Girl Child Labour in Cottonseed Farms: A Case Study of Kutiyana Taluka of Gujarat State-India

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Abstract

India is the largest cotton producing country in the world. Three states namely Gujarat, Maharashtra and Andhra Pradesh contribute three-fourth of the total cotton production in the country. Currently, Gujarat is the leading producer of cotton and cotton seeds. Since much of the work in cotton seed farms is carried out manually, large workforce is engaged in this work. The issue of child labour in hybrid cotton production in Gujarat recently received a lot of attention at national and international level. It is highly labour intensive and children are used in most of the operations. In Gujarat, about one-third of the total workforce in cotton farms is below 14 years of age and another 42 percent lie in the age group of 15-18 years. A little less than half of these children, in both age groups are girl child labour. The main objectives of the present study were to examine the socio-economic and working conditions of girl child labour. Study attempts to understand the effect of various inputs for cotton production, on health and education of these girls of Kutiyana taluka of Porbandar district of Gujarat state. The study was conducted during October to November 2014 and mainly based on primary data collected through questionnaire, personal interview and observation. The girl child failed to experience normal physical and mental growth due to work pressure of more than 10-12 hours per day and vulnerable living conditions. They also sacrificed their basic human rights. Appropriate and concrete efforts should be made from local to international level to stop child labour. Relevant policies, strategies, programmes and plans are needed to protect these girls, strict implementation of child labour prohibition law is required.

Keywords: Cottonseed farms, girl child labour, Kutiyana taluka, vulnerable living conditions.
JEL Classification: J 20, J 30, J 43, J 81, Z 22
1. Introduction

Every child born in this world has some fundamental birth rights which include the right to a healthy mental and physical development. However, children of a very few countries in the world automatically get these rights, while millions of children especially of the third world nations are deprived of these rights. Their situation is very bad despite the efforts of the national and international agencies.

What is child labour? There is no universally accepted definition of child labour. Defining child labour is not as simple as it may appear because it encompasses three difficult tasks to define concepts “Child”, “Work” and “Labour”. Childhood can be defined in terms of age. In most of the cases, person who has not completed 14 years of age are considered as child labour. Child labour is work that deprives children of their childhood, their potential and their dignity; work that exceeds a minimum number of hours; work that is mentally, physically, socially or morally dangerous and harmful to children; and work that interferes with their schooling.

According to Director General of ILO, Francis Blanchard, “Child Labour includes children prematurely leading adult lives, working long hours for low wages under conditions damaging to their health and to their physical and mental development, sometimes separated from their families, frequently deprived of education and training apprentices that could provide them a better future”. (ISRJ, 2014)

What is child labour? Classification by the International Programme on the Elimination of Child Labour (IPEC) puts it into acceptable and unacceptable types of child labour. Acceptable work includes children helping parents around the home, earning pocket money after school and on holidays, and even helping in a family business. Such activity is viewed as beneficial to children's development and socialization. While, unacceptable child labour, in contrast, is harmful to physical and mental development, affects children's dignity, and deprives children of their precious childhood. The report shows that globally child labour continues to decline (at the rate of 2.2 percent per annum), but, the most recent ILO global labour estimates for the year 2012 show that despite important progress in terms of declining child labour, there exist still 168 million children worldwide, around 11 percent of the total population (World Report on Child Labour, ILO, 2015).

Child labour refers to the exploitation of the children who has not completed their 14 years of age, but work under conditions which put them in to risk. It is an unfortunate reality that children worldwide are often forced to undertake work that is physically, mentally and morally damaging to them. However, not all work performed by children are classified as child labour. In fact, some light work that does not interfere with the children’s physical and mental development, their education, or health, helping parents at home, or earning pocket
money beyond school hours or on holidays, can be a positive experience for children. Therefore these, deserve to be cared and protected. Children are an important part of the social structure and the potential future of the culture and nation. Unfortunately, the problem of child labour (especially age group of 5-14 years) exists in our country and in many other developing countries. The children under the category of the child labour receive a rude and unpleasant introduction to life. They not only lack the basic necessities of life, but also are forced to spend a major part of their day and life, working in inhuman and unhealthy conditions.

In India there are many laws to protect the rights of children such as The Factories Act, 1948, The Mines Act, 1952, The Child Labour (Prohibition & Regulation) Act, 1986 and constitutional provisions etc. (vide. Annex. 1, 2) still, children are engaged in labour work for economic gains. There is the provision in Child Labour (Prohibition & Regulation) Act, 1986, for child labour in agriculture sector, it only prevents the child labour for the processes in agriculture where tractors, threshing and harvesting machines are used and chaff/grass cutting. (Part ‘B’ of the schedule to this Act). It means it does not prevent children to work in the fields where machines are not used. Thus, the applicability of the law become limited here and problem of child labour is to be continued.

The paper is divided into three sections. The first section will deal with aspects of child labour, review of literature and research methodology, the second section deals with analysis of data and finally the third section will deal with findings, recommendations and conclusion.

2. Global Scenario of Child Labour

The International Labour Organization estimates that 215 million children age of 5-17 are engaged in child labour activities. Asia and the Pacific has the largest number (almost 78 million or 9.3% of child population), but Sub-Saharan Africa continues to be the region with the highest incidence of child labour (59 million, over 21%). There are 13 million (8.8%) of children in child labour in Latin America and the Caribbean and in the Middle East and North Africa there are 9.2 million (8.4%).Agriculture remains by far the most important sector where child labourers can be found (98 million, or 59%), but the problems are not negligible in services (54 million) and industry (12 million) mostly in the informal economy. Child labour among girls fell by 40% since 2000, compared to 25% for boys. (ILO-IPEC, 2013). An estimated 12 percent of children in India aged 5-14 are engaged in child labour activities (UNICEF, State of the world children, 2010).

2.1 Girl Child Labour

The universal declaration of Human Rights and the International Covenants on Human Rights, which together make the *magna carta* of mankind, confer rights without discrimination as to age, race, sex, religion, birth or other factors. The articles 23 and 25 of
the Universal Declaration of Human Rights (1948), declare that everybody has the right to life and to a decent play, decent working conditions.

Child Labour as understood by the International conventions and National Legislation is a violation of Human Rights to fundamental that it must be out-lawed without compromise (ILO, 1997). ILO prioritizes girl child for immediate protection because of two reasons: Firstly, their estimates suggest that there are at least 100 million girl child workers in the world and this number does not include those who work in their own parent’s household. The second reason for immediate concern is the nature and the conditions under which girls are at work. The work done by the girls is underestimated, they work for more hours at workplace and home apart from drop-out rate being high. Girls often start working at an earlier age then boys, especially in the rural areas, many girls suffer the double burden of domestic chores and work outside, paid or unpaid.

The female child is considered as liability for the parents who are influenced by the traditions, values, societal norms and social institutions like family, kinship and marriage. Girl child labour is not only deprived of their education and recreation, but they are exposed to the risk of sexual harassment and their moral and psychological development is at stake. The forms of employment for girls also reflect the gender bias. Family duties are relegated to the girl child from early childhood. These are the issues of violation of human rights.

2.2 Child labour in Agriculture

Near about 98 million boys and girls between 5-7 years is identified as child labour in agriculture, worldwide nearly 60 percent of child labour is found in agriculture (FAO, 2014). The work by children performed in agriculture is often invisible, because they assist their parents in task work or other forms of work organization. Because this work is not recognized, nor easily recorded in statistics, it goes largely unnoticed. Nearly 60 percent child labour are in agriculture sector in the world, in India almost 70 percent and in Gujarat nearly 77 percent children are working in this sector (vide Annex 3, 4).

India has the highest area (120 lakh hectares) under the cotton cultivation in the world. Of the three types of cotton cultivation namely regular or conventional cotton, organic cotton and genetically modified or BT (*Bacillus thuringiensis*), the last one is prominently adopted for the cotton farming. It is a bacterium whose gene is injected into cotton seeds to give them resistance against boll worms. The average requirement of labour is ten persons per acre of land. One third of this comprises of the children, with a greater portion comprising of girl child labour. Several thousand children, mostly girls sacrifice their education and health while working in these cotton farms.

2.3 Need of girl child labour in cotton farms:

Why the preference for girl child labour? The reason being that, cotton picking process is very labour intensive and a large number of laborers are required to do this work. Due to the
height of the plant and development of cotton balls at two to three feet from the ground, it requires lot of bending down of the body. The process requires very delicate hands. Farmers prefer young girl children for this task because with their delicate fingers they can handle this work better than boys and adults. They also work more intensively and carefully than the adult labour. Apart from being submissive to the contractors and farmers, the wage rates for these children are far lower than adult, low wage reduces the labour cost also. All these combine to make the cotton farming more conducive and convenient for the lobby of cotton growers.

3. Review of Literature

Review of some of the studies on girl child labour is as follows;

Rural children at work, in this study researchers examined that girls between 9 - 19 years worked much harder in agriculture fields and animal husbandry than boys of the same age, but they work less than boys in non-agricultural labour. They were of the view that work participation rate depend on the type of the work and facility available. Another interesting finding was that the age structure of the female child worker is lower than that of males. This picture is reinforced by the higher rate of non-enrollment in schools and school dropout among girls than boys (Jain and Chand, 1991).

The study conducted on, Street Children of Delhi, reveals that the children assumed responsibilities at the age of 8, and most of their childhood is spent in doing various jobs both within and out of the house. Discrimination based on sex is a common complaint. While boys are given a lot of freedom, the girl children are over burdened with work. Health and nutrition of the girl is neglected (Panicker and Desai, 1993).

The Status of the Girl Child in Socio-Economic Set Up with special reference to rural girls. The author examined that girl child in rural India suffers from the parents bias as the daughter are treated as liabilities, while the son are treated as assets. The girls are also facing severe discrimination with respect to nutrition, health care and education (Devendra, 1995). Educating the girl child in rural areas- examines the barriers to education of girls in India. According to researcher, education continues to be viewed as a preparation for employment; hence parents with limited resources spend money on educating their sons rather than on the daughters. Another dimension is that girls are treated as another’s property. As the girl child after marriage will go to her husband’s house, the family is not interested in investing on her (Tandon , 1995).

Born to Work: Child Labour in India, this study examines that the work of the girl child is invisible and this invisibility has serious negative consequences in terms of her status within the family which in turn determines her role in the family and society. According to her, bulk of the female working child population is found in rural areas. Girls are engaged in low paid
or low wage unskilled jobs which do not necessarily lead to skill formation. (Burra, Neera, 1995).

Study on Child labour in Hybrid Cottonseed Production in Andhra Pradesh: Recent Developments, explained that children constitute 53.5% of total workforce. On an average 5.5 children were employed in one acre cottonseed farm. Girls account for nearly 72% of the total child labour population. Compared to 2001-02 the proportion of child labour to the total labour force has come down by 34.5% (from 88% in 2000-01 to 53.5% in 2003-04). Due to increased media attention and frequent inspections from the labour department, farmers in several places have started adapting new strategies to hide their irregularities. The 11 to 14 year young girls are made to wear adult women dresses and shown as adults. By bribing local officials, seed farmers are securing wrong age certificates to claim that the children they employ are above the age limit prescribed under law (ICN, 2004).

The preliminary estimates of the area under cottonseed production for the 2007-08 season indicate that compared to 2006-07, the total area under cottonseed production in 2007-08 has increased by 15-20% in different states. This will further increase the demand for labour, including children, in this sector. The total number of children in cottonseed farms is likely to increase further during 2007-08. Unless serious efforts are made to stop the employment of children at the field level (Venkateswarlu, 2007).

The survey examined that more than 416,000 children under the age of 18, of which almost 225,000 younger than 14, are involved in (often bonded) child labour in India’s cottonseed fields. Most of them are girls. They work in the states of Andhra Pradesh, Gujarat, Karnataka and Tamil Nadu. Compared to the 2003-2004 harvest season the total number of working children has risen. Children are made to work 8 to 12 hours a day and usually earn between Rs.20 and Rs.30 a day (hardly half a euro). They are routinely exposed to poisonous pesticides and often trafficked as migrants from other districts and even states. In Tamil Nadu and Gujarat more than 80% of the children are trafficked. E.g. North Gujarat ‘receives’ tens of thousands of children from the neighbouring state of Rajasthan every year. They often live in make-shift shelters and are very vulnerable to mental, physical and sexual abuse, majority of the children working in the cotton fields are Dalits (‘untouchables’, officially called ‘scheduled castes’) or Adivasi (tribals) (ICN, 2007).

The study on Child Bondage Continues in Indian Cotton Supply Chain- Hyderabad, this study shows how multinational seed corporations like Bayer, Monsanto, Advanta and Emergent Genetics, which produce and market the seeds, are involved in perpetuating the problem of child labour. Children working on cottonseed farms are employed on a long-term contract basis through advances and loans extended to their parents by local seed producers, who, in turn, have agreements with large national and multinational seed companies. During 2006-07 an estimated total number of 4,14,390 children (2,23,940 below 14 years and
1,90,450 are 15-18 age group) mostly girls were employed in cotton farms in India. Children constitute about 77 percent in Andhra Pradesh, 84.5% in Karnataka, 79 percent in Tamil Nadu and 66% in Gujarat of the total workforce. Girls out number boys. No other industry in India has such a high proportion child labour in its workforce (Venkateswarlu, 2007).

The study explained that what children receive is often well below the minimum wage. In Gujarat, India, a child working on a cotton seed farm receives less than A$1 per day. Children may work up to 12 hours in extreme temperatures. In Uzbekistan, children are made to work from early in the morning to evening, without sufficient food. Exhaustion, heat stroke and malnutrition are common amongst child labourers. Children are forced to work in unbearable conditions and in some cases stay in crops store area or farm machinery. Physical and sexual abuse of child cotton labourers has also been widely reported. School children can be given harvest quotas as large as 50 kg of cotton per day and are beaten or threatened if they fail to meet their quota or pick low quality cotton (World Vision Australia, 2012).

According to the survey on “Cotton for Gotten Children”, farmers employ children, particularly girls, primarily in order to minimize costs. In cottonseed production, the labour costs account for about 50% of total cultivation costs. Farmers endeavor to cut these labour costs by hiring children because the wages paid to children are far below both the market wages for adults in other agricultural field work and even further below official minimum wages. Farmers also hire children in preference to adults because farmers can squeeze out higher productivity from children per day. Children will work longer hours, will work much more intensively and they are generally much easier to control than adult workers – whether through verbal or physical abuse or through inexpensive treats like chocolate or hair ribbons (Venkateswarlu, 2015).

3.1 Importance of the study

Gujarat is the fastest growing and most diverse state in India and covers an area of 196,024 square km. Gujarat is a major producer of chemicals, petrochemicals, fertilizers, engineering etc. The people of Gujarat are known to be successful business community. Agriculture in Gujarat forms a vital sector of the state's economy. It provides the required food grains and raw materials for most of the agro-based industries. At present, Gujarat comprises of 25 districts. Porbandar is one of them. Porbander district has three talukas; Porbander, Ranavav and Kutiyana. Kutiyana has 2840 hectare land under the cotton cultivation. Since no prior study on this issue has been done in this district, we selected Kutiyana taluka for the present case study.

In Gujarat, 37 percent of the total labour force is child labour between age group of 7 to 14 years. 60 percent of total child labour is girls. Every year 60,000 to 100,000 boys and girl child labour migrate according to the season. Observation says that many children work in agriculture sector in this district especially in cotton crop to pick up cotton from “Cotton
bolls”. Most of them are migrated. They are migrated from the neighboring state and district. Many girls work in cotton farms in extreme condition. These girls are far away from villages and completely isolated. They hesitate to talk about the condition of living, illness, harassment etc. They work in cotton farms for long hours in very vulnerable condition. Therefore in this study we have tried to know about the various problems of girl child labour working in cottonseed farms.

3.2 Objectives

The present study has following broad objectives;

1. Examine the socio-economic condition of girl child labour working in cotton farms.
2. To know about the living and working condition of girl child labour.
3. To study the effect on health and education of girl child labour.
4. Suggest some measures to reduce the problem of child labour in the current times.

3.3 Methodology

This study is based on primary and secondary data. Secondary data has been collected from various published books, reports, journals and other bulletins. Primary data has been collected through questionnaires by personal interview of the girl-child labour – only, at cotton farms. The study was undertaken during November to December-2014. The farms chosen were those where the cotton cultivation was intensive. Ten farms from five villages namely Kutiyana, Amar, Chauta Ishvariya and Kotada were selected. Of these, five girl-child labourers (between the age-group of 6-14 years) were selected from each of the farm respectively, to administer the questionnaire. Primary data was also collected in the form of field observations. The results of the current note on child labour are based on a convenient random sample of 50 girls. However, wider results are expected after a larger sampled data is incorporated into the analysis – since the study is still ongoing.

4. Data Analysis

The collected primary data have been processed by using by SPSS software. The data was collected from the Kutiyana Taluka of the Porbandar District of Gujarat State. Preliminary results of the pilot survey are as follow;

4.1 Socio-Economic Profile of the Respondents

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Variables</th>
<th>Reported answers</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>How did you join this work?</td>
<td>By Self (2.0%), Parents (90.0%), Relatives (8.0%)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Methods of Payment of Wages</td>
<td>Weekly (88.0%), Monthly (12.0%)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Non-Monetary Benefits</td>
<td>Medical benefits (0.0%), Accident during work (12.0%), Safety Instrument (0.0%), Tea and meal (88.0%) No benefits (10.0%)</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Source: Based on field survey data
The above table shows that 90 percent girls came to this work due to parental insistence. Nearly 82 percent respondents have reported poverty is the main reason for joining this work. They received their wages mostly on weekly basis. These girls don’t get any other benefits, but tea (twice) and meal (once) are provided by the farmer to almost all every day. Wages are decided on the basis of the weight of cotton picked by labour, it is 100 - 110 rupees per 20 kg. No medical allowances and safety instruments are provided by any farmer.

**Table 2: Information about the residence**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Variables</th>
<th>Reported answers</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Type of House</td>
<td>Pakka House (0.0%), Kacha House (26.0%), Zupdu/Tambu/Hut (74.0%)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Basic Amenities</td>
<td>Light (90.0%), Water (100.0%), Bathroom (0.0%), Toilet (0.0%), Kitchen (2.0%)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Facilities at Residence</td>
<td>Bed (5.0%), Fan (0.0%), Radio (25.0%), Mobile (50.0%)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Problems at Residence</td>
<td>Mosquitoes (95.0%), Cold (90.0%)</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Source: Based on field survey data

It can be seen from the above table that as answers reported by respondents, 74 percent girls live in Zupdu / Tambu/Hut and 26 percent are live in Kachcha house no one living in Pakka house. About basic amenities, it is found that no sanitation facilities are available at residence and working place. Only 2 percent respondents having kitchen to cook food. 98 percent of total respondents cook their food in open area. 95 percent suffer from mosquitoes bite, insect’s problems and 90 percent suffer from cold because most of them sleep in open fields. They don’t have woolen cloths and blankets to protect themselves from cold.

**Table 3: Income-Expenditure-Saving of the Respondents**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Variables</th>
<th>Reported answers</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Monthly Income (in Rs.)</td>
<td>Up to 3,000 (45.0%), 3001 - 6000 (55.0%)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Monthly Expenditure (in Rs.)</td>
<td>Less than 2000 (85.0%), 2001 - 4,000 (10.0%), No answer (don’t know) (5.0%)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Savings (in Rs.)</td>
<td>No Savings (7.0%), Less than 2,000 (70.0%), 2001 - 4,000 (23.0%)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Use of Saving</td>
<td>Cash in hand (5.0%), Give to parents (95.0%)</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Source: Based on field survey data

Table -3 depicts that 45 percent girls earn less than Rs.3000 per month and 55 percent are earning Rs. 3000 - 6000 per month. Their total expenditure is mostly less than 2000 Rs. Entire earning is deposited with parents. Only 5 percent girls keep their earning with them those who live with their relatives.
Table 4: Age group and Working hours of girl child labour

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Age of the respondents (years)</th>
<th>Working hours per day</th>
<th>Total</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Up to 8 hours</td>
<td>9 to 12 hours</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>6 to 8</td>
<td>3 (6.00%)</td>
<td>6 (12.00%) 9 (18%)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>9 to 11</td>
<td>3 (6.00%)</td>
<td>22 (44.0 %) 25 (50.0%)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>12 to 14</td>
<td>4 ((8.0%)</td>
<td>12 (24.0%) 16 (32.0%)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Total</td>
<td>10 (20.0%)</td>
<td>40 (80.0%) 50 (100.0%)</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Source: Based on field survey data

The field survey data shows that the 80 percent girl child is working for more than 10 hours in a day. It can be seen from the table that 6 percent girls between the age group of 6 to 8 are working 8 to 10 hours in a day, while 12 percent girls from the same age group are working more than 10 hours in a day. The second age group was 9 to 11 years, in this group 6 percent girls are working 8 to 10 hours in a day, while 44 percent girls are working for more than 10 hours. And third age group was 12 to 14 years, in this group 8 percent girl children are working for 8 to 10 hours, while 2 percent 4 girl child labour are working for more than ten hours, thus, 20 percent girls are working 8 to 10 hours in a day, while 80 percent girls are working for more than 10 hours, sometimes morning 5:00 a.m. to evening 7:00 p.m.

Table 5: Types of migration and category of girl child labour

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Types of migration (%)</th>
<th>Category of the respondents</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>OBC</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Local</td>
<td>7 (14%)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Seasonal</td>
<td>0 (0.0%)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Permanent</td>
<td>0(0.0%)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Total</td>
<td>7(14%)</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Source: Based on field survey data

It can be seen from the above table that total 86 percent girl child labour are migrated out of which 72 percent are seasonal migrants and 14 percent are permanent migrants. Besides out of 72 percent of seasonal migrants 42 percent are of ST category and 30 percent are of SC category. They are mostly from rural tribal area. Only 7 percent girl child labours are belonging to OBC category and they are local residents.
During the survey it was found that majority of girl child is migrated from neighboring state Madhya Pradesh and few from other districts of Gujarat. They are migrated with their parents. Parents are migrated because of poverty and lack of employment opportunities etc. at their villages, therefore these children has to sacrifice their education. Most of them are drop out because of insufficient attendance in their schools.

**Table 6: Category wise level of education of girl child laborer**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Category of The Respondents (In Percentage)</th>
<th>Level of Education of Respondents</th>
<th>Total</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Not enrolled</td>
<td>1\textsuperscript{st} to 3\textsuperscript{rd}</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>OBC</td>
<td>0(0.0%)</td>
<td>1(2.0%)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>SC</td>
<td>11(22.0%)</td>
<td>4(8.0%)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>ST</td>
<td>10(20.0%)</td>
<td>15(30.0%)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Total</td>
<td>21(42.0%)</td>
<td>20(40.0%)</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Source: Based on field survey data

Here in this study it is found that children, who work, sacrifice their education for earning bread. It can be seen from the table-6 that total 18 percent girls are from OBC category; out of them 2 percent are between 1\textsuperscript{st} to 3\textsuperscript{rd} standard and 16 percent are between 4\textsuperscript{th} to 6\textsuperscript{th} standard.

32 percent girl children are belong to SC category, out of them 22 percent are not enrolled, 8 percent are between 1\textsuperscript{st} to 3\textsuperscript{rd} standard and 2 percent are between 4\textsuperscript{th} to 6\textsuperscript{th} standard. 50 percent girl comes under ST category, out of them 20 percent are not enrolled, 30 percent are between 1\textsuperscript{st} to 3\textsuperscript{rd} standard.

**Table 7: Occupational Hazards**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Type of Effects</th>
<th>Numbers of child Labour</th>
<th>% of Child Labour</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Scratches on skin</td>
<td>22</td>
<td>44.0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Insects bite</td>
<td>15</td>
<td>30.0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Sensation on skin</td>
<td>8</td>
<td>16.0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>No effect</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>10.0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Total</td>
<td>50</td>
<td>100.0</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Source: Based on field survey data
Cotton crop is required to be protected from different insects. Therefore use of pesticides is very necessary. But the effect of these pesticides remains on the cotton plant for long time, it adversely affects to the health and skin of the child workers particularly when cotton is being picked from bolls, because during cotton picking each plant of cotton is touched by hands only. On the basis of field survey data and the observations it is found that 90 percent of respondents said that, during the work in cotton farms their skin had adversely affected. It has been identified that 44 percent girl child are suffering from skin scratches due to dry bushes and dried twigs, 30 percent are suffering from insects biting and 16 percent are suffering from itching, sensation on their skin because of insecticide and pesticides.

These girls stay in farms for 2 to 3 months. The living conditions are shocking. It is observed that boys and girls live together, share common room. There is no separate accommodation and sanitation facility for boys and girls, no supply of safe-clean drinking water facility, they drink water from the water kept for the cattle, they cook their food in open area, also sleep in open fields, lack of sufficient woolens to protect themselves during winter. There was one case of sexual harassment. Apart from this, as observed from the study, not enough physical and personal safety measures are taken by the farmers and the contractors for the benefit of the child labour.

4.2 Addiction

In the matter of addiction of the girl child labour, it was found that out of total selected sample about 86 percent were addicted having the addiction of chewing tobacco and Gutkha. Only 14 percent of the girl child was not addicted.

4.3 Findings

1. Reasons for child labour are mainly poverty (82 percent). Unemployment, illiteracy, parent’s ignorance, migration are also the responsible factors.
2. 90 percent girls came to work in the cotton seed farms with their parents. They are mostly from rural tribal area of neighboring state and districts.
3. 45 percent girls earn less than Rs.3000 and 55 percent are earning Rs. 3000- 6000 per month.

4. 95 percent suffers from mosquitoes bits problems and 90 percent suffer from cold.

5. 80 percent girls are working for more than 10 hours. Sometimes morning 5:00 a.m. to evening 7:00 p.m.

6. More than 40 percent are not enrolled in the school. Most of girl children drop out from school due to short attendance.

7. It has been identified that 44 percent girl child are suffering from scratches on skin, 30 percent are suffering from insects biting and 16 percent are suffering from itching, sensation on their skin.

8. They have to stay in the fields for 2-3 month without proper residence, sanitation, safe drinking water and other basic facilities.

9. About 86 percent were having the addiction of chewing tobacco and Gutkha.

5. Recommendations

1. Poverty is the main driving force of child labour, a proper identification of the labour to provide gainful employment to the parents first is important, so that they need not push their children into economic activities at an early age. It also becomes the responsibility of the State to rehabilitate these children and improve the economic conditions of their family. This will help the child labour, especially the girls to remain away from the fields and labour work, in lieu of education and other capacity building exercises.

2. Parents should not bring their children with them or they should allow their children to continue their schooling even after the parents have migrated to other places for economic reasons. This is however, a difficult proposition considering the limited physical and economic resources in the hands of the parents. The state intervention through various socio-economic support and measures can go a long way in putting control over the issue.

3. If the parents get the employment in their own village and if wages also increase, then the migration will come down too, thus reducing the withdrawal of the children from school. They will withdraw their children from the work.

4. There is urgent need to create awareness against their addiction of tobacco, because it not only affects the health adversely but also detain their health.

5. To stop child labour in agriculture and allied fields, government has to undertake reform in the Child Labour (Prohibition & Regulation) Act, 1986, it prohibits employment of children below the age of 14 years. In this act, there is provision for child labour to work in agriculture sector, it only prevents the child labour for the
processes in agriculture where tractors, threshing and harvesting machines are used and chaff/grass cutting. (Part ‘B’ of the schedule to this Act). It means it does not prevent children to work in the fields where machines are not used. Thus, the applicability of the law become limited here and problem of child labour is to be continued.

6. This has to be done so by defining the hazardous nature of labour in all forms agriculture. Also in addition to this provisions have to be made to ensure the protection of the rights of the children.

7. Child Labour (Prohibition and Regulation) Act, 1986 should be implemented effectively. Laws related to prevention of child labour should be strictly implemented. Especially those related to imprisonment and reprimanding. Government should impose ban on child labour in cotton seed products.

8. It is also very necessary to have proper coordination among the international and national agencies, programmes. Concrete action should be undertaken for proper implementation of these programmes, coordination among the local agencies like the police, NGOs, judiciary, central as well as state governments, special schools. Contractors, farmers, trade union, parents and media can play a vital role.

9. With abolition of child labour, there will be rise in the demand for adult labourers. This may add to the overall productivity of the idle adult labour, human capital in better future for the nation.

10. Proper data base on the child labour is necessary. Stake holders like farmers and other businessmen who employ child labour, do not part or assist the state in identifying the exact amount of child labour and the problems associated with it. When the data on child labour are collected, each parents, relatives, employers, farmers, contractors should give correct information so that proper programs, plans, policies for these children can be formulate and implemented. One can always add here that the market of child labour is full of information asymmetries. This is leading to improper policy planning on the part of the state, apart from various other issues to planning and implementation.

11. It has been observed that only a generation of educated and economically strong parents can prevent child labour from growing in the market. Because only this aspect can lift and imbibe economic and social capacities in the children. This in turn with lift the child, economically, socially, politically and otherwise. Education and good health will lift the girl child; physically, mentally, economically and legally, they can protect themselves from violence, atrocity, exploitation and injustice and so they will be able to play vital role in all the sectors of the country.
6. Conclusion

Finally we can conclude that there are number of legislative measures, laws and constitutional provisions, government, educationists, unions, non-government institutions are existing in India. Apart from these international organizations such as UN, ILO, UNICEF, UNESCO, CRY etc. are actively working to stop child labour but the problem is still not to be solved. Though the proportion of child labour in urban areas has come down, but in rural areas, it is more serious and complex problem. The child labour in the study, failed to experience normal physical and mental growth due to work pressure, also work for more than ten hours in a day in extreme temperature during winter. They also sacrifice their basic human rights such as, nutrition, health, and education, recreation, sufficient opportunities for their physical and mental development. Unfortunately, reality is that there are not any proper, suitable, effective and universally acceptable measures that can be taken to improve the condition of them, and curb the child labour. The socio-economic scenario and the availability of recourses, a sequential, progressive, integrated, multidimensional and multilateral approaches are needed to achieve the gradual elimination of child labour in India

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Annexures

**Annex.1 Laws to protect the rights of children in India**

1. Children (Pledging of Labour) Act, 1933 prohibited the work of children under the age of 15 year.
2. Factory Act, 1948 prohibited the work of children under the age of 14 year.
3. Plantation Labour Act, 1951 prohibited the work of children under the age of 14 year.
4. Mines Act, 1952 prohibited the work of children under the age of 18 year.
5. Merchant Shipping Act, 1958 prohibited the work of children under the age of 14 year.
7. The Apprentice Act, 1961 prohibited the work of children under the age of 14 year.
8. Atomic Energy Act, 1962 prohibited the work of children under the age of 18 year.
9. Beedi & Cigar Workers Act, 1966 prohibited the work of children under the age of 14 year.
11. Shops & Establishment Acts (State Laws)(Varying state-wise between 12 to 15 years)
12. Child Labour (Prohibition & Regulation) Act, 1986 prohibited the work of children under the age of 14 year.
Annex.2 Child Labour and Constitutional Provisions in India

**Article 21(A) Right to Education:** The state shall provide free and compulsory education to all children of the age of 6 to 14 years in such manner as the state, by law, may determine.

**Article 24:** Prohibition of employment of children’s in factories – No child below the age of 14 years shall be employed in work in any factory or mine or engaged in any other hazardous employment.

**Article 39:** The state shall in particular direct its policy towards securing- That the health and strength of worker’s, men and women and the tender age of children are not abused and that citizens are forced by economic necessity to enter vocations unsuited to their age or strength.

**Annex. 3 Sector wise Child Labour in the World**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Sectors</th>
<th>Year 2008</th>
<th>Year 2012</th>
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<td></td>
<td>No. of child labour</td>
<td>In Percentage</td>
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<tr>
<td>Agriculture</td>
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<tr>
<td>Industrial</td>
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<tr>
<td>Service Sector</td>
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<td>Others</td>
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Source: ILO, Marking Progress Against Child labour: Global Estimates and Trends, 2000-12

**Annex.4 Sector wise Child Labour in India (2009-10)**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Sector</th>
<th>Child Labour (In Percentage)</th>
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<td>India</td>
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<tr>
<td>Agriculture Sector</td>
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<tr>
<td>Industrial Sector</td>
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</tr>
<tr>
<td>Service Sector</td>
<td>13.00</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Others</td>
<td>4.5</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Source: NSSO Survey, 2009-10 (66th Round)