

# MOTIVATING CHILD DEVELOPMENT AND ERADICATION OF CHILD LABOR BY PROMPT EFFORTS BY US, SOCIETY AND GOVERNMENT

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**Abstract:** One of the menacing curses that our nation is facing today is child labor. Lack of economy and basic education has been monitored as a cause for majority of child labor activities. It is being generally realized that, child labor especially in hazardous occupation is one of the worst social evil and has to be eliminated at the earliest. Government has been taking various pro-active measures to tackle this problem. However, considering the magnitude and extent of the problem and that it is essentially a socio-economic problem inextricably linked to poverty and illiteracy, it requires concerted efforts from all sections of the society to make a dent in the problem. To eradicate child labor we have our plan which involves educating children, providing them financial support, spreading awareness among their parents, making them mandatory to go to school. Our plan aims to stop the activity of child labor completely.

Our plan of action includes the eradication of child labor by taking a target area and implementation of our idea. Our idea basically involves the participation of college and university students. Since the families which are involved are mainly those having income around 50-60 rupees per day, hence they have no other alternative other than forcing each member to work, in order to satisfy their basic needs. For this our plan includes collecting donations and financial support from college, university students and common people who are interested in the upliftment of these underprivileged families.

Our plan includes a policy, '**adopt a child policy**'. "According to our '**adopt a child policy**' we collect financial assistance from volunteers who are willing to support our cause, we also include faculty members and other students to donate as per their will." The money we assimilate, we distribute it amongst the children by helping them to buy books, daily needs, and also helping their parents by providing financial help to buy groceries and other daily need product.

Other than this we aim to spread awareness among the localities and families involved. This is also done by visiting government aided and private schools, via newspaper and media so that prohibition laws from the government are regulated.

In this regard we also aim to provide other facilities to the children and their parents. It has been observed that child labor owes its existence due to lack of education at primary level. Hence our idea includes setting up of schools for primary education having well equipped facilities within every 2-3 km range. The fund for the constructing of schools need to be provide by the state or central government. The NGOs and industrialists can make an active contribution in this regard. We aim to make these children skillful by imparting professional education such as computer education. This would enable them for certain alternative employment like data feeding in certain government offices, computer designing etc. Girls can be involved in activities like designing of handicrafts, pottery making arts paintings and other artistic talents that could provide them with an alternative source of income.

Hence, measures stated above if successfully implemented can play a vital role in eradication of child labor.

**Keywords:** menacing, child labor, government, illiteracy, eradication

## INTRODUCTION

One of the menacing curses that our nation is facing today is child labor. Our society is grooved with people belonging to all social and financial classes having different ideologies and approach towards life. The root cause for child labor practice is poverty. Lack of economy and basic education has been monitored as a cause for majority of child labor activities. Due to the rise of industrialization in the mid- 18<sup>th</sup> century and mechanization of agriculture lead to the destruction

of the family based economy in the country. Moreover the displacement of a large number of labors has just exacerbated the condition. Extreme poverty in a family makes it necessary for all the members to search for a job including the children. Initially, children were employed in cotton and jute mills and coal mines. Later, legal measures were introduced to tackle the problem and the new state wedded to the notion of social welfare assumed the responsibility of protecting the children. The problem of child labor continues to pose a challenge before the nation. Government has been taking various proactive measures to tackle this problem. However, considering the magnitude and extent of the problem and that it is inextricably linked to poverty and illiteracy, it requires concerted efforts from all sections of the society to make a dent in the problem.

### **Description of our Idea**

To eradicate child labor we have our plan which involves educating children, providing them financial support, spreading awareness among their parents, making them mandatory to go to school. Our plan aims to stop child labor activities completely. Our team chose the target area at MACT slum near MANIT Bhopal, Madhya Pradesh. We are working for teaching the parents who are forcing their children into this vicious activity. On this small locality we have chosen 5 underprivileged children involved in activity related to child labor. We have a government primary school near the MACT slum named as MACT School. But the poor people for the sake of their basic necessities have no regrets in leaving their child for work and they don't let them go to school. Our team members are teaching the students free of cost for the whole of our academic life at our college and this will continue even after we leave the college, as we will be handing the baton over to our juniors. This is helping the students in many ways as they have got a great affection with us and they are doing well in academics as well. But our main aim is to convince their parents to not let their children work anymore. Educating children is very important since it will help them in their overall development. We know that by just providing proper education and meeting their financial requirement can help us stop to eradicate this heinous activity of child labor.

### **Detailed Idea behind the Solution**

1) We have made a group naming it as "Motivate Child Development". We have an initiative called "Adoption for child Welfare" under which we would collect Rs 30/- per month from interested volunteers of our college. This would not be difficult for the volunteers as they are required to deposit Rs 30/- per month (1 Rupee per day) which is not a heavy burden on them. Accordingly we are estimating around 200 volunteers. This would account to Rs 6000 per

month. Since our targeted area comprises of 5 underprivileged children. Then we would be able to provide them with monthly income of Rs 1200/-. Since we are focused on to get these children admitted into government aided private schools, thereby their education and source of income for their family go hand in hand. This would be a stupendous platform for them to receive education at the highest level with negligible financial burden on their parents. This cause will not end here and our juniors and cooperating faculty members would carry the motive further. Our program of teaching students through volunteers is open to all underprivileged students who are willing to study and don't have opportunities to go to school. We are optimistic that other people of our college and society would be influenced by this program and cooperate with us to eradicate child labor and promote child education on an extensive scale.

2) According to the honorable Supreme Court of India all private schools and government aided minority institutions in the country will have to provide 25% reservation in admission for children from the weaker sections of society. The court said that its order would take effect immediately, but because maximum schools having completed admissions for the current academic year, poor students will be able to benefit from the judgment from the next session. Children admitted under this quota will be provided free education.

Plan of Action: (a) Visiting government aided and private schools. (b) Making sure that 25% quota rule is initiated in their next academic session. (c) For the next academic year of admission we would get the forms filled for the underprivileged children. (d) Spread awareness via newspaper and media that the above law by Supreme Court is regulated. (e) Will ensure that the children in our targeted area are admitted in the government aided schools and other private institutions.

3) Last but not the least we would encourage the parents to motivate their children to go to school and must not let their children work for the sake of money.

### **Implementation of the Solution**

The implementation of our initiative to curb child labor was carried forward with great zeal. We monitored several areas in Bhopal and came across that numerous children were involved in the laboring activities. Finally we focused our plan of action near the MACT slums as it would be feasible and convenient to us to monitor these areas. Also the volunteers from our college were interested to educate the children as they too find it convenient. Initially it was difficult to communicate our plan of

action to the people. They were reluctant to reveal that their children involved in labor activities. We were determined to build the rapport of trust with the people. We convinced them that we are helping their children to be educated, self-reliant and inculcate them with the knowledge of latest technologies. In the same community we talked with few children who were going to school regularly rather than working at a local shop. We asked them the possible solution for others. Of those children one child said that we should talk to the parents. He said that his mother encourages him that this is not his age to work and that he will learn to work later in his life. Hence for complete eradication of child labor awareness among parents is very important and we made our focus for the same. We told them how important education is in forming the career and personality of their children, what are the goals of government to curb this menace. Also we told them how their children are going to study at convent schools by new law from Supreme Court of India. They were highly moved by our words and many of them were ready to support us. Here we came to know about many children who want to study and their parents want them to study but still they are unable to study. It is due to poor financial condition that many families in India which are below the poverty line are forced to send their children for work and act as a helping hand in their families. As students we were motivated to help the cause and make our contribution towards the growth and development of our society.

1) We are educating the children near the MACT slums near a construction building. We have a well-organized schedule to teach them. We have our syllabus for educating children pertaining to their ability to grasp the subjects. To maintain regularity we have instigated their parents to motivate them at their homes and on our behalf, we reward the children who have perfect attendance.

2) Satisfaction for parents – Parents were apprehensive that whether their children were misguided by us. To satisfy them we apprised them of our properly organized classes and told them that several children (other than our targets) are interested in receiving guidance from us and we are also educating them. Now this is where eradication of child labor be fulfilled because it works like a chain or web amongst children. Children often discuss their activities with their mates and other children are too motivated to study and we have observed that this link could play an important role to curb child labor.

3) Free education: This is a very susceptible topic and we were planned our initiative in this regard as following: (a) According to the honorable Supreme Court of India all private schools and government

aided minority institutions in the country will have to provide 25% reservation in admission for children from the weaker sections of society. The court said that its order would take effect immediately but because maximum schools having completed admissions for the current academic year, poor students will be able to benefit from the judgment from the next session. Children admitted under this quota will be provided free education. (b) Now there are several children who are not aware of this law and there are several children who have slow grasping power and not ready to be admitted into the schools. Now here our plan of action should be emphasized. "According to our adopt a child policy", the money we assimilate, we would distribute it among the children by helping them to buy books, daily needs, and also helping their parents by providing financial help to buy groceries and other daily need product. (c) Spreading awareness: many of the under privileged children and their parents are not aware of the government schemes and policies for them. When we are educating the children, we make them aware of the latest government policies, mid-day meal scheme and other social beneficiaries for them. We organize a visit to our target area once in a week, in which we inform the parents upon the progress of child, and that adoption of child policy would continue to provide them with financial help and the initiative would not end here, and our juniors and other helping staff members would carry the cause forward.

We took five target families whose children were involved in child labor. With the help of Mr. Vijay Jadhav (Samatol foundation) we began our work for the rehabilitation of child labor with our selected target families. We met with their parents and assured them to provide financial support to educate their children on the condition that they are going to comply with our idea to abolish child labor. In the beginning the parents were reluctant to support us, saying that they have poor financial condition. Demonstrating the case of one of our target family, the child (Krishna Kumar Mishra) son of Amit Lal is involved in tea making at a tea shop, the boy failed in his class examinations and left schooling due to his weak financial condition, he was unable to buy books, pay fees, etc. This forced the boy to sell tea. Our team is giving tuition to that boy so that he could study free of cost and we helped him in purchasing books and other necessary stationery items. Now here the implementation of our idea begins. We have decided that the collection we gather we would help the child to buy his basic amenities required for his education such as books, clothing etc. Here we make it clear that the collection we gather would not be directly given to their parents as it might lead to misuse of money. We have volunteers from our

hostels that are assisting us for the noble cause. We have framed the schedule for educating them. We teach them Basic English (introduction to alphabets, sentence making etc.), mathematics depending upon their age and ability to grasp the subject. We have convinced their parents to help their children and after certain difficulties we have been able to collect a good amount of donation from the volunteers in our college. The money is solely directed to enable the children to overcome the hardships involved in child labor and imparting them with education. Thus in the forthcoming days we would be able to execute our plan such that maximum possible underprivileged children are benefited from our scheme. Secondly we met a boy named Raj Singh Thakur who was working at a Pan shop at Mata Mandir with his father Govind Singh Thakur. His father had a meager income of around 125 rupees per day. During the time he wasn't there on the shop he used to leave the shop totally in the hands of his son. When we asked his father, why his child is working at the shop in such an early age, he told us that, the boy used to study in a nearby school but his academic record was not good, he failed in the 5<sup>th</sup> class, after that, due to their poor financial condition. His father was wrong in his way of thinking that there should be some helping hand in his pan shop. We believed that both of them were wrong in their way of thinking so we talked to both of them in isolation, at first we talked to his father and asked that wouldn't he like his child going to the school? He said yes, but he said that due to his financial condition he wasn't able to send him to school. So when we told him about the benefits of education and about our plan. After listening patiently about our plan he was ready to comply with us. Next we talked to his child and told him that sitting in the pan shop wouldn't help him achieve his aims and urged him to attend school and he agreed that he would no more be sitting in the shop. After that we started giving him regular tuition with our members. Tutors helped him to improve his academics, and it was truly beneficial too for him as he is showing good progress especially in the mathematics. Currently we teach our ten students regularly so that they could cope up with their school education. We also used to keep a keen watch on that shop that whether Raj and his father are listening to us or not. Currently he is attending his classes regularly. After this case, nearby of the previous pan shop we found another boy whose name was Golu, he was working at a tea shop. At the tea shop he used to clean the glasses and did various other cleaning works. When we asked the owner of the tea shop about his whereabouts he told us that he used to work along with his grandmother and both of them helped them in cleaning of their utensils and of the place and they used to pay Rs 150 per day for that. So we decided to talk to his grandmother regarding the

child. She told us that they belong to a poor family of Jhansi in Uttar Pradesh and his son used to work in the fields but their income was not so much and his husband also used to remain ill as a result of which she had come to Bhopal for the treatment of her husband and earn their livelihood as well she used to work with her grandson on a tea shop. We also came to know that because of living in the villages the boy was eating tobacco and all sorts of things which are not good for his health. When we asked her that why she is not sending him for basic schooling, she replied that they were not well to do and secondly she asked what they will get by education. We believed that she was wrong to some extent in her way of thinking. We made her aware about the benefits of education and told her about our plans. In the beginning she was reluctant and was not willing to listen to us but later she agreed. We also talked to the boy and he agreed as well. We also made him aware about the harmful effects of the substances he is addicted to and asked him not to eat these kinds of stuff. As it was the month of October we were not able to get him admitted in some kind of school because all of the schools were midway in their session. So we enrolled him in our plan to at least impart the basic education which he did not had. We met a child who worked at a grocery shop just outside our MANIT campus, the boy named Manoj, a boy of 13 years of age, he has never gone to a school and the boy is working at the shop from past one year at a daily wage of 70 rupees per day. When we talked to the boy, he explained that he couldn't stop working due to his extremely poor condition and for his attachment to the owner of the shop. But since it is a night canteen hence the time of his work is from 5:00 pm to 10:00 pm, We were ready to take the boy into consideration, what we thought was that once the boy gets involved in studies he himself will stop working. Now we have enrolled the boy into a nearby school. Also since the boy is poor in studies we are giving him regular tuition at our regular place of teaching along with the other boys. The boy has made great changes and has started taking keen interest in studies. Once he starts schooling we are sure he will stop working at the shop. Another child named Afzal Ali resides at MACT slums near MANIT Bhopal is working at a cloth ironing shop at mata mandir along with his father. The boy is 12 years of age and he left schooling when he was 10. Since then he is supporting his father at the shop. We told his father about our plan and he refused to comply with us saying the boy goes to school and do not work. But when we told them that we will bear all his expenses of schooling and accessories, also we will provide free tuition to the boy. He became ready and we added the boy in our plan. This was not that difficult since his father himself could manage the shop and no parents ever want to let their child go in drain. The

boy is getting regular tuition with our team and he is a good student. Afzal has got a great affection with our team and now he himself doesn't want to work anymore.

### Cost Analysis

In our approach to proscribe the act of child labor, we needed a support of large number of volunteers for helping us financially. For the five targets we chose we had decided to collect one rupee per day, so as to ease ourselves and to make this job less cumbersome. We decided to collect it once in 10 days' time. In return of that we gave them a receipt. In this way we got a sum of Rupees 6000 from 200 volunteers. Apart from this we didn't take any financial support for our cause and we spent whatever we had for the welfare of the children. Education we provided to them was provided free of cost and this did not incur any financial burden upon us as well. Mainly we tried to include our batch mates in our plan of action because the youth is the most cooperating part of the society and they are the ones who are much more willing to eradicate child labor from our society. Our plan is sufficient enough for eradication of child labor in whole Bhopal. According to a survey of Bhopal District, Madhya Pradesh by the Ministry of Minority Affairs, Government of India, there are around 4500 child labors working in Bhopal and our plan focuses on removing these children who are working as laborers. As our initiative is basically based on involving the youths in the program, we can promote our idea to the other colleges of Bhopal for the removal of child labor, thereby improving in the conditions of children living in slums of Bhopal. We have more than 150 colleges in Bhopal so if each college takes up the responsibility of just 30 children located in their proximity then surely we can remove heinous activity of child labor in Bhopal. A college comprises of a huge number of students so each college is capable of supporting them financially as well as providing supplementary education as an aid for tuition to these children. Likewise our plan can be adopted in every nook and corner of the world where the children are involved in activities of child labor. We are not ruling out the possibility of industrialists becoming part of our scheme as they are free if they want to come forward and want to adopt a child then surely it can be of great help for the society. We are optimistic that our plan of action would be successful in coming months and then we would promote our child welfare scheme to other interested people as well. Then we can handle the donations and money in a proper organized way so that transparency is maintained and underprivileged children are most benefited.

### RESULTS AND CONCLUSION

We are aware of the present scenario of child labor activities in our country. There are children in our country who are reduced to mere slaves and have been deprived of their right to education, freedom and expression. To bring about a revolution, it is very necessary to study the cause behind the child labor. As per we have seen the main causes behind child labor includes poverty, unemployment of parents, lack of awareness regarding government policies, illiteracy among parents. During our visit there was only one case where the boy himself was not interested in leaving his work and join school. The boy was an addict of eating gutkas and smoking according to the shopkeeper. He further told us that these children work for the sake of money so that they can get money to buy gutkas and cigarettes. We tried hard to add that boy to our plan and finally he agreed to join our tuition classes. His name was Golu, 13 years of age. Since we are providing free tuition, giving him books and copies he has got a close attachment with us and he has promised us he will leave all the activities involving labor. Hence in this way we feel our solution is appropriate and will surely abolish the menacing activity of child labor in our society. All we need for our proposed solution that the under privileged class who knowingly or unknowingly involved in child labor activities should come forward by themselves, so that they can participate in building India a better place to live in. Following improvements were seen in the children due to our whole hearted efforts: (a) Children addicted to unhealthy eating habits have sacrificed eating tobacco and have been attracted to our education system and are willing to do better in academics. (b) Meeting the present standard of education and hygiene has and will help them to meet the universal standard of education in this competitive world and also keeping themselves healthy. (c) Releasing the pressure from the parents by providing free education to the children and we are also optimistic that the government schools and private colleges will abide the laws of honorable supreme court so that the pressure of educating the children be released from the shoulder of the parents as far as financial support is concerned. Our plan is to support the families by providing them 1000 rupees per month and making sure that the money we provide them is not misused.

Our plan of action can be promoted on a higher level such that industrialist, businessmen and social societies could also help this cause and save our society from this vicious activity of child labor. The youth of today forms the major part of the society so the major portion of the solution of the problem should be taken up by the youth itself. So what could be done is that if each college takes up this initiative

and tries to support a given number of children after looking after them, then this problem could be solved to a very great extent and the cost involved behind this initiative wouldn't be cumbersome as each individual can give Re1 every day. Moreover each college should inspire their students to teach these under privileged children. This can be done free of cost. This all works in a chain, as from our target areas many people are coming to us enrolling their children in our program, since they are influenced from other children who they are receiving at least a basic education and it is substantially helping their physical and mental growth and they are provided with necessary motivation, so that they can walk head to head with the educated section of the society.

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