

## EXPLOITATION OF BIDI ROLLING CHILD LABOUR

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### ABSTRACT

The present study deals with a study of bidi rolling child labour in Gondia city. This study primarily focuses on the child labour prevailing in bidi making of families within Gondia district, maharashtra. The aim of the present study was to highlight the problem of exploitation of bidi rolling child labour. The informative study is broad based quantitative and qualitative analyzed are under taken. Besides study includes interviews with bidi contractors, employers, children and their connected an adult colleagues involved in bidi making process. The study survey is also done about in prime location where bidi making process are constructed within Gondia district.

**KEYWORDS:** Exploitation, Bidi, Rolling, Chid Labour, Problem

### INTRODUCTION

#### Bidi Sector in India

Bidi sector is an agro-forestry based, labour intensive industry characterised by low fixed capital requirements, high wage sensitivity and a strong tendency to shift towards cheap labour. This sector encompasses workforce involved in the collection and processing of the two main raw materials, tendu (bidi wrapper) leaves and tobacco. Of the total workforce in the sector (estimated by Ministry of Labour to be 41.42 lakhs) more than two-thirds are engaged in bidi making, the most labour intensive segment.

The industry is spread across the country. Concentrated in the states of Madhya Pradesh, Maharashtra, Tamil Nadu, Karnataka, Andhra Pradesh, Uttar Pradesh and West Bengal, bidis are also manufactured in Gujarat, Kerala, Orissa, Bihar, Rajasthan, Assam, Tripura and Delhi. Most of the bidi making work is carried out in rural and semi-urban areas. It varies in the capital invested, size of bidi, extent of concentration, gender and child composition of workers and so on from place to place (Giriappa, 1987<sup>1</sup>; Prasad and Prasad, 1985<sup>2</sup>).

Most of the bidi making work is carried out under the contractual, home-based, piece rate system. Women and children predominate, constituting around 90 per cent of all home-based workers. Employed for their proficiency, yet ironically paid lower wages, these women and children involved in bidi rolling tasks are discriminated. Arbitrary and ingenious ways are practiced by the contractors/middlemen (known as sattedars or commissiondars) to exploit and harass these susceptible and vulnerable workers. they face tremendous health hazards.

#### Child Labour in Bidi Industry

The child labour is one of the major problems India is facing over the last many years. From the beginning of mankind, child labour has been unrestrained. Its genesis, growth and magnitude are conditioned by the historical and social circumstances. Its nature and dynamics are concomitant with the changing trends and characteristics of the productive

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<sup>1</sup> Giriappa, S., Bidi-Rolling in Rural Development, Daya Publishing House, Delhi, 1987.

<sup>2</sup> Prasad KVE. & Prasad, A., 1985, "Beedi workers of Central India: a study of production process and working and living conditions" V.V.G. National Labour Institute

system in society. Before the dawn of factory mode of production, when family was the primary unit of economic production, children were seen cooperating with their parents and other adult and family members in the accomplishment of the traditional family occupations. Each family was an impersonalized and informal social milieu – a workplace, where children were engaged in pursuance of their family occupations under the direct supervision of adult family members. Thus child labour has a long historical association with the extended nature of family system in India.

The problem of child labour is a major challenge in front of the nation. Issue is complicated but in absence of due investigation on the problems and non finding remedies thereon gradually it is becoming grave and grave, hence it is necessitated this submission. The nation where those children are being exploited and forced into labour is a concern with many more. India can be considered one of the examples of a nation plagued by the problem of child labour.

History revealed that child labour is in existence in the most of countries but presently it appears that child labor's problems are in existence in developing countries mostly. Data about the numbers of children working through the world can not be thoroughly estimated however it is very large about hundreds of millions. In the recent year child labour problems and its ill effects have received several attentions. Undoubtedly this increased attention is due to in part to the fact that child labour often has serious social, moral, economic, demographic implications for children, households, communities, Societies in the world. Therefore, the elimination or reduction of child labour has been the aim of numerous fields in different parts of the world.

The child labour constitutes a substantial portion of total labour force, especially in developing countries of Asia and Africa. There is a paucity of statistics exactly showing the number of children gainfully employed in agriculture, trade and business, industry, mining, plantation, transport and many other organized and unorganized sector of economy, until recently. However, our common sense and to day observation of the surroundings tell us that a larger proportion of the children at the early stage of life is engaged in varied forms of labouring activities in different, business establishments, trade and industrial concerns at the cost of their education recreation and psychic pleasure. Most of these children, who go to work are either school drop outs or they have not seen the face of a school at all. These children are engaged in agriculture, they graze the cattle and sheep, protect the crops in the farm from birds and cattle, help their parents at the time of showing seeds and harvesting the crops. At home, they look after the younger siblings, collect firewood, carry water in small pots, and participate in various other domestics and non-domestics work. In the urban sector, they engage themselves in a wide variety of economy activities in organized as well as unorganized sectors of labour force viz., road side cafes, scooter repairing workshops, selling fruits in thelās, bidi making, construction work, domestic services and even organized street business.

In central India "Bidi" manufacturing or bidi making is a big industry; most of the rural families are engaged in this job. Since most of the employers prefer to get the bidis prepared through contract labourers, who too prefer to do the job at their homes, employment of the child labour has the biggest scope.

The child labour is utilized by the parents guardians to earn, therefore it has to some extent taken away the control on prevention of child labour.

Due to contract labour abolition by statute, the bidi rolling has become the direct employment; the entrepreneur is required to maintain the establishment. It being not the manufacturing process requires labour in abundance. The legislation has, therefore been named as bidi and cigar workers (conditions of employment) made Act, 1966. The Act requires the employer to obtain valid license, to involve in the process of bidi and cigar. He is required to hold that process in industrial premises.

The Act provides that the employer shall keep the industrial premises clean and ventilated; prevent over crowding, drinking water facilities, latrines and urinals, first-aid facilities, canteens, fix hours of work etc. Section 24 of the Act, like other enactments, prescribed the employment of child labour.

Bidi industry over 1.7 million children work as labourers in India's bidi rolling industry. Children are engaged as their nimble fingers. More adept at rolling bidies. Children work up to 14 hours a day with no breaks or holidays. Earning is as little as Rs 30 per 1000 bidies on an average and the children hardly get anything suffered from tuberculosis, postural and eye problems, anemia, lung cancer and skin diseases.

### **Exploitation**

Labourers below the age of 14 years are called child labour. India has the largest number of child labour in the world. Most commonly the desperate conditions affecting the rural as well as the urban poor in India are forcing growing numbers of children to toil often in subhuman conditions. They are deprived of their most basic rights as children, including education and a joyful childhood. Most have never been to school or dropped out at very young ages. Besides, the estimates of the number of child labourers vary widely.

Most of the child labourers are engaged in agriculture and allied subject like livestock, foresting and fisheries. Besides, a sizeable number of children work in the bidi rolling industry. In the urban areas children work in dhabas, eateries helpers or cleaners in trucks and as domestic servants etc. They have long working hours, bad and unhygienic working conditions and fewer wages. The main reason behind child labour is poverty. Children born in poor families are forced to work not only for their own survival but also for their family. Indebtedness of the parents also compels poor parents to their children employed as labourers in agricultural forms, factories, brick kilns and as domestic servants. Such harsh environments are responsible for child labour exploitation by the employers. In view of the above, the exploitation of the child labour was studied in detail and the results are presented in this section of the chapter.

## **RESEARCH METHODOLOGY**

### **Objective**

To examine the working condition of the children at their work place and the nature and forms of exploitation and moral abuse to which they are subjected

### **HYPOTHESIS**

Children engaged in bidi rolling profession are exploited by the contractor.

### **Working Definition of Variables**

- **'Childlabour'** means the employment of boys and girls when they are too young to work for hire, or when they are employed at jobs unsuitable or unsafe for children of their ages and under conditions injurious to their welfare.
- **'Bidi'** means which is useful for smoking and which is prepared by using Tendu Leaf and Tobacco.
- **'Bidi rolling'** means to roll the product by using Tendu leaf in tobacco.
- **'Problem'** means question to which there is no obvious, immediate answer, a question that requires some work done on it before a solution can be available.

## AREA OF STUDY

In the study region the large scale bidi factories are located at Bhandara, Gondia, Tirora, Arjuni, Sihari, Warthi, Tumsar, etc. These factories are mainly engaged in sorting and packing of bidis. The INDUS project has been carried out in the Gondia District and the researcher has actively worked in this project on child labour. There she came in close contact with the bidi rolling child labour. Hence, in view of her interaction and the association with these workers, she has selected the area of study i.e. "Gondia District".

This study primarily focuses on the child labour prevailing in bidi making of families within Gondia district (India). The informative study is broad based quantitative and qualitative analyzed are under taken. Besides study includes interviews and cross interviews with bidi contractor, employers, children and their connected an adult colleagues involved in bidi making process. The survey is also done about in prime location where bidi making processes are constructed within Gondia district

### Universe and Sampling Method

The universe of the study consists of all working children engaged in bidi rolling occupational category widely scattered over the Gondia district as the universe of the study was quite vast in view of containing as many as 1935 child working population thus a sample of 400 working children.

The bidi making Child have been enrolled because of the INDUS project of bidi making child labour in Gondia dist. that's why number of the child labour were counted and for that probability sampling method was appropriate for this study so systematic sampling method from probability sampling method was used for selection of sample. Child labour was selected by sequential list from fifteen prime locations. The sample is fully representative of the population.

### Research Unit

At present bidi rolling child labour who are involved in bidi rolling profession. For the present study the child labour as research unit of age group between 10 and 14 was selected.

### Sources and Techniques of Data Collection

The informative study is broad based quantitative and qualitative analyzed are under taken. Besides study includes interviews and cross interviews with bidi contractor, employers, children and their connected an adult colleagues involved in bidi making process. The survey was also done about the prime locations where bidi making processes are constructed within Gondia District.

Both primary and secondary nature of data was used in this study. The primary data, which emanates from the people source of data collection, constitutes the major part of the data. For the study, interview schedule was

Adopted as a major technique of data collection keeping in view the background of illiteracy and extremely low educational qualification of the working children. However, this technique was supplemented by the personal observation of the working children by researcher herself. These techniques proved to be effective in terms of helping the researcher to elicit required responses from the working children.

### Primary Data Collection

The primary data collection in view of the objectives of the study involved preparation of research instrument (interview schedule). Though development and measurement of research constructs is neither simple nor straightforward, instrumentation techniques are available that allows us to construct research instruments that constitute acceptable levels of

reliability and validity. The process of developing the research instrument for this study was based on generally accepted psychometric principles of instrument design, and was carried out according to the standard methodology.

**Table 1: Views Regarding Working Condition and Exploitation-Information Regarding Views of Bidi Rolling Children about Working Condition and Exploitation**

	Contractor Checks the Quality of Bidis		Substandard Bidis are Put Rejection Basket		Rejected Bidis Returned to the Workers		Payment Slip Gives to the Workers		Contractor are Demanding Extra Bidis		Contractor Supply the Adequate Raw-Material		You are Bargaining About Your Wages with the Contractor		Regardless of the Number of the Bidis Rejected by the Contractor	
	Fre.	Per.	Fre.	Per.	Fre.	Per.	Fre.	Per.	Fre.	Per.	Fre.	Per.	Fre.	Per.	Fre.	Per.
Always	286	71.9	284	71.0	61	15.3	76	19.0	122	30.5	32	8.0	64	16.0	148	37.0
Sometime	48	12.1	52	13.0	68	17.0	148	37.0	142	35.5	144	36.0	168	42.0	64	16.0
Rarely	20	5.0	42	10.5	143	35.8	144	36.0	46	11.5	178	44.5	24	6.0	144	36.0
Very rarely	44	11.1	22	5.5	128	32	32	8.0	90	22.5	46	11.5	144	36.0	44	11.0
Never	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
<b>Total</b>	<b>398</b>	<b>100</b>	<b>400</b>	<b>100</b>	<b>400</b>	<b>100</b>	<b>400</b>	<b>100</b>	<b>400</b>	<b>100</b>	<b>400</b>	<b>100</b>	<b>400</b>	<b>100</b>	<b>400</b>	<b>100</b>

Fre.- Frequency; Per.- Percentage

Above **Table** provides information pertaining to the views of bidi rolling children about working condition and exploitation. It was evident from the information that according to 71.9% children contractor always check the quality of bidi, 12.1% children reported that contractor sometimes checked the quality of bidi. Whereas the responses such as contractor rarely and very rarely checked the quality of bidi was given by 5% and 11.1% bidi rolling children respectively. Furthermore it was also reported by 71% children that substandard bidis were put in rejection basket. 32% children reported that rejected bidis rarely returned to the workers while according to 15.3% children rejected bidis always returned to the workers.

Moreover 37% children reported that payment slips were sometimes given to the workers, whereas according to 36% children payment slips were rarely given to the workers. It was reported by 35.5% children that contractors sometimes demanded extra bidis, while according to 30.5% children contractor always demanding extra bidis. According to 44.5% children contractor rarely supply adequate raw material.

According to 42% children they have sometimes needed to bargain regarding their wages whereas 36% children reported that they have very rarely need to bargain about their wages. It was also observed that according to 37% children always regardless of the no. of bidis rejected by the contractors and 36% children reported that regardless of no. of bidis rarely rejected by contractors. It may be concluded from the study results that-

- Contractor always checks the quality of bidi
- Contractors always put substandard bidis in rejection basket
- Rejected bidis are rarely return to the workers
- Payment slips are sometimes or rarely given to the workers
- Contractors sometimes demanding extra bidis
- Contractor always supply adequate raw material
- Workers have some time or rarely needed to bargain for their wages
- Regardless of the number of the bidis always rejected by the contractor

**Table 2: Views and Experience Regarding Nature and Forms of Exploitation Results Regarding Views and Experience Pertaining Nature and Forms of Exploitation of Bidi Rolling Children**

Views	Deduction are Made from the Wages According to the Number of Rejected Bids		Contractor Stacks the Bundles and Send Them to the Branch		Child Labour are Mercilessly Exploited by the Contractor and the Company		Contractor Supply Lesser Quantity of Raw Material Than Required for the Bidi		Worker Deposit Less Bids Due to Shortage of Raw Material		High Rejection Rate		Demanding Extra Bids over and above the Production for Which Payment is Made		Insufficient Supply of Raw-Material		A payment of Less Than the Exiting Minimum Rate of Wages	
	Fre.	Per.	Fre.	Per.	Fre.	Per.	Fre.	Per.	Fre.	Per.	Fre.	Per.	Fre.	Per.	Fre.	Per.	Fre.	Per.
Strongly Disagree	118	29.5	288	72.0	108	27.0	144	36.0	64	16.0	268	67.0	122	30.5	208	52.0	48	12.0
Disagree	204	51.0	76	19.0	204	51.0	102	25.5	228	57.0	98	24.5	86	21.5	106	26.5	148	37.0
Undecided	78	19.5	36	9.0	88	22.0	154	38.5	108	27.0	34	8.5	192	48.0	86	21.5	204	51.0
Agree	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
Strongly Agree	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
<b>Total</b>	<b>400</b>	<b>100</b>	<b>400</b>	<b>100</b>	<b>400</b>	<b>100</b>	<b>400</b>	<b>100</b>	<b>400</b>	<b>100</b>	<b>400</b>	<b>100</b>	<b>400</b>	<b>100</b>	<b>400</b>	<b>100</b>	<b>400</b>	<b>100</b>

Fre.- Frequency; Per.- Percentage

**Table** provides information regarding views and experience regarding nature and forms of exploitation of bidi rolling children. It was observed that 51% children indicated their disagreement with the statement which states that deduction are made from the wages according to the number of rejected bids.

72% children strongly disagreed with the statement which states that contractor stacks the bundles and send them to the branch. 51% children disagreed with the statement which states that child labour is mercilessly exploited by the contractor and the company.

36% children strongly disagreed with the statement which states that contractor supply lesser quantity of raw material than required for the bidi, whereas 38.5% children were not sure about the adequacy of raw material supplied by the contractor.

57% children disagreed with the statement which states that worker deposit less bids due to shortage of raw-material. 67% children strongly agreed with the high rejection rate of bids by contractor.

According to 30.5% children there is no demand for extra bids over and above the production for which payment is made where as 48% children were unaware regarding the demand of contractor for extra bidisover and above the production for which payment is made. 52.8% children strongly disagreed regarding insufficient supply of raw-material whereas 51% children were unaware of the payment of less than the exiting minimum rate of wages.

It may be concluded from the study results that-

- No deduction are made from the wages according to the number of rejected bids
- Contractor did not stacks the bundles to send them to the branch
- Child labour are not mercilessly exploited by the contractor and the company
- Contractor supply adequate quantity of raw material required for the bidi
- There is no shortage of material
- There is no high rejection rate
- Contractors did not demand extra bids over and above the production for which payment is made
- Labourers are not aware of minimum rate of wages

**Table 3: Views and Experience Regarding Nature and Forms of Exploitation Information Regarding Views and Experience Regarding Nature and Forms of Exploitation of Bidi Rolling Children**

Views	Workers with ID Cards Receiving Benefits of any of the Schemes		The Contractor and Their Agents are Ruthless Exploiter		Contractor find Employing Child Labour Highly Profitable		You Face the Problem of Exploitation by the Contractor		Child Labourers often Face Discrimination and are Paid Less than Man and Women Labour		Children are Even Worse off with no Wage Structure		The Lack of ID Cards Exposes Worker to Exploitation		Depriving Workers of Their Legally Stipulated Benefit		Children Does not Mention in Employers Register	
	Fre.	Per.	Fre.	Per.	Fre.	Per.	Fre.	Per.	Fre.	Per.	Fre.	Per.	Fre.	Per.	Fre.	Per.	Fre.	Per.
Strongly Disagree	102	25.5	62	15.5	46	11.5	28	7.0	48	12.0	58	14.5	66	16.5	28	7.0	26	6.5
Disagree	52	13.0	208	52.0	158	39.5	126	31.5	268	67.0	245	61.3	186	46.5	62	15.5	24	6.0
Undecided	246	61.5	130	32.5	196	49.0	246	61.5	84	21.0	97	24.3	148	37.0	310	77.5	348	87.0
Agree	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
Strongly Agree	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
<b>Total</b>	<b>400</b>	<b>100</b>	<b>400</b>	<b>100</b>	<b>400</b>	<b>100</b>	<b>400</b>	<b>100</b>	<b>400</b>	<b>100</b>	<b>400</b>	<b>100</b>	<b>400</b>	<b>100</b>	<b>400</b>	<b>100</b>	<b>398</b>	<b>99.5</b>

**Table** provides information regarding views and experience regarding nature and forms of exploitation of bidi rolling children.

It was apparent from the information that 61.5% children undecided of receiving benefits of any of the scheme while having ID cards with them. 52% children were disagreed that the contractor and their agents are ruthless exploiter.

49% children undecided over contractor's profit in employing child labour. 61.5% children were not sure that they faced problem of exploitation by contractor. 67% children dis agreed that they often face discrimination and were often paid less than man and women labour.

61% children were disagreed that they were often worse off with no wage structure. 46% children disagreed with the statement which states that the lack of ID cards exposes worker to exploitation.

77.5% children undecided on depriving them of their legally stipulated benefit and 87% children were unaware of they were not mentioned in employers register.

It may be concluded on the basis of study result that-

- Majority of child labour were unaware of receiving benefits of any of the scheme while having ID card with them
- The contractor and their agents are not ruthless exploiter
- Majority of child labour unaware that contractor find employing child labour highly profitable
- Majority of child labour unaware of facing problem of exploitation by the contractor
- Child labours not often face discrimination and are paid adequate wages
- Contractors provide wages to child labour also
- The lack of ID cards did not expose worker to exploitation
- Majority of child labours unaware of depriving them of their legally stipulated benefit
- Majority of child labour are unaware of their registration in employer's register

## HYPOTHESES TESTING

- Children engaged in bidi rolling profession are exploited by the contractor
  - The study results (Table 4.24) showed that deduction are made from the wages according to the number of rejected bidis, though contractor did not mercilessly exploited by the contractor and the company, there is no high rejection rate, contractors did not demand extra bidis over and above the production for which payment

is made and labourers are not aware of minimum rate of wages. Hence the hypothesis, which states that “Children engaged in bidi rolling profession are exploited by the contractor”, is **rejected**.

### **Social Work Intervention**

Social work intervention is an effective strategy by social workers to offer intervention to individuals, families and groups which enables them to meet their needs and issues. The main purpose of these interventions is to aid clients in alleviating problems and improving their well-being. Social work intervention is done in different settings such as hospitals, schools, child welfare centres and guidance clinics. In the present study, it was observed that the Government initiatives with respect to legislation, policy, programmes and other interventions can result in betterment of the bidi rolling child labourers.

Furthermore, it is necessary that the law enforcement agencies should look to implement the Child Labour (Prohibition and Regulation) Act (1986) with more conviction so as to expect a better life for the bidi rolling child labourers of Gondia District. In addition to this, the role of social worker is also important who can intervene in many different types of settings, including hospitals, mental health facilities, child welfare centers, guidance clinics, schools, substance abuse programs, etc. These programs and services may vary with respect to the type of problems faced by the bidi rolling Child Labourers of Gondia District. Thus, the proactive function of social work interventions can help in overall development of the bidi rolling child labourers of Gondia District.

The degree to which social work interventions are effective is determined by the degree to which client goals and outcomes are achieved. When goals and outcomes are achieved as demonstrated by the results of the work done between the social worker and client, the interventions used are then recognized as effective. Hence, prior to intervention, proper deliberations should be carried out with all the stakeholders.

### **SUGGESTIONS**

- Similar studies should be carried out in other district of India where bidi making industry is established
- Studies focusing in detail on the economic aspect of the bidi making industry in view of different stake holders should be carried out.
- The health related problems should be assessed in future studies with respect to the socio-economic status of the bidi rolling workers.
- The role of law enforcement agencies should be investigated in view of the bidi rolling industry
- Comparative assessments of the ability of different NGOs with respect to their work towards bidi rolling industry should be carried out
- The intervention by Govt. and NGOs in view of the development of the people working in the bidi rolling industry should be investigated.
- The rehabilitation related initiatives of the NGOs and Govt. departments should be assessed in future studies.

### **RECOMMENDATIONS**

#### **For Government**

- Evaluation of different Govt. schemes directed towards the bidi rolling industry should be carried out.
- Government should ensure that 100% children working in bidi industry get proper education

- Government should provide more and more scholarships to labourers working in bidi industry for completing their education
- Government should assess the role of its employees in implementing various schemes floated for the bidi workers.
- Government should provide adequate resources for implementing various schemes floated for the bidi workers.
- Government should vigorously communicate or promote various schemes floated for the bidi workers.
- Government should take feedback from the bidi workers for delineating future policies for the bidi industry

#### **For NGOs**

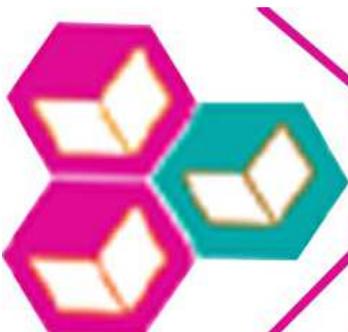
- The NGOs should help the Govt. officers for implementing various welfare schemes for the bidi rolling industry.
- NGOs should conduct impartial studies to unearth the actual problems faced by the bidi industry workers.
- Role of NGOs should be proactive in promoting various schemes floated for the bidi industry workers.

#### **For Society**

- The society should consider the plight of the bidi industry workers.
- Society should undertake small projects to improve the quality of life of the children working in bidi industry.

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