	34	46
10	24	70
11	30	100
<b>Total</b>	<b>100</b>	

*Note: The highlighted cells presents the ages when most of the children started their businesses.*

It is important to examine the reasons for which they started their businesses at such early ages. (The reasons are presented in Table-3.) To investigate the issue, at first, it is explored why they wanted to earn. Almost half of the respondents (56%) informed about the poor financial condition of the family for which they needed to maintain the living by themselves. Even some children (20%) precisely mentioned that their family imposed them to initiate businesses. Moreover, a number of children (12%) lived without their family in Dhaka as they were orphans or abandoned or came from villages to relatives for seeking means of earnings. They needed to financially support themselves. Some others (12%) launched businesses due to their interest of having own earnings which implies the attitude of independence. Therefore, in general, for the children, poor financial condition is the reason regarding the decision of earnings. It reflects what we know from the extant literature concerning poverty in relation to child labor (Basu, 2002; Basu, et al. 2010; Webbink, 2012).

**Table-3: Reasons for Earnings of the Children**

Reasons	Percent
Inability of Family to Support	56
Compulsion of Family	20
Living without Family	12
Interest to have Own Earnings	12
<b>Total</b>	<b>100</b>

Providing greater attention to the background of businesses, the study reveals different reasons for which the children preferred to do businesses rather than to be engaged in other form of employment (presented in Table-4). According to many participants (40%), it was easier to establish a business compared to search and continue a job. They considered the establishment of a business in terms of funds, necessary to launch a venture and overall operation of the business. (The issue of initial capital is discussed at the later part of this section and the operation of business is explained in the next section.) Profit potentiality is important for almost equal number of children (38%). Apparently, they could earn relatively higher amount of money by doing businesses instead of working for others. Some children (10%) raised the issue of less availability of jobs. Some respondents (8%) had negative image of jobs due to the behavioral issues of the employers. The finding is consistent with the study (Jaim, 2011) that discloses the unwanted behavior, even physical assault, of the employers, while dealing with children at work. This issue acted as a discouraging factor for not seeking for a job and consequently, the children became entrepreneurs.

In addition, only a few children (4%) mentioned about other reasons, for example, one child simply followed the foot step of his elder brother by getting engaged in a similar business. Another one preferred self-employment over other employment due to the interest of having more flexibility in work. It suited better with his school schedule and in his opinions, in the case of doing his own business, he enjoyed the freedom of not going for work according to his wish. In brief, generally, the children considered financial benefits of businesses or the problems of employment to decide upon their entrepreneurial ventures.

**Table-4: Reasons for Starting Businesses of the Children**

Reasons	Percent
Easy to Establish Businesses	40
Profit of Businesses	38
Less Availability of Jobs	10
Negative Image of Jobs	8
Others	4
<b>Total</b>	<b>100</b>

While discussing on initiating ventures at early ages of the children, it needs to concentrate on their background that supported them to commence businesses. In other words, it requires exploring whether they were prepared enough to start such a way of earning. For example, the issue of education is a very crucial aspect because basic calculation is one fundamental task for purchasing and selling things. From the accounts of the respondents, it is evident that all these children were not attending schools. During the period of interview, only 20% children informed that they were continuing education along with businesses. Some were studying in schools earlier but they dropped out for carrying on business activities. Accordingly, some children (72%) learned basic calculation from schools that supported their work of livelihood. Without formal schooling, some learned calculation from their family (16%) or others (12%) to operate businesses.

Finance can be considered as another important aspect for launching businesses (Cassar, 2002). Most of the cases (40%), parents supported the children financially to initiate businesses (mapped in Table-5). ‘Mohajon’ (a Bengali word that is widely used in Bangladesh for the term ‘wholesalers’) is one significant source of initial capital. For a number of children (34%), they provided the products without any money and the children paid them after their selling. In other words, these children did not need any financial capital to start the businesses. However, reliable references were needed by the wholesalers in such cases. Few children (14%) had funds from some relatives or other people without the condition of financial returns. The rest of the respondents mentioned about loans that they generally had from their relatives. Thus, the children managed to start their micro businesses with the funds from informal sources or even without any fund.

**Table-5: Sources of Finance for Starting Businesses**

Sources	Percent
Parents	40
‘Mohajon’*	34
Relatives and others	14
Loan	12
<b>Total</b>	<b>100</b>

\*Note: In Bangladesh, the term is commonly used for wholesalers.

In sum, whilst entrepreneurship is regarded as the issue almost exclusively for adults, this section potentially contributes to the prevailing knowledge by bringing to light the age of children, while starting businesses. It provides the evidence of how immature the children were at the stage of initiating ventures. To reveal the background of launching businesses, this section identified that, like child labor in employment (Basu, 2002; Basu, et al. 2010; Webbink, 2012), for self-employment of the children, poverty was the cause of earnings. More specifically, it extends the view by exploring different issues that instigated entrepreneurship. Further, it

offers valuable insights concerning how these entrepreneurs developed their essential human capital and gathered financial capital to initiate the businesses in such a young age.

#### 4. Overview on Businesses

Regarding child labor, UNICEF emphasizes considering the type of work and the time of working to reveal the condition of those children (UNICEF, 2015). In a similar vein, in order to provide the overview on child entrepreneurship, this section also concentrates on these aspects. In order to reveal clearer picture of the businesses, the total time of working and the schedule are explored to demonstrate the operational activities of ventures.

In this study, child entrepreneurs were involved in businesses of diversified products (presented in Table-6). The highest number of children was engaged in two different kinds of businesses. Some children (28%) were selling popcorn packets, whilst the same number of children was selling prepared tea as well as cigarettes. It is worth noting that children were legally not allowed to purchase cigarettes in many countries (Wakefield, et al., 1992), whereas they were publicly doing this form of business in Bangladesh. Newspaper selling was another business, conducted by a large number of children (24%). In this regard, it can be mentioned that the children could return the unsold papers at the end of the day. Further, a few children were selling accessories and other things (12%), followed by those having businesses of peanut (8%). In general, the children did not need to be engaged in any form of production for businesses, except the case of selling prepared tea. Therefore, while presenting the diversified products of businesses, the study reveals that in some cases, children were involved in businesses of certain products (i.e. cigarettes), which should not be legally related to them.

**Table-6: Nature of Businesses of Child Entrepreneurs**

<b>Types of Businesses (in term of Products)</b>	<b>Products of Businesses</b>	<b>Percent</b>
	Popcorn	28
	Tea and Cigarettes	28
	Newspapers	24
	Accessories and Other Things	12
	Peanuts	8
<b>Total</b>		<b>100</b>
<b>Locations of Operation (Selling Products)</b>	<b>Types of Areas</b>	<b>Percent</b>
	Street	58
	Park	26
	Shopping Area	16
	<b>Total</b>	<b>100</b>

The operation of businesses in different locations provides further insights of their ventures. (Table-6 collates relevant information.) Some children (26%) sold their products in the parks without having any fixed selling point for operating business activities. These businesses were related to the products of tea and cigarettes, peanut or popcorn. Few entrepreneurs (16%) sold their products, for instance, accessories and other things, in the shopping areas. Even though they did not have any established shop, they drew attention of customers by moving around the shopping areas. Children did not have to pay any amount of money for utilizing the area of parks or shopping areas.

Nevertheless, majority (58%) child entrepreneurs did their selling on the street. They selected some areas where the vehicles were regularly stuck for a long time due to traffic signals or traffic jam. The children moved from the footpath with their products, such as, newspapers, packets of pop-corn or peanut, etc., to the people, who were in those vehicles on streets. When the vehicles started moving, they rushed to return to the footpaths. It should be pointed out that in some cases, they had to run with the moving vehicles to complete their transactions. The overall scenario eventually establishes and underscores the risky way of business operations as it might result in serious accidents of the children. Whereas some studies (Swaminathan, 1998; Dammert and Galdo, 2013) raises the issue of health hazard regarding child labor, this study advances the debate by demonstrating the riskiness of doing businesses of children. In sum, the child entrepreneurs had their selling activities without any established shop but in doing so, most of them were placing themselves at a highly risky position.

For the synopsis of the businesses, it is important to unveil how much time the children invested daily in business operations. Most of the entrepreneurs (78%) considered it as their main work, i.e. they were not involved in studying or other employment. Others were doing businesses on part-time basis for continuing their studies or paid work. Table-7 presents that, for the children, total time (excluding intervals) in businesses is reasonably long. (Even 38% entrepreneurs of the entire sample worked without any interval.) More than half of the sample (68%) spent 8 to 11 hours daily in their ventures. The maximum time (13 hours) in the sample was

significantly high for a few entrepreneurs (8%). Few children (18%), however, worked for 7 or less than 7 hours per day.

Nevertheless, in Bangladesh, the high number of hours for businesses did not only exist for children's entrepreneurship but also evident for employment of persons of this age, as revealed in a study (Jaim, 2011). It is worth noting that in the case of the employment in any establishment, according to Bangladesh Labour Code, 2006, (sub-section 2 of section number 41), any child worker (attaining the age of twelve years or more) is not permitted to work for more than 7 hours in a day. It indicates that it is not suitable for them to work for more than certain hours and the children, under 12 years of age, were not allowed to work at all. Whereas children (of the age of less than 12 years) are not legally allowed to work, the total time of their daily work in employment is considerably long time, i.e. far more than 7 hours (Jaim, 2011). In such a context, this research demonstrates that the immature persons (less than 12 years old) also employed substantial part of their childhood time in their businesses whereas they were supposed not to do so.

**Table-7: Total Time of Work for Businesses**

Total Time of Work (in Hours)	Percent	Cumulative Percent
7.00 or Less Than 7.00	18	18
8.00	18	36
9.00	22	58
10.00	14	72
11.00	14	86
12.00	6	92
13.00	8	100
<b>Total</b>	<b>100</b>	

*Note: Total time is calculated excluding intervals and the table highlights the numbers of hours that were spent by majority of Child Entrepreneurs.*

To have a closer look to the time of business operations, this study further sheds lights on the starting time and the closing time of their business activities (presented in Table-8 and Table-9 respectively). Most of the entrepreneurs (84%) started their work in the morning. More specifically, the earliest time was 6 AM, when a number of children (22%) began their operations. Some children needed to start their work in the early period because they had to collect the products from distant wholesalers in order to sell products in the morning. More than half of the children (60%) started their business activities before 9 AM. Around that time, there was a significant number of people on streets for going to schools or offices or for other activities. As most of the children were working on streets (as discussed earlier), they had to consider the pick time of traffic jams in their selling areas. Nonetheless, few children were found to commence their work even at night, for example, 8 PM. The time of starting business activities demonstrates that in many cases, children started work either too early in the morning or too late at night.

**Table-8: Starting Time of Business Operations**

Starting Time	Percent	Cumulative Percent
6.00 AM	22	22
7.00 AM	10	32
8.00 AM	10	42
9.00 AM	18	60
10.00 AM	14	74
11.00 AM	10	84
12.00 PM	4	88
1.00 PM	2	90
2.00 PM	4	94
3.00 PM	2	96
5.00 PM	2	98
8.00 PM	2	100
<b>Total</b>	<b>100</b>	

*Note: Table highlights the specific hours when the majority of the children started their work.*

As alluded to above, the completion time of business operations also reflects working at a later period of days. Majority (80%) finished their work between 8 PM to 10 PM. A few children were even found to complete their business activities at 11 PM. Nevertheless, the earliest time of closing the daily business activities was 12 PM. Again, it is important to note that children (attaining the age of 12 years or more) are not allowed to be employed for working in between 7 PM to 7 AM, as per Bangladesh Labour Code, 2006 (section number 41).

In the case of child labor in Bangladesh, for instance, in restaurants, the practice is not consistent with the laws (Jaim, 2011). As a point of clarification, these children were 12 years or less in their age but they work beyond the period when comparatively older children were not even legally authorized to work (ibid). In a similar vein, the data of the study also establishes that considerable number of children was engaged in working before 7 AM and particularly, after 7 PM for their self-employment. As children are not legally allowed to work during a certain period, it implies that it might not be suitable for them and the prohibition of children below the age of 12 years reinforces that particularly for these children this period is not at all appropriate. Nevertheless, like employed children in that society, these children, in the study, were also operating their businesses during that period which supposed to be inappropriate for them.

**Table-9: Completion Time of Business Operations**

Completion Time	Percent	Cumulative Percent
12.00 PM	6	6
1.00 PM	2	8
6.00 PM	4	12
7.00 PM	2	14
8.00 PM	14	28
9.00 PM	24	52
10.00 PM	42	94
11.00 PM	6	100
<b>Total</b>	<b>100</b>	

*Note: Table marks the specific hours when most of the children completed their daily activities.*

The discussion of this section significantly contributes to the understanding of businesses, owned and operated by children. It adds to the prevailing knowledge by not only providing the information concerning different types of ventures but also revealing how children were engaged in businesses of certain products (i.e. cigarettes) with which they were not supposed to be related. The section further extends the debate on child safety related issue by unveiling the risky way of selling products on streets. While the total number of working hours as well as the starting and completion time of business activities were aligned with the child labor practice in the country (Jaim, 2011), this study indicates that self-employment makes no difference in terms of these issues. It also underscores that the schedule of work or total working time is not suitable for the children of this age. Thus, it contributes to the prevailing knowledge of working hours for children in the context of entrepreneurship.

### 5. Financial Support by Businesses

As poverty is the main reason for being engaged in earnings through businesses, it needs to investigate whether the children were able to financially support themselves. In so doing, it also demonstrates their capacity of generating cash from businesses.

In this study, food and cloth, two major basic needs, were considered to explore to what extent children managed these with their own earnings. (Table-10 demonstrates the relevant information.) Majority of the children (70%) managed their own meals with the earnings of their businesses. Others mostly relied on their family for the purpose of food and they partially contributed for the meal expenses. The child entrepreneurs were also found to purchase their own clothes in most of the cases (66%). For the rest of them, their family generally provided dresses.

**Table-10: Financial Support by Businesses**

Basic Needs	Sources	Percent
<b>Food</b>	Children	70
	Mostly Their Family	30
	<b>Total</b>	<b>100</b>
<b>Cloth</b>	Children	66
	Mostly Their Family	34
	<b>Total</b>	<b>100</b>

The section demonstrates that, in general, children were capable of maintaining their food and cloth entirely or in some cases, partially. Thus, it adds to the existing knowledge concerning the issue of managing the subsistence with the entrepreneurial ventures in childhood. In other words, child labor (through employment of others), is not the only source of maintaining the livelihood for the children. It extends the view from the perspective of entrepreneurship. The scenario further provides a strong evidence of children's managing businesses with a positive cash flow to support themselves. It eventually leads to conclude that despite their

immaturity, they were capable of operating businesses with a success. Consequently, the study provides novel contribution to the prevailing knowledge by highlighting the successful operation of businesses of children, whilst the entrepreneurship is considered as essentially an adult domain.

## 6. Conclusion

It is contended that while concluding research on child labor, the assessment of the cultural and moral inferences needs to be considered (Pertile, 2008). In line with this view, this paper does not intend to provide policy recommendations as it is not concentrated on the environmental analysis. Rather building upon this research, it leaves the questions – Should we celebrate the potentiality of the children for being entrepreneurs at such immature ages? This enquiry is imperative because the entrepreneurship is supposed to be the issue of only adults, while these children were operating businesses with success. Alternatively, should we legally restrict these informal businesses for children? If yes, how would the children be able to maintain their subsistence in such developing countries?

Whilst the questions around child entrepreneurs present a dilemma, this paper potentially instigate future research in this area. Nonetheless, this research challenges the rhetoric of ‘adult’ entrepreneurs with the evidence of ‘child’ entrepreneurs. It contributes to the understanding of child entrepreneurship, whereas this cohort of entrepreneurs is remained almost unnoticed in the existing literature. The research brings to the fore the diversities and complexities of businesses of the children. It demonstrates how the children managed to initiate their ventures at a very early age and carried on business activities to maintain their subsistence. Simultaneously, in relation to business operations, it discloses the negative aspects concerning the development of the children or even some issues that placed them at highly risky positions. The study extends the debate from child labor to child entrepreneurship in developing nations and potentially provides avenues for further research.

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