

Exploitation of Adolescents under the Child and Adolescent Labour (Prohibition and Regulation) Act, 1986

V Harshita Shree¹, Sanjai Srinivasan S²

^{1,2}Student

ABSTRACT:

The study "Exploitation of Adolescents under the Child and Adolescent Labour (Prohibition and Regulation) Act, 1986" examines young adult labours (adolescents) in Chennai, Tamil Nadu, in a critical manner. The study includes actual data collected from adolescents in order to understand the present condition of adolescent job and how they work. The research conclusions are backed not only by the preliminary data but also by an examination of relevant precedents and the relevant sections of the "Child and Adolescent Labour (Prohibition and Regulation), Act, 1986." The primary objective of this study is to identify the reasons for adolescent work and the exploitation they experience. The paper also thoroughly examines the effectiveness of the statute and the scope of its enforcement.

PART 1 - INTRODUCTION:

INTRODUCTION:

Adolescent employment is allowed under certain conditions, yet exploitation of adolescents has been a major, persistent issue in our culture for many years. They choose to work mainly because of their family's financial situation, which forces them to take up difficult job chances at a young age. Such adolescents lose their entire childhood as a result of this circumstance, has a detrimental effect on their physical and emotional health. The worrying aspect of this problem is that it is accepted at the expense of their education, which destroys their potential.

"When millions of young people worldwide lack respectable employment and, as a result, feel insecure and unable to improve their own and their families' lives, none of us can look forward to a solid future."³ states the ILO 2024 report on youth employment. "According to ILO Director-General Gilbert F. Hougbo, the three essential elements of peaceful societies are stability, inclusivity, and social justice, and the foundation of all three is decent employment for youths"⁴.

Effective laws to protect children's and adolescents' interests and safety were created in India as a result of constitutional requirements. 'Article 24⁵' of the Constitution forbids hiring minors younger than 14. in any hazardous places. By ratifying ILO Conventions 138 and 182, enacting the 1986 Child Labour

¹ Author is a final year student at SRM School of law, SRM Institute of Science and Technology, Kattankulathur, India.

² Author is a final year student at SRM School of law, SRM Institute of Science and Technology, Kattankulathur, India.

³ International Labour Organization's (ILO) 2024 report on youth employment

⁴ Gilbert F. Hougbo, ILO 2024 report on youth employment

⁵ Ind.Const.art.24, Prohibition of employment of children in factories, etc.—No child below the age of fourteen years shall be employed to work in any factory or mine or engaged in any other hazardous employment

(Prohibition and Regulation) Act, and enacting the ‘2016 Amendment Act’, which forbids children under 14 from working and adolescents between the age of 14-18 from engaging in life threatening jobs while imposing exhaustive restrictions regarding the adolescent employment that are non-hazardous in nature, the Indian government has demonstrated its dedication to eradicating child labour. Additionally, India has made several efforts to ensure that everyone has access to education throughout the nation. These include the “Right of Children to Free and Compulsory Education Act” of 2009, the creation of the “Sarva Shiksha Abhiyan (SSA) in 2001”, which guarantees all children up to 14 years old the right to an education, and the incorporation of the ‘Mid-Day Meal Scheme’ into the “National Food Security Act 2013”.⁶

In India, the “Child and Adolescent Labour (Prohibition and Regulation) Act, 1986⁷” prohibits the employment of adolescents (ages 14 - 18) in dangerous jobs and procedures, with stricter penalties for employers and measures for child and adolescent rehabilitation labourers. Adolescents are not allowed to work from 7 p.m. to 8 a.m., and their daily work schedule is restricted to 6 hours, including a mandatory break of 1 hour after three hours of labour. However, they are allowed to work while adhering to the restrictions of the Act.

To end this menace worldwide, international groups have worked very hard. Despite the fact that many nations have passed laws outlawing exploitation in any form, it is nevertheless prevalent worldwide. For developing nations like India, outlawing this issue is a difficult undertaking. This research analyses the various provisions, precedents and data collected from the adolescent to understand the current situation.

1.1 OBJECTIVE OF THE STUDY:

- To research and evaluate the laws and regulations that forbid the exploitation of adolescents
- To understand the factors which influence the adolescents to take up employment at a tender age.
- To analyse the effectiveness of the implementation of the existing laws and statutes which curb this exploitation.
- To provide practical recommendations to eliminate the exploitation.

1.2 LIMITATIONS:

- Child labour is often underreported due to informal and unregistered employment, employers hiding child workers during inspections, and unreliable census or survey data.
- Measuring the actual effectiveness of the “Child and Adolescent Labour (Prohibition and Regulation) Act” is difficult because official records, prosecution data, and penalty imposition may not reflect ground realities.
- Populations at risk such as migrant children, girls, and those with disabilities are often missed in surveys, skewing prevalence estimates.
- Child labour is intertwined with poverty, social norms, and economic necessity which complicates isolating the effect of legal provisions from other socio-economic variables.

1.3 RESEARCH QUESTION:

- What are the socio-economic factors which makes the adolescents take up such exploitative work?
- How does exploitation affect the mental, physical, and psychological health of adolescents?
- How effective is the ‘child and adolescent (prohibition and regulation) Act,1986’ in curbing exploitation of young adult workers?

⁶ UNICEF-Innocenti-Child-labour-schooling-India-Report-2024.pdf

⁷ Child and adolescent labour (prohibition and regulation) Act,1986

1.4 RESEARCH METHODOLOGY:

The approach utilized in this study is both doctrinal and non-doctrinal method. Doctrinal method has been used to study provisions, legislations, international conventions, case laws and principles. Non doctrinal method is used to obtain the facts which influence adolescent labour and adequate data has been collected through an empirical mode.

1.5 HYPOTHESIS:

- Adolescents choose to work due to socioeconomic issues like poverty and family circumstances.
- Adolescents are severely affected both psychologically and physically due to long hours of work and lack of other basic amenities.
- Adolescents are exploited due to gaps in legal enforcement, and lack of awareness despite legal prohibitions.

PART 2 – LEGAL PROVISIONS AND JUDICIAL PRECEDENTS

2.1 CONSTITUTIONAL PROVISIONS:

1. ‘Article 24’⁸ stipulates that children under the age of 14 are not permitted to work in any dangerous employment, including those in factories or mines.
2. ‘Article 39(f)’⁹ of the part IV asserts that it is the responsibility of the state to provide all children with opportunities and resources for a healthy, free, and dignified development, as well as to shield them from exploitation and material and moral abandonment.
3. ‘Article 45’¹⁰ stipulates that early childhood education and care should be provided by the state until the child is six years old.

2.2 PROVISIONS OF “CHILD AND ADOLESCENT LABOUR (PROHIBITION AND REGULATION) ACT,1986”¹¹:

1. ‘Section 2(i)’¹² provides that, an adolescent is a person who has attained the age of 14 but is not yet 18.
2. ‘Section 2(ii)’¹³ characterizes a person under the age of 14 as a “child.”
3. “Any store, business, farm, restaurant, dining facility, theatre, or other public amusement or entertainment venue is described as an establishment in “Section 2(iv)”¹⁴”.
4. ‘Section 3’¹⁵ of the statute states that children are not permitted to engage in or be employed in any process or occupation. The provision comes with a condition that, this section shall not apply to children who works to help their family which is not a hazardous occupation and is not included in the act’s schedule, but this is allowed only after school hours or during vacations. Another exception to

⁸ Ind.Const.art.24, Prohibition of employment of children in factories, etc.—No child below the age of fourteen years shall be employed to work in any factory or mine or engaged in any other hazardous employment.

⁹ Ind.Const.art.39(f), subs.by the Constitution (by 42nd amendment act),1976, Certain principles of policy to be followed by the State- (f) that children are given opportunities and facilities to develop in a healthy manner and in conditions of freedom and dignity and that childhood and youth are protected against exploitation and against moral and material abandonment.

¹⁰ Ind.Const.art.45, subs.by the Constitution (by 86th amendment act),2002, Provision for early childhood care and education to children below the age of six years. —The State shall endeavour to provide early childhood care and education for all children until they complete the age of six years.

¹¹ Child and adolescent labour (prohibition and regulation) Act,1986

¹² Child and adolescent labour (prohibition and regulation) Act,1986, s 2(i)

¹³ Child and adolescent labour (prohibition and regulation) Act,1986, s 2(ii)

¹⁴ Child and adolescent labour (prohibition and regulation) Act,1986, s 2(iv)

¹⁵ Child and adolescent labour (prohibition and regulation) Act,1986, s 3

this section is the child who is employed in the entertainment sector, such as in movies, TV shows, commercials, sports, or any other form of entertainment other than the circus.

5. 'Section 3A'¹⁶ of the Act stipulates that teenagers are prohibited from participating in any of the places listed in the schedule as hazardous establishments or procedures. This clause gives the union government the authority to determine what types of jobs are safe for adolescents to perform.
6. 'Section 7'¹⁷ deals with the duration of work for the adolescents. This provision provides that the adolescents are allowed to work only for the period prescribed for respective establishments, the work period shall be formulated in such a manner that the adolescent will not work more than 3 hours consecutively without pausing for 1 hr. The work hours in whole for an adolescent in a day shall not exceed 6 hours which will include the break time and any waiting time. This section further provides set of rules such as adolescents are not allowed to perform any task in between 7 p.m. to 8 a.m., should not be allowed to engage in work beyond the working hours, not to work consecutively in 2 establishments.
7. 'Section 8'¹⁸ provides holiday for the adolescents in a week. It states that the adolescents should be granted a weekly holiday of one full day on any day which is to prescribed by the employer and positioned in a prominent area of the enterprise. Changes to the notified day should only occur once every three months.
8. 'Section 11'¹⁹ of the act mandates a register to be maintained by all the employers in respect of every adolescent employed by him and the register shall be presented to the inspector for inspection. The register shall include the name, DOB of adolescent employed, working hours including break time, the nature of work carried on by the adolescent, and such other required details.
9. 'Section 14'²⁰ prescribes the penalty for the offences in contravention of the act. It provides that those whoever contravene 'section 3' of the act will face a minimum sentence of six months in jail, which could be increased to two years, or a penalty of at least ₹ 20,000, which may be increased to ₹. 50,000, or with both. The parent who permits their child for monetary gain in violation of 'Section 3' will also be punished under this clause.

14(1A) provides that those whoever violate 'section 3A' faces a minimum sentence of six months in jail, which may be extended to two years, a minimum fine of ₹ 20,000, which may be extended to ₹ 50,000, or both. If the adolescent's parents allow them to work in violation of "section 3A," they will also face charges.

14(2) states that when a person convicted under section 3 or 3A has again contravened the said sections, they will be punished with a minimum sentence of one year and a maximum sentence of three years in prison.

Likewise, when parents commit an offence twice, they will be punished with a fine extending up to ₹ 10,000.

2.2 JUDICIAL PRECEDENTS:

In '**A. Srirama Babu Vs. Chief Secretary to the Government of Karnataka**'²¹, the Karnataka high court discussed the factors which contribute for the prevalence of child labour in the landscape of India.

¹⁶ Child and adolescent labour (prohibition and regulation) Act, 1986, s 3A

¹⁷ Child and adolescent labour (prohibition and regulation) Act, 1986, s 7

¹⁸ Child and adolescent labour (prohibition and regulation) Act, 1986, s 8

¹⁹ Child and adolescent labour (prohibition and regulation) Act, 1986, s 11

²⁰ Child and adolescent labour (prohibition and regulation) Act, 1986, s 14

²¹ A Srirama Babu Versus Chief Secretary to the Government of Karnataka, ILR 1997 Karnataka 2269.

The court identified Poverty, low adult wages, unemployment, and the lack of family welfare programs, availability of children at low cost for work, illiteracy of the parents, etc. as the key factors which cause this social menace. The court expressed its grief on the physical deterioration of the child's health such as exposure to polluted air, water, lack of ventilation, posture due to the work. The court in this case also laid down remedies to eliminate this social evil, the court expressed that:

1. the state should educate everyone about the child labour.
2. A distinct entity for child welfare should be established by the state.
3. The state ought to continue the birth records of the children & should continuously track the abouts of the same.
4. the state should give meticulous care on the children who are without anyone's support and are wandering throughout the city.
5. the state should establish a care centre for the wandering children.
6. the state should try to approach the parents who wilfully disregard their children.

The court firmly expressed that the primary cause is poverty of this social threat & the parents are supporting this menace to support their family needs. The court stated that the employers taking advantage of this situation exploit the children by making them work for long hours with low wage. The court directed 9 further remedies to try reduce this social malevolent.

In '**MC Mehta Vs. State of Tamil Nadu & Ors**'²², prominent public interest attorney M.C. Mehta filed a writ petition to uphold the fundamental rights of minors employed in dangerous industries under Article 32 of the Indian Constitution. The fireworks and matchstick factories in Sivakasi, Tamil Nadu, which are notorious for employing numerous minors in dangerous and exploitative situations, were the main targets of the case.

The petitioner claimed that there was a direct violation of 'Article 24' of the Indian Constitution, which prohibits the employment of kids under the age of 14 in mines, factories, or any other hazardous occupation.

After a terrible disaster in Sivakasi's matchstick manufacturers killed 39 people, the matter became even more urgent, and the Court took Suo moto cognisance.

The directives issued by the court in this case are:

- Employers who were found to be using children in dangerous jobs were subject to fines of ₹20,000 per kid, which was to be deposited into a fund for the care and rehabilitation of child labourers.
- Rehabilitation of Families: The government had to put ₹5,000 per kid into the Welfare Fund if an adult family member of the child labourer could not find another job.
- Welfare and schooling: Full-time schooling was required for children taken out of dangerous industries. Families were only eligible for financial aid or alternative work if their children were enrolled in school.
- Regulation of Non-Hazardous Work: Children were only allowed to work six hours a day in non-hazardous enterprises, and they were required to attend school for two hours every day. Employers are required to pay for education.
- Government Accountability: The Court ordered the government to pinpoint dangerous sectors where labour of children was widespread and to make sure that the legislation was strictly enforced.

²² MC Mehta Vs State of Tamil Nadu AIR 1997 SC 699, 1996 (6) SCC 756

In the recent case of ‘**Som Distilleries**’²³, according to the Indian state government's examination of the Som Group Distillery, children in the 13–17 age range were forced to perform long hours packing and filling alcohol bottles. The children were reportedly engaged in manufacturing, bottling, and packaging alcohol. Many suffered chemical burns and infected wounds on their hands from exposure to hazardous spirits and other substances.

Children were allegedly transported to the factory in school buses and compelled to put in lengthy hours at work, sometimes for a duration of twelve hours a day, for really low wages. To conceal the illegal employment, the company allegedly had them wear school uniforms. ‘National Commission for Protection of Child Rights’ had discovered that 58 minors were working 11-hour shifts beginning at 8 a.m. unlawfully at the plant. The government of Madhya Pradesh suspended the manufacturing licenses of the distillery and launched a police investigation into the matter.

In the particular case of ‘**Aman Kumar vs The State of Bihar**’²⁴, the superior court held the follow:

As per prosecution case, two adolescent/child labourer were found working in the line-hotel of the petitioner. The informant found the two minor children doing the work of labour. It was held by the counsel that the provisions of Child and Adolescent Labour (Prohibition and Regulation) Act, 1986 are bailable & ‘Section 370 of IPC²⁵’ has been incorporated to make the offence serious. Learned applicant opposed the prayer for bail submitting that two minor children were found working in the hotel of the petitioner. In the event of his arrest or surrender before the court concerned within a period of eight weeks be released on bail after providing two sureties of the same amount each and bail bonds totalling Rs. 20,000 to the satisfaction of learned Additional Chief Judicial Magistrate-VII, Darbhanga/court.

In the matter of ‘**Bachpan Bachao & Ors. vs Union of India & Others**’²⁶, The court decided that the ‘Juvenile Justice (care and protection of children) Act, 2000²⁷’ ’s child welfare committee would have the authority to decide complaints about:

1. Refusing to pay agreed-upon salaries;
2. Harassment, including employer-initiated harassment by placement agencies;
3. Abuse and/or harassment by the owner or employees of the placement agency on their property or at work;
4. Failure to adhere to the terms agreed upon;
5. When individuals between the ages of 14 and 18 are employed, they may be subjected to abusive working conditions that exceed their physical capabilities.
6. working long hours;”

PART-3 DATA ANALYSIS

3. DATA COLLECTED:

The names of the children/Adolescent are not revealed for the sake of privacy.

DATA	AGE	WORK HOURS	WORKING SINCE	REASON FOR WORK	Break after 3 hours	REMARKS

²³ Anurag Dwary, ‘Hands Blistered, Skin Peeled, 60 Children Rescued from Madhya Pradesh Distillery’ (NDTV, Jun 16, 2024) <<https://www.ndtv.com/india-news/in-horrific-child-labour-case-60-children-rescued-from-madhya-pradesh-distillery-5903268>>, accessed 05.12.2025.

²⁴ Aman Kumar Vs the State of Bihar, Patna High Court CR. MISC. No.62265 of 2023(3) dt.06-12-2023

²⁵ Indian Penal Code,1860, s 370

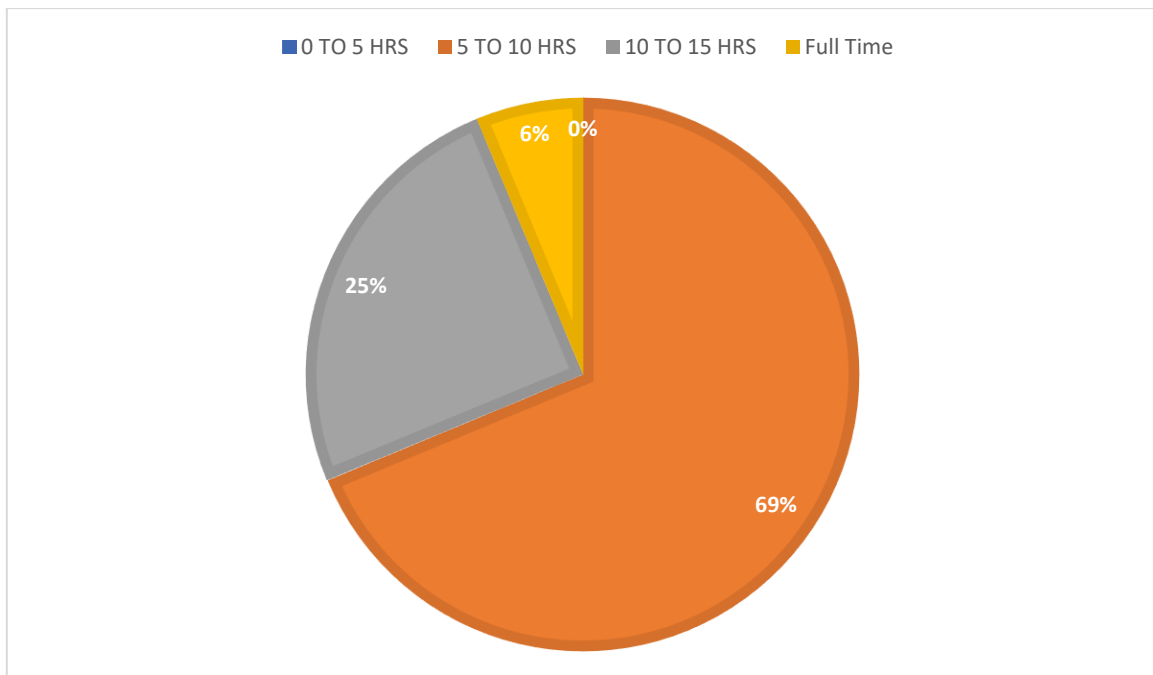
²⁶ Bachpan Bachao & Ors. vs Union of India & Others, 2010 SCC OnLine Del 4613.

²⁷ Juvenile Justice (Care and Protection of Children) Act, 2000

1.	16	9hr	14	Poverty	No	Working as a mechanic. Studied till 10 th grade. Severe physical health deterioration due to work
2.	17	13hr	13-14	Family hardships	No	Works in a bakery. Studied till 7 th grade. Migrated from north India. Is not even allowed to speak during work hours. Gets 3 weeks leave annually.
3.	17	10hr	14	Family hardship	No	Works in an eatery shop, studied till 8 th grade. Still has interest to study.
4.	17	9hr	15	Not interested in studies	No	Works in a chaat shop Doesn't know anything other than work. Studied till 9 th grade.
5.	16	10hr	13	Not interested in studies	No	Works as a mechanic as he has interest in it. Studied till 6 th grade.
6.	17	9hr	13-14	Poverty	No	Works as a porter using hand carts. Studied till 5 th . Work causes severe physical strain.
7.	17	9hr	13-14	Family hardship	No	Works as a porter using hand carts. Studied till 6 th grade. Work causes severe physical strain
8.	16	13hr	14	Poverty	No	Works in a chaat shop along with. Migrated due to hardships. Is not even allowed to speak and deviate from work even for a minute. No details about his educational qualification.
9.	17	9hr	Since childhood	Family Hardship	No	Working since childhood to take care of his family. Studied till 7 th . Sells toys and books.
10.	14	7hr	11	Poverty	No	just working on the days off, and during school holidays

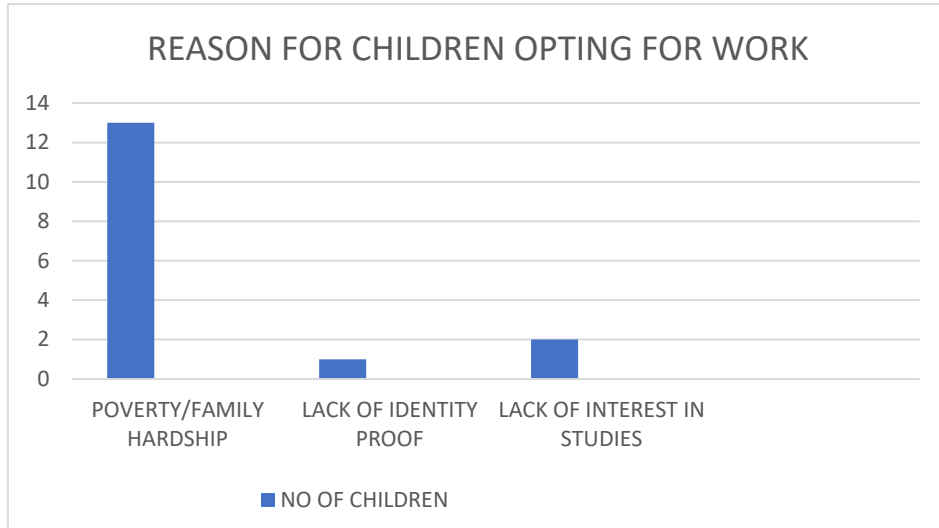
						while attending classes.
11.	14	7hr	12	Poverty	No	just working on the days off, and during school holidays while attending classes.
12.	14	7hr	12	Family Hardship	No	just working on the days off, and during school holidays while attending classes.
13.	12	6hr	10	Due to poverty.	No	Studying 6 th grade. Sells toys and books to support his family because he lost his dad. Works only during weekends.
14.	14	8hr	11	Due to poverty	No	Stopped education and into full time work due to family hardships.
15.	15	9hr	11	Due to poverty	No	Discontinued Schooling and is engaged in full time work.
16.	16	Full time	Since childhood	Due to lack of identity proof	No	Has not been admitted into school due to lack of ID proof. Works in platforms.

PIE CHART ANALYSIS OF THE COLLECTED DATA:

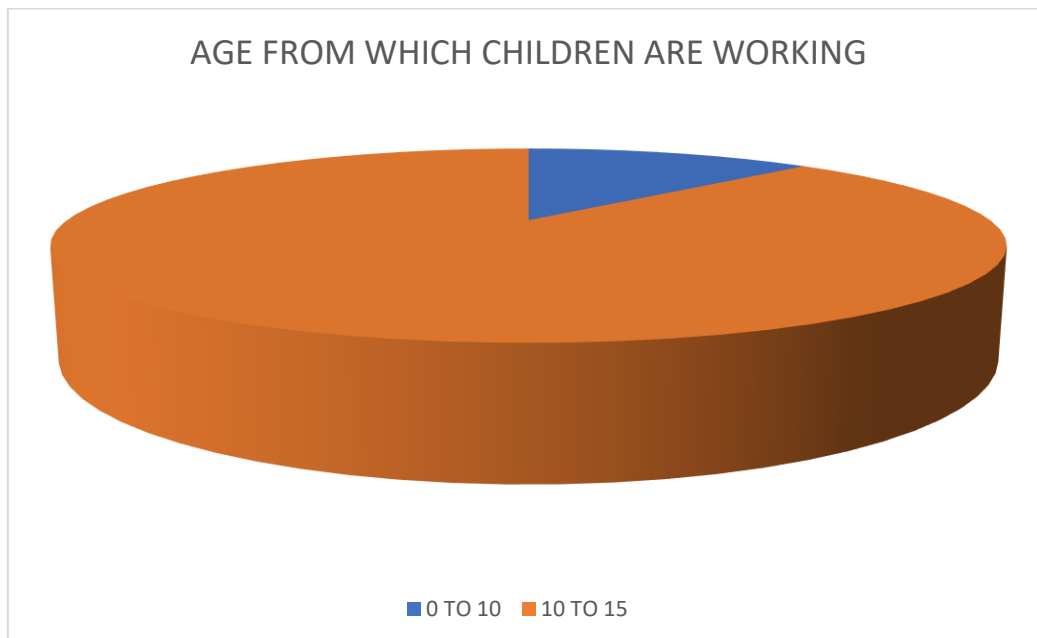


3.1. The above presented pie chart clearly depicts the average working hours of the children/adolescent from the collected data. It can be analyzed that 69% of children/adolescent are made to work between 5

to 10 hrs., and 25% of the children/adolescent are subjected to 10-15 hrs. of work, 6% are working full time. No one are working in the time period of 0-5 hrs.



3.2. The bar demonstrates the magnitude of each element that leads to child and adolescents’ employment in the community. From the collected data the top factor which cause child labour is ‘poverty’/ ‘family hardship’ which drives the child/adolescent to work. The second ranked factor is ‘lack of interest in studies,’ and the least ranked factor is ‘lack of identity proof.’



3.3. This pie chart depicts the age gap from which the children/adolescent are exposed to work. It is inferred that 87.5% of them are induced to working between the age of 10-15, and 12.5% of them started working between the age of 0-10.

It can also be inferred from the data table that the adolescents are not given a break after 3 hours of work in a row which contravenes the ‘section 7’ of the ‘child and adolescent labour prohibition and protection

act, 1986'. The young workers are made work beyond 7 p.m. which also violates the said provision. In total it is visible from the data collected from the adolescent themselves that they are not treated in compliance with the law.

PART 4- ANALYSIS & CONCLUSION

ANALYSIS:

There are a lot of policies created by the nation to overcome child labour that includes the welfare of adolescents as well, which the citizens are not aware of. The execution and implementation of these policies are not well established and propagated which acts a barrier for the citizens to utilize these policies. To name a few effective policies: - '**The National Policy for Children 1974**' was adopted on August 22, 1974, which serves as the framework for this strategy and the basis for several national Policies and initiatives launched in recent decades to deal with the diverse needs of children. The '**National Human Rights Commission**' has been extremely worried about its use in the nation through frequent visits, workshops and connection with the state government and NGO's the Commission keeps an eye on the nation's child labour situation. Investing in education is an investment in the country. The most significant investment a developing nation can make in its future is in education. The best way to decrease child labour and exploitation of adolescents is through education. The Parliament passed the '**93rd Constitution Amendment Bill 2001**' to proclaim education as a vital right in India as a consequence of persistent and ongoing advocacy campaign. The '**National Child Labour Project**' Began with just 12 districts, has gradually expanded to 271 districts across 21 states, significantly contributing to the country's efforts to eradicate child labour²⁸.

The cause behind adolescents choosing work is primarily driven by multiple interrelated socio-economic factors. The most significant among these are poverty, cultural and social norms, unemployment or underemployment of adults, and weak enforcement of child and adolescent labour laws. These factors create a cycle where adolescents are pushed into work either to supplement family income or due to the absence of better opportunities. The single greatest driving force pushing them into labour is poverty. The poverty factor and family hardships are closely connected to each other. Poverty-stricken families frequently depend on their adolescent's income for basic survival necessities like nourishment, medical care, and schooling. This creates a vicious cycle where adolescent labour perpetuates poverty by depriving children of education and skills needed for better-paying jobs in the future. This can be strongly proved by the analysis done in the part III. Thus, it can be held that the factors analysed by the court in the case of 'A Sriram Babu' is still relevant and contributes for the existence of adolescent labour even in the modern-day scenario. Even though laws exist to prohibit exploitation of adolescents, enforcement is often weak, allowing employers to exploit them, especially in informal sectors and establishments of small kind. Natural disasters, climate change, and economic downturns can devastate family incomes, pushing them to rely on the adolescents as a coping strategy. The output derived from the collected data which was analysed in bar graph 3.2. of the part III clearly answers the research question 1 that the poverty and family hardships are the most impactful factor which make the adolescents to opt full time work sacrificing their education, and the hypothesis 1 is also proved in respect to this analysis.

Moving on to the next research question, "What effects does exploitation have on adolescent's physical, mental, and emotional well-being?", data table mentioned in part III shall be referred to find answer. The

²⁸ N. Slundara Ramaiah and Prof. Dr. C. Narasimha Rao, 'Child labour in India: Causes, Consequences, Legal provisions and Efforts', Volume 10 Ijert (2022), <<https://ijert.org/papers/IJCRT2211353.pdf>> accessed 10 December 2025

data collected from the children/ adolescent conveys the pain and suffering faced by them every single day, they are subjected to works such as mechanic, operating hand cart, working in eateries and bakery, selling toys and handicrafts in the roads. During the work they are exposed to severe pollution, long work hours more than limit prescribed by the legislation, and above all they are treated inhumane by the employers who does not even let them speak or have some rest gap in between. The child and Adolescent labour Act states that an adolescent cannot be forced to labour more than six hours in a day, the collected data depicted as pie chart (3.1.) shows that around 69% of children/adolescent are working for 5-10 hours a day, 25% of them are subjected to 10-15 hours work, and 6% of the people are working full time without any structured work time. Though the children work only during the weekends they spend their entire holiday on work alone which is disheartening. At the tender age where they should focus on education and enjoy their childhood, these people get their health and mind exploited due to long working hours to support their family. This is clearly exploitation of children/adolescent as they are subjected to work for more than limit prescribed by the legislation. They are physically exploited by the long duration of work, improper environment, and pollution, and they are psychologically affected by inhumane treatment, low wages, and lack of proper holidays. Thus, the second research question, and hypothesis for the same have been answered.

Dealing with the final research question and the hypothesis i.e., to analyse the effectiveness of the respective legislation in this concern, it can be seen in the data part that almost every adolescent, are working more than 6hrs a day without a break after every 3 hours which is in excess than the prescribed limit and is violative of Sec 7 of 'Child and Adolescent (Prohibition and Regulation) Act 1986'. In the representation made in 3.3 of part III, many adolescents started to work between the age of 10-15 (87.5% of collected data), and 12.5% of the collected data started their working career before 10 years. The children use the age window of 13-14 as a loop hole and use it to join any work which can be seen in the data analysis part wherein 43.75% of the children started working in the 13-14 age window. This proves to be a clear breach of 'article 24²⁹' of the Constitution of India which strictly prohibits children below 14yrs from work, and 'Sections 3 & 7³⁰' of the 'Child and Adolescent (Prohibition and Regulation) Act, 1986'. In India, though the legislations & statutes provide a stronger basement, it lags in executing such provisions in the right and strict manner which reduces the effectiveness of such provisions and statues.

SUGGESTIONS:

- A mass awareness campaign should be conducted to educate the parents about the ill effects of sacrificing education for work.
- Work time of the children who help their family or family enterprise should also be regulated.
- The state should provide adequate welfare schemes to the disadvantaged sectors of the society to reduce the burden on the adolescents.
- Penalties should be made more stringent so that there will be no second time offender.
- The work period of the adolescents should be strictly monitored by the inspectors by making sudden inspection, investigating the concerned person, interrogating with adolescents etc.
- The inspectors should periodically review the registers maintained by the employers and the details of the adolescents employed should be cross examined.

²⁹ Ind.Const.art.24, Prohibition of employment of children in factories, etc.—No child below the age of fourteen years shall be employed to work in any factory or mine or engaged in any other hazardous employment.

³⁰ Child and adolescent labour (prohibition and regulation) Act,1986, s 3, s 7

- The children should be educated about the importance of the education which will instil the desire to study rather than opting for work.
- Awareness about the child labour rehabilitation fund and after care home for Children in Care of Need and Protection should be made to the children/adolescent who are subjected to employment or has been neglected by their family.

CONCLUSION:

According to the findings of this study on adolescent labour and exploitation, adolescents are compelled to work long hours without access to basic amenities, which is against the Child and Adolescent Labour (Prohibition and Regulation) Act of 1986. The factors that are likely to promote teenage labour are collected directly from the teenagers for the purpose of this study. It is clear from this study that adolescents' jobs are detrimental. It is clear that there is a discrepancy between the law and how it is applied in light of the facts and situations detailed in the previously cited study. Despite numerous domestic regulations and international initiatives, India does not fully implement these rules, which prevents adolescents from being exploited. A developing nation like India has an essential duty to raise and safeguard its youth, who will serve as the nation's future pillars. Future generations won't be freed from this social threat until the present generation is safeguarded and transformed.

In order to address the current situation, recommendations were also included in this study. It should be highlighted that despite the policies and recommendations put forth, a solution to the problem has not been found, indicating that the implementation aspect is the problem. Thus, it can be concluded that the only option is to implement strict enforcement methods.