

## Child Labour and Education in Nepal

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### Abstract

Children are the source of humanity, human civilization and development (Pradhan, 1994). However, a recent data about child labour says 168 million children are working as a labour and in Asia child labour is about 78 million that are engaging in harmful situation, children at risk and that directly affecting children's education, health and development (ILO, 2013) and see figure no. 1). However, children work and live in most health hazardous and risk conditions and they are exploited of their right to social, emotional, physical, moral development and basic right to education. So, this paper is highlighted existing situation of child labour, law and policy, challenges and difficulties, and possible solution for reducing child labour in Nepal.

**Keywords:** Child labour, humanity, development health hazard and risk.

### Abbreviations

CBS	Central Bureau of Statistics
CCWB	Central Child Welfare Board
CFLG	Child Friendly Local Government
CRC	Convention on the Right of the Child
CWIN	Child Workers in Nepal
GON	Government of Nepal
ILO	International Labour Organization
NLFS	Nepal Labour Force Survey
UN	United Nation

### Introduction

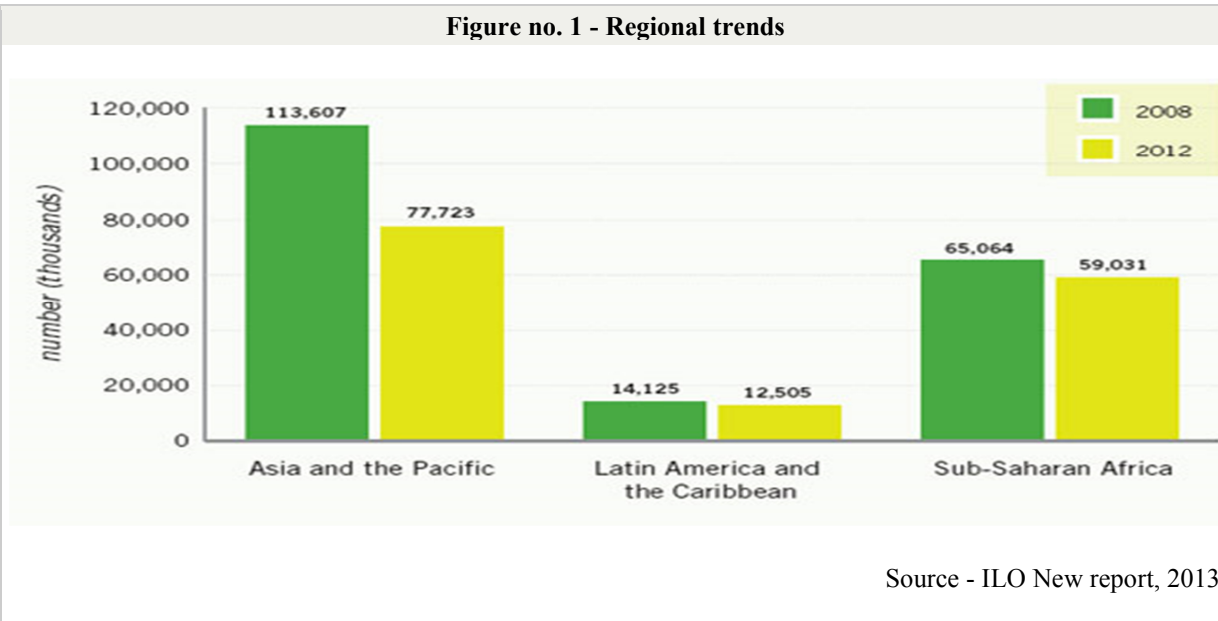
Child labour is an any form of work that hampers the children's education, moral development, childhood, their potential, dignity and health (Pradhan, 1999) and (Sattaur, 1993). According to the children's act 1992, everyone who below 16 years of age is regarded as the child in Nepal and no one should not be employed aged between 5 to 14 years (Shrestha, 2008). However, the situation of child labour is still at risk that means about 1.7 million of aged between 5 to 14 years children are working as a labour and target to reduce 9 lakha by 2015 (Pradhan, 2013) and (Kopilaghar, 2013). And nearly half of the total population, children are aged 16 years in Nepal (GON, 2011).

Nevertheless, according to the new report of International labour organization (ILO, 2013), child labour is to work undertaken by children below the appropriate legal minimum working age 5 to 14 years based on the International labour organization ( ILO) minimum age convention,1973 ( no 138) and the worst form of child labour convention, 1999 (no 182).

In Nepal, children about 127000 are worst forms of child labour, 40000 children are bonded laboures and 5000 children are working in street (Bhattra, 2005). And among 5000 street children, about 95% of street children use denlight (glue) in street (Kopilaghar, 2013). Annually 12000 Nepali girls are sold in India every year (GON, Child labour, 2013) and (Kopilaghar, 2013). However, data shows that child laboures are in critical situation and children at risk in Nepal.

According to the Nepal labour force survey (NLFS, 2008), says that 13.4% working children aged 5 to 9 and 52.7% working children age 10 to 14 year and 82.1% children are engaging in agricultural activities. However, thousands of child organizations are working on child issue under the aged 16 years for child protection and development but the situation of working children are becoming more critical than pass situation.

**Figure no. 1 - Regional trends**



Worldwide, the situation of child labours are decreasing, even in Asia and the pacific (see figure no 1) and ever in Nepal, also child labours are decreasing that is about 1.7 million from 2.6 million children who are deprived of right to education and health. However, children are forced to carry hammers and sickle for their living instead of pen and pencils in their hands. Instead of carrying school bag, they are carrying labours and instead of going to the schools, they are involving in hazard and danger circumstances.

#### **National law, legislation and policy**

In early 1990s, particularly after the adoption of UN convention on the rights of the child (CRC, 1989), the issue of child labour has gradually taken the form of strong social and political agenda in Nepal. However, the government of Nepal developed children's act 1992 with based on UN Convention on the right of the child (CRC), 1989. CRC focus on child development, child participation, child survival and child protection. However, some instruments and right perspectives are lacking but developing children's act in Nepal is one positive beginning for achievement in child right.

Then, developed labour act 1992, labour rules 1993, and kamaiya labour provision act 2001 in Nepal which was great achievement for child activists and civil society. The child labour act 1999 designed to eliminate child labour should be conducted on a national level by mobilizing the cooperation of national and international organizations (Malla, 2005). However, in other to eliminate child labour, the country needs to recognize the importance of comprehensive rehabilitation programs and combat the root causes of poverty that often make child labour appear to be a necessity. The worst form of child labour convention, 1999 (no 182) had been introduced as no one should not be employed the age between 5 to 14 years (ILO, 2006). However, many discussion and debates are going on as regarding the elimination and reduction of child labour in Nepal.

According to Namuna Bhusal (Bhusal, 2013), says that there is a central child welfare board and district child welfare board in each 75 district in Nepal for working on child labour and child development under the children's act 1992 and 1995. About 300 child friendly local governments (CFLG) are in 33 district out of 75 district in Nepal with the aim of emphasizing meaningful participation of children at all levels and in each stage of development and change process (CCWB, 2012) and aim to expand to at list one VDC in all the 75 district by the end of 2015 (UNICEF, 2010). However, committees are not seem to be more active due to political conflict and political pressure in planning and budgeting but establishment of district child welfare committee in each district and central child welfare committee are beginning part for child protection and child development and the place where children can file their cases.

#### **Analysis of the situation of Child labour**

According to the (CBS, National Population and Housing Census 2011: National report, 2012) report, Population of Nepal stands at 26,494,504. Among this total population, nearly 50% of children age under the 16 years and child labour are still is about 1.7 million in Nepal. However, it might be due to lack of awareness and still Nepalese people are not fully educated. About 34.1% people are still illiterate in Nepal (CBS, National Population and Housing Census 2011: National report, 2012). Due to poor access to resources and production, landlessness, gender inequity, unequal distribution of land and unemployment, people could not offer education

for their children. The poverty rate of Nepal is about 25.16 percentages (CBS, 2011). That's why; many children from poor family are involving as a child labour.

We have children's act, policy, provision, thousands of child organizations, budgets and planning on child issues and child labour but still a lot of challenges are facing on the child labours. It might be due to lack of well management, implementation and individual capability for development as freedom (Sen A. , 2000). However, planners and policy makers are not aware on child development with free of their choice and participation due to problems of social, economic and political. Child development is more than development of the child as an individual means the development of an integral part of the whole of human society (Pradhan, 1991) and children are central creations and hope for future to the community, family, society and nation (Pradhan, 2013). However, children are motive force for future in society and the future of nation and without children cannot be imagine a society.

According to the cases received in CWIN Bal Helpline ( 1098 bal helpline, telephone communication), mainly those people who are in high level, educated people, political leaders and policy makers are exploiting children at their home. Girls have to work double than boys and working 18 hours per day (CWIN, 2009). However, children especially girl children are victim of exploitation and abuse from their own family members, relatives and friends. These facts have not been highlighted as the victims themselves due to fear and are also threatened by those who abuse them. Such cases are usually registered. Instead of working, children are abusing as physically, mentally and psychologically by their owners and relatives in our society. Relatives, teachers and friends with whom children highly believe and trust, are becoming danger for children and being victim of exploitation, abuse and kidnapping.

Billions of money comes to Nepal for reducing the child labour. According to the data, child labours are increasing means budget is not properly managed or used for child development. With the named of child labour, poor children and back warded children, social organizations bring projects but the situation is noticeable improved in health (CBS, 2011). However, the health of child labour, the condition of child labour are not improved and they are involving at risk and dangerous circumstances in real life.

Child labours are creating and developing new form of social problems like street workers, crime in street, prostitution ect, To be street children, involving in crime and prostitution are not their interest but due to poverty, changing life style and away from home children are involving in new form of child labour. Children, who are under violence and abuse, will come out as abusers in the future. They do not only get puddle up in crime and prostitution but also they grow as the promoter and conserver of such crimes in the future. That's why increasing child labours are danger for national development which creates the social inequality in education.

### **Reasons and a way out of the child labour**

Lack of self awareness and not educated on child labour are the main reasons for emerging child labour in our society. Then social discrimination and economic exploitation in our society creates and encourage children to away from home and due to caste discrimination and untouchable behaviors toward the children are main reason for increasing child labour. Unwanted child marriage, weak government act and policy implementation are also equal important reasons for increasing child labour.

Education is a spark and machine for development and transmission of knowledge, skills and information for social change (Shukla, 1998). However, education is the only one machine to reduce the child labour in Nepal. Education makes people aware on child policy, act and provision so that people feel aware on child right and child labour. Education opens up a new horizon of life that helps children to expose their talents.

Education cannot be useful unless it helps children to understand their problems and circumstances. Today's education is not highlighted with people concerned and based on child centered and child friendly education. So, today's society desire "meaningful education for all" (Pradhan, 1999, p. 12) that address to reduce the existing child labour in Nepal. However, education should start from self, from you, from your family, community and your society so that you think hundred times before you put a child at your home.

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