

Ending Childhood in Shining Bangles Jaipur City's Bangle Enterprises

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ABSTRACT: *In unorganized sector, it is growing trend to employs children to make product price competitive and earn large profit. It is not good in long run for the businesses. Employing children in labour work prohibit them in achieving their overall development and also make them at risk of various kind of violence, exploitation and abuse. Each child must get an equal opportunity to grow and develop with their full potential and also enjoy his /her childhood. Through this article, efforts have been made to know the situation of the children employed in Jaipur bangle workshops and provide snapshots of the legal provision on how to stop child labour.*

Key Words: *: Unorganized sector, child labour, Jaipur bangles]*

INTRODUCTION

Children's are supreme asset of any nation. It is truth that the future of nation depends on the overall development of children there. India is one of the signatory of "United Nation Convention on the Rights of the Child" that provides each child a right to survival, development, protection and taking part in decision making that concerning them. This convention applies to all children irrespective of region, caste, race, religion, abilities, and gender etc¹. Each child must get an equal opportunity to achieve their overall development through proper education, accessing to nutrition, providing them protective environment and leisure hours to enjoy their childhood. It is unfortunate that a large number of children faces distress circumstances and are deprived from realizing their basic rights. Engaging children in labour work is one of the child protection issues that deprived them in achieving their overall development and they also become victims of various forms of violence, abuse and exploitation. In order to get good profit margin children are employed in labour work which is not good for the business in long run. Jaipur bangle is an example where large number of children has been employed in bangle making workshops.

Jaipur city, a capital of Rajasthan state is recognized as a chief centre of art and crafts in India. Jaipur also known for amazing varieties of bangles that are decorated with lovely stones, colours and metal embedding. Bangle which is traditional ornament of women holds significant place in the life of women. Beautifully decorated bangles attracts women however, the newly married women consider lac bangles auspicious for them. Now a day, silk tread bangle made in Jaipur attracts women of all age, and has good demand during marriage and festive seasons. In many occasions women wears lac bangles include; marriage ceremony and festivals. Lac bangle is considered as divine and compulsory to wear the newly married females in Jaipur. In India, It has high demand at the time of festivals and occasions. Even foreign people have started adorning these lac bangles and are even exporting these bangles to foreign countries. The beautiful bangles made in Jaipur attract all the women, but the truth is that many children are losing their childhood. Children are employed and exploited in bangles making in order to get large profit margin. The work of making bangles is going on in the family enterprise where children are working with other family members. There are also other categories of enterprises where enterprise are run by individual and children are employed who are other than the family children. Such enterprises are large in number. The work condition is pathetic in such enterprises and children are exploited as much as enterprise owner can. Children in these enterprises work more than (14-18) hours without any leisure hours. They work, sleep, eat and do other activity in the same place. More than 10 children work in a single 100 sqft room. Majority of such children in these enterprises are trafficked from Bihar State and other adjoining states.

Through this study attempts have been made to understand the Jaipur's bangle supply chain, engagement of children and child vulnerabilities therein. Accordingly information has been gathered from the stakeholders and this article has been prepared.

¹ United Nation Convention on the Rights of the Child, Article - 2

METHODOLOGY

Following sets of information have been collected through meeting, discussion and observation. The specific methodology included;

- Desktop search were done to understand bangle business supply chain including major pockets in the city where bangle making units² are located, engagement of different stakeholders, potential and challenges etc. Information collected were triangulated with the stakeholders.
- Discussion with bangles workshop owner were done to understand why children are employed in bangle making process.
- Focus group discussion with the rescued children were conducted to understand why and how they were employed in bangle making units, kind of vulnerabilities they faced, their aspirations etc.
- Rescued children's parents were interviewed to understand why they sent their children to work in bangle making units.
- Keen observation by investigators at the time of information and data collection from field was regular process.

DEMAND OF JAIPUR BANGLES

Lac bangles have good demand in Jaipur and inside Rajasthan State. Lac bangles are traditional ornaments for local people. Therefore, the sale of these bangles surges during local celebrations such as teej, the Marwari festival of gangaur, karva chauth, holi, wedding and special ceremonies for the mothers-to-be. In fact, each celebration can be identified with a distinct style of bangles design. These bangles also have demand outside state and are supplied to other state accordingly as per the needs and choices through their respective agents. The other state include; Jharkhand, Bihar, Uttar Pradesh, Delhi etc.

BANGLE CLUSTERS IN JAIPUR

Bangle making units are found one or two units everywhere across the Jaipur city. However, in few places such units are in cluster³. The known bangle cluster locations in Jaipur include; Bhatta Basti, Shastri Nagar, Kotwali (Choti Chopar), Brahmपुरi, Jotwara, Ramganj, Subash Chowk, Vidyadhar Nagar, Viaswakarma Nagar, Amer etc. The estimated number of units in these clusters ranges from (500 to 2000)⁴ units.

MAJOR CLUSTER ACTORS IN SUPPLY CHAIN

The major actors in bangle making cluster include;

- Raw Material Suppliers:** All raw materials including beads, thread, stones, chemicals, lac, beroza, ghea powder are available with the local raw material retailers. Bhatta Basti is considered as the biggest market in Jaipur for bangle's raw materials. More than 200 raw material retail shops are here. These retail shops have good contacts with raw material manufactures inside and outside the state that supply raw materials in reasonable price. The metal rings, which is one of the raw material however not manufacture in Rajasthan. The retailer shops arrange it from Kolkata. Likewise, the other raw material as require by manufacturer, they will arrange it from other places, if not available locally.
- Bangle making units:** Majority of Bangle making units are owned by persons from Bihar, Uttar Pradesh and West Bengal. Majority of these units are in rented premises. The local community called *Manihaar* whose traditional business is lac bangle making. The number of such units are less.
- Retail Shops:** Lac bangles are famous in Jaipur. One or more bangle shops are there even in small market across the Jaipur city. However, closely clustered bangle's retailer shops located at Amer, Amer Road, Jhotwara (Chuddi Market), Babu Bazar, Nehru Bazar etc. But majority of these shop owners do not have direct contact with manufacturers. The middleman is instrumental in between producer and retailers.
- Middleman (Buyers):** Middleman is instrumental between retailers and manufacturers. Middleman takes order from the retailers and pass it to the manufacturer. In return take finished products from manufacturers and supply it to the retailers. In this process middleman keeps his good profit. They also guide manufacturer in terms of design and quality.

² Bangle unit are the small enterprise where bangle are produced.

³A **cluster** is a sectoral and geographical concentration of enterprises, i.e. Micro, Small and Medium Enterprises, manufacturing same or related products facing common opportunities and threats.

⁴ This is based on the estimation by participants (Community members) at the time of focus Group Discussion.

- e. **Banks:** Manufacturers have little linkages with Banks and do not get frequent credits from banks. Banks are available in said clusters but banks do not considered manufacturers as credit worthy and do not provide any credit to them. Also majority of manufacturers do not have local address proofs. Whereas few have bank accounts in nearby banks.
- f. **Government supports:** Bangle comes under handicraft item and office of Development Commissioner (Handicraft) is entrusted with the responsibilities for the promotion of handicrafts. However this office has little focus on the development of Bangle cluster. Also the office of other line department like DIC, MSME – DI, RSLDC, and Export Promotion Council has little focus on these clusters.

CHILDREN IN SUPPLY CHAIN

Children are intensively engaged in bangle making units. First category of such children are family children and work in family enterprises. The other category of children are those who are from outside Jaipur and work in bangle making units. Mostly they are trafficked children. They faces various forms of vulnerabilities including long duration work in single stretch, physical violence, meager wages etc. The estimated⁵ number of such children ranges from 20000 to 30000.

REASONS FOR CHILD LABOUR

Ornamenting and embellishment on bangles requires nimble hands of children to give them finesse. Children are the cheap labor and easy to handle them to complete the target. Children works ranges from (14-18) hours per day to complete the target. The profit margin at manufacturer level is very low and this has been compensated with engaging children as a laborer with meager wages. These are the reasons, the unit owner believe to employing children in labour work.

SOURCES OF CHILD LABOUR

Based on the study conducted by PRAXIS, New Delhi and discussion held with local shelter home functionaries where children stayed after their rescue, more than 85 percent children are from Bihar State and the major districts are; Gaya, Samastipur, Mzaffarpur, Vaisali, Nalanda, Madhubani etc. Majority of children from these districts are trafficked by local person and employed in labour work. These local persons are known to the bangle unit holder at Jaipur. In discussion, it has also came to know that few women are involved in transporting children from respective district of Bihar to Jaipur. During the year 2013-14 to 2015-16, altogether 1957⁶ Bihar's children rescued from Bangle making units at Jaipur city. In addition to Bihar, children are also from Uttar Pradesh, Madhya Pradesh, Jharkhand, West Bengal, and Assam. But the numbers are comparatively less.

EMPLOYER'S PREFERENCE TO ENGAGE CHILDREN

Children are cheap labour and irreplaceable skills (having nimble fingers). They are easy to control and they also never form union and lobby for their rights and privileges. They are less aware about their rights, less troublesome, less complaining and more flexible.

VULNERABILITY OF CHILDREN

Engagement of children in work abides them from education and this is violation of their Right to Education. The other vulnerabilities include;

- Low wages and long duration work. The duration ranges from (14-18) hours without any leisure hour. Each child has target to be achieved each day. Children are rarely allowed to contact their parents.
- Trafficking and sale of children. This made them bounded labour. Majority of children rarely saw the world outside the room, where they worked, ate and slept.
- In contrary to not achieving to the day target; children are punished by the manufacturer. Physical violence and abuse is usual by the unit owner and sometimes by co-workers.
- Unit owner keep eye all the time on children. They are not allowed to move outside the workshop and share any things with others. If the children found disclosing their identity, they are punished by the employer.
- Working in these units, very often children suffers from various health issues including breathing problems, poor vision, burns, neck pain, and malfunctioning of fingers and other body parts etc.

VIEWS OF INFLUENCERS TOWARDS CHILD LABOUR

The child labour is growing in various unorganized sectors including bangle industries due to acceptability of child labour by parents and community. Addressing child labour issues in bangle industries will require

⁵ Estimation has been done by group members at the time of Focus Group Discussion.

⁶ Study on Rescue operation in Jaipur, 2017

behavior change of parents, local community. The view of major influencers about engaging children in labour work include;

a. Parents greediness / unawareness

Majorly the children working in these units belong to poor family. Their parents even face hardship to meet the expenditure of two meals a day for them. Manufacturers / agent take advantage of this situation and convince the parents for paying INR 2000 per months per child. They also convinced respective parents that the child will continue education in Jaipur and learn skill sets of making lac bangles, after five to six years, the child will be fully trained and will start his own business and will earn at least INR 20,000 per month.

b. Manufacturer view

Bangles making in Jaipur city are decades old. The skill sets has been transferring from one generation to another. Majority of the present bangle makers came in cluster as a child laborer, learnt the skill and started their own business. They had desire for education but due to over work they could not continue their education. Employing children is arms-deed for them because these children belong to poor family and after learning the skill they may earn more. It has also been noted that no unit owners engage their siblings in production. Their children are continuing their education.

c. House owner views

Majority of units in Bhatta Basti cluster is operational in rented house. The house owner get good rent from the unit owners. So they did not make any complain about the child labour. Some time, they also protect unit owner during rescue operation of child labor conducted by Task Force. It has also been noted that majority of house owner's / their relatives have raw material shops. So, they are also associated with this business.

CHILD LABOUR - CONSTITUTIONAL AND LEGISLATIVE FRAMEWORK

There are constitutional provisions to prevent child labor. And subsequently, many legislation has been framed to prohibit child labour and bonded labour. These should necessarily be enforced. Constitutional provisions that prohibit children to engage in labour work include;

Article 21A: Provides for free and compulsory education for all children in the age group of six to fourteen years as a Fundamental Right.

Article 23: Prohibits all forms of forced and bonded labour

Article 24: Prohibit employment of child below the age of 14 years in any factories or mine or engaged in any other hazardous employment.

Article 39 (e): the tender ages of children are not abused and that citizens are not forced by economic necessity to enter avocations unsuited to their age or strength.

Article 39 (f): States that “children are given opportunities and facilities to develop in a healthy manner and in conditions of freedom and dignity and that childhood and youth are protected against exploitation and against moral and material abandonment”.

Article 45: States that the state shall endeavour to provide early childhood care and education for all children until they complete the age of 6 years.

There are various legislative framed that protects children from engagement in labour work, exploitation and abuse included;

a. Child Labor (Prohibition and Regulation) Amendment Act, 2016

The Child Labor (Prohibition and Regulation) Amendment Act, 2016 enacted on July 2016. It prohibits “the engagement of children in all occupations and of adolescents in hazardous occupations and processes” wherein adolescents refer to those under 18 years and children to those less than 14 years. This Act empowers the government to make periodic inspection of places at which employment of children and adolescents are prohibited. It also empowered Government to confer powers on a District Magistrate (DM) to ensure that the provisions of the law are properly carried out and implemented. This Act has a provision of creating Rehabilitation Fund for the rehabilitation of children rescued from labour work.

b. Juvenile Justice (Care and Protection of Children) Act, 2015

The new Juvenile Justice (Care and Protection of Children) Act, 2015 enacted on January 2016. This Act deals with two categories of children – Children in Conflict with Law (CCL) and Children in Need of Care and Protection (CNCP). Child labour comes under the category of children in need of care and protection. There is separate dedicated chapter in this Act to protect children from violence, exploitation and abuse. There is provision for fine and punishment for offenses against children and specific sections included; Punishment for cruelty, employment of child for begging, penalty for giving intoxicating liquor or narcotic drugs or psychotropic substance to a child, using a child for vending, peddling, carrying, supplying or smuggling any intoxicating liquor, narcotics drug or psychotropic substance, Exploitation of a child employee, punitive

measures for adoption without following prescribed procedures, sale of procurement of children for any purpose, corporal punishment, use of child by militant groups or other adults, kidnapping and abduction of child, offences committed in disabled children. The punishment included imprisonment ranges from six months to fourteen years and fine ranges from INR 10,000 to 5 Lakhs and or both.

c. Unlawful Compulsory Labor; Sec 374 IPC

Forced labor is totally prohibited under Section 374 IPC. If a person compels any other person to labour against the will of that person, shall be punished with imprisonment of either description for a term which may extended to one year, or with a fine, or with both.

d. The Bonded Labor System (Abolition) Act 1976

This Act to provide for the abolition of bonded labor system with a view to preventing the economic and physical exploitation of the weaker sections of the people and for matters connected therewith or incidental thereto.

RESCUE AND REPATRIATION OF CHILDREN

District Administration keen to the child labour issues in Jaipur city. With the help of local police, Anti Human Trafficking Units, childline and local NGOs rescue operation are being conducted in different locations. In the year 2018 (Jan-Dec) more than 400 children has been rescued from Bangle making units and other places, out of which 248⁷ children were from Bihar. Rajasthan police also conduct special rescue operation for rescuing these children. In all cases, FIR (First Information Report) are registered to prosecute the employer. But due to weak FIR, lack of proper evidence collection at the time of rescue, weak charge-sheet, delay in prosecution process resulted low conviction.

All rescued children are repatriated to their respective family. But still there is need to ensure proper rehabilitation of these children. Both educational and economic rehabilitation is require to protect such children from re-trafficking.

CONCLUSION

It is growing trend to employ children in labour work especially in unorganized sector in order to get large profit margin. It is not good in long run for the businesses. Employing children in labour work prohibit them in achieving their overall development and also make them at risk of various kind of violence, exploitation and abuse. Looking at such businesses especially in unorganized sectors, it is found that the child laborers involved are being victim of various types of exploitation, violence and abuse. There are legal framework that prohibit to engage children in labour work and provide them opportunity to achieve their overall development with full potential. There are some constitutional structures that provides preventive and responsive services to such children. Therefore, there is need to strengthen such structures and ensure effective implementation of related legislation to prevent children employing in labour work.

WAY FORWARD

Bangle products of Jaipur has potential to grow and generate good profit and employment opportunities. But merely employing children for getting good profit margin, the cluster will collapsed in long run. Also employing children working in unhealthy environment has put off them for enjoying their rights and make them affected physically, mentally, socially and morally. All these affect them to grow with their full potential. So, below approaches may be adopted for the growth of Jaipur's bangle clusters;

- a. **Child Labor free zone approach:** This include; mobilization of local communities against employment of their children in any work and continuing of education of their children, mapping of vulnerable families in cluster area and linkages with eligible social protection schemes, programmes and livelihoods, skill training etc.
- b. **Discourage acceptability of child labour:** Aware and sensitize community about the consequence of child labour and discourage acceptability of child labour practices in large.
- c. **Strengthen system;** The existing system must be strengthen to provide preventive and responsive services to the children involved in labour work. The employer must be prosecuted that employ children. Children employed in such setup must be rescued, repatriated and their educational and economic rehabilitation must be ensured.

Competitive growth of Cluster: Bangle cluster has potential to grow and can fetch good market. UNIDO cluster development approach may be adopted for growth and development of this cluster.

⁷ As per the data available with Child Welfare Committee, Jaipur.