

Girl Child and Domestic Work: A Sociological Note from Western Odisha

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ABSTRACT:

The precarious condition of girl children has not found sufficient attention of the recent research in social sciences as it involves the methodological challenges for the researcher. The present study delved into the debates of wage, work and working condition and threat of the invisible encountered by girl children in Western Odisha. This study has relied on secondary sources of reports, documents and other web based resources and tried to bring out the micro level issues to the fore. It has been noted in that the feminisation of labour and the socio cultural factors dominates the wage and livelihood pattern in rural and urban areas of which the data has been explored here.

Keywords:

Domestic workers (DW), Feminisation, ILO, Apprenticeship, Violence

1. INTRODUCTION

Children's worked in others' house's so on play out the family supplement like aiding in food-preparation, handling the infants, cleaning the utensils and therefore the floor of the house, washing the garments, helping the old relatives in doing their everyday exercises, may be a typical phenomenon in India. it's a barbaric and remorseless sort of children work, for these children aren't just denied of their peer friendship at their youthful age, yet additionally not given the essential comfort like employers child enjoys. They are compelled to measure at the external houses—in unhygienic condition, rest on the floor—regularly without a screen and prey on the left over of the relatives. They are every now and again subject to the brutal conduct of the proprietor and his relatives, the cases of which aren't sparse. The compensation for a Child Domestic Work (CDW) is exceptionally less and as a rule, the child is attached to the family for quite while—till he develops old or till she accomplishes the time of marriage. Child domestic work/labor, an appearance of subjugation may be a severe kind of work—a case of the sheer infringement of human rights which should be controlled.

1.1 Domestic Work

According to Convention No. 189 of the International Labor Organization (ILO), "domestic work" signifies work acted in or as the ILO covers both admissible and non-reasonable circumstances. Similarly, child work in household work alludes to circumstances where household "work is undertaken by

children below the significant minimum age (for light work, full-day non-dangerous work), in perilous conditions or in a servitude like circumstance".

1.2 The Magnitude of Child Domestic Labor

India assumes the acknowledgment of facilitating the most important number of youngster workers on the earth yet it's an incongruity that there's no refreshed (most recent) and dependable figure of the entire number children workers within the nation. consistent with Census 2011, 2,52,000 child were occupied with beedi making and a couple of 2,08,833 within the development sector. An estimated 185,595 child were utilized as residential assistance and in dhabas; 49,893 children add auto-fix workshops. The Census of India, 2011 places the figure of working children within the age-gathering of 5-14 years at 43,53,247 against 12,66,637 consistent with the Census 2001. However, the real picture is distinctive as countless child working in various segments—organised and unorganised unnoticed due to the laxity of the enumerators and therefore the before the lack of care of the parents/guardians and the employer's, the last putting them far out of the assessors within the dread of discipline by law. Further, an honest number of NGOs have directed surveys on counting the child work. Regarding their finding, it could also be said that the foremost recent figure of the children workers in India might be in more than 55 lakh.

In spite of varied impediments to completely catching all concealed work circumstances, various household unit overviews among those utilized within the ILO's (2012) worldwide appraisals on children work, give significant quantitative data on children household work – taking under consideration global evaluations on child household laborers to be made. “consistent with the ILO evaluation, about 17.2 million children are in paid or unpaid household add the house of an outsider or employers; of those, 11.5 million are in child labour, of which 3.7 million are in hazardous work (21.4% of all children domestic workers); and 5.7 million, in admissible work yet should be shielded from misuse and gave better than decent work; likewise as aftereffect of forced labour and trafficking, dubious quantities of domestic workers are in local work. 2012 is the year when the ILO estimated the quantum on forced labor. In absolute terms 20.9 millions were forced labour, child aged 17 years and below represent 26% of all forced work casualties (or 5.5 million children). While the actual number of child in forced work and local work stays obscure, evidence infers presence of large numbers of children within the debts bondage, casualties resulting from trafficking and bondage condition; ILO estimates 67.1% of all child domestic laborers are young girls; 65.1% of all children domestic wage earners are below 14 years: 7.4 million and 3 to 8 millions are between age of 5 to 11 and under 12 to 14 years” respectively.

As regards the accomplishing the task of domestic labour in India, it is often safely claimed that they constitute a serious section of the whole child labour force. As per a conservative estimate, it shall not be but 6 lakh. Way back in 1997 in Odisha, “the last survey on girl child labour was conducted, putting the figure at 2.15 lakh. consistent with some NGOs this figure is unrealistic and that they claim that the amount is nearer 7.30 lakh on the idea of a study conducted by the” (ILO: 1990). As per Census 2001, the amount of working children within the age bracket of 5-15 years was 3,77,594. But the figure was only 92,087 in 2011, which again raises doubt by some NGOs actively involved in promoting the explanation for child labourers. “The age of—10-14 years old, and not in class and hence child labourer such assumed numbers is 13 lakh. NGO studies claim that 15% of the child-population within the age-group of 5-14 works as child labourers, including those that work on their families’ own agricultural land”, per UNICEF. consistent with this, the magnitude of

child labour is alarming and it must have exceeded 10 lakh by 2011. But in sight of less school-drop outs within the recent years, the figure, at the best might be put at 4 lakh, which doesn't seem unrealistic.

1.3 Is it hazardous??

Some researchers refuse to admit it within the hazardous category. for the child who are usually bereft of the essential necessities of life within the own houses could get an equivalent in the place of employment—the number might not be at par with the expectation of the human rights activists. Barring the rare instances of torture by employer, they're taken care of properly, claim these advocates in following, “the employer is a kin who offers a protected environment for the child”. Further, there is dire need by female of the household to supplement a domestic “replacement” that permits them to enter into the labour market” (ILO). In some cases these children also are sent to colleges, thereby making a balance between work and study. they are doing not hesitate to quote article 21 of the Constitution, in accordance with which the poor parents send their children to perform light works at others houses in lieu of food, cloth and shelters—the basic necessities to measure a life as they might not afford an equivalent at their own places. could also be for this reason, the (Child Labour Prohibition and Regulation Act-1987) “overlook the hazardous the utilization of child as domestic labour within the list of seven occupations and eight processes prohibited by it”. But it has identified hazards to which domestic workers are particularly vulnerable and therefore the reason to be so in some leads to worst condition. in domestic sphere the common risks children faces are: long hours without break in working days; use of toxic materials; heavy loads; handling sharp and risk items like knives, axes and hot pans; lack of sufficient food and accommodation, and humiliating or second class treatment which may include violence, and sexual assault. The risks are very high when a child lives within same four wall where he or she works as a Domestic Worker (DW). These hazards got to be factored in association deprivation of fundamental rights of the children, like access to education and health care, to rest, leisure, play and recreation, and therefore the right to be cared for and allowed to communicate with their parents and peers. As ILO apprehends these factors can have an irreversible physical, psychological and moral impact on the event, health and well being of them which is confirmed by survey conducted by Campaign against Child Labour (CACL). It can be assumed “more than 90% of girl-children engaged in domestic work are exploited

through different sorts of harassment by their employers, or by their cousins or relatives." as many little girls of nine or 10 say innocently, "my master is extremely affectionate, he often puts me on his lap and pets me saying 'good girl, good girl'. Often, men will ask domestic workers (DW) to massage their bodies and no-one thinks anything about it. 'Even male daily wagers are sexually abused', claims CACL. A study estimated that in India 70,000 sex workers, of which 15% had began their life working as daily wage between the age of 15 and 18".

In a study of 2016 by local NGO Bharat Integrated Welfare Agency (BISWA) found 90% of girl domestic workers (DW) started work before they completed 12 years aged, of which 75% belonged to the age-group 12-14 years. pre-puberty girls, whilst themselves still unaware of their sexuality, are increasingly becoming targets of sexual assault. Again 70% stepped bent work to supplement the family income. The study also found instances where mothers had accepted 'silence money', following the abuse of their daughters. this is often often prompted by a way of helplessness and ignorance with reference to registering official protests. Studies reveal one common aspect within the state of mind of children DW— "that their work hours to be curtailed, that they need no legitimate rights. Abuse, and sexual assault, is accepted as knowledgeable hazard to be endured. projected as the sole alternative to go away the work. All children daily earners are hesitant to speak about their jobs even after they need left them. They fear they're going to not only lose their present jobs but are going to be 'stigmatised' by the local employer association".

2. Causes of Child Domestic Work

2.1 Social and Cultural Institution

In many parts of Western Odisha, especially in tribal pockets which are the prime sources of supplying child domestic workers to different urban areas and villages child domestic work is taken into account a serious component of socialization— children are taught the domestic chores from their parents while assisting them in performing an equivalent. At an early age, once they are considered fit handle the household chores in others' houses, they're pushed to the employers' family in lieu of some wage. In some cases, the families consider it a cultural necessity that the girl children are born to serve in others' families—the grooms'

households. Since the village atmosphere and for that matter the atmosphere at the family of origin isn't conducive to coach to manage certain chores like rearing a small kid, taking care of the old, etc, the oldest folk consider the utilization at others' houses in neighborhood as woman's "apprenticeship" as *rites de passage* to 'adulthood' and 'marriage'. Although the invisible longing of sending the child to work in others' families is earning some money, the author was astonished to found out the above social-cultural factors among the Santhal and Munda tribes Balishankara Block, Sundergarh district in Odisha. Most of the respondent-parents claimed that child domestic add the employers' family may be a social cultural necessity which they need been inheriting from their fore fathers. Child Domestic Work is additionally regarded during a positive light as a protected and non-stigmatized sort of work and preferred to other sorts of employment – especially for women.

2.2

Feminisation

Studies on "child labour claim that quite 60% of the women than boys living below poverty level are bereft of an education and forced to work to supplement their family income. Girl child labourers, the nowhere children; a community of the children population that's neither at college nor reported to be economically active" (ILO).

"A large proportion of girl child labourer enter the unorganized sector of domestic work. Girls are seen as naturally domestic workers, seemingly trained in doing house work. within the absence of the official sources data, rough estimate available from sporadic studies actually limit a sensible assessment of the magnitude and nature of the matter. However, that there's severe 'feminisation' of domestic work is well established and visible, there are 16.8 lakh female domestic workers within the country, as against 6.2 lakh male workers. This finding is reinforced by another study, conducted in the year 2015, by the Catholic Bishops Conference of India a 12-city study, which says females constituted 78% of daily earnings. In Odisha, In 2016 study by Campaign Against Child Labour (CACL) and NCLP Sundergarh, points a strong preference for girl-children, particularly part time daily wagers. Invariably most studies confirmed that children DWs are preferred not only because they cost less but are more pliable than the boys consistent with the" (Sharamshakti Report, 2013). A group of researchers, just like the adherents of the "nimble figure" theory—the belief that the tiny fingers of the Child is indispensable. to weave carpets than the

grown up children believe that the women are better fitted to the new environment—unlike the boys, they learn and handle the household chores quickly.

2.3 Social Exclusion

In many parts of the country, the rigid caste and class structure acts as a push factor for Domestic Child Worker so as to beat the rigidity of the social exclusion, the members of the lower castes consider fleeing to urban areas and dealing in several sectors, both organised and unorganised. The Child are often seen working in others' houses—cleaning the utensils, helping the elderly in performing their day-to-day works, assisting the cooks in food preparation, watching the child playing, etc. altogether these instances the intention is to supplement to the family's income.

2.4 Violence On and Off the Home

In some cases, the Child flee their houses so as to flee the violence inflicted on them by their parents. Sometimes, because the researcher found in five cases in Rourkela city, the child get troubled thanks to the quarrels among the oldsters and other family disturbances and that they feel it better to go away the villages for the nearby or distant urban areas where they fall prey to the mediators who take them to the employers. Although children under this category form a little segment of the whole child labour force, more particularly that of the Child Domestic Workers, which is a matter of great concern for the social psychologists. Same study revealed that 30% of the entire Child Domestic Workers have fled their houses resultants of “family breakdowns—either the father had deserted the family, or he was an alcoholic or a junkie or, the mother was living with another man as the case may be. A supportive family structure made girl DWs more vulnerable as observed by the current research.

2.5 Poverty

Poverty undoubtedly is that the prime reason for child labour. It surpasses other reasons like sociocultural factors, social exclusion, etc. In Odisha, a study by Campaign Against Child Labour (CACL) in 2016, found that the reasons for 48% of its population still lives below poverty level are due to lack of normal income by the daily wage earners in the family set up (Dhir, 1994:94). As regards occupation, 85% of the state's population depends on agriculture, which is usually rain fed—prey to erratic monsoons within the absence of adequate irrigation facilities. The land reforms measures in many parts of the state seem unsuccessful. the typical ownership of land (by households) in its poorest districts is between 0.5 to

2 acres. There still exists an enormous hiatus between the normal Zamindars (Malgoozars and Sahookars termed in several regions) and therefore the poor landless and marginal farmers. The frequent occurrence of drought, flood and cyclone brings untold miseries to poor farmers. during a normal paddy year, the harvest isn't quite 100 bags of paddy. The family consumes a part of the yield, which, once all the debts are paid off, sustains them for a maximum of three to 6 months counting on family-size. Barring paddy, the farmers don't take interest in growing other crops, especially the cash crops. Although the govt has been imparting training to the farmers on state of the art techniques of production in agriculture, there seems to be lack of interest among the farming communities. In recent years, distribution of 25 kg of rice at the speed of Re.1 per kg per household living below poverty level has given a solid blow to the incidence of absolute poverty within the state, but it's not brought an end to the incidence of “migration to Andhra Pradesh, Chhatisgarh, Madhya Pradesh and Maharashtra of poor families”. A peculiar situation has emerged within the state. At home, the poor farm-laborers enjoy the availability of cheapest rice and consider it knowing sit idle at their homes than exerting vigour in others. At an equivalent time, a chunk of population flees to others states on the plea that they're starved in native and there's a scarcity of job within the state. The migrating farmers in many instances get jobs only in unorganised sector as they lack the skill demanded by the organised sectors. so as to supplement the families' income, they force their women and child to figure in others' households, that too at a meagre wage.

3. Role of the State

3.1 States Initiatives

The successful implementation of mid-day-meal scheme within the schools and free feeding programme for pre-school children at Anganwadi centres within the state, particularly within the backward areas which are the most sources for supply of child domestic workers, has restricted the swelling of the matter. To justify an equivalent, the enrolment of child in primary schools within the state was 42.73 lakh in 2002-03 which has risen to 45.82 lakh in 2008-09. Similarly, the enrolment in upper grade school was 9.16 lakh in 2002-03 which went up to 21.22 lakh in 2008-09. Likewise, the gross enrolment ratio in 2005-06 was 83.59 in 2005-06 which increased to 106.31 lakh in 2008-09. The

dropout rate in primary schools has come right down to 2.83% in 2009-10 as against the dropout rate of 41.8% in 2000-01. Likewise, the dropout rate in upper primary schools (the prime parameter of child labour) was 57% in 2000-01 which came down to 8.19 % in 2009-10. The above-statistics is an indicator of the very fact that the speed of child labour, including the child domestic workers has been showing a negative trend in recent years.

It's an incontrovertible fact that the government has played a commendable role in rehabilitating an excellent portion of the kid labour force through 20 National Child Labour Projects (NCLPs), but the shortage of follow-up action by the administration has made the rehabilitation strategies unsuccessful in many cases. Opening of Child Help Line numbers is great boost for eradicating child domestic labour.

The district child welfare committees has to undertake measures with the target of prohibiting the exploitation of child by the employers. Officials at the women and child development department and labour department when probed into they pass the buck back and forth saying that are not authorised to initiate any action unless a police complaint is filed. So the burden of advocacy and activism seems to be shouldered by Non- Government Organization" (NGOs).

4. Concluding Remarks and Way Ahead

The problems posed by child labour in domestic work require a complementary approach in several domains and at different levels like:

* In a landmark orders from the Supreme Court wherein amended the All India Service (Conduct) Rules 1968, in February 2000 subsequently prohibited the employment of child below the age of 14 as domestic servants by government servants". To assess the magnitude of the Child Domestic Labourer in Odisha, the primary and foremost target should be the homes of the government employees.

* Before implementing different strategies for the rehabilitation, an active and effective state wide survey on these children should be conducted.

* Co-operation of elders and employers during this regard is required. Further, proper follow-up action by the implementing agencies should be conducted in order that the various strategies of rehabilitation might be made more effective.

* There should be a huge awareness among the parent population that their children shouldn't be burdened with household chores of others at a time once they are expected to play with their friends

in their villages. Further the social attitude that the child are indispensable for domestic works and therefore the beliefs amongst employers and par that these situations represent a protective and healthy environment for child – especially girls should be changed.

* The enforcement mechanisms should be strengthened in order that the employers engaging the child in hazardous domestic works should be punished.

* If in the least a lower minimum age for the domestic workers is established, say 20, the employers wouldn't prefer them for accomplishing the petty jobs at their homes.

* Identification of the hazards the child face while performing household chores should be made in order that stringent legal actions might be initiated against the employer inflicting such hazard, thereby dissuading them from employing children at their households.

* The hours of domestic work performed by the child should be regulated and therefore the employers should be compelled to supply them with the wage at par with their young and grown up counterparts, in order that the employers shall prefer the latter than the child.

* The enrolment of the child at schools and college should be made compulsory; an affective vocational training for the vulnerable children should be ensured and successful feeding programme at schools should be implemented.

* "Periodic effective labour inspection should be made as authorized by law to enter premises so as to enforce provisions applicable to domestic work(ILO).

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