



Child Rights Issues in India

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Abstract

One-sixth of the world's population lives in India, which also has the most children per capita in the entire world. Children in India deal with a variety of problems, such as child labour, child marriage, starvation, access to school, and a lack of essential amenities including healthcare and basic services. India also has some of the highest rates of child labour, child abuse, and child trafficking in the world. Poverty, cultural norms, and limited access to services are only a few of the causes of these problems. To safeguard the rights of all children in India, it is crucial to solve these challenges. The numerous child rights concerns in India, the various parties involved in addressing these concerns, and potential solutions to these concerns will all be covered in this essay.

Keywords : Child Labour India, Child Marriage India, Child Abuse India, Child Trafficking India, and Education Rights India

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Introduction

The Indian government and the international community are very concerned about issues relating to children's rights in India. The problems include child labor, child marriage, child trafficking, illiteracy, exploitation, starvation, poor health, access to justice, and inadequate protection of children's rights. The Child Labour (Prohibition and Regulation) Amendment Act 2016, the Juvenile Justice (Care and Protection of Children) Act 2015, and the Right of Children to Free and Compulsory Education Act 2009 are just a few of the measures the Indian government has taken to address these challenges. Despite these initiatives, there is still a long way to go until all Indian children are safe and developing properly.

Child rights concerns in India have an impact on the general wellbeing of children in the nation. These include the rights to safe and secure living conditions, an education, protection from exploitation, access to health care, and decision-making power. India has adopted a variety of laws and policies to defend children's rights in addition to being a signatory to the United Nations Convention on the Rights of the Child. Despite these initiatives, India still has to solve a

number of problems in order to guarantee that all children's rights are upheld. These problems include child abuse, child trafficking, child marriage, and child labour. In addition, a lot of youngsters in India are malnourished or undernourished, which can have a long-term negative effect on their health and general wellbeing. It is essential that the government, civil society organisations, and people collaborate to address these challenges if children's rights are to be protected in India.

In India, concerns for children's rights are very important, especially in light of the country's explosive economic expansion. Millions of children in India still lack access to basic services and are victims of exploitation, abuse, and neglect despite the country's economic achievements. Children in India confront a variety of difficulties, including gender inequality, poverty, malnutrition, limited access to school and healthcare, and a lack of sufficient protection from exploitation and abuse. The Juvenile Justice Act and the Integrated Child Protection Scheme are only two of the actions the Indian government has taken to address these problems. To guarantee that all children in India have the rights and protections they deserve, however, there is still considerable work to be done. We'll examine some of the



most important child rights concerns India is now dealing with in this piece.

The majority of children in the world live in India, where a number of problems jeopardise their rights. The Indian government has put in place a number of laws and regulations to guarantee the protection of children's rights, however there are still many issues to be resolved in this regard. These include things like child marriage, underage labour, starvation, and a lack of educational opportunities. In addition, child abuse and exploitation instances have increased alarmingly in India, adding to the load already placed on the youth of the country. The government has made some progress, but there is still a long way to go before children's rights are fully protected in India.

Literature review

India has a sizable amount of literature on matters relating to children's rights. Child labour, child marriage, child trafficking, access to school, nutrition and food security, health, and protection from abuse and exploitation are only a few of the issues covered in this literature. According to studies, child labour is a major issue in India. According to the most recent data from the National Sample Survey Office (NSSO), 8.3 million kids between the ages of 5 and 14 work in some capacity. Unpaid family employees are not included in this number. According to studies, the bulk of these kids come from low-income homes and frequently work risky, low-wage occupations. In India, child marriage is a significant problem. Despite being prohibited by law, child marriage is nonetheless widely practised. According to estimates, 47% of Indian females get married before turning 18 years old (Fottrell et al.2021). A number of unfavourable effects, such as lower educational achievement, greater health risks, and economic disadvantage, have been associated with child marriage. In India, child trafficking is a serious issue.

<i>Child Labour</i>	<i>A whopping 10.1 million children between the ages of 5 and 14 are said to be working in hazardous conditions in India, one of the countries with the highest rates of child labour worldwide.</i>
<i>Education</i>	<i>In spite of attempts by the government to increase access</i>

	to education, 25 million children in India still do not attend school.
<i>Child Marriage</i>	One of the highest incidences of child marriage worldwide is in India. Approximately 47% of girls are married before turning 18 years old.
<i>Child trafficking</i>	Human trafficking has India as a prominent source, destination, and transit country. Each year, between 40,000 and 50,000 kids are reportedly trafficked in India.
<i>Child Abuse</i>	It is estimated that up to 53% of children in India experience physical abuse.
<i>Child Nutrition</i>	Malnutrition affects nearly half of India's children, with 48% of children under the age of 5 suffering from chronic malnutrition.
<i>Child Health</i>	With an anticipated 6.3 million newborn deaths in 2018, India has one of the worst rates of infant mortality in the world.

Table 1: Child Rights Issues in India

Source: Made by author

The National Crime Records Bureau estimates that around 11,000 cases of child trafficking were reported in 2018. The majority of these children are trafficked for the purpose of forced labour, domestic servitude, and sexual exploitation. Education is an important factor in reducing the incidence of child labour and child marriage. However, access to education in India is unequal, with children from marginalized communities often facing the greatest barriers. There are also disparities in the quality of education provided in rural and urban areas. In terms of nutrition and food security, recent studies have shown that over half of Indian children aged 5 to 17 are stunted and over a third are underweight. This indicates chronic malnutrition and food insecurity. Poor nutrition can negatively impact a child's physical and cognitive development, and can lead to long-term health problems. Finally, there are



concerns about the protection of children from violence and exploitation. Studies have highlighted the prevalence of physical and sexual violence against children in India, as well as other forms of exploitation including child labour and trafficking. It is estimated that an estimated 5-7 million children are engaged in exploitative labour in India. Overall, there is a large body of literature on child rights issues in India (Popovich et al.2019). It is clear that children in India face a range of challenges, from child labor and child marriage to inadequate access to education and nutrition, and lack of protection from violence and exploitation. It is essential that effective policies and programs are implemented to address these issues, and ensure that all children in India can realize their rights.

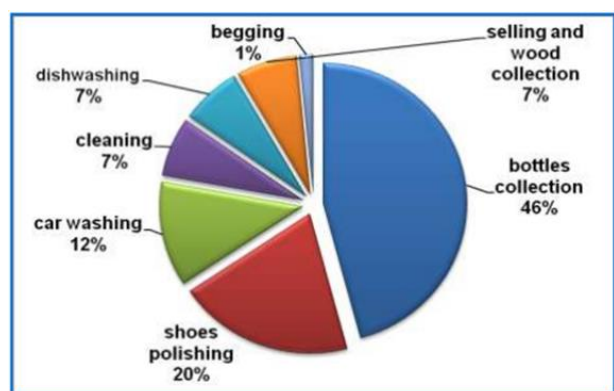


Figure 4: Different types of works done by child labours in India

(Source: Narayan et al.2019 p 55)

According to the National Crime Records Bureau, there were 11,000 or so reports of child trafficking in 2018. Most of these kids are trafficked to be used as domestic labourers, sexual slaves, or for forced labour. In order to lower the prevalence of child labour and child marriage, education is a key aspect. However, there are disparities in access to education in India, with children from disadvantaged communities frequently encountering the most difficulties. The level of education offered in rural and urban locations differs as well. Recent research on nutrition and food security have revealed that more than half of Indian children between the ages of 5 and 17 are stunted, and more than a third are underweight. This is a sign of persistent undernutrition and food insecurity. A child's physical and cognitive development can

be hampered by poor nutrition, which can also result in long-term health issues. Concerns have been raised regarding safeguarding kids from abuse and exploitation. Studies have shown how common child abuse—both physical and sexual—is in India, along with other forms of exploitation like child labour and trafficking. In India, it is thought that 5-7 million youngsters work in exploitative conditions. In India, there is a substantial corpus of literature on topics relating to children's rights (Popovich et al.2019). It is obvious that children in India confront a variety of difficulties, including child labour and child marriage, poor access to nutrition and education, and a lack of protection from exploitation and abuse. In order to solve these problems and guarantee that all children in India may exercise their rights, it is crucial that effective policies and programmes be put in place.

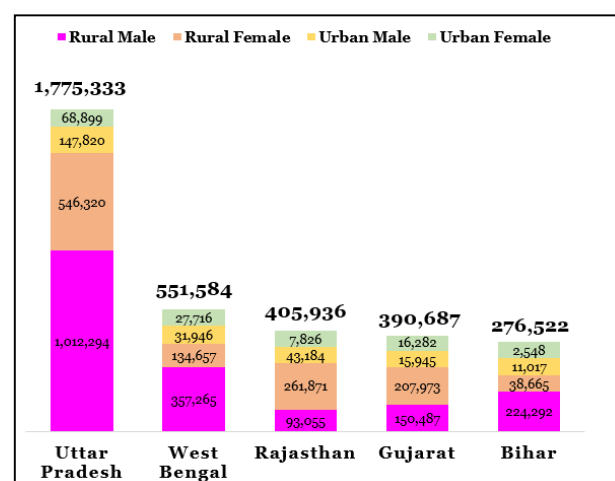


Figure 1: child labour count in different states of India

(Source: Gopalan et al. 2020)

The literature on child rights in India is vast and covers a wide range of topics. The key issues that are discussed include child labor, child trafficking, child abuse and exploitation, education, health and nutrition. The literature also discusses the various challenges faced by children in India, such as poverty, inequality and lack of access to basic services. In addition, the literature highlights the various initiatives taken by the government and non-governmental organizations to address these issues. The literature on child rights in India also provides



an insight into the various opportunities that exist in the field. These include initiatives to promote child welfare, such as the Integrated Child Protection Scheme, the Prime Minister's Beti Bachao Beti Padhao Yojana and the National Policy for Children. In addition, the literature also discusses the various measures that can be taken to ensure that children are protected and their rights are respected. Overall, the literature on child rights in India provides a comprehensive overview of the current situation and the various challenges and opportunities within the field (Bageshwar et al.2021). It also highlights the various initiatives taken by the government and non-governmental organizations to address the issue. However, the literature also points to several gaps and opportunities for further research. These include the need to better understand the root causes of child rights violations, the need to strengthen child protection mechanisms and the need to ensure that children's rights are respected and protected.

Child rights issues in India is a complex and multifaceted issue. Children in India face a wide range of challenges such as poverty, abuse, exploitation, inadequate access to education, lack of healthcare and nutrition, lack of protection from abuse, trafficking and neglect, and lack of access to justice. These issues have been well documented in various studies conducted by various organizations and in various forms including reports, books, and policy documents. In India, the Constitution of India provides for the protection of the rights of children under Articles 23, 24, and 39. The Protection of Child Rights Act (POCRA) was passed in 2006, which provides for the protection of children from any form of physical, mental, sexual or economic abuse (Bhalotra et al.2021). Additionally, India has signed and ratified the United Nations Convention on the Rights of the Child (CRC), which requires the government to take necessary measures to protect and promote the rights of children.

In order to better understand the child rights issues in India, it is important to look at the broader context in which these issues arise. India is characterized by large disparities in income, education, and health care, as well as by regional disparities in access to basic services. In addition, India is home to a large population of

children who are vulnerable to exploitation and abuse, particularly those children who are living in poverty and living in rural areas. Recent research has highlighted the importance of understanding how child rights issues are interrelated and how they are shaped by social and economic factors. In particular, research has explored the relationship between poverty and child rights violations, how the lack of access to education and health care affects children's rights, and how gender discrimination and the prevalence of child marriage are linked to child rights violations (Swaminathan et al.2019).Overall, research on child rights issues in India has provided valuable insights into the complexity of the issue and the need for comprehensive solutions. It is clear that the rights of children in India must be protected and promoted through policies and programs that are tailored to the specific needs and contexts of different regions and communities.

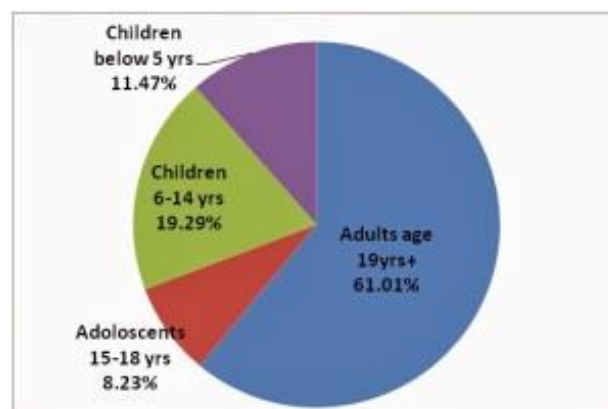


Figure 2: Ages of child labour in India
(Source: Baviskar 2020 p89)

Child rights issues in India have been a major concern in recent years due to the country's large population of children. Issues such as child labor, child abuse, child marriage, and child trafficking are some of the most pressing problems facing India today. The government has taken numerous steps to address these issues, but there is still a long way to go. This paper aims to review the literature on child rights issues in India and discuss the various interventions that have been implemented to address them (Ganorkar RA, et al.2014). The literature on child rights issues in India can be divided into two main categories: national-level studies and regional-level studies. National-level studies provide an overview of child rights



issues in India as a whole, while regional-level studies focus on specific states or regions. National-level studies have highlighted the severity of child labor, child abuse, and child marriage in India.

**Total Grants Under National Child Labour Project,
2007-08 To 2012-13**

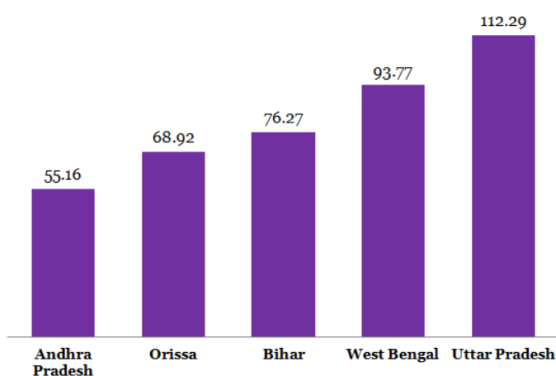


Figure 3: Growth of child labours across India

(Source: Veda et al. 2019 p 13)

The 2012 National Survey on Child Abuse by the Ministry of Women and Child Development reported that nearly 53% of children aged 5-18 years had experienced some form of abuse. Furthermore, the International Labour Organization estimates that there are 5.5 million child laborers in India, with the highest concentration of child laborers in the agricultural sector. Child marriage is also a major issue in India, with an estimated 47% of girls aged 20-24 having been married before the age of 18 (Karunanidhi et al.2021). Regional-level studies have provided a more in-depth analysis of child rights issues in specific states or regions. For example, a study in the state of Rajasthan found that the prevalence of child labor was higher than the national average, with an estimated 8% of children aged 5-14 engaged in some form of work. Similarly, in the state of Kerala, a study found that half of the child laborers were below the age of 14. These studies highlight the need for targeted interventions in specific regions in order to address child rights issues in India.

Conclusion

Child rights issues in India are numerous and varied. They range from lack of access to basic

healthcare and education, to child labor and exploitation, to child marriage and trafficking. In addition, the issue of malnutrition and the lack of adequate nutrition is a major problem in India. Despite the efforts of the government, child rights violations continue to be a major problem in India. Given the gravity of the situation, it is essential that the government, civil society, and other stakeholders work together to address child rights issues in India. This includes setting up effective legal frameworks, ensuring access to basic services, and creating awareness among the general public. Furthermore, it is also important that the government works towards creating an enabling environment for children to grow and develop in a safe and secure environment. Only then can India take steps towards achieving its goal of protecting the rights of its children.

The issue of child rights in India is a complex and multi-faceted one. It is one of the most pressing issues that the country faces and it is essential that all stakeholders, including the government, civil society, and families, come together to ensure that the rights of all children in India are respected and protected. The government has taken several steps to address the issue, including the adoption of the Juvenile Justice Act, the Right to Education Act, and the Protection of Children from Sexual Offences Act. Additionally, it is important to ensure that all stakeholders are aware of their responsibilities towards children and that they are held accountable for any violations of child rights. Finally, it is essential to ensure that all children have access to basic education, health care, and nutrition, and that they are given all the necessary support to reach their potential.

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