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GLOBALISATION AND CHILD LABOUR: EVIDENCE FROM INDIA

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ABSTRACT

Child labour is a complex problem basically rooted in poverty. The Government of India has formulated policies since the economic reforms of the early 1990s. Children under fourteen comprise 3.6 per cent of the total labour force in India. Nearly eighty-five per cent are engaged in the traditional agricultural sector, less than nine per cent in manufacturing, services and repairs and only about 0.8 per cent are in factories. The elimination of child labour is a priority and is being implemented at the grass roots level in India. A large number of non-governmental and voluntary organizations are involved in this process along with national and international organisations. This paper reviews the child labour situation in India and analyses the effect of globalisation on child labour.

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I. INTRODUCTION

Global movement against child labour has emerged as an important international debate since the 1990s. According to the International Labour Organisation (ILO), there are more than 350 million children 'economically active' around the world. Discussion on child labour has been stimulated as a contemporary issue on globalisation and international labour standards.ⁱ Incidence of total child labour in India is around 10.4 million and has been declining in recent decades.ⁱⁱ There are enormous regional variations in its incidence and pace of decline.

The current wave of globalisation started after World War II, but accelerated since the 1980s in developed and some developing countries. Is there a direct link between globalisation and child labour?ⁱⁱⁱ The literature on this issue cannot provide a definitive conclusion. Both the proponents and opponents of globalisation have explained the effect of globalisation on child labour with arguments. According to the proponents, the international free market will reduce the necessity of child labour with overall economic development through higher income and standard of living. According to the opponents, globalisation increases the opportunity of exploiting cheap labour particularly from poor countries. Countries like Vietnam, Thailand and Mexico have experienced a clear decline in child labour; while other countries like Bolivia and Zambia have witnessed a decline in schooling and a rise of child labour. As shown in Table 1, labour participation rates for children have declined significantly in different regions of the world. India is slightly above the world average in the case of the children participation rate.^{iv}

Table 1: Labour Participation Rates of Children: 1950-2000

Region	1950	2000
World	27.57	11.32
Africa	38.42	24.92
Latin America and Caribbean	19.36	8.21
Asia	36.06	10.18
Europe	6.49	0.04
India	35.42	12.07
China	47.85	7.86

Source: Basu (1999, pp 1087)

Most of the theoretical literature on child labour (Basu and Van 1998, Basu 2002) focuses on poverty and credit constraints as the main causes of child labour. Other studies based on the impact of trade, technological changes and economic conditions and their effects on incidence of child labour.^v In India, parental poverty and illiteracy; lack of awareness; social and economic circumstances; lack of access to basic and meaningful quality education; high rates of adult unemployment and underemployment; cultural values of the family and society are the major factors generating child labour.

In this paper, we identify various background factors related with the persistence of child labour in India and their changes over the years. The paper is organised as follows. Section II deals with historical perspectives in the Indian context. Section III provides explanations of drivers of child labour and their changes due to globalisation. Levels and rates of change of child labour in Indian states are discussed in Section IV. The final section provides a status report on the initiatives undertaken at the national, state and international levels and their implications.

II. HISTORICAL PERSPECTIVES: THE CHILD LABOUR SITUATION IN INDIA

Child labour is a colossal problem in India and is deep rooted with poverty. Over 400 million people live below the poverty line and 90 per cent of its active population work in the informal sector. According to the 1991 census, there are 11.2 million^{vi} working children out of a total 210 million children aged 5-14 years. Amongst them, 9.8 million are classified as 'main' workers^{vii} and 2.2 million as 'marginal' workers.^{viii}

Table 2 shows vast disparities in literacy rates across gender since the 1950s. Overall the literacy rate has increased from 16 per cent to 65 per cent between 1951 and 2001. Between 1991 and 2001, the number of illiterates has, in absolute terms decreased by 31.9 million. The number of literates, on the other hand, has increased by 203.6 million within 10 years. During this period, the female literacy rate has increased by 14.87 per cent as against 11.72 per cent in the case of males, hence reducing the gap between males and females to 21.7 per cent.

Table 2: Literacy Rates: 1951-2001

Census	Total	Males	Females
1951	16.67	24.95	7.93
1961	24.02	34.44	12.95
1971	29.45	39.45	18.69
1981	43.67	56.50	29.85
1991	52.21	64.13	39.29
2001	65.37	75.85	54.16

Source: *Selected Educational Statistics 2000-01, Department of Secondary & Higher Education, Ministry of Human Resource Development; The Government of India.*

Table 3 presents the educational level of working children in rural and urban areas. In 1991, only 13.61 per cent of male child workers and 8.19 per cent of female child workers had primary level education. A Public Report on Basic Education (PROBE) was produced by the Centre for Development Economics in the Delhi School of Economics along with other institutions. They conducted a survey in 188 randomly selected villages in Bihar and Madhya Pradesh enquiring about schooling facilities in late 1996. The PROBE team also interviewed 1,221 households. Sending children to school was found to be expensive for poor parents. Moreover, the quality of schooling in rural areas discourages parents from making such effort.

Table 3: Percentage Distribution of Working Children by Sex, Residence and Educational Level: 1991

Educational Level	Rural			Urban			Total		
	Male	Female	Person	Male	Female	Person	Male	Female	Person
Illiterate	72.38	82.63	76.38	56.1	68.38	59.34	70.37	81.59	74.59
Literate (without Educational level)	11.39	7.9	10.03	15.21	13.26	14.69	11.86	8.3	10.52
Primary	12.6	7.74	10.7	20.68	13.94	18.9	13.61	8.19	11.57
Middle	3.32	1.63	2.66	7.14	4.01	6.32	3.79	1.8	3.04
Matriculation/Secondary	0.26	0.08	0.19	0.71	0.33	0.61	0.31	0.1	0.23
Higher Secondary./Intermediate/Pre-university/Non-Technical/Technical Certificate Diploma	0.05	0.02	0.04	0.16	0.08	0.14	0.06	0.02	0.05
Total	100	100	100	100	100	100	100	100	100
Number* (Million)	4.96	3.17	81.3	0.7	0.25	0.95	5.66	3.42	9.08

*Note: Data relate to age group 0-14 years. *: Includes main workers only.*

Source: Statistics on Children in India, Hand Book 1998, the National Institute of Public Cooperation and Child Development.

Table 4 analyses the employment status of working children in different sectors both in rural and urban areas in 1993-94. Over 80 per cent boys and girls amongst working children are employed in the rural agricultural sector. More than 56 per cent of them are self-employed without any social protection. In urban areas, 82 per cent of children work in the non-agricultural sector such as manufacturing, mining, housing and are engaged in all sorts of industrial work. Child servitude is both a tradition and a status symbol in India, particularly involving girls. Child workers are mostly from deprived sections of society: with parents living in urban areas with high unemployment and underemployment, from poor or landless rural communities, minorities and immigrants. Along with these factors, the existence of the caste system and sexual discrimination against girls - are also quite common to force children particularly girls to start working from an early age.^{ix}

Table 4: Working Children by Employment Status, Sex, Residence and Industry: 1993-94

Status	Industry	Rural						Urban						Total					
		Male		Female		Person		Male		Female		Person		Male		Female		Person	
		No.	%	No.	%	No.	%	No.	%	No.	%	No.	%	No.	%	No.	%	No.	%
Self-Employed	0	3475	57.08	2969	55.36	6444	56.27	114	11.13	76	12.01	190	11.47	3589	50.46	3045	50.78	6634	50.61
	1-9	532	8.74	514	9.58	1046	9.14	356	34.77	228	36.02	584	35.24	888	12.49	742	12.38	1630	12.44
Total	0-9	4007	65.82	3483	64.94	7490	65.41	470	45.9	304	48.03	774	46.71	4477	62.95	3787	63.16	8264	63.05
Regularsalaried/ Wage employee	0	243	3.99	34	0.63	277	2.42	14	1.37	-	-	14	0.85	257	3.61	34	0.57	291	2.22
	1-9	122	2	68	1.27	190	1.66	270	26.36	164	25.91	434	26.19	392	5.51	232	3.87	624	4.76
Total	0-9	365	5.99	102	1.9	467	4.08	284	27.73	164	25.91	448	27.04	649	9.12	266	4.44	915	6.98
Casual Labour	0	1306	21.45	1467	27.35	2773	24.21	28	2.73	63	9.95	91	5.49	1334	18.76	1530	25.52	2864	21.85
	1-9	410	6.74	311	5.8	721	6.3	242	23.63	102	16.11	344	20.76	652	9.17	413	6.89	1065	8.12
Total	0-9	1716	28.19	1778	33.15	3494	30.51	270	26.37	165	20.06	435	26.25	1986	27.93	1943	32.41	3929	29.97
Total Workers	0	5024	82.52	4470	82.35	9494	82.91	156	15.23	139	21.96	295	17.8	5180	72.83	4609	76.87	9789	74.68
	1-9	1064	17.48	893	16.65	1957	17.09	868	84.77	494	78.04	1362	82.2	1932	27.17	1387	23.13	3319	25.32
Total	0-9	6088	100	5363	100	11451	100	1024	100	633	100	1657	100	7112	100	5996	100	13108	100

Note: Numbers are in thousands. Data relates to age group 5-14 years; Principal as well as Subsidiary usual status workers; 0-Agriculture, 1-9 Non-Agriculture.

Source: Statistics on Children in India, Hand Book 1998, National Institute of Public Cooperation and Child Development.

Child labour is most common in rural areas and mostly in the informal sector. Children often perform hazardous tasks. In the leather tanning industry, children are exposed to corrosive chemicals and bacterial contamination from hides. In the glass manufacturing industry of Firozabad, in northern India, children work under exploitative conditions in small workshops or private homes for low wages. Children weld the ends of glass bangle bracelets, sort bangles, engrave them on grinding wheels, and collect melted glass from boiling stations with iron rods. In the footwear industry of Agra, children work in small workshops and homes for up to 12 hours per day and are exposed to glue fumes and other chemicals.

Child labour is used in the labour-intensive hand-knotted carpet industry in India, where children frequently work in a confined, area and often develop respiratory illnesses and spinal deformities from long hours crouched at the looms. In the stone quarries of the southern state of Tamil Nadu, children break stones into small pieces and carry explosives. Children also labour in brick-kiln operations and the construction industry. In the gemstone industry, children work in private homes or small workshops. The International Labor Organization (ILO) estimates that at least 20,000 children are involved in processing diamonds by cutting and polishing the stones in hazardous conditions.^x

Table 5 presents the sector-wise trends in index of child labour (using 1961=100) between the period 1971 and 2001. In rural areas, both male and female child labour have almost doubled in the manufacturing sector. Both in construction and transport storage and communications female child employment has increased significantly over the last four decades.

In urban areas, both male and female child employment has increased in almost every industry. Only for transport storage and communication has female employment declined. Overall, female employment has increased both in rural and urban areas particularly in urban areas the index has doubled within this period.

Table 5: Sector-wise Trends in Index (Base: 1961=100) of Child Labour in India:1971- 2001

Sector	Male				Female			
	1971	1981	1991	2001	1971	1981	1991	2001
Rural								
Cultivators	72	68	76	65	24	35	39	34
Agricultural Laborers	170	157	174	149	110	137	156	133
Household Industry	18	21	23	19	23	32	36	31
Manufacturing other than household	133	246	272	232	139	271	307	261
Construction	90	112	126	108	76	155	169	143
Trade and Commerce	113	129	140	120	47	72	76	64
Transport Storage & Communication	118	112	128	109	247	164	354	301
Mining	91	70	77	66	75	76	87	74
Other Services	45	26	29	25	30	23	26	22
Total	90	82	91	78	49	63	72	61
Urban								
Cultivators	80	96	122	121	19	35	47	47
Agricultural Laborers	227	285	356	355	132	205	275	273
Household Industry	66	79	100	100	41	60	81	81
Manufacturing other than household	128	194	244	243	127	261	375	349
Construction	105	142	180	180	80	104	144	143
Trade and Commerce	193	226	283	283	87	128	172	171
Transport Storage & Communication	205	183	226	226	282	118	200	199
Mining	79	73	93	93	75	74	103	102
Other Services	61	58	73	73	82	108	145	144
Total	107	131	164	164	72	109	145	144

Source: Indian Labour Organisation, Ministry of Labour, Govt. of India.

III. DRIVERS OF CHILD LABOUR: CHANGES DUE TO GLOBALISATION

Following Chaudhri (1996), four major reinforcing factors are considered here which generate a '*vicious spiral*' resulting in a pervasive and high incidence of child labour in India.^{xi} These are high fertility and infant mortality rates, high rates of illiteracy and non-participation in school education, outdated technology attempting to survive in the face of technical progress and globalisation, and inappropriate public policies dealing with social infrastructures.

The child population within 0-14 years, as projected for 2001, accounts for 33.8 per cent of the total population, where 49.3 per cent are female children.^{xii} Of this amount, 31.2 per cent of the total population is in the 0-14 age group. Birth and death rates in 2001 were 26.1 and 8.7 respectively per thousand. The infant mortality rate has declined sharply from 93 in 1988 to 70.8 in 1999. The

gross enrolment ratio for primary and middle level has increased significantly.^{xiii} During the period from 1950-51 to 1999-2000, the number of primary schools has increased by more than three times from 210,000 in 1950/51 to 642,000 in 1999/2000 whereas the number of upper primary school (grades VI to VIII) has increased by about 15 times from 13,600 in 1950/51 to 198,000 in 1999/2000.

The parental decision to make a school-age child work depends on the costs and benefits of education. Developing countries like India can enjoy the benefits of globalisation in reducing child labour by spending more on education and public health. In the case of India, Swaminathan (1998) finds an increase in the numbers of working children due to recent economic growth in Gujarat, a fast growing state of India. Kambhampati and Rajan (2004) also establish that economic growth increases child labour using data from 15 Indian states with a bivariate probit model in analysing the probability of work and schooling for boys and girls. In other studies Cigno et. al. (2002), a negative relation is found between economic development and the incidence of child labour. In summary, some of these major factors affecting child workers have improved significantly in India since recent years. There are regional disparities amongst various states and union territories. We discuss this in the next section.

IV. CHILD LABOUR: SCENARIO IN DIFFERENT STATES

Information on child labour and schooling (1983-1999 for major states/union territories, UTs) is presented in Table 6. Hours for child workers have increased significantly for Arunachal Pradesh, Assam, Bihar, Gujarat, Madhya Pradesh, Maharashtra, Manipur, Meghalaya and Uttar Pradesh. However, the rate of increase has also been very uneven. Between 1983 and 1999, the national average for working hours for children has almost doubled. Except for Arunachal Pradesh, hours of schooling out of total other activities have increased in all other states and UTs. Children in Kerala, Himachal Pradesh, Nagaland and Pondicherry spend over 90 per cent of their total time in schools. Kerala has long pursued voluntaristic social policies, which have succeeded in reducing poverty and in allowing every child to benefit from a proper education.

Table 6: State-wise Distribution of Child Labour and Schooling: 1983-1999

States/UTs	Child Labour				Schooling			
	1983	1988	1993	1999	1983	1988	1993	1999
Andhra Pradesh	23.38	39.56	28.41	32.51	54.97	59.99	71.38	76.78
Arunachal Pradesh	0.00	50.10	42.73	54.07	57.14	48.19	62.75	55.32
Assam	9.38	29.07	42.73	54.07	57.14	48.19	62.75	55.32
Bihar	18.43	57.39	41.23	30.68	60.03	69.52	77.74	75.89
Gujarat	15.08	32.86	41.04	54.38	59.21	66.50	73.95	74.96
Haryana	18.14	33.45	19.49	17.33	55.98	66.30	80.87	82.73
Himachal Pradesh	11.96	21.88	15.57	7.42	69.91	77.71	87.76	92.75
Jammu & Kashmir	13.64	41.31	23.24	21.29	49.04	58.29	79.09	82.15
Karnataka	21.93	36.52	24.73	25.54	52.28	62.79	77.33	76.89
Kerala	5.34	8.89	6.43	8.13	88.38	90.60	95.15	94.78
Madhya Pradesh	19.02	48.07	37.15	36.92	45.67	51.69	65.02	66.70
Maharashtra	14.36	25.93	19.81	31.06	65.91	73.80	82.63	83.57
Manipur	3.77	19.16	15.99	25.58	57.35	80.57	88.40	87.50
Meghalaya	9.81	50.57	20.60	43.64	65.27	49.32	80.13	82.16
Mizoram	2.32	25.35	55.57	36.75	72.99	74.51	89.22	80.08
Nagaland	2.33	21.79	9.95	10.13	86.05	78.21	90.05	91.45
Orissa	20.20	39.98	34.66	29.58	47.98	59.61	66.92	70.74
Punjab	16.06	28.93	18.30	15.37	66.27	70.62	83.09	85.41
Rajasthan	16.81	50.90	37.94	27.85	41.61	48.85	61.99	72.04
Sikkim	11.88	24.06	9.39	13.78	77.78	75.78	92.19	86.33
Tamil Nadu	16.05	21.07	17.45	21.30	69.54	78.20	85.05	88.65
Tripura	6.92	32.94	13.49	12.94	41.71	66.62	86.67	87.00
Uttar Pradesh	17.87	50.43	37.87	33.02	41.60	49.35	63.72	69.39
West Bengal	19.29	39.77	33.05	27.26	56.75	59.93	72.13	75.00
Andaman & Nicobar Islands	4.53	12.87	15.09	22.69	82.28	86.94	84.99	77.31
Chandigarh	8.07	13.28	8.0	9.32	77.31	86.72	91.20	91.68
Dadra & Nagar Haveli	26.06	58.96	49.08	87.07	41.35	41.04	50.55	64.54
Delhi	8.09	11.12	16.08	14.71	84.86	88.55	90.71	88.64
Goa, Daman & Diu	9.86	10.09	15.85	50.10	73.94	89.33	90.55	84.91
Lakshadweep	0.00	14.72	1.92	4.88	85.71	84.26	98.08	95.12
Pondicherry	10.11	15.28	4.68	10.70	82.22	84.07	94.95	94.14
India	16.76	37.82	30.18	31.19	54.60	61.76	73.39	74.58

Note: National Sample Survey Organisation (NSSO) Data, 1983, 1988, 1993 and 1999. The figure reported for child labour are the total number of hours spent working (market work, household work) as a percentage of the total number of hours spent in all activities (which includes hours spent doing nothing- i.e. neither work nor school) for children aged 5-14 years. The figures reported for schooling are the total number of hours spent attending school as a percentage of the total number of hours spent in all activities for children aged 5-14 years.

Table 7 presents the percentage of working children in each state/UT between 1971 and 2001. Except Haryana, Rajasthan Uttar Pradesh and West Bengal, the incidence has child labour has declined in every other state /UTs.

Table 7: State-wise Distribution of Working Children: 1971-2001

States/Uts	1971	1981	1991	2001
Andhra Pradesh	15.13	14.30	14.73	10.83
Arunachal Pradesh	0.17	0.13	0.11	0.15
Assam	na	na	2.90	2.79
Bihar	9.85	8.08	8.35	8.87
Gujarat	4.82	4.52	4.64	3.86
Haryana	1.28	1.42	0.97	2.01
Himachal Pradesh	0.66	0.73	0.50	0.86
Jammu & Kashmir	0.66	1.89	na	1.39
Karnataka	7.52	8.30	8.65	6.53
Kerala	1.04	0.68	0.31	0.21
Madhya Pradesh	10.34	12.45	11.99	8.46
Maharashtra	9.19	11.42	9.47	6.07
Manipur	0.15	0.15	0.15	na
Meghalaya	0.28	0.33	0.31	0.43
Mizoram	na	0.05	0.15	0.21
Chhatisgarh	na	na	na	2.90
Jharkhand	na	na	na	3.23
Uttaranchal	na	na	na	0.56
Nagaland	0.13	0.12	0.15	na
Orissa	4.58	5.15	4.01	3.00
Punjab	2.16	1.59	1.27	1.41
Rajasthan	5.46	6.01	6.86	10.03
Sikkim	0.15	0.06	0.05	0.13
Tamil Nadu	6.63	7.15	5.13	3.33
Tripura	0.16	0.18	0.15	0.17
Uttar Pradesh	12.34	10.52	12.49	15.31
West Bengal	4.76	4.44	6.31	6.81
Andaman & Nicobar Islands	0.01	0.01	0.01	0.02
Chandigarh	0.01	0.01	0.02	0.03
Dadra & Nagar Haveli	0.03	0.03	0.04	0.03
Delhi	0.16	0.19	0.24	0.33
Daman & Diu	0.07	0.07	0.01	0.01
Goa	na	na	0.04	0.03
Lakshadweep	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00
Pondicherry	0.03	0.03	0.02	0.02

Figures are in percentage. Figures for 1991 relates to workers of age group 5-14 years; Source: Annual Report 2002-03, Ministry of Labour Govt. of India.

Rajya Sabha Unstarred Question No. 2295, dated on 23.12.2004.

na: Not Available

In Table 8, information on child labour is presented for all states and union territories according to sex. For all states, the percentage of both male and female child workers has declined during the period between 1961 and 1991.

Table 8: Percentage of Child Labour by Sex in Different States of India: 1961-91

States	1961		1971		1981		1991	
	Male	Female	Male	Female	Male	Female	Male	Female
Andhra Pradesh	15.7	11.2	11.8	6.6	9.8	7.2	9.3	7.2
Assam	7.8	6.4	6.0	0.1	-	-	-	-
Bihar	9.6	5.9	6.7	1.9	4.5	1.6	4.6	1.6
Gujarat	7.3	6.6	6.2	2.6	4.7	2.2	4.6	2.2
Haryana	(9)	(9)	5.0	0.6	4.0	1.1	4.0	1.1
Himachal Pradesh	12.1	18.1	4.3	5.8	2.9	4.3	3.0	4.6
Jammu & Kashmir	1.7	6.3	6.1	0.9	6.8	1.9	-	-
Karnataka	11.9	8.2	9.3	3.7	8.3	4.9	8.1	5.1
Kerala	2.2	1.9	1.4	1.2	0.8	0.8	0.8	0.8
Madhya Pradesh	11.8	10.8	8.0	4.1	7.4	5.3	7.4	5.5
Maharashtra	8.6	8.8	5.7	3.7	5.6	4.9	5.1	4.7
Manipur	3.2	7.6	3.3	3.9	2.6	3.7	-	-
Meghalaya	-	-	8.0	5.8	8.0	5.8	-	-
Nagaland	13.9	16.6	6.1	8.0	4.5	5.8	-	-
Orissa	12.3	6.6	9.1	1.5	7.4	2.4	7.5	2.6
Punjab	7.9	3.8	7.7	0.1	5.2	0.3	5.1	0.3
Rajasthan	13.6	12.1	7.4	2.7	5.3	2.7	5.8	3.1
Sikkim	23.1	25.4	19.5	19.3	5.3	7.4	-	-
Tamil Nadu	9.3	6.7	6.2	2.9	5.7	4.5	5.4	4.4
Tripura	5.2	3.3	4.2	0.8	3.4	1.4	-	-
Uttar Pradesh	8.6	4.1	5.5	1.4	4.3	0.9	5.1	4.4
West Bengal	5.0	1.2	4.7	0.7	4.0	0.9	3.9	1.0
All India	9.4	6.6	6.6	2.6	5.5	2.8	2.9	1.6

Note: Percentage from total child population; Source: Census of India 1961, 1971, 1981 & 1991.

Table 9 and 10 present the funding allocation and coverage of the National Child Labour Projects (NCLP) for different states. Andhra Pradesh, Orissa, Tamil Nadu, Uttar Pradesh and West Bengal have received the greatest shares of funding and also these 5 states together covers over 77 per cent of schools in India under this program in 2002/03.

Table 9: Funding Allocation amongst different States under the Scheme of National Child Labour Projects (NCLPs) in India: 2000-2005

(Rs. in Lakh)					
States	2000-01	2001-02	2002-03	2003-04	2004-05
Andhra Pradesh	118.33	1657.67	1730.99	1693.16	2322.21
Bihar	190.74	95.02	150.38	205.36	282.06
Chhatisgarh	0	105.66	187.05	168.47	230.81
Jharkhand	0	174.59	164.78	182.87	192.86
Karnataka	97.44	211.47	296.35	320.57	331.01
Madhya Pradesh	184.11	101.29	150.4	134.99	445.21
Maharashtra	38.19	56.41	134.26	102.24	168.48
Orissa	765.21	1232.13	337.1	1132.67	1312.64
Punjab	59.96	114.64	187.54	239.37	184.05
Rajasthan	180.41	309.39	337.1	352.07	443.04
Tamil Nadu	301.71	655.72	749.15	746.58	724.63
Uttar Pradesh	336.23	766.99	841.74	759.12	754.15
West Bengal	345.15	521.32	500.77	456.21	742.36
Total	3683.48	6002.3	5767.61	6493.68	8133.51

Source: *Rajya Sabha Unstarred Question No. 3785, dated 28.04.2005.*

Year: Period of fiscal year in India is April to March, e.g. year shown as 1990-91 relates to April 1990 to March 1991.

Units: (a) 1 Lakh (or Lac) = 100000.

(b) 1 Crore (or Cr.) = 10000000.

Table 10: State-wise Coverage under the NCPLs in India: 2002-03

States	No. of Districts	Sanctioned Coverage		Actual Coverage	
		No. of Schools	No. of Children	No. of Schools	No. of Children
Andhra Pradesh	22	1033	51650	1021	51820
Bihar	3	85	6500	84	6216
Chhatisgarh	5	139	9900	98	5128
Jharkhand	5	114	5700	114	5700
Karnataka	5	190	9500	141	6689
Madhya Pradesh	3	88	4600	84	4333
Maharashtra	2	74	3700	69	3570
Orissa	18	696	39550	628	34855
Rajasthan	6	180	9000	161	8050
Tamil Nadu	9	425	21900	414	21411
Uttar Pradesh	11	524	27000	520	25067
West Bengal	8	347	17350	299	14950
Punjab	3	107	5350	107	5350
India	100	4002	211700	3740	193139

Source: *Annual Report 2002-03, Ministry of Labour, Govt. of India.*

V. POLICY IMPLICATIONS AND CONCLUSIONS

Finally our major question is here: How is the Indian Government performing in combating the child labour problem in the era of globalisation? The answer is mixed. Challenges have been met in some areas like education, health and overall development of children in improving the situation since the early 1990s. India has not yet ratified ILO Conventions 138 and 182 on banning child labour and eliminating the worst forms of exploitation. A national law enacted in 1986 (The Child Labour Prohibition and Regulation Act), introduced compulsory education for under 14s and prohibited child labour in dangerous sectors.^{xiv} The Government prohibits forced and bonded child labour but not able to enforce this prohibition. The law prohibits the exploitation of children in the workplace. There is no overall minimum age for child labour. Work by children under 14 years of age was barred completely in "hazardous industries," which includes among other things, passenger, goods, and mail transport by railway. Child labour is prohibited in certain hazardous industries where there are specific age limits for specific jobs. In occupations and processes in which child labour is permitted, work by children is permissible up to maximum of 6 hours between 8 a.m. and 7 p.m., with 1 day's rest weekly. The enforcement of child labour laws is the responsibility of the state governments; however, enforcement is inadequate, especially in the informal sector in which most children are employed.

Recently, a Supreme Court decision increased penalties for employers of children in hazardous industries to \$US 430 (20,000 Rs) per child employed and established a welfare fund for formerly employed children. The Government is required to find employment for an adult member of the child's family or pay \$US 108 (5,000 Rs) to the family. According to the South Asian Coalition on Child Servitude (SACCS) the authorities pursue thousands of cases every year against employers. The Supreme Court ruling also help the local government officials to be more aware of the prohibitions against child labour in hazardous industries. This in some cases helped improve cooperation between local officials and NGOs like SACCS that removed children from hazardous workplaces.

Over 80 per cent of child labour in India is found in occupational categories for which neither regulation nor prohibition is contemplated by the ILO and the Government of India. Policy-makers, if they are serious about reducing deprivation of children and child labour in India, they need to devote a substantial part of their efforts in this area to enforce the existing laws in reality. The Government participated in the ILO's International Program on the Elimination of Child Labor (IPEC). Approximately 145,000 children were removed from work and received education and stipends through IPEC programs since they began in the country in 1992. State government laws set minimum wages, hours of work, and safety and health standards. The Factories Act mandates an 8-hour workday, a 49-hour working week, and minimum working conditions. These standards

were generally enforced and accepted in the modern industrial sector; however, not observed in informal sector and in less economically stable industries.

In 1994, government created a National Authority for the Elimination of Child Labour (NAECL). The Ministry of Labour and Employment has been implementing the National Child Labour Policy (NCLP) through the National Child Labour Projects (NCLPs). Around 100 projects were launched under the NCLPs across the country during the Ninth Five-Year Plan (1997/02). The government has committed to extend the coverage of the NCLPs to an additional 150 districts with a budgetary allocation to over Rs 6 billion during the Tenth Five-Year Plan (2003/07). The ILO's IPEC programme along with the NCLPs scheme has started both integrated and state based approaches.^{xv} The Integrated Area Specific Programme (IASP) started in 2000, looked at all interlinked issues that cause child labour at the district level. This has been completed. The state based programme covers a state as a whole. The Andhra Pradesh State Based Project (APSBP) is one example addressing the issue of child labour covering geographical boundary of the state with all sectors.^{xvi} The United Nation's Children Fund (UNICEF) supported initiatives are also operating in different districts. A great number of Non Governmental Organisations (e.g. Action Aid India, Butterflies, CARE India, CINI ASHA, Prayas, World Vision India among others) both local and international also exist in assisting working children.

The process of monitoring and evaluating various schemes sometimes suffers from serious drawbacks. There is a lack of timely and effective feedback from high to lower levels, large amount of paperwork at all levels, and finally, the failure to establish a link between costs and benefits. The existing evaluation techniques used by the government to assess schemes like the Integrated Child Development Scheme (ICDS) are criticised and there is a need for independent agencies-which can be more reliable in monitoring these schemes. During the period of the tenth five-year plan, the ICDS will be extended to 5652 projects covering 54.3 million children and 10.9 million mothers.

Strategies are being implemented to improve the child labour situation under the current five-year plan. Major schemes for educational improvement include the Universal Elementary Education (UEE)^{xvii}, 'Sarva Shiksha Abhiyan', mid-day meals scheme, the schemes for female and under privileged child workers. Also various schemes, such as 'Operation Blackboard' scheme^{xviii}, establishment of Colleges of Teacher Education (CTEs) and Institutes of Advanced Studies in Education (IASEs) for pre-service and in-service training for secondary school teachers have been introduced to improve the quality of teachers. To improve the supply, quality and retention power of of education system, the authorities must act at central, state and district levels. More collaborative efforts with the private sector and expansion of the role of private initiatives will help in this respect.

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NOTES

- i Child labour is defined following the ILO Convention 138 and 182. Convention 138 includes working children under age 14 except light work, which is permitted for children aged between 12-14) including 'worst forms' of work performed by children under age 18. The worst forms of child labour includes slavery or compulsory labour and child trafficking, use of children for prostitution and other illicit activities under Convention 182.
- ii Source: Ministry of Labour and Employment, Working Group Report on Strategy for the 10th Plan.
- iii There are four categories of children-working only, working and attending school, only attending school and not working nor attending school (nowhere children).
- iv The incidence of child labour is higher in Africa than anywhere else in the world. Economic decline, war, famine and HIV/AIDS have combined to prevent the decline in child labour in this region.
- v See Jafarey and Lahiri (2002), Cigno et.al. (2002), Edmonds and Pavcnik (2004), tested the trade effect on child labour, Foster and Rosenzweig (1996), Neri and Thomas (2001) analyse the effect of technological progress on child labour.
- vi Registrar General, Government of India, Census of India 1991: Working Children in India, An Analysis of the 1991 Census Data.
- vii Those who have worked for 183 days or 6 months preceding the date of enumeration.
- viii Those who have not worked for more than 183 days, but done some work.
- ix Mukhopadhyay, A. (1994) finds that all female children in rural households are in fact disguised child labourers. The study is based on household surveys in West Bengal, Bihar and eastern Uttar Pradesh.
- x These two paragraphs are reproduced from the U.S. Department of Labor website. Source: <http://www.dol.gov/ILAB/media/reports/iclp/Advancing1/html/india.htm>
- xi Positive clustering of these factors reduces the incidence of child labour and is called as 'virtuous spiral' by Chaudhri (1996).
- xii 6 per cent are infants below 1 year; 12 per cent are toddlers in the age-group 1-2 years; 22.2 per cent are in the age group 3-5 years and 59.8 per cent are in the age group of 6-14 years.
- xiii The figures are 80.5 per cent in 1980-81 and 94.9 per cent in 1999-2000 for primary level; and corresponding figures are 41.9 per cent and 58.8 per cent at the middle level. Dropout rate for primary and middle levels are 40.3 and 54.6 per cent respectively in 2001.
- xiv The Act prohibits employing children below 14 years in 13 occupations and 57 processes, which are hazardous to their lives and health.
- xv A number of national institutions such as the V.V.Giri National Labour Institute (VVGNI) and the National Institute of Rural Development (NIRD) have contributed significantly in bringing child labour issues in forefront.
- xvi The INDUS Child Labour project is an Indo-US initiative started in 2000 covering selective districts of Uttar Pradesh, Madhya Pradesh, Maharashtra and Tamil Nadu.
- xvii Under this scheme, all children between age 6-14 should have primary schooling by 2007, drop-out rate to be reduced to less than 10 per cent by 2007, improving the quality of education in all respects to ensure reasonable learning outcomes at the elementary level, particularly in literacy, numerics and life skills.
- xviii Providing infrastructure facilities, additional teachers to primary schools.