

A CASE STUDY OF EMPLOYMENT CONDITIONS OF CHILD LABOURS IN GEMS AND JEWELLERY INDUSTRIES OF JAIPUR

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ABSTRACT

The work settings of the organization play a crucial role in determining the efficiency, productivity and work pleasure of the employees. The organizations need to invest more of their time and resources in its the human capital for survival and sustainability .To achieve the competitive edge it is indispensable to keep the workforce satiable so that the profits and financial rewards flow in the favor of the organizations. Today because of dynamic business environment it is hard challenge to make the workforce happy for long term benefits and getting g rid of bottlenecks in the production and profitability. Thus ,to achieve the aforesaid objectives the business need to be employee focused and furnish them with the amicable working environment .The objective of this paper is to study the work settings of the child labour employed in gems and jewellery industries of Jaipur and its subsequent effects.

Keywords: Work Environment, Employee Satisfaction.

INTRODUCTION

Work organizations today have to overcome many challenges to achieve a competitive edge in the economy. They need to excel in delivering the quality outputs to the society .For achieving the objectives and vision of the organization; the support and contribution of its employees plays a pivotal role .Organization need to collaborate with the employees to outshine and survive. The contributions, efforts and commitment of the workforce go a long distant in success of the business. Henceforth, it is a prime responsibility of the organizations to provide quality work settings to the employees in terms of physical and behavioral factors. It is only that when the employees deliver their best towards the organization that it will sustain and survive for long in this dynamic business world. Investment on human capital is indispensable for remarkable achievements of the organization objectives .Most important challenge for the organizations are to satisfy the workforce and give them the sense of pride and pleasure while working for the organization. They are the primary players in the success and achieving the organizational objectives. The organizations that ignore the workforce tends to get internally weak and are unable to innovate and expand.Thus,foremost it the workforce that should be made more productive and proficient by investing more and more on them in terms of providing physical and social infrastructure. Job satisfaction and work pleasure are the factors that act as motivators to the employees in achieving the mission and vision of the organization.

WHO IS A CHILD LABOUR??

"Child labour" is work for children under age 18 that in some way harms or exploits them - physically, mentally, morally, or by blocking access to education.

STATEMENT OF THE PROBLEM

The crisis of child labour is not a new occurrence, but was never highlighted as it is today. Various studies indicate that child labour is widely used in certain hazardous occupations and processes of industrial sector, which are prohibited under the laws. The gems and jewellery industry of Jaipur is one of them. Children are exposed to accidental and other injuries at work due to hazardous working conditions and unfurnished environments leading to severe health hazards. Child labour is sheltered from social, economic and physical harm, which can persist to influence them for their lifetime and can lead to irrecoverable consequences costing their skill, abilities and lives. In lieu of it, meticulous study of working conditions of these labours in the gems and jewellery factories will help us make an analysis of the factors that are deterrent and the motivators leading to work, physical and mental fatigue.

SCOPE OF THE STUDY

The study attempt to study the working conditions of child labor in the t gems and jewellery factories of Jaipur. The jewellery and gem polishing industry in Jaipur have been chosen for this study because these industries are majorly functional in the informal sector and employ mainly poor and small children working as child labours.

OBJECTIVES OF THE STUDY

To study the abhorrent conditions of the employment of child and adult labour in the gem and jewellery polishing industries in Johari Bazaar, Jaipur.

RESEARCH METHODOLOGY

No formal questionnaire was used for the interviews with the child labour working in gems and jewellery industries. The universe of the study is gems and jewellery factories of Jaipur. Child labours between the age of 5 to 14 years employed in these factories were observed extensively working in the kind of factory settings they were forced to work in. Hence, Observational method of research was used in it as it was important to study a phenomenon in its natural setting. Observation leads to an in depth and intensive study of an incident, situation and/or surroundings and the performance of the participants in those setting. As it is tremendously problematical due to the understanding of the topic of child labour in India, especially in the gems and jewellery industry, it was often difficult to get detailed information on working conditions of child labour from them through interview or survey. Hence, observational method was deemed fit to collect the factual and unmanipulated information of the problem under study.

CHILD LABOUR TOIL IN JAIPUR'S GEMS INDUSTRY

Almost at its conception, Jaipur has been rich in the craftsmen and skilled stonecutters and jewellers under the patronage of then ruler Jai Singh II. The jewellery they created include gem stones and other studded jewellery with fine art men ship and skills. The Johari Bazaar, one of the city's oldest markets was custom-built by Jai Singh II and was made the hub of Indian jewellery and gems market of world. The bazaar is till date home to numerous small gems and jewellery workshops and emporiums. Jaipur is built upon this rich custom, with today's entrepreneurs excelling in trade of gems and jewellery trading and ranks first in world contributing to export revenue earnings as well as modern jewellery manufacturing (Determining the total number of people working in the Jaipur gem and jewellery trade is difficult. The sector includes the city's structured gemstone cutting and jewellery factories, as well as adjoining areas and numerous cottage industries where families and households do contract manufacturing. It is estimated that it is over 200,000, and some estimates put it closer to 300,000, with around 150,000 sizeable cottage industries and people involved in the gemstone cutting sector. (<https://www.gia.edu/gems-gemology/winter-2016-jaipur-industry>).

Gems and jewellery industry require perfect precision and the skillfulness and it is the worker's sharp vision and nimble hands that give the final shape to the stones and gems which are given proper polishing and finish. Children are considered more appropriate in doing this task. The child labours can be easily threatened and convinced to work in deplorable working conditions and are easy to be exploited so they form the majority workforce of this industry. They can be forced to work for long working hours incessantly under the influence of fear and threatening so they are more preferred in gems and jewellery trade and industry.

Hence, these are the reasons why child labour is employed comparatively on extensive scale in this industry. Today, the country enjoys a near-monopoly in gems and jewellery business and is the chief exporter of it. The major factor leading to the prosperity of the industry is the low wages of worker and cheap availability of skilled worker with ease. There is clear evidence that as the gems and jewellery industry has grown, it has also lead to more and more poor rural families to move into cities and often the entire families are seen to be employed in the industry to make up the living.

MAJOR FINDINGS OF WORKING CONDITIONS OF CHILD LABOURS IN GEMS AND JEWELLERY INDUSTRIES OF JAIPUR

The world's widest gems and jewellery industries is in India and this industry constitutes almost around 80 per cent of the total export value

Jaipur is said to be the hub of gems and jewellery business with huge number of industries located here. One main reason for the explosive growth in this industry is the availability of skilled and inexpensive labour. This industry is intensively labour intensive industry because of the nature of the work and the constant strain of polishing and cutting these gem stones.

After visiting the gems and jewelers industries located at Jaipur; we became familiar with the working conditions of the child labors in these industries. The fact that came to our knowledge was very gruesome and depressive. Hence, the findings of the observation of the work environment states that:

- Child labours were forced to work under the detrimental working surroundings inside the factories. The working areas were congested, ill ventilated and dark without any light. The factories were

operational in the basements in the Johari Bazaar so were not at all maintained and were not in good repair.

- The child laborers' between the age of 5 to 14 years were working continuously at a stretch without any respite in such an unfavorable working conditions so they were noticed to be totally exhausted and were feeling work fatigue. Stretched and long working hours from dawn to dusk, the children were seen to suffer from poor eyesight, hand burns, severe cough and even finger deformity due to handling of precious stones and then fixing the tiny stones in the necklaces and other jewelers. Hence, the delicate fingers were seem to be chapped and the skin was torn and brittle with minor burns in the hands and arms
- Factory settings were cramped, dirty and ill illuminated with severe suffocation and immensely hot and humid lacking proper arrangements for ventilation to have fresh air and sunlight hence, the surroundings smelled pungent.
- The floor was contaminated with the dust of polishing of gems and jewellery and corroded nails making it very slippery and thus was very uneven and risky in walking leading to health hazard.
- The dust exposure in gems and jewelers factory was seem to be cause of various health problems for the child labors as they were seen uncomfortable in breathing, itchy skin and problem of proper vision in working.
- No arrangements for sanitary facilities like toilets were seen nor were the provision of rest rooms and first aid in case of burns and cuts and injuries were provided at readily reachable place.
- Children were exposed to deal with machines and sharp tools at very young age of 5 to 8 years old and were looking uncomfortable, inexperienced and unskilled in dealing with the equipments and tools used in working.
- There were no provision for child laborers' to work in the hot and humid closed environment without any provision of maintain a reasonable temperature and unfortunately, they were working without any arrangements of fans, coolers etc in the hot environment
- Some of the factory sites were so wretched in Johari Bazaar that researchers were was afraid to investigate due to safety risk considering the poor condition of factory. Thus, the security provision for the child labour at the workplace were not adequate leading to threats to life.
- Child lab ours were subject to beatings and violence by the factory owners in case of some negligence or mistake on their part in working. They were threatened and ill-treated for delay in work or some inaccuracy or oversight. Hence, they lack cordial interpersonal relationship.
- No tea or snacks were served to the lab ours and nor they were given work breaks for rest and leisure.
- The vicious, hazardous and exploitative surroundings were provided to countless child laborers. This was the reason that managers and guards resisted the researchers to have access to the factories and observe the scenario.
- Children were looking very unhealthy, stressed, fatigued and malnourished by working in the grim work environment making them depressed and gloomy.

CONCLUSION

The results from this study have shown the consequence of workplace environmental factor on the child labour's health and productivity and suggest that corrective actions should be effectively taken towards humanizing the physical setting, social setting, and psychological system related to the workplace. Job environment can be termed as a man's closest surrounding which he can influence his survival or existence. If this surrounding is imperfectly manipulated, it may result in hazardous situations leading to irrecoverable outcomes. Hence; human capital of the organizations should be furnished with friendly physical and behavioral working conditions so that they can contribute to their best of their efforts and skills in achieving the organizations objectives and missions for its long term survival and profitability.

REFERENCE

- (<https://www.gia.edu/gems-gemology/winter-2016-jaipur-industry>).