

“The Nastiest Form of Child Workers in the Brick Fields – the Mistreatment to Society and Nation”: A Case Study on Khejuri CD Blocks of Purba Medinipur District in West Bengal

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Abstract: *Social norms and economic realities mean that child labor is widely accepted and very common in India. Many families rely on the income generated by their children for survival, so child labor is often highly valued. Additionally, employers often prefer to employ children because they are cheaper and considered to be more compliant and obedient than adults. When children are forced to work, they are often denied their rights to education, leisure and play. As per 2001's data, 1.26 crores child labour is existed over all India and 36.43 lakh children in the age group of 5-14 years are working in non-agricultural sector in the country, out of which 12.19 lakh children are working in hazardous occupations. In this sense, about 3 lakh is in construction sector with brick manufacturing and only in brick kilns, number is 84972(2001).The gravity of this situation led my initiative to study on child labour in brick field in the work area in Khejuri CD Blocks under Purba Medinipur district in West Bengal. This study uses data to examine the different components of child labor in brick field. Study used quantitative method for data collection and particularly survey was used. A total of 301 respondents of five brick fields in Khejuri CD Blocks have been interviewed. SPSS windows program is used to process and organize the data for the study. The respondent are interviewed regarding various aspects related to the child labour in brick field includes causes and consequences of child labor to engage their risky job, working environment, their schooling profile, their future goal etc. The fieldwork observation shows that the working environment in brick field are hazardous to child health due to unsanitary environment, unsafe working environment (such as heat, burning ashes, flying ashes, and pieces of broken bricks everywhere), and the hazardous work (prolonged working hours, heavy work, and dangerous jobs).They also suffer from breathing problem, cold & fever, minor injuries and sometime more than that. Inspire of that majority of child workers have a very common expectation that is all of them want to lead a happy life with their work and their family.*

Keywords: Social norms and economic realities, Child labor, hazardous occupations, brick manufacturing and unsafe working environment.

1. Introduction

*"We worry what a child will become tomorrow,
yet we forget he is someone today."*

-Stacia Taucher

Children are the greatest gift to humanity and Childhood is an important and impressionable stage of human development as it holds the potential to the future development of any society. Children who are brought up in an environment, which is conducive to their intellectual, physical and social health, grow up to be responsible and productive members of society. Every nation links its future with the present status of its children. By performing work when they are too young for the task, children unduly reduce their present welfare or their future income earning capabilities, either by shrinking their future external choice sets or by reducing their own future individual productive capabilities. Under extreme economic distress, children are forced to forego educational opportunities and take up jobs which are mostly exploitative as they are usually underpaid and engaged in hazardous conditions. Parents decide to send their child for engaging in a job as a desperate measure due to poor economic conditions. It is therefore no wonder that the poor households predominantly send their children to work in early ages of their life. One of the disconcerting aspects of child labour is that children are sent to work at the expense of education. There is a strong effect of child labour

on school attendance rates and the length of a child's work day is negatively associated with his or her capacity to attend school. Child labour restricts the right of children to access and benefit from education and denies the fundamental opportunity to attend school. Child labour, thus, prejudices children's education and adversely affects their health and safety.

The term *child labour*, suggests ILO, is best defined as work that deprives children of their childhood, their potential and their dignity, and that is harmful to physical and mental development. It refers to work that is mentally, physically, socially or morally dangerous and harmful to children, or work whose schedule interferes with their ability to attend regular school, or work that affects in any manner their ability to focus during school or experience a healthy childhood.

The Child Labour issue is one of the great concerns throughout the world. It is quite common for children of all types of societies to be engaged in some forms of occupation depending on the economic structure and level of development. As such, the phenomenon is not connected to any particular country or culture. Empirical estimates of the ILO show that the number of economically active children in the world in the age group 5-14 years was nearly 191 million in 2004, with a work participation rate of 15.8 per cent. Children involved in hazardous work comprise around

38.7 per cent of global child labour population. Among the different regions, largest number of child workers, 122 million constituting 64% was concentrated in Asia and the Pacific, within which India accounts for a substantial size.

In fact, Child Labour has been generally received more as a problem of developing countries like India as well as our ability which is consistently facing challenges against poverty, high population growth, rising employment, natural disaster and so on. Child labor, a sheer reality in India like many other developing countries, is one of the major socio-economic problems in the country. As per the Census 2001, there are 1.26 crores economically active children in the age-group of 5-14 years. 36.43 lakh children in the age group of 5-14 years are working in non-agricultural sector in the country, out of which 12.19 lakh children are working in hazardous occupations.

Khejuri is one segmental part of Bengal in India where this worst child labour scenario is not exceptional from other corners of our country. Recently, this study area has been faced a great social problem like child labour through the hand of brick manufacturing as a considerable source of economy here. In this study, I have used child labour as a concept that, those children are called child labour who work for money to maintain their livelihood as well as to support their family economically and those worker researcher selected as respondent who has been working since at least one month and aged between 5-17 in this study area (brick fields in Khejuri of Purba Medinipur). The study tries to find out what are the causes behind engaging children such risky work with its consequences to draw the attention of all people of different sectors about this concerning issue with a hope of child development and eliminating the worst form of child worker in brickfields and save their future life.

2. About the Study Area

The territory of Khejuri Block came into existence as a consequence of coalescence of twin sister islands- 'Kedegree' and 'Hijili' which emerged as small riverine islands along the western bank of Hugli estuary. Since then the area has undergone not only various morphological and environmental changes throughout its geological history but also witnessed social, political and economic transformations under the Mughal, Pathan, Portuguese and British rules. Its early importance as a trade centre faded out with gradual decline of the native port of Khejuri in response to estuarine morphodynamic modifications. All such transformations have brought about alterations in livelihoods of the local people and economy of the area under consideration. In recent years, brick manufacturing has come up as an emerging economy in a big way that provides livelihood to a considerable proportion of the local population and has become third largest contributor (after agriculture and fish farming) to the local economy. It has grown in fabulous manner in Khejuri Block particularly during the last decade. More than 70% of the existing brick fields have been developed between 2005 and 2011 along the banks of rivers (Hijili and Rasulpur), tidal channels and canals or beside the roads having agricultural lands mainly.

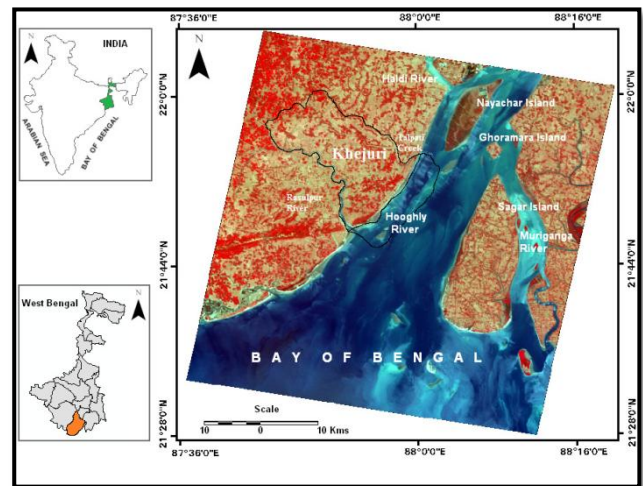


Figure 1: Location Map of the Study Area

(Satellite/Sensor:-Landsat -5,TM, Date:-February 6,2010, No. Of Bands:-7, Spatial Resolution:-30m, Path/Row:-139/45)

3. Objectives of the Study

The overall objective of the study is to understand the causes and consequences of child labor in brick field and for this purpose the study incorporates with some specific objectives that are stated below:

Specific objectives:

- To describe the working and living conditions of children working in brick factories
- To identify factors that affect the development of children, including education, health, and safety of children in brick factories
- To analyze reasons why employers hire children
- To analyze reasons why parents allow their children to work in brick factories
- To analyze reasons why children accept work in brick factories.
- To identify the conditions of harassment that child workers face.
- To enlighten the consequences of child workers in brick field.
- To provide recommendations for eliminating the worst forms of child labour in the brick factories.

4. Methodology

A methodology refers to the choices researcher make about the cases to study methods of data gathering, forms of data analysis etc. in planning and executing a research study (Silverman, 2001). While it directs how a researcher will go about studying phenomenon, in this research. a detailed design of the study including sample size, study population, process of survey instrument development, data collection and data analysis, ethical consideration etc. will be explained in order to achieve an insight about of the whole procedure of this research work.

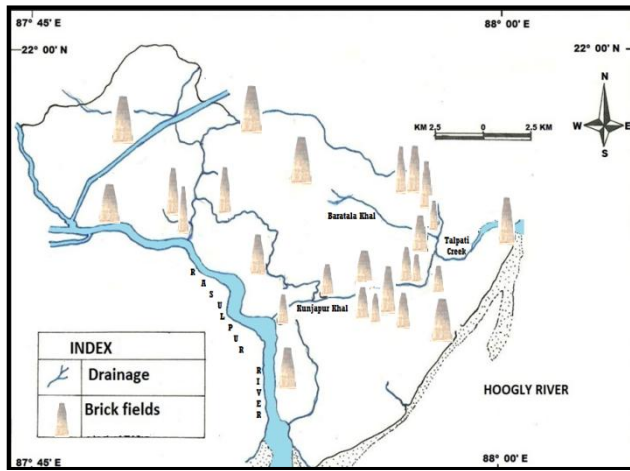


Figure 2: Distribution of Brick Fields in the study area

5.1. Study Population

Before selecting a sample size a researcher has to demarcate a population. In this study population is consisted of the children who work in the brick fields Khejuri CD Blocks under Purba Medinipur district.

5.2. Selection of the Study Area

In the present study Khejuri CD Blocks under Purba Medinipur district had been identified as the study area.

5.3. Sampling technique and sample size

Considering a non probability sampling procedure data have been collected purposively from the respondents who are available during the survey. Though there was defined target population but the researcher was not able to carry out a research using probability sampling technique. A semi-structured survey has been served as the main data collection method for this study. A total 301 sample out of 508 child labourers have been taken from the different 23 brick fields out of 27 of Khejuri CD Blocks under Purba Medinipur district.

Table 1: Distribution of the respondents by Gender

Gender	Frequency		%	
	Total Number	Sampled Number	Total %	Sampled %
Male	337	198	66.3	58.8
Female	171	103	33.7	60.2
Total	508	301	100.0	59.3

5.4. Survey instrument

Survey is the main data collection method of this study. A semi-structured survey was conducted to collect necessary primary data from the target population. For conducting survey, a semi-structured questionnaire was used.

5.5. Construction of the Questionnaire

The questionnaire contains 37 questions. The questionnaire is finally drafted based on a compromise between the requirement and ability of the respondents to furnish the data, while designing the questionnaire certain statistical and operational factors among which the terms of data sought ,

the method of collection, the respondents units processing and tabulating requirement also considered.

5.6 Data collection procedures

To conduct the survey a semi structured and self-employed questionnaire has been used containing pertinent questions in relation to the objectives of the study.

5.7 Data Processing and analysis

In this study data collected from field were edited to look for a missing or error, codified and to entry into the computer and grouped in terms of variables the statistical Package for the Social Sciences (SPSS) version 18.0 was to analyze the data. Other hands, for data and mapping analysis, some statistical and GIS techniques have also been used.

5. Review of literature

Child labour refers to all forms of work undertaken by children below 18 years of age. Child labour is an economic and social issue in developing countries because children are perceived to represent an important source of family total income. Available studies suggest that light work can have positive outcomes for child development because it provides work experience, builds confidence in children, and provides some financial support/means. However, child work is considered acceptable only when it is not hazardous to children's health and psychological development (ILO, 1999)¹. Certain forms of child labour can cause impairment to the physical and mental development of children. Frequently, many children who work usually do not go to school. ILO Convention 182 states that child labour that interferes with children's schooling is considered as the worst forms of child labour (ILO, 1999). ILO Convention 182 calls for the prohibition and elimination of the worst forms of child labour, child labour that violates rights to development of children. According to ILO Convention 182, the worst forms of child labour comprise (a) all forms of slavery or practices similar to slavery, such as the sale and trafficking of children, debt bondage and serfdom and forced or compulsory labour, including forced or compulsory recruitment of children for use in armed conflict; (b) the use, procuring or offering of a child for prostitution, for the production of pornography or for pornographic performances; (c) the use, procuring or offering of a child for illicit activities, in particular for the production and trafficking of drugs as defined in the relevant international treaties; (d) Work which, by its nature or the circumstances in which it is carried out, is likely to harm the health, safety or morals of children (ILO, 1999).

As stated in Emerson and Knabb (2007), there has recently been renewed interest in this topic among economists, which has led to a series of theoretical studies with the aim of better understanding the causes and consequences of child labor and to help guide appropriate policy responses. At least six publications locus on South Asia, addressing (i) the linkage between child labor and trade (Sharma, 2007). (ii) Child labor and child abuse (Bhattacharya, 2007), (iii) domestic and international initiatives to reduce child labor (Castle, Chaudhri and Nyland, 2002), and (iv) the linkages

between child labor and educational issues (Kabeer, 2001; Kabeer, Nambissan and Subrahmanian, 2002; and Ray, 2001).

The most relevant for this study is that of Kabeer (2001), who explores the geographical, economic and social dimensions of the twin problems of child labor and poor educational outcomes in India and Bangladesh. She comes to the conclusion that poverty is not necessarily barrier to accessing educational services and that there is a need to draw out the lessons from the efforts of the few educational planners who have (i) understood the patterns of disadvantage caused by caste, gender, ethnicity and livelihood insecurity and (ii) started delivering educational services geared to the needs of the marginalized.

Hazardous conditions of child labour, coupled with the immaturity of children, increase the risk of work injuries and illnesses among child workers. Two forms of health hazards include work-related accidents and illness/disease. Common injuries are cuts, wounds and punctures. Other serious but less frequent injuries include burns, fractures or sprains, loss of body parts, contusions, bruises, haemorrhoids and abrasions. A study by Pinder (2000)¹¹ on work injuries among child brick factory workers reveals that the levels of musculoskeletal trouble found in the wrists or hands and the lower back of brick packers were far greater than the levels reported by other groups of working children.

Furthermore, the negative impact of child labour on child health can have worrisome consequences on the mental development of children. Negative psychological aspects include decreased school performance, decreased participation in extracurricular and social activities, increased use of alcohol, and a consistent pattern of inadequate sleep (NIOSH, 1997)¹². As aforementioned, quitting school is one pervasive consequence of early participation of children in child labour.

It is noteworthy that studies on the impact of child labour on child development are difficult and the findings are mostly inconclusive because of the dynamic of the child health and the absence of the comparison groups and the complexity of the relationship among these phenomena (O'Donnell, Van Doorslaer, and Rosati, 2002)¹³. Some children are more vulnerable than others even without working. In addition, studies, such as that of WVC (2006), are based on a relatively small sample size that may yield results with varying reliability.

The above review shows that children are engaged in child labour for a variety of reasons, ranging from the need to work for survival to the exploitation and abuse of children, and the impact of early child labour can be devastating on all aspects of child development. Thus, attempts to eliminate the worst forms of child labour have to be in line with the elimination of the etiological roots of child involvement in child labour. In other words, understanding the causes of child labour can help develop workable strategies for campaign and activities against the worst forms of child labour.

6. Theoretical Framework

(1) Child labour as a contribution to the family

According to the theory of child labour as a contribution to the family, most children in developing countries work because they want to support their families. In many cases children work simply for the reason that they are told to, some voluntary and some against their will.

Boyden J, Ling B and Myers W point out in this theory results from studies made in Indonesia and Morocco which show that many children prefer factory work instead of work inside the household. The reason is that they find household work more grinding and futureless. Many children also get a good feeling when they can help their families economically; a fact received from an Ethiopian study, where the children answered that the feeling to be able to contribute to their families' monetary situation was the thing they liked most with work. A survey among street children in Brazil showed that the children lived in the streets because they wanted to help their mothers. The largest part of their earnings was given to their family weekly. The fear of losing support from the family and being left alone is another common factor behind child labour. Boyden J, Ling B and Myers W claim that an underlying fear of abandonment often exists among working children. Children working in urban slums are often personally acquainted with other children in the same situation; it seems to be important for children to get the feeling of close family ties, even if it is not their "real" family. The enforcement of standards concerning minimum age for work has been seen by many children as a threat to their will of contributing to their families and to have an income. The children feel they have the right to work because they must satisfy their basic needs and thereby defend their own survival.

(2) Child labour as a means of self-actualization

The principal argument of this theory is that many children would want to work even if they did not have to. Even if poverty were non-existing and nowhere were children obliged to work, some children still would like to take part in productive work. For the same reason as many middle-class children seek part-time work in industrialized countries, the children in developing countries want to work. The ILO declares that work is an essential part of life, i.e. a way to participate in the society and the economy. Non-exploitive work makes children feel more mature, independent and included in the society at large. Many children also believe that work is a good way for them to get education and thus become competent and prosperous adults.

(3) Child labour as a consequence of family-dynamics

The third theory stated by Boyden J, Ling B and Myers W is the explanation of child labour, as result of inadequate family decision-making or relationships. Child labour can be seen to represent errors either in families' view of reality or in their strategic thinking about how to best deal with that reality. An example is the idea that most parents who let their children work instead of being in school are ignorant of the importance of education. If those parents would have a known what a great outcome education can give, they would have tried to keep their children in school. The family

dynamics explanation often blames these moral judgments: child labour can be a consequence of a breakdown in family values in which they do not fulfill their protective function. A breakdown in values is, for example, when parents sell their children into prostitution or bondage with the purpose of material benefit, for example a wedding. This theory also claims that child labour can be a result of ignorant and irresponsible parents.

(4) Child labour as a result of poverty

Child labour as a result of poverty is one of the most common theories about the causes behind underage work. A majority of studies in developing countries show that poor families put their children in child labour more often than families in a better economic situation. Increase of the household income is one reason but it is also a safety strategy to even out the risk of losing economic income, for example with the loss of an adult income earner or a failed harvest. According to ILO child labour commonly may represent around 20 per cent of the household income, and as poor families spend the majority of its income on food, consequently the children's incomes are crucial. In many households not all income is equally allocated to meet basic needs. Income earned by the mother of the household is more likely to be available for the family than income earned by the father. Children's earnings given to mothers may therefore be more important for the family than the earnings gained by the father. It is common that children think about such factors, they are fully aware of their work as an important part to support their family. Boyden J, Ling B, and Myers W indicate that the fundamental importance of child labour as 3 result of poverty is so widely accepted and well demonstrated that there is no need to question the theory. But, there exist disagreements about to what degree poverty is fundamental to child labour — if poverty was the sole determinant for child labour, the highest rates of child labour would be found in the poorest parts of the world. This is not always the case. The relationship between child labour and poverty is varied, vague and indirect. If poverty would be the only determinant, the same patterns would be found over the world, but they are not. In rich countries it is often the opposite; children from high-income families are more likely to work.

The finding was that children in the wealthier south were much more likely to be involved in labour than were the children in the poorer north. The best explanation was that the well-situated environment in south provided more labour opportunities for children. Even if more children might have been looking for work in the northern poor area they could not find it.

7. Conceptual Framework for Child Labours in the Brick Fields



8. Analysis and Findings

Child labour has become one of the social issues in the study area as well as in Bengal and also in India. One concern is that work undertaken by children in brick-making factories is by nature heavy and dangerous, coupled with long working hours, school interference, and low payment. Thus, its far reaching effect on child development, especially on schooling and health, is devastating. Yet some parents still sent their children to work in brick factories and hiring children to work in brick factories is suspected to continue by many employers.

(A) Background Profile of Child Workers

Table 2: Distribution of the respondents by the number of sibling

Age(Years)	Frequency	%
3-4	249	82.7
Above 4	52	17.3
Total	301	100

The table shows that most of the child labours (83%) have more than 3 to 4 sibling and 17% percent children have more than 4 siblings.

Table 3: Distribution of the respondents by their birth order

Birth Order	Frequency	%
1 st	88	29
2 nd	81	27
3 rd	63	21
4 th	48	16
5 th	21	07
Total	301	100

From the above table it is evident that the highest number of child workers 29% is the first child of their parents and 7% is the 5th place.

Table 4: Distribution of the respondents by their parent's aliveness

	Frequency	%
Yes	154	51.2
No	7	2.3
Only Father Alive	43	14.3
Only Mother Alive	97	32.2
Total	301	100

In the above table it is evident that 32.2% child worker has no father, but only 2.3% has no parents and 51.2% has both father and mother.

Table 5: Profile of the respondents by with whom they live

	Frequency	%
Biological Father/Mother	221	73.4
Step Father/Mother	57	18.9
Total	278	92.4
Unanswered	23	7.6
Total	301	100

From the above table, highest number of child worker (73%) live with their biological father and mother and 19% live with their step father or mother.

Table 6: Distribution of the respondents by their father occupation

Father Occupation	Frequency	%
Day Labour	99	32.9
Rickshaw Puller	51	16.9
Unemployed	21	7.0
Died Before	81	26.9
Cultivation	31	10.3
Unanswered	18	6.0
Total	301	100

Above table shows that the highest 33% parents of the child worker are day labour and 7% is unemployed.

Table 7: Distribution of the respondents by their mother occupation

	Frequency	%
House Wife	139	46.2
Day Labour	83	27.6
House maid	35	11.6
Others	44	14.6
Total	301	100

A significant number of numbers of respondents from the above table state that 46.2% mothers of the child labour are housewife, 11.6% is with house maid and 27.6% are engaged in day labour.

Table 8: Distribution of the respondents by the family member who work in the brick field

	Frequency	%
Yes	183	60.8
No	118	39.2
Total	301	100

Table 9: Distribution of the respondents by the family member who work with them

	Frequency	%
Father	83	27.6
Mother	31	10.3
Sister	11	3.6
Brother	67	22.3
Other Relatives	57	18.9
Unanswered	52	17.3

Total	301	100
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From the above table highest 63.8% respondent has family member the work with them.

(B) Schooling Profile of Child Workers

Many child workers in brick-making factories were not in school About three fourths of them quitted school more than two years with several reasons, including family reasons (the family economic hardship, their needed labour by parents, sick parents, and family debt. It is evident that about 81.4% child worker reported that they don't go to school. And 3.0% respondents don't answer. They said that their parents are not able to give them school expenditure although cost is very low. Then they said who will provide their need if they go school because most of the family even depend of their child income.

Table 10: Schooling profile of the respondent

	Frequency	%
Unanswered	9	3.0
No	245	81.4
Total	254	84.4
Yes	47	15.6
Total	301	100.0

Table 11: Respondent profile about the expectation of going school

Expectation of going school	Frequency	%
Yes	170	66.9
No	35	13.8
Sometimes	44	17.3
Unanswered	5	2.0
Total	254	100.0

It is evident from the above table 17.3% respondent want to go school sometimes and 13.8% don't want to go school and about 67% want to go school.

Table 12: Schooling Status

Schooling Status	Frequency	%
Currently in School	47	15.6
Currently Not in School	169	56.2
Never Attended School	76	25.2
Unanswered	9	3.0
Total	301	100.0

Table 13: When Quitted School?

When Quitted School?	Frequency	%
1-12 months ago	19	11.2
13-24 months ago	28	16.6
25-36 months ago	24	14.2
36+ months ago	98	58.0
Number of quitting school	169	100.0

Table 14: Reasons for Quitting School (Multiple-Response Question)

Reasons for Quitting School	Current Residence Living in Brick Field	
	Frequency	%
1. Family-Related Reasons		
Family not have enough money to buy food	97	57.4
Help the family with work to make money	56	33.1
Parent is sick, need money for medicine	15	8.9
Mother did not let me and forced me to work	16	9.5

Family travelled a lot for work	33	19.5
Family is in debt	9	5.3
2. School-Related Reasons		
No money for school	29	17.2
School is far, no transport	15	8.9
Teacher spans, teacher takes money	11	6.5
3. Personal Reasons		
Poor grades	36	21.3
Lazy, don't want to go to school	0	0
Want to make money	19	11.2
Quarrel with parent	7	4.1
Be with friends	8	4.7
Total respondents	169	100.0

(C) Work Profile of the Child Interviewees

Child workers in brick factories usually performed multiple tasks. Common tasks are mixing clay, cutting raw brick, digging clay, loading bricks in and out of the kiln, loadings brick onto the truck, and arranging bricks to dry. However, most children work full-time in brick factories 6-8 hours per day (85%). The average wage is (55%) 2000-3000 rupees per month.

Table 15: Age at Start to Work for Money

Age at Start to Work for Money	Male		Female		Total	
	Frequency	%	Frequency	%	Frequency	%
6-8	20	10.1	5	4.9	25	8.3
9-11	28	14.1	9	8.7	37	12.3
12-14	49	24.7	28	27.2	77	25.6
15-17	101	51.0	61	59.2	162	53.8
Total	198	65.8	103	34.2	301	100

Table 16: Distribution of the respondents by the work they under take in the brick field

Tasks Undertaken by Child Workers	Frequency	%
a) Pulling brick wheelbarrows	159	53
b) Loading bricks in and out of kiln	126	42
c) Loading bricks in/out of brick wheelbarrows	132	44
d) Loading bricks onto truck	132	44
e) Arranging bricks to dry	145	48
f) Crushing and/or grinding clay	66	22
g) Operating a brick-making machine	84	28
h) Cutting raw bricks	51	17
i) Extracting clay	42	14
j) Carrying clay	24	8
k) Mixing clay	24	8
l) Carrying rice husks	21	7
m) Firing kilns	6	2
Total	301	100

It is evident that no child worker is engaged in a specific category of brick field works. Rather than they are used into different activities as mind as the managers or owners. From the above table the highest 53% child worker engage with Pulling brick wheelbarrows, 48% with arranging bricks to dry, 44% with both loading bricks in/out of brick wheelbarrows and loading bricks onto truck, 42% with loading bricks in and out of kiln, 28% with operating a brick-making machine in the brick field, 22% with crushing and/or grinding clay and only 2% worker with firing kiln.

Table 17: Distribution of the respondents by their working hour

Working hour	Frequency	%
6-7 hrs per day	154	51.2
7-8 hrs per day	102	33.9
8-9 hrs per day	45	14.9
total	301	100

Table shows that 51% respondent work 6-7 hours per day and no one work more than 10 hour.

Table 18: Distribution of the respondents by their mode of salary

Mode of salary	Frequency	%
Daily	133	44.2
Monthly	127	42.2
At some month interval	41	13.6
Total	301	100

From the above table 42% getting salary monthly, 44% get salary daily and about 14% get at some month interval.

Table 19: Categories of the respondents by money they get per month

Salary/Wage per Month	Frequency	%
2000-3000 rupees	47	15.6
3000-4000 rupees	126	41.8
4000-5000 rupees	89	29.6
>5000 rupees	39	13.0
Total	301	100

From the above table 15.6% respondent reported that they get 2000-3000 rupees per month, about 42% get 3000-4000 rupees and only 13% get more than 5000 rupees.

Table 20: Respondents opinion about what they do by their earned month

Use of earning	Frequency	%
Use of Personal Needs	11	4
Use of Family Needs	99	33
Both	191	63
Total	301	100

Above table shows those 63% child workers spend money both for their personal and family need.

(D) Reasons for engaging the risky work

According to children's responses, top reasons for working are the family economic hardship. And most of the time they spent money for their family & personal need. They work most of the time as a contributor of the family sometimes as a means of self actualization. As a consequence of family dynamics and most of the important pull factors is that poverty leads them to work.

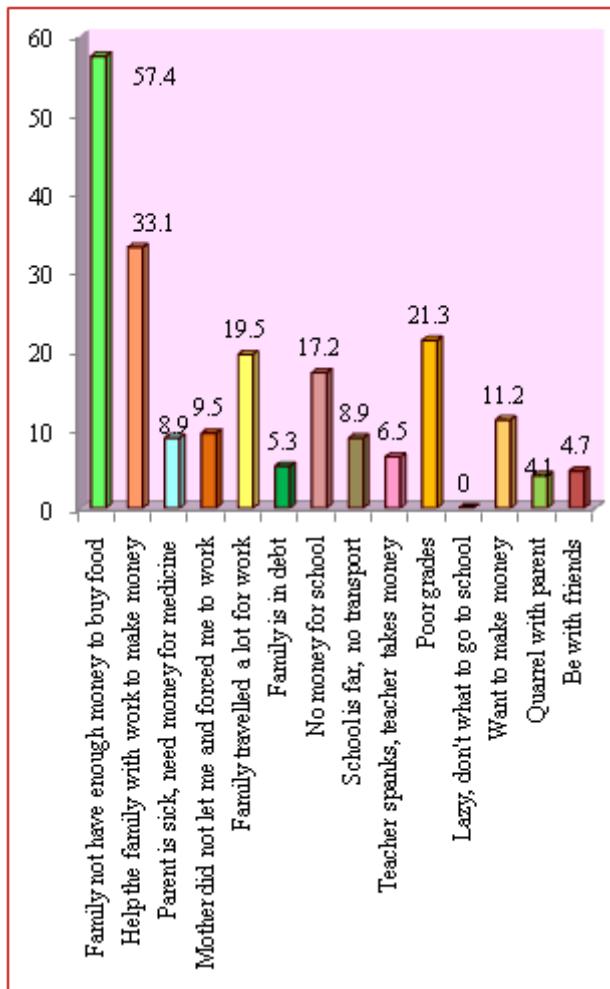


Table 21: Respondent opinion about the causes of engaging the work

causes of engaging the work	Frequency	%
Economic Hardship	256	85
Personal Needs	45	15
Total	301	100

A significant number of respondents from above table state that 85% have to do this work for economic hardship.

Table 22: Respondent's opinion whether they forced to do the work or not

	Frequency	%
Yes	98	33
No	167	55
Unanswered	36	12
Total	301	100

From the above table it is shown that 55% respondent do their work willingly.

(E) Work Conditions in Brick Field

The fieldwork observation shows that the working environment in the brick factory is hazardous to child health due to unsanitary environment (unclean, smoke, bad smells of manures, and consuming pond water), unsafe working environment (such as heat, burning ashes, flying ashes, and pieces of broken bricks everywhere), and the hazardous work (prolonged working 110 heavy work, and dangerous jobs).

Table 23: Respondent opinion about the happiness of their work

Happiness of their work	Frequency	%
Yes	35	11.6
No	117	38.9
Sometimes	149	49.5
Total	301	100

From the above table 49.5% workers are happy sometimes to do their work and about 39% are not happy with their work.

Table 24: Opinion about safety materials available there

	Frequency	%
Yes	45	15
No	256	85
Total	301	100

At above table shows that 85% respondent state that there is no any safety material when they work.

Table 25: Percent of Brick Factories having Bad Working Conditions as Reported by at least 80% of Child Interviewees (N = 23 BF's)

Nature of Conditions	Frequency	%
Hazardous to health	18	78
Not Safe for kids to live in	16	70
No sanitation	19	83
Bricks falling on workers	20	87
Flying dusts/ashes	22	97
Extremely hot	23	100
No first-aid kits	23	100

(F) Work Safety and Regulations

According to child workers, many brick factories do not have any work regulations or safety measures. And most of the brick field (70%) has no safety materials. Only (15%) respondents report that they use safety materials during their work. The tasks include operating a brick machine, cutting raw bricks, and mixing clays, carrying clays etc.

Table 26: Whether they use safety materials or not

	Frequency	%
Sometimes	45	15
Yes	45	15
No	211	70
Total	301	100

Above table shows 15% respondents use safety materials during their work.

(G) Impact of Child Labour

In terms of specific health problems frequently experienced. According to study, about 57% of the respondents report that their job is the cause for their disease. Sometimes they have to face different injuries. They also suffer from breathing problem, cold and fever and sometimes more than that. In addition, nearly one half (62%) of the child workers had minor injuries due to work.

Table 27: Whether they face any injuries during their work

	Frequency	%
Yes	216	72
No	69	23
Unanswered	16	5
Total	301	100

From the above table shows 72% face injuries during their work where 5% respondents don't answer.

Table 28: Types of injuries did them face.

	Frequency	%
Minor Injuries	187	62.1
Medium Injuries	55	18.3
Unanswered	59	19.6
Total	301	100

Above table shows 62% respondent face minor injuries during their work and 18% face medium injuries.

Table 29: Opinion towards the satisfaction of the child labour about the working environment

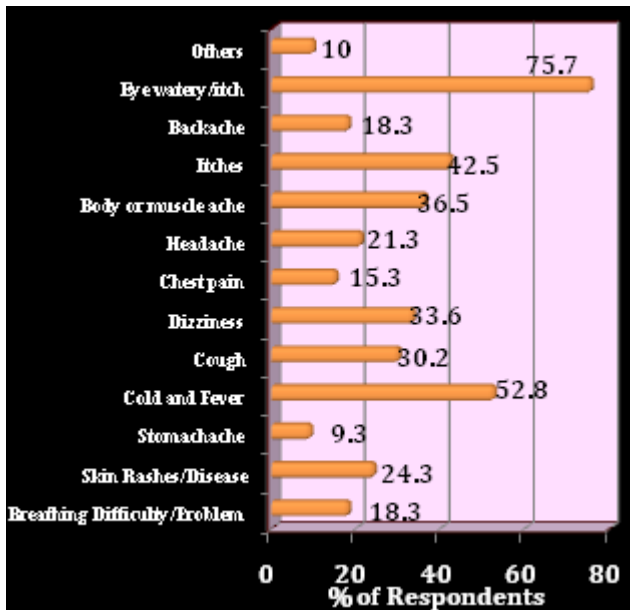
	Frequency	%
Very Satisfactory	16	5
Satisfactory	75	25
Non-satisfactory	196	65
Unanswered	14	5
Total	301	100

Above table shows 65% respondent are not satisfied with their work.

Table 30: Whether they suffer any disease last six months

	Frequency	%
Yes	232	77
No	69	23
Total	301	100

From the above table shows 77% respondent suffer from any disease since last six month.



From the above diagram shows 53% worker suffer from cold and fever & 9% suffer from stomachache.

Table 31: opinion towards whether their job causes their illness or not.

	Frequency	%
Yes	172	57.1
No	27	9.0
Sometimes	102	33.9
Total	301	100.0

It is evident from the above table that 57% respondent state that their work is caused for their disease.

Table 32: Respondent profile of facing any torture

	Frequency	%
Yes	117	38.9
No	40	13.3
Sometimes	144	47.8
Total	301	100.0

It is evident from the above table 47% worker give opinion that sometimes they face torture and 39% face torture regularly.

Table 33: Types of torture that they faced

	Frequency	%
Beating	43	14.3
Sexual Harassment	63	20.9
Forcing to do Hard Task	147	48.8
Others	17	5.7
Unanswered	31	10.3
Total	301	100.0

It is evident from the from the above table 49% worker are forced to do their work and lowest 14% respondent face beating.

Table 34: Opinion of the respondent about who torture them

Torturer	Frequency	%
Manager	137	45.5
Co-worker	75	24.9
Outsiders	13	4.3
Owner	39	13.0
Unanswered	37	12.3
Total	301	100.0

It is evident from the above table 42% worker reported the most of the time they are tortured by their manager.

(H) Expectations for the Future of Child Workers

The majority of child workers do not want to continue their schooling, contrary to the expectation of parents, especially parents who lived in brick factories. This may be due to the fact many child workers interviewed had already quitted school. Most of the worker wants that they could carry out the bear both of their family and them. They also want that their working conditions would be easier and safety for them. And very common expectation is that all of them want to lead a happy life with their work and their family.

Table 35: Improving Working Conditions for Children in Brick Factories

Improving Working Conditions	Child workers Living in BF	Parents Living in BF
Provide continued education	6.1	2.9
Benefits: leave when sick, health coverage	2.9	0.0
Rules on dangerous tasks, not force children to work	2.9	6.1
Need protection device	5.9	15.2
Increase wage	5.9	6.1
Reduce work loads	11.8	9.1
Children must be more careful	35.3	24.2
No idea	41.2	33.3

9. Recommendations

- 1) Since the main cause for children to work is the family economic hardship, it may be unwise to eradicate all

forms of child labour. However, children should be prohibited from undertaking all dangerous jobs, including operating brick machines, brick firing operations, and clay preparations. In addition, work-load and work-age regulations should set and strictly enforced. They include the reduced current work load for children, no forced labour, no work under contract, and no full-time work for children less than 18 years of age during school time, no work more than 5 days a week for full-time child workers, etc.

- 2) Children have the rights for development. Thus, efforts against child labour should make sure that child workers have equal chance to attend school, that they attend school, and that they stay in school to complete at least their basic education. If they cannot attend school regularly for whatever reasons, especially those who live in brick factories, continued education should be provided either at the work place or at a designated place.
- 3) Educational program should enhance so that every student get educational opportunity. For that formal and non formal education through part time & full time school, vocational training activities may be enhanced. Educational facilities, different vocational training facilities should be free for the poor children.
- 4) Child workers should be entitled to full health benefits. In other words, employers should take full responsibility for their child workers to cover their health expenses in case of injuries or sickness due to work, as well as recovery care. Local health authority should be involved.
- 5) Increase knowledge and awareness of work hazards. Efforts should aim at developing the public awareness of children's rights and the damage to children caused by child labour. Such awareness requires partnerships among many different groups, including government sectors, businesses, trade unions, educators, researchers, NGOs, the community leaders and stakeholders, parents, and children themselves.
- 6) Work safety regulations should be set and standardized for all brick factories. The legal force should be given to the regulations. The regulations should list also safety measure requirements for all child workers, including safe working environment and use of protection devices that include safety helmet, working shoes, workable gloves, masks, and protecting glasses. The employer should be responsible for providing these safety devices to child workers; and should workers should be charged for or not be allowed to work if not wearing the protection device at work. Warning signs or stickers of danger should be placed on each of work equipments and areas that are health-threatening or injury- or incident inducing.
- 7) Safety devices should be required for all brick making machines. The machine belt should be properly and completely covered. The machine slot where clay is put should be funneled in such a way that avoids direct contact of hand and the machine.
- 8) Monitoring and enforcement mechanisms should be created, including codes of conduct for employers in which they be confined employing children as set by work and work safety regulations, work safety orientations to all child workers, labour inspections, safety inspections, fines, and health checks.

- 9) By nature, children cannot fight for their rights because they are powerless. Thus, child workers need others to advocate and campaign on their behalf. Advocates against the worst forms of child labour should initiate social activities aiming at increasing the public awareness of child labour issues and at involving all parties concerned and relevant. In addition, they should set as priority identifying children who live in impoverished families and are involved in the worst forms of child labour because these children are most at risk of being forced into labour.

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- 1) All brick factory owners/mangers, children working in brick factories, and parents who gracefully participated in the study for their participation and sharing of experience and information needed for the study;
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11. Conclusion

Child labor have become a sheer reality in Bengal as well as India like many other developing countries, is one of the major socio-economic problems in the country. The working children, as a socio-economic group, happened to be the most disadvantaged because for survival of self and family. They are forced to work for living, sacrificing their childhood along with their future. They are generally not getting medical services, many times not even in cases of workplace accidents. It is common for all children in brick field to suffer from illness frequently with cold fever, skin diseases, physical pain, and eye-sight-related problems. Children, with the compulsion of taking up work at early age do not get the proper supporting environment for their physical and mental development. Many working children, especially girls, are also subjected to sexual abuse and harassment. Since the main reason for children to work is the family economic hardship, it may be unwise to eliminate all forms of child labour. However, children should be prohibited from undertaking all dangerous jobs, including operating brick machines, brick firing operations, and clay preparations. In addition, work-load and work-age regulations should set and strictly enforced. And work safety regulations should be set and standardized for all brick factories. The legal force should be given to the regulations. The regulations should list also safety measure requirements for all child workers, including safe working environment and use of protection devices that include safety helmet. Working shoes, workable gloves, masks, and protecting glass.

12. Limitations of the Study

Research is a complex, complicated and scrutinizing activity based on scientific knowledge and competence. For doing the study a lot of problems are suffered by the researcher's. Some of these problems are given below:

- 1) The fieldwork was limited only in Khejuri CD Blocks of Purba Medinipur District of Bengal. The study sample size is very precise.
- 2) Most of the sample respondents are illiterate or less illiterate. So, due to this reason, proper and adequate answer could not be taken from the respondents against questionnaires.
- 3) To prepare an analytical study, financial assistance is most necessary. Lack of sufficient money, various types of analysis did not possible.
- 4) To conduct the field work there has been faced different kinds problems and obstacles from political, administrative and also brick field owner's sites.

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