Child Labour and Human Development in Pakistan

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This is to certify that the work produced under this thesis Child Labour and Human Development in Pakistan is my original research, which has been carried out as part of partial fulfillment for the award of Doctor of Philosophy Degree in Anthropology.

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Abstract

This anthropological research explores the issue of child labour from the human resource development perspective embedded in the centuries old cultural practices of workplace based skills transfer to younger generations. Moreover, within cultural and economic discourses the research attempts to present the factors that influence poor parents to decide a career course for their idle male children to become functional adults. This research was carried out in the *Dhok Hassu* locality of Rawalpindi City in the Province of Punjab, Pakistan, involving children working at the informal auto repair and refurbishing workshops, their *Ustaads* (Technicians & Employers), and parents. It has helped to understand more fully the existence of the child labour phenomena from the perspectives of communities. The research presents a 'Split Pyramid Model: Depicting Cultural and Economic Determinants of Child Labour'. The model describes how the interplay of cultural and economic determinisms induces poor families to send children into labour to develop their human resources. On the cultural side, it suggests that social norms of abhorring idleness[1] and deviancy[2] compel parents to place out of school male children at workplaces. On the economic side, the model indicates that future income needs, as opposed to immediate ones, play a critical role in prompting parents to opt for workplace based human resource development opportunities for their idle male children. The practice of child labour is carried out despite parents knowing that children are subjected to corporal punishment at the workplaces. Communities view the practice of child labour

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[1] Idleness: A person who is doing nothing of value. Hereafter it refers to a child who is not going to school (never been to school or dropped out) and primarily spending time in streets in playful activities, which is considered by parents as waste of time.

[2] Deviancy: It consists of actions or behaviors that violate cultural norms including formally-enacted rules and informal violations of social norms. Parents fear that children can develop behaviors that are socially and culturally unacceptable and lead to crime.

as a traditional method of transferring new skills to the next generation, in continuity of cultural practices.

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Chapter 1
Introduction

1.1   The Background

Pakistan is a country with a large number of young people and children. These young people could be both a source of strength and a challenge. Pakistan's Demographic Survey 2007 indicated the population size of 150 million[1] with an annual population growth rate of 1.88%. The survey also indicated that there were 20 million (19%) children between 0-5 years, and 43 million (29%) between the ages of 5-14 years. The overall literacy rate (among 10+ age) in 2007-08 was reported at 56 percent (PSLMS 2007-08). This is further complicated by the fact that in Pakistan almost 7 million of the estimated 19 million primary school age children (5-9 years) remain out of school, and more than a quarter of those who enroll in Grade 1 do not make it to Grade 5, the last year of primary education[2]. This raises a question as to what such a large number of out of school children do. The human and child rights activists assert that these out of school children are potential child labourers.

The education system does not absorb this demographic pressure of children due to lack of its capacity to enroll and retain all school going age children (5-14). The result is that, many children end up in workplaces spending long hours performing various tasks. Although, the majority of children of a school going age are enrolled in schools, only a small percentage of those are able to complete ten years of school education. In 2008, the

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[1] Pakistan Demographic Survey- 2007, by Federal Bureau of Statistics, Government of Pakistan, (Table-1, Population by Age) http://www.statpak.gov.pk/depts/pco/index.html
[2] UN Joint Programme: delivering as one, Published by UN Pakistan 2009

Ministry of Education presented a report[3] on government school student retentions for the period of ten years. This report indicated that in 1997-98, total public school enrolment for the 1st grade was 2.41 million and in 2006-07 when the same batch reached the 10th grade, enrollment reduced to 0.56 million. This depicts a huge school drop-out rate of 77% between 1st grade and the 10th grade. A variety of reasons could be attributed to this extraordinary high level of school dropouts. Generally believed reasons include lack of relevance of school education, absence of educational back-up support at home, and corporal punishment in school among others. Poor parents with an out of school child are faced with the predicament of few choices; namely to send the male child to a workplace (presumably to earn income) and keep the girl child busy with domestic chores and when possible and feasible send her to work as well.

Pakistan's only National Child Labour Survey carried out in 1996 by the Federal Bureau of Statistics estimated that 8 percent (3.3 million) of children between the ages of 5 and 14 were in labour[4]. Out of these, 2.4 million were boys and 0.9 million were girls in this age group[5]. The majority of children, 2.7 million, were in the age cohort of 10-14 and only 0.6 million were in the age cohort of 5-9 years. The successive Pakistan Labour Force Surveys, since then, have repeatedly confirmed the presence of children (10-14 years) in the world of work. The Labour Force Survey 2006-07 indicated that 2.78 million children in the age cohort of 10-14 years were in Labour. It is evident from these

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[3] "Pakistan Education Statistics 2006-07", Published by Academy of Education Planning and Management, Ministry of Education, 2008, Islamabad (http://aepam.edu.pk) p 32
[4] Child Labour Survey 1996 Main Report (Volume-I); Published by Federal Bureau of Statistics, p30
[5] Ibid, p 30

surveys that more children were found to be in labour in the age cohort of 10-14 years as compared to 5-9 years.

Families send children, both boys and girls, into labour and remain oblivious or indifferent to the fact that their decision to send children to work is in direct conflict with national and international legislations. Both the national and international legal framework prohibits the presence of children at the workplace, labeling it as child labour.

It remains a moot point whether child labour is due to certain social structures, cultural norms, poverty, or a combination of these elements. Discourse around child labour has various interpretations; some of these are briefly[6] discussed below.

1.2   Child Labour: Concepts and Discourse

Historically, children perform a wide range of activities and tasks outside school, home and the playground, that is, in the realm of the market place. The second half of the 20th century witnessed variety of literature on the topic attempting to understand activities of children in the world of work and how these affect the well-being of children (Aries 1962; Mause 1976; Fyfe 1989; Nordinelli 1990; Nieuwenhugs 1996). This literature, in many ways, has shaped the global normative about the nature of children's involvement in the world of work. International conventions of the United Nations define all persons below the age of 18 years as children. The present global normative categorises activities and tasks performed by children into acceptable and unacceptable primarily on the basis of the child's age.

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[6] Detailed discussion is presented in Chapter 2

Children's activities in the world of work are broadly labeled[7] as light work, child labour, hazardous forms of child labour and worst forms of child labour. The United Nations Convention on the Rights of Children defines all persons below 18 years of age as children. ILO Conventions No.138 on Minimum Age and No.182 on Worst Forms of Child Labour specially regulate children's presence in the world of work. These UN Conventions are now presented as global bench marks for all countries to observe these international regulations regarding children's activities and rights. Thus, some type of paid work or employment of children is tolerated if performed after attaining a certain age and in certain conditions. However, the understanding about such work of children might not be widely understood among different stakeholders.

In terms of causes of child labour, the various arguments can be broadly categorized in two areas: economic determinism indicating poverty as the cause, and cultural determinism suggesting the norms and practices of certain cultures to view child labour as a legitimate means of children's growing-up experience and a barrier to social deviancy.

Economic determinism overwhelmingly focuses on the link between poverty and child labour. The proponents of economic rationale as the key determinant of child labour, explains the phenomenon in terms of demand and supply of child labour. Nardinelli suggested that the gradual reduction in children's workforce participation in British

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[7] Definitions of 'light work', 'child labour', 'hazardous forms of child labour' and 'worst forms of child labour' have been presented in section 1.13

industrialization could be understood by changes in the demand and supply of child work. The demand for skilled workforce subdued the need to have child workers. He asserted that higher wages for the adult skilled workforce reduced family reliance on children's income. Moreover, the benefits of long term returns on the investment of a child's education influenced family's decision making (Nardinelli, 1990).

Similarly, Heywood (1988) also considered economic factors while explaining children's workforce participation. The changes in the nature of production due to technological development resulted in the reduction of children from the workforce. In other words, the children's unskilled work became irrelevant thus making children redundant in the production process. The value of skilled workforce facilitated in shifting children from the world of work toward schools. In support of the poverty hypothesis, Jensen and Nielsen (1997) argued that parents send children to work to generate additional family income and suggested a decrease in family poverty would increase children's school attendance.

The interpretation of children's participation in work solely in economic terms has been questioned. The norms, values, attitudes and tradition of a society certainly influence its individuals. These influences have an important bearing on parents' decisions to send children to work. Weiner and Noman (1995) suggested that key determinants of children's entry into the workforce in India are cultural rather than economic. He argued that the cultural attitudes of the Indian elite did not want to change the social order by allowing the poor children a chance to education. "At the core of these beliefs are the

Indian view of the social order, notions concerning the respective roles of upper and lower social strata, the role of education as a means of maintaining differentiations among social classes, and concerns that 'excessive' and 'inappropriate' education for the poor would disrupt existing social arrangement"[8]. It has also been said that many developing countries have kept the minimum age to start work less than the required age of compulsory education, resulting in children being placed into full time employment (Siddiqi & Patrinos, 1995).

Kabeer (1994) and Nieuwenhugs (1994) both argued that it is the intra-household decision making that determine children's entry into work. Kabeer suggested that rigidities within the household division of labour reflect social characteristics. Nieuwenhugs argued that age and gender hierarchies in broader societies indicated that women and children were assigned low level tasks, for example housework. Delap has analyzed the economic and cultural factors that influenced the incidence of child labour in the slums of Bangladesh. She identified a particular cultural norm, deviancy, responsible for pushing male children into labour. She discussed that parents would push their idle male children into labour in order to avoid their deviancy (Delap; 2001).

The academic discourse still continuing to expand the knowledge frontiers around the phenomenon of child labour. It has been discussed at length in the second chapter. However, the international conventions have already banned child labour, considering such practices as detrimental to the well-being of children. This global normative on child

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[8] Weiner, M., and Noman, O. (1995). The Child and the State in India and Pakistan. Oxford University Press, Karachi. P. 5

labour comes into conflict with cultural understanding and practices regarding child development amongst the poorer communities of developing countries.

1.2.1   Cultural Concepts of the Child and its Link to Child Labour

At the outset, it is important to examine the cultural context within which the concept of the child is defined and understood in Pakistan. Culturally, the age of maturity is linked to the onset of puberty and this concept receives validation, and may even stem from the interpretations of Islamic teachings. The Islamic fundamentals regarding various prayers (*salaat*[9], *roza*[10]) become obligatory on any person who has achieved puberty. The cultural belief that links childhood with the asexual nature of a person is validated by such religious interpretations. Since both boys and girls invariably attain puberty many years before they reach the age of 18, they are therefore not universally treated as children in the Pakistani culture.

At the onset of puberty, the observable physical changes in the body, voice, and facial features of children also change as do the social perceptions about them. The result is that, society and families assign different roles with higher responsibilities to children at that stage and also have an increased level of expectations from them. In relatively conservative societies, puberty marks the change in the lives of girls and boys where the former are typically confined to homes and the latter are expected to take part in earning a livelihood for the family. Moreover, many families in traditional and rural societies tend to marry their young children, particularly girls at 14 or 15 years of age.

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[9] *Salaa*t: daily five-time prayers for Muslims
[10] *Roza*: fasting during the Islamic Month of *Ramadaan*

These cultural beliefs regarding the lives of children come into direct conflict with the forces of modernity and new international definitions about children. Thus within traditional societies and cultures like in Pakistan, the definition of a child that is linked to a certain age, for example 18 years, is considered unrealistic if not 'absurd'. In Pakistani culture, it is not strange to find persons below 18 years of age being married and even having their own children. Therefore, the notion of an '18-year-old' child is difficult to absorb for many communities in Pakistan.

Moreover, Islamic history in South Asia has ample examples of heroes who rose to fame in their teens. During the 7th century Muhammad Bin Qasim still in his teens was made governor of Persia and at the age of 17 he was sent by "Caliph Al-Walid-I to lead an army in the South Asian region today known as Sindh and Punjab (provinces) located in Pakistan"[11]. Qasim succeeded in defeating Raja Dahir, the ruler of Sindh. Another similar example is from the 16th century, where Zaheer-ud-Din Babur who laid the foundation of the great Mughal Empire in India. His autobiography starts with a simple but profound sentence, "*In the province of Fergana, in the year 1494, when I was twelve year old, I became king*"[12]. The Mughal Empire lasted for three centuries and achievements of the Mughal dynasty are still engrained in the minds of the South Asian people.

These historical accounts of two heroes from the Muslim history, particularly for those in present day Pakistan, have important bearings for many. These historical personalities are

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[11] http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Muhammad_bin_Qasim
[12] Tuzk-i-Baberi, Page 1 (http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Baburnama)

presented to children as role models. Parents, teachers and elders often quote these "heroes" who attained success in their teenage years. Thus, notwithstanding the international convention, the idea of considering an 18 year old as a child is difficult for many communities in Pakistani to comprehend. The result is that, the cultural perceptions about roles and responsibilities assigned to a person before and after puberty are embedded in a certain religious and historical context and well entrenched in tradition. For such communities childhood ends many years before a person reaches the 18 years of age.

It is also important to mention that the Islamic jurisprudence divides the responsibilities of individuals into two areas; *ibaadat* (an individual's spiritual responsibilities towards God) and *Maumalaat* (responsibilities of an individual towards other individuals and society). "As far as *ibaadats* are concerned, these become obligatory for an individual as soon as he/she reaches puberty. However, for *Maumalaat* an individual must be *Rasheed* (wise) in addition to attaining *Balooghat* (puberty). This means that only a person who knows the difference between right and wrong and is intelligent enough to comprehend the consequences of his/her actions will be considered as an adult. For this there is no prescribed age limit, but it must be decided according to societal norms and culture"[13].

However, popular thinking among traditional communities does not go into these finer details. A child who has attained puberty will have increased responsibilities. School attendance notwithstanding, a young person who has crossed puberty would be required to carry out numerous activities. These activities certainly have a stereotypical gender

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[13] "*Children and law*" by M. Saifullah, Sahil, Issue No. 9, July-September 1998

dimension, whereby girls would be assigned household chores like cleaning, washing, attending to younger siblings, assisting in cooking and so on. However, where the family considers it to be feasible, girls would also be sent to work. On the other hand, boys are generally accepted to help in various tasks that are linked to the market place or agricultural activities. Put simply, outdoor activities are to be performed by boys and indoor activities to be performed by girls. This perspective regarding children is embedded in the local cultural tradition.

Global discourse has now accepted that all persons below 18 years of age are children and international conventions provide the necessary legal base for this benchmark. In most countries, after reaching the age of 18 years a person is entitled to his or her full legal rights as an independent individual. These legal rights include obtaining a national identity card, driving license, maintaining an independent bank account, having the right to cast a vote and getting married. This particular age is globally promoted as a bench mark to enter adult life.

Thus, two different perspectives regarding the definition of children are constantly competing with each other. The global constructs of the 'child' finds its legitimacy in international law vis-a-vis the cultural constructs in developing countries within its local tradition.

1.2.2 Global Child Labour Normative and Trade

At the international level the local belief about children's involvement in world of work are not tolerated and in fact actively discouraged. The United Nations has developed

international conventions that have prohibited the practices of child labour[14]. The United Nations Children Fund (Unicef) and the International Labour Organization (ILO) have developed conventions that articulate the rights of children and also prohibits child labour and demands ratifying states to change their respective national legislation to enforce this international standard.

Similarly, global trade has actively distanced itself from commodities produced by children and demands action against child labour. In the last three decades, international trade has become extremely sensitive towards products that might have been produced by 'child labour', and increasingly associating itself with standards on human rights and labour rights. Thus, the private sector has created voluntary concepts like Corporate Social Responsibility and Global Compact for businesses to demonstrate ethical business practices.

Among the initial landmarks, legislations aiming to eliminate child labour were passed in the United States. The US Congress passed The Child Labour Deterrence Act in 1992, popularly known as the Harkin Bill[15]. This bill was aimed at banning those products that were produced by children and were being exported to the US market. Similarly, European countries offered preferential trading opportunities (reduced to zero tariff) to those developing countries that actively observe international labour standards including reducing and eliminating child labour practices. The trade policy of the European Union

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[14] UNICEF has developed Convention on the Rights of Children (CRC) 1989; ILO has developed Minimum Age for Admission to Employment (N° 138), 1973 ; and Prohibition and Immediate Action for the Elimination of the Worst Forms of Child Labour (N° 182), 1999
[15] The Bill was proposed by US Senator Tom Harkin

(EU) articulates these labour standards clearly. The EU has introduced a Generalized System of Preferences (GSP), which is a trade arrangement that allows 176 developing counties to sell their products in EU markets at reduced tariffs provided they have ratified and implemented 27 international conventions related to human rights, core labour standards, sustainable development and good governance.[16] These also included conventions related to child labour and child rights.

During the 1990s, many importers in the US and the European Union boycotted products from developing countries including Pakistan and Bangladesh on charges that children were employed to produce those commodities. These products included garments, soccer balls, and hand knitted carpets.

The outcry against child labour practices started with a famous article published in a US magazine. While presenting the dilemma of child labour engaged in stitching soccer balls in Sialkot, Pakistan, the magazine wrote, "children are not only the easiest to intimidate, they're also the cheapest workers. Twelve-year-old Tariq, one of thousands employed in Pakistan's soccer ball industry, which produces five million balls a year for the U.S. market, stitches leather pieces in *Mahotra*. He earns 60 cents a ball, and it takes most of a day to make one"[17]. Soon after that, the Pakistan's soccer ball industry was hit hard, as US companies cancelled their large-scale orders to purchase soccer balls from Sialkot.

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[16] http://ec.europa.eu/trade/issues/global/gsp/index_en.htm (up-dated in March 2009)
[17] Schanberg, Sydney H. "Six Cent an Hour", LIFE Magazine, June 1996, pp: 38

Ten years afterwards, the issue of child labour again haunted the soccer ball industry in Sialkot. In 2007, the multinational company Nike, the biggest purchaser of hand stitched soccer balls from Sialkot's then largest exporter SAGA, terminated its contract due to certain violation of international labour standards. The factory (SAGA) annually produced between 6 to 8 million balls for Nike. The loss of the Nike contract resulted in the loss of around 3,000 jobs, and eventually the company ceased to function. According to Nike media relations director Alan Marks, "It opens the door for child labour. Even if you only have adults doing the stitching (at homes), the work still can't be monitored to ensure the conditions are safe. Given the history of child labour in Pakistan, Nike felt that allowing home-based stitching to continue, then there was no guarantee that children weren't doing the work."[18]

Another example from 2008 depicted how the suspicion of 'child labour' even in a non-profitable and promotional activity could be harmful to any business in the developed world. In 2008, a Swiss bank, Credit Suisse distributed 200,000 free footballs across Switzerland ahead of the Euro 2008 championships, which took place in Switzerland and neighbouring Austria from June 7-29. Those free promotional balls were hand stitched in Sialkot.

In April 2008, Credit Suisse "*admitted that thousands of free footballs handed out ahead of the summer's Euro 2008 championships could have been made by child labour in Pakistan. The bank said it 'cannot at this time completely rule out the possible*

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[18] Nelson, Chris, "Just did it: Nike strikes Pak. Deal", www.indusbusinessjournal.com Issue date 15 June 2007; posted on 19 June 2007

involvement of child labour' in the manufacture of the balls, following an expose on Swiss German television. 'Even the mere hint of suspicion that the ban on child labour may have been violated in the manufacture of the footballs is unacceptable to Credit Suisse,' the bank said in a statement. As a result, Credit Suisse said it would donate 1 million Swiss francs (622,000 Euros) to the United Nations Children's Fund, UNICEF. An investigation by Swiss TV station SF1 found that the company mandated by Credit Suisse to produce the footballs, Sun flex International, used Pakistani villagers to do the work for just 35 Swiss cents per ball. 'We sewed a great number of these balls," one man told the TV reporters. 'Everyone took part, men, women and children,' he said".[19]

Clearly, even a promotional business activity that is perceived to be 'tainted' with 'child labor' is not acceptable at the international level. In this case, Credit Suisse volunteered and donated one million Swiss Francs for child related community work in Sialkot. This was primarily done to improve the image of the bank in the eyes of the public and the bank's clients.

The developed world demands that developing countries undertake action against "child labour" practices. Multinational companies refuse to do business with those manufacturers and suppliers from developing countries that 'employ' children in the production of goods. Human rights and child rights activists, members of civil society and the media highlight child labour issues and demand governments to ensure the elimination of child labour. Governments in the developing countries painstakingly try

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[19] http://www.soccernews.com/red-faces-at-credit-suisse-over-child-labour-balls/1342/

and put together policies, plans and programmes to 'eliminate the incidence of child labour'.

The Government of Pakistan, like many other developing countries, has made efforts to comply with such international human rights and labour standards to protect and boost its exports. Pakistan has ratified all international conventions on child labour including the Convention on the Right of Children (CRC), ILO Convention on Minimum Age 138 and Convention on Worst Forms of Child Labour 182 and also the core international labour standards. Moreover, national labour legislation on child labour and bonded labour has also been enacted to comply with international pressures and demands. Similarly, various government programmes are initiated to prevent and eliminate the incidence of child labour in Pakistan. Nonetheless, Pakistan is beset with the same challenge where despite national child labour legislation in-line with the international conventions, many families send their out of school children into the world of work. The details of the child labour situation in Pakistan are given in the following sections.

1.3   Child Labour Situation in Pakistan

The last and only national child labour survey was carried out by the Federal Bureau of Statistics in 1996. This survey[20] estimated 3.3 million children (5-14 years) to be in child labour on a full time basis, of which 2.4 million (73 percent) were boys and 0.9 million (27 percent) were girls. It also indicated that 83% of total child labourers were in the 10-14 years age group, and only 17% were in the 5-9 years age group.

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[20] Child Labour Survey, Main Report (Volume-I), Published by Federal Bureau of Statistics 1996, p 31

The following table 1.1 provides detailed information from the national child labour survey 1996 on age cohorts, gender, and provincial breakups.

Table 1.1: The National Child Labour Survey 1996[21]

NATIONAL CHILD LABOUR SURVEY 1996 CONDUCTED BY FEDERAL BUREAU OF STATISTICS (Last Week)								
			mil.			mil.			mil.
Age Group	**All Areas**			**Rural**			**Urban**		
	Total	**Boys**	**Girls**	**Total**	**Boys**	**Girls**	**Total**	**Boys**	**Girls**
Pakistan	3.30	2.37	0.93	2.86	2.06	0.79	0.36	0.31	0.05
5-9 years	0.57	0.32	0.25	0.52	0.29	0.23	0.04	0.03	0.01
10-14 years	2.74	2.06	0.68	2.34	1.77	0.57	0.32	0.28	0.04
Punjab	1.94	1.37	0.57	1.63	1.18	0.45	0.23	0.20	0.03
5-9 years	0.20	0.14	0.06	0.18	0.12	0.06	0.02	0.02	0.00
10-14 years	1.74	1.23	0.51	1.45	1.06	0.39	0.21	0.18	0.03
Sindh	0.29	0.26	0.02	0.20	0.18	0.02	0.09	0.08	0.01
5-9 years	0.03	0.03	0.00	0.02	0.02	0.00	0.01	0.01	0.00
10-14 years	0.26	0.24	0.02	0.18	0.16	0.02	0.08	0.07	0.01
NWFP	1.05	0.72	0.33	1.02	0.69	0.33	0.03	0.03	0.00
5-9 years	0.32	0.15	0.17	0.32	0.15	0.17	0.00	0.00	0.00
10-14 years	0.73	0.57	0.16	0.70	0.54	0.16	0.03	0.03	0.00
Balochistan	0.01	0.01	0.00	0.01	0.01	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00
5-9 years	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00
10-14 years	0.01	0.01	0.00	0.01	0.01	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00

In 1996, the occurrence of child labour in Pakistan was predominantly between 10-14 years of age and among rural male children (54%). Even in the urban areas where total child labour was 0.36 million, the majority of child labourers (78%) were males and 10-14 years of age. The provincial break-up also indicated that Punjab being the most populous province has the largest number of child labourers (59%).

The national child labour survey also identified that child labourers come from large families in the low-income bracket. It also indicated that the reason given by rural

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[21] Ibid, p 31

parents/guardians for sending their children to work was to assist in family enterprises (69 percent) whereas the urban parents/guardians' reason was to supplement the family income (28 percent). It also identified the following six key factors as the determinants of child labour[22]:

    a. A large population with a higher population growth rate
    b. Almost three quarters of the total population is living in rural areas, with subsistence agricultural activities.
    c. Low productivity and prevalence of poverty
    d. Unpaid family helpers especially in agricultural activity
    e. Discriminating social attitudes towards girls and women
    f. Inadequate educational facilities

This national survey provided useful information on child labour, however, an in-depth analysis, as well as intra-household dynamics and decision making for child's present and future well-being, were not analyzed. Since 1996, a second national child labour survey has not been carried out. However, the yearly Labour Force Surveys do provide information about the involvement of children in the 10-14 years age cohort in economic activity. This information does not capture the complete national profile of child labour, but it is sufficient to confirm the continued existence of child labourers and identify some of the trends. The time series data evidence on "10-14 years extracted from the micro data tapes of ten rounds of Labour Force Survey (LFS) conducted by the Federal Bureau of Statistics during 1990-91 to 2005-06"[23] confirms the continuous presence of 'child labour' in Pakistan.

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[22] Ibid, p 62
[23] "Statistical Data Series of Labour Market Indicators" by Umer Khalid & Lubna Shahnaz; Statistics Report 1, June 2007, Centre for Research on Poverty Reduction and Income Distribution

Table 1.2[24] presented below confirms the incidence of child labour over a period of sixteen years from 1990 to 2006. Over most of these years, the labour force participation rate for 10-14 years hovered around 12 percent. However, the Labour Force Survey 2005-06 showed the labour force participation increased for 10-14 years and estimated at more than 15%, indicating some increase in the incidence of child labour.

Table 1.2: Labour Force (10-14 years) Participation Rate (1990-2006)

Population Aged 10-14 years			
Child Labour Force Participation Rate (1990-2006)			
Years	Overall	Boys	Girls
1990-91	13.65	19.21	6.91
1991-92	14.57	20.13	8.06
1992-93	13.35	17.92	7.74
1993-94	12.29	16.77	6.94
1996-97	12.80	17.19	7.61
1997-98	13.08	17.95	7.40
1999-00	10.94	18.32	2.79
2001-02	12.04	17.18	6.28
2003-04	12.80	18.45	6.69
2005-06	15.23	20.68	9.21

Source: Labour Force Survey, various issues

The results of the Labour Force Survey 2006-07 carried out by the Federal Bureau of Statistics gave some useful insights into the national and provincial child labour trends. It indicated that the majority of child labourers in the 10-14 year age bracket were boys as they formed 68% of the total labour force in this age cohort. Out of the total 2.78 million

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[24] Ibid. p. 27

child labourers of 10-14 years of age, 1.88 million were male children. The following

table 1.3[25] provides a provincial and gender breakup for this age group:

Table 1.3: Labour Force (10-14 years) Participation Rate (2006-07)

	Total		Boys		Grils	
Labour Force Survey 2006-07						
Civilian Labour Force Participation **10-14 Years**						
	mil.	%	mil.	%	mil.	%
Pakistan	2.78	13.31	1.88	16.92	0.89	9.18
Punjab	1.70	15.14	1.04	17.66	0.66	12.37
Sindh	0.66	12.46	0.53	18.32	0.13	5.53
NWFP	0.26	8.28	0.20	11.74	0.06	4.24
Balochistan	0.15	13.16	0.12	17.63	0.03	7.14

The discussion so far has established the fact that children below 14 years of age are very

much part of Pakistan's world of work. Many boys and girls never get the chance to go to

school and many children drop-out from schools before completing their primary

education and enter the workplaces as child labourers.

These child labourers do not get a chance to develop their human resource from school

and formal skills training systems. It will be helpful to briefly look at the broad

architecture of the human resource development mechanism available in Pakistan. It will

help understand how this mechanism becomes part of the context in which parents reject

the formal avenues of human resource development and send children to work.

1.4   Human Resource Development (HRD) System and Child Labour

The human resource development system in Pakistan is designed in a vertical manner

with the assumption that all children would at least attain ten years of school education

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[25] Labour Forces Survey Report 2006-07, Federal Bureau of Statistics, Government of Pakistan.
(http://www.statpak.gov.pk/depts/fbs/publications/lfs2006_07/lfs2006_07.html)

(matriculation) before deciding on their future course of action. Therefore, the horizontal linkages between school education and skills training providers are not available for school children before 10th grade. After ten years of school education, the subsequent six years education of college and university is also well established as a possible course of career development. Nonetheless, education is generally viewed in terms of the following bench marks[26]:

No.	Level	Numbers of Years
1	Primary School	Five years of school education. Grade 1 to 5
2	Middle School	Three years of school education, after Primary school
3	Matriculation (High School)	Two years of school education, after Middle School
4	Intermediate	Two years of college education, after Matriculation
5	Bachelors	Two years of college education, after Intermediate
6	Masters	Two years of university education, after Bachelors

This human resource development system offers two broad courses of action for students completing their Intermediate; that is either to opt for university education or professional colleges (medical, engineering and so on). In other words, after intermediate (12 years of education) qualifying students can choose to go to professional colleges (spend four to five years) or to do a university degree (4 years). This link of school education with professional colleges and University is well established and visible to communities.

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[26] Prepared by the research based on discussions with the officials of Ministry of Education; Higher Education Commission

School education is also linked to technical and vocational education. However, this option is available to a limited number of school children and has weak linkages with the formal school education system. Students after completing matriculation can opt for skills and vocational training, and after doing their Intermediate can also choose technical training. However, these linkages are not clearly known to families, particularly those who send their children to work. The following diagram 1.2[27] depicts the broader architecture of the formal human resource mechanism available in the country:

Diagram 1.1: Broad Architecture of Human Resource Development System
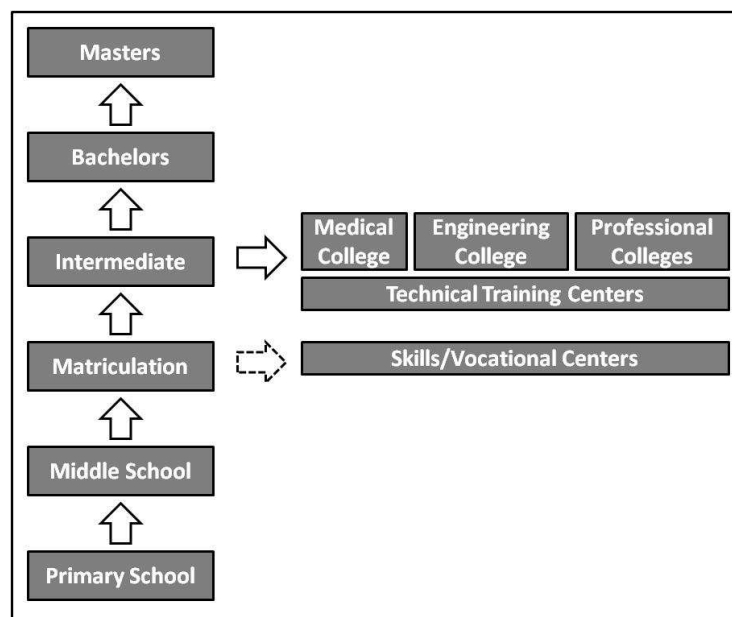
For many families the purpose of education is primarily to ensure their children find meaningful employment. For such families, sixteen or fourteen years of formal education are considered a long-term investment for children. The available human resource development model primarily relies on formal school education with vertical linkages to college and subsequently with university or professional colleges. At the stage of moving

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[27] Prepared by the research based on discussions with the officials of Ministry of Education; Higher Education Commission; and Technical Training Providers

into professional colleges, the system becomes extremely competitive and expensive. Moreover, for poorer segments of society, the system does not guarantee automatic transfer from school/colleges to employment. At the same time, there is also no guarantee that a student who reaches a higher level of education, for example to university degree, would immediately secure employment after graduation.

This human resource development system demands heavy investment of time (at least ten years) and financial resources from the family to enable their children to enter the world of work for formal employment. Even these ten years of education would not enable a person skilled enough to find meaningful employment. At best a matriculate, if lucky, may find employment in the private sector. However, such an employment would not offer remunerations even equivalent to the minimum wage, that is, rupees 6000[28] per month and that to on a precarious contract. Such a person, would not easily find better employment.

The next section will present a critical view of the human resource system, consisting of both education and skills training streams, depicting enrollment and retention of children within its fold. However, the next section on formal education will only focus on enrollment and retention in schools and drop-outs till the 10th grade. Typically a child is supposed to complete his or her ten years of school education (matriculation) around the age of 15 years.

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[28] During 2008-2009, the minimum wage in Pakistan was Rs 6000 for unskilled and illiterate worker.

1.4.1 The Condition of School Education

As discussed earlier, the United Nations in Pakistan indicates that almost 7 million of the estimated 19 million primary school age children (5-9 years) remain out of school.[29] Limited availability of formal schools coupled with inadequate facilities are among the major causes for the existence of out of school children. There are not enough schools and teachers to cater to the educational needs of a growing number of children.

The school drop-out rate is exacerbated by the absence of back-up educational support in most homes and the prevalence of corporal punishment[30] in schools. The National Education Census 2006 found 31% children dropped out of school before completing their primary education, though previously it was estimated at 50%. The majority of children could not reach the 10th grade (matriculation). These statistics clearly support the general perception that the government educational infrastructure is inadequate, inefficient and largely unsuccessful in catering to the educational needs of Pakistani children.

The table 1.4[31] presents ten years statistics of government school enrolment and retention from 1st grade to 10th grade.

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[29] Joint Programme Document on Education, One UN Programme signed by the UN Pakistan and Ministry of Education in 2009,

[30] The concept of corporal punishment is explained and looked at in detail in subsequent sections.

[31] "Pakistan Education Statistics 2006-07", Published by Academy of Education Planning and Management, Ministry of Education, 2008, Islamabad (http://aepam.edu.pk) p 32.

Table 1.4: School Enrollment & Retention by Year and Class (1997-98 to 2006-07)

										mil
Class	**1997-98**	**1998-99**	**1999-00**	**2000-01**	**2001-02**	**2002-03**	**2003-04**	**2004-05**	**2005-06**	**2006-07**
Class 1	2.41 (100%)	2.49	2.68	2.77	2.69	2.83	2.77	2.96	3.26	3.30
Class 2	1.98	1.79	1.93	2.05	2.16	2.17	2.12	2.29	2.55	2.65
Class 3	1.77	1.55	1.67	1.72	1.83	1.89	1.95	1.99	2.14	2.25
Class 4	1.62	1.36	1.53	1.52	1.59	1.62	1.77	1.85	1.94	1.93
Class 5	1.42	1.31	1.31	1.34	1.35 (56%)	1.39	1.53	1.60	1.68	1.60
Class 6	1.20	1.20	1.16	1.05	1.10	1.1 (46%)	1.16	1.24	1.38	1.38
Class 7	0.99	1.01	1.01	0.94	0.93	0.95	1.01	1.04	1.17	1.19
Class 8	0.84	0.87	0.90	0.86	0.87	0.87	0.91	0.92	1.00	1.04
Class 9	0.71	0.72	0.75	0.71	0.71	0.71	0.75	0.75	0.80	1.02
Class 10	0.55	0.58	0.56	0.54	0.53	0.54	0.59	0.64	0.65	0.56 (23%)

The table indicates almost half of the children dropped out of school before completing primary education. The shaded boxes indicate the retention from 1st grade to 10th grade of one batch of all government school children. In 1997-98, 2.41 million children who were enrolled in 1st grade were reduced to 1.1 million (46% retention) in 6th grade, and in 2006-07 only to 0.56 million (23% retention) were left in 10th grade. Conversely, the school dropout, from the initial enrolment of 2.41 million in 1st grade, was 54% at 6th grade and drop-outs rose drastically to 77% by the time the same batch reached 10th grade. Clearly, it indicates, among other factors, parents' and students' lack of faith in the formal school education system.

Graph 1.1[32] below presents extracted time-series data about school enrollment at primary, middle and high school levels.

Graph 1.1: Enrollment in Primary, Middle and High Schools (1996-2007)
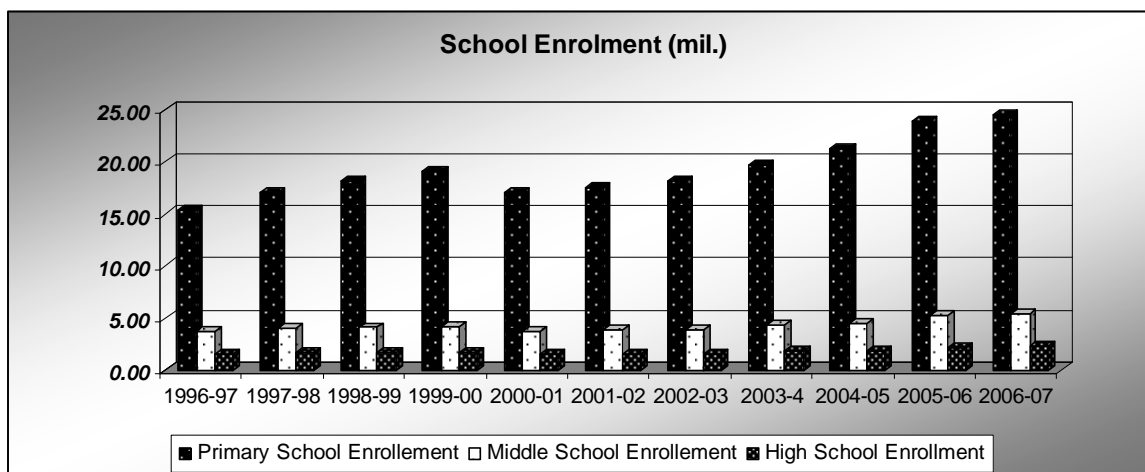
School Enrollment (in millions)											
Categories	**1996-97**	**1997-98**	**1998-99**	**1999-00**	**2000-01**	**2001-02**	**2002-03**	**2003-4**	**2004-05**	**2005-06**	**2006-07**
Primary School Enrollement	15.40	17.06	18.17	19.15	17.14	17.53	18.22	19.78	21.33	23.97	24.59
Middle School Enrollement	3.73	4.03	4.10	4.11	3.76	3.82	3.92	4.32	4.55	5.26	5.37
High School Enrollment	1.52	1.66	1.70	1.73	1.57	1.57	1.59	1.80	1.88	2.13	2.31

This time series data covers the period of 11 years from 1996-97 till 2006-7 and was compiled by the Federal Bureau of Statistics (FBS), Government of Pakistan. Over the eleven year period the enrolment at primary level has increased from 15.4 million in 1996-97 to 24.5 million in 2006-07. However, the enrollment at middle school level only moved from 3.73 to 5.37 million during the same period of eleven years. This also indicated a high drop out of children while moving from primary to middle levels of school. This drop-out rate becomes more pronounced as high school enrolment has moved from 1.52 to 2.31 million during the same period.

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[32] This data is extracted from the Social Surveys of the Federal Bureau of Statistics, Government of Pakistan (http://www.statpak.gov.pk/depts/fbs/statistics/social_statistics/education.pdf)

In Pakistan, the private sector also plays a significant role in catering to the educational needs of children. During the last two decades there has been a rapid growth of private schools catering to those segments of the societies that could afford it. These schools are now visible in large and small cities, and even in rural towns. Many of these private schools are perceived as a means to receive quality education for children. On the other hand perception about government schools as the provider of quality education has deteriorated over the last couple of decades. Resultantly, the demand for private schools has risen.

Consequently, children from middle and upper middle classes are increasingly enrolling in private schools. Largely, the children from poorer segments of society are enrolled in government schools. However, there are low fee private schools also that cater to people from low income bracket. Such private schools are also run by entrepreneurial teacher who have converted one or two room of his/her house into a tiny private school. He/she would engage one or two more teachers. The fee structure is low and the only activity is teaching children who would enroll from the neighbourhood. Table 1.5[33] illustrates the number of children enrolled both in public and private sector schools. It is important to note that the private sector caters to 37 % children at the pre-primary, and roughly close to 30% at primary, middle and high school levels. However, school drop-outs are observed in both public and private sectors.

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[33] Pakistan Education Statistics 2006-07. (http://aepam.edu.pk)

Table 1.5: School Enrollment in Public and Private Schools (2006-07)

				mil.
Institutions Type		**Enrolment by Stage**		
		Boys	**Girls**	**Total**
Pre- Primary	Public	2.50	2.05	**4.56**
	Other Public	0.05	0.05	**0.10**
	Private	1.52	1.25	**2.77**
	Total	**4.08**	**3.34**	**7.42**
Primary	Public	6.69	5.04	**11.73**
	Other Public	0.14	0.13	**0.27**
	Private	2.80	2.25	**5.04**
	Total	**9.62**	**7.41**	**17.04**
Middle	Public	2.18	1.43	**3.62**
	Other Public	0.05	0.05	**0.10**
	Private	0.89	0.76	**1.65**
	Total	**3.13**	**2.24**	**5.37**
High	Public	0.97	0.60	**1.57**
	Other Public	0.03	0.03	**0.05**
	Private	0.37	0.32	**0.69**
	Total	**1.36**	**0.95**	**2.31**

i . Mosque Schools are included in Primary Schools.

ii . Other Public Sector means Public Institutions run by other than Ministry of Education or Provincial/ Regional Education Departments.

Despite the rapid growth of private schools, the difference of school enrollments at primary, middle and high school levels indicate the continued limited capacity of both public and private education systems in the country to enroll and retain children in schools. As argued earlier too, most school drop-outs happen within the various levels of primary school education and also soon after grade five. A predominant number of the school going children move out of school and could potentially enter the world of work.

Various factors are attributed to this high degree of school drop-outs. In 2003-04, the Ministry of Education commissioned a longitudinal study on access and equity in basic education. These series of studies are being carried out in fourteen representative districts across the four provinces of the country. So far only two studies have been published and the results of these studies provide useful insights into the phenomenon of low enrolment and high drop-out of children at the primary school level. In 2005, the Ministry of Education's study on *Access and Equity in Basic Education*[34] presented useful insights as well. The study, while exploring the reasons for low school enrolment, indicated that in all the fourteen districts of the samples, only 36% children had access to schools whereas 64% children were out of school or had no access to school at primary level. The study provided many reasons for not enrolling boys in the schools. In the opinion of 65% parents an extra earning member of the family was an important reason of not enrolling boys in school. Moreover, 62% parents were of the view that their children were not interested in getting an education, another 60 % thought that their children provided help at home.

The same study of the Ministry of Education also investigated the reasons for high school dropouts, and found that lack of guidance and the educational expenses turned out to be important reasons for a high drop-out rate. Other reasons included family size, lack of good teachers and the improper behavior of teachers (resorting to physical punishment). Regarding access to primary schools, this study concluded that "54 percent children had

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[34] *"Access and Equity In Basic Education"* by Dr. Pervez A. Shami and Kh. Sabir Hussain; AEPAM Research Study No.188, 2005; Academy of Educational Planning and Management, Ministry of Education

access to primary schools and 46 percent had no school facility in the year 2003-04."[35]

This study also identified the following factors as a hindrance to boys' and girls' school enrollment:

- Children (boys and girls) have to provide help at home.

- Schools are not available.

- Schools are at long distance from the children's residence.

- Children are not interested in studies.

- There is no opportunity for further education.

- No security for girls.

- Teachers' harsh behaviour (resorting to physical punishment).

- No physical facilities.

- Expensive education.

- Children's sickness.

The question arises, what do all those children who either never get enrolled in schools or drop out during or soon after primary schooling do? Those children who drop out before or after completing primary education often enter the world of work at a young age, sometimes when they are seven or eight years old. If this is the case, then the magnitude of child labour in Pakistan could be exceptionally higher than the estimates of 1996 National Child Labour Survey or successive Labour Force Surveys as discussed above.

Before moving forward, it would be useful to review the state of technical and vocational education in the country. It would also be helpful to see, within the overall human

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[35] Ibid. ix

resource development system of the country, how technical and vocational education stream performs its function and how it interacts with the regular education system.

1.4.2   The State of Technical and Vocational Education and Gaps

In Pakistan, the state of public sector technical and vocational education is of a low standard, and the private sector is not well organized either. The lack of visibility of horizontal linkages between government schools and skills and vocational training institutions make school education almost unidirectional. These linkages are non-existent below the matriculation level (grade 10). Schools teachers are not aware of available skills and vocational training centers or trades being taught there. Similarly, the skills and vocational centers never make an attempt to introduce skills/vocational training to the teachers, school children and their parents as alternative and shorter duration career paths than to professional colleges.

The National Skills Strategy 2009-2013 identifies a limited capacity of technical and vocational training institutes in the country. "There are currently only 315,000 enrolled students across 1,647 technical and vocational education and training institutes in Pakistan. It is quite evident therefore that major changes are necessary to achieve these quantitative targets"[36]. However, in 2005-06, the total enrolment at the technical and vocational training centers stood at 238,687 students[37].

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[36] The National Skills Strategy 2009-2013, Published by The National Vocational & Technical Education Commission, Islamabad, 2009, p. 17.
[37] Table 4.40, Education for All: Mid Decade Assessment, Pakistan Country Report 2008, Ministry of Education, Government of Pakistan.

The dearth of these training centers, poor quality of training, coupled with the perceived low social status of these trades makes the existence of these technical and vocational training centers almost invisible. Another reason is that formal higher education, despite all drop-outs, still has more students than those in the skills and vocational training centers. "About 314,864 students are enrolled in TVET institutes in Pakistan. In comparison, the enrolment in higher secondary, intermediate and degree colleges is 2.2 million. This means that students in TVET are only 14% of those pursuing general education up to the college level. The proportion falls even further if professional and university education is included,"[38]

In many instances, poor families are not aware of the existence of the government's skills and vocational training centers. Where, members of marginalized communities know about these centers, the high admission criteria to these centers exclude the children of the poor from benefiting. Students are required to successfully complete Matriculation or Intermediate to be eligible for admission into the skill and vocational training centers.

However, children from marginalized communities drop out of school during or soon after primary schooling (5 years of education), well before they complete their Matriculation (10 years of education) or Intermediate (12 years of education), which is a prerequisite qualification for admission into these skills and vocational training centers. Therefore, the skills and vocational training infrastructure is unable to cater to the needs of marginalized and vulnerable groups both in urban and rural areas.

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[38] The National Skills Strategy 2009-2013; op.cit. p. 38

1.4.3 Non-functioning HRD System and Informal Economy

This section will present the broad contours of the flow of the work force from a formal human resource development (HRD) system. Diagram 1.2 (while benefiting from the data presented in the table 1.4 School Enrollment and Retention by Year and Class) indicates that the majority of children sooner or later drop-out from schools and eventually finds employment in the informal economy. However, no clear data is available that confirms that all those children who drop-out from school and had immediately entered into employment. In any case, statistical data from various labour force surveys of Pakistan, as also discussed in section 1.3, continues to confirm the existence of child labour.

Nonetheless, it is presumed that once a child, particularly male, is out of school he would potentially end up in some sort of employment sooner or later. Thus, between 1996 and 2007, out of a total 2.41 million children who were in class 1, only 0.56 million children could reach grade 10 (data from table 1.4). In other words, 1.88 million children, who were probably less than 15 years of age, left formal schools and possibly all were absorbed by the informal economy. Clearly, the supply of child labour is common place as the schools fail to retain children within its fold. The formal economy, on the other hand, mostly offers employment to highly educated and skilled manpower. Diagram 1.2 makes it clear that a large majority of students do not reach to a higher level of educational and technical skills development institutions and thus after dropping out from various classes enter into the informal economy.

Diagram 1.2: Flow of Work Force from HRD System (1996-97 to 2006-07)
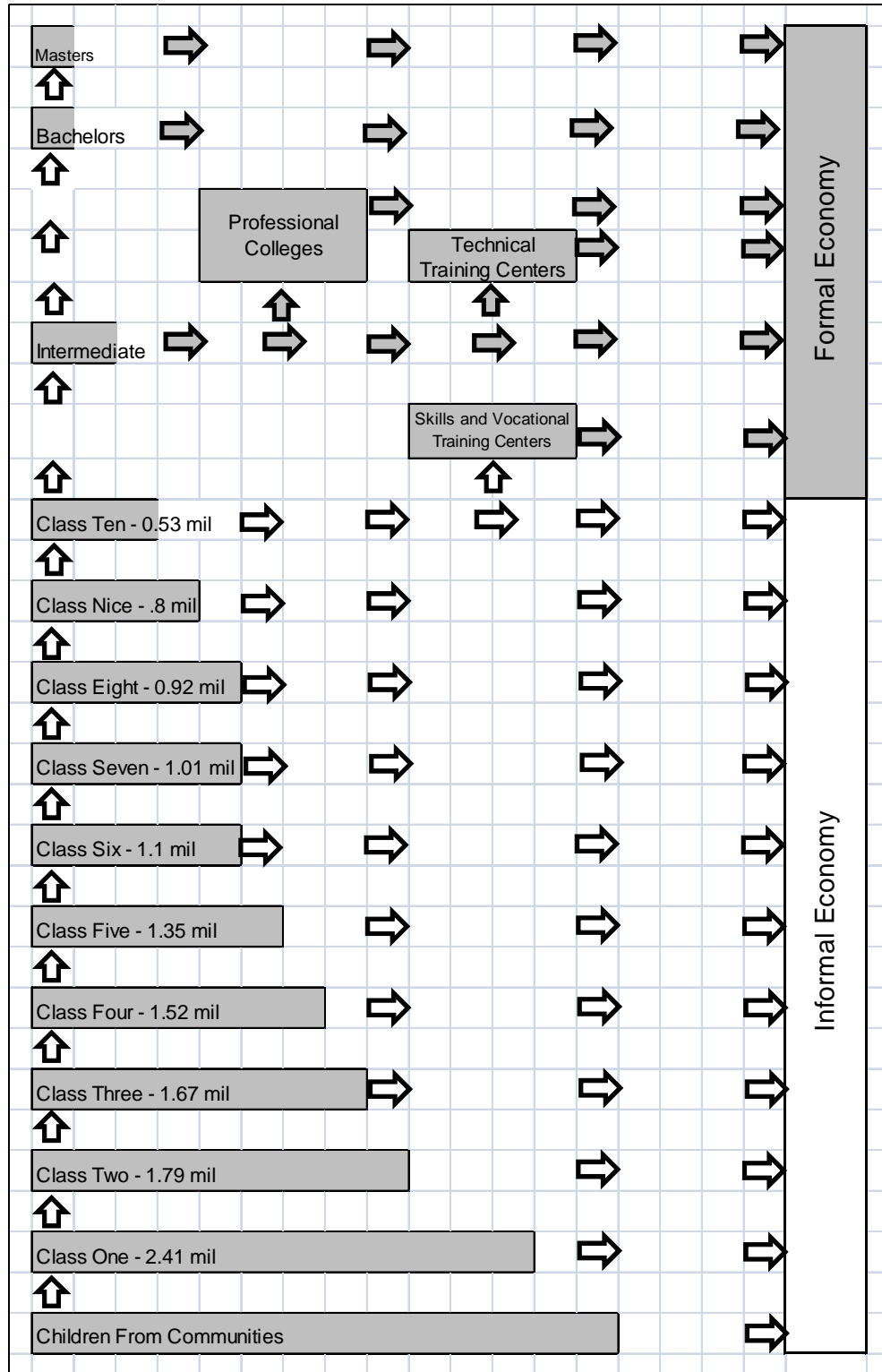
Clearly, a large majority of the population in Pakistan remain illiterate or semiliterate due to non-functioning of the formal human resource development system. In this environment, where many children enter into the world of work, the workplace education becomes significant for their development. In developing countries, it is the workplace where benefits of education affect communities and families. Under the Human Resource Development Perspective, such employers who use child workers and invest in workplace education could be considered as investing in education for their employees (children) but also for their families and the community (Cho & McLean, 2002).

1.5   The Problem

Many out of school children enter the world of work and perform various tasks. Economic and legal approaches label such practices as child labour and consider poverty coupled with non-altruistic parents as the chief determinant. The cultural discourse, on the other hand, suggests norms and tradition also ensure continuity of child labour practices. Parents conceptualize child labour as culturally legitimate and useful human resource development practice that also prevents deviancy among idle children. Parents send their children to work through these informal apprenticeship arrangements despite the fact that it would expose their children to workplace health hazards and adult violence. On the other hand, both international and national legislations prohibit child labour practices. The state, formal businesses and human right activists actively try to discourage child labour practices. This results in a conflict between the state/human rights activists trying to impose legislation prohibiting child labour practices and those communities that send children to work.

The 1996 National Child Labour Survey confirmed that there were 3.3 million child labourers in Pakistan and of those 73% were boys. Pakistan has developed National Policy and Plan of Action to combat child labour. Moreover, there are various labour legislations, including the Employment of Child Act 1991, which prohibits child labour. Government of Pakistan has also introduced programs to rehabilitate child labour. However, child labour is continued to be present in both urban and rural settings. In urban settings, boys are often seen working in various occupations including the informal auto repair workshops.

This research aims to investigate and document child labour practices in the informal auto repair and refurbishing workshops. Socio-cultural and economic factors would be looked at to map how these factors influence parent's decision making to send children to work instead of school.

Child labourers spend a number of years at the workplaces and undergo certain human resource development processes. The nature of the human resource development mechanisms at these workplaces needs to be examined to document the process through which a novice learns to perform a certain set of skills and eventually transforms into an independent skilled worker. Moreover, an examination of the work culture determines the context in which child labourers undergo the transformation. This will help to show how skills transfer fits into the future career development of these children.

This informal arrangement of knowledge transfer relies heavily on the use of violence[39] to imbibe skills in children. The power asymmetry between adults and children at the workplace enhances vulnerability of children vis-à-vis violence. Workplaces have multiple challenges for children including adult violence and work related injuries. The analysis of work related violence and injuries to children would help in understanding the full context of children's workplace environment.

1.6 Objective of the Research

The main objectives of the study were to:

a. Document the nature and extent of child labour in the research area;

b. Determine the socio-cultural and economic factors that compel parents to send their children for work;

c. Examine human resource development mechanisms at the workplace;

d. Map skills transfer to children at workplace and their future career needs; and

e. Identify and document children's vulnerabilities to workplace related injuries and adult violence.

1.7 Hypothesis and Assumptions

The following hypothesis and assumption were developed:

Hypothesis: "**Cultural practices compel poor parents to place their out of school male children at the workplace to make them functional members of the society**"

Assumptions:

- Skilled child is culturally accepted and valued;

- Poor parents send children to work for a career; and

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[39] The violence has been discussed and analysed in detail in Chapter 6

- Workplace based skill acquisition enables children to become functional members of the family.

1.8   Locale of the Research

The study was conducted in *Akhtar ka Ahahta* situated in the *Dhok Hassu* (Union Council No. 6) locality, Rawalpindi city, in the Punjab province, Pakistan. The research site was among many such places in this area that offer services of auto repairs and refurbishing of different types of vehicles. This research site was selected because it had relatively higher concentration of boys, within the target age range of 5-14 years, working there. Moreover, good rapport had been developed with few auto workshop owners, and it was helpful to conduct research at this locale.

The *Akhtar ka Ahata* consisted of two large interconnected compounds, an adjacent market and another smaller compound. The total area of these compounds was 14 kannals (7150 square yards). Although, the adjacent market named *Azeem Market* and the nearby smaller compound called *Malik Rahmat Ka Ahata,* this whole working area was popularly referred to as *Akhtar Ka Ahata.* This research also adopts the same description of *Akhtar Ka Ahata*. The research site was full of numerous informal auto-repair workshops that offered a variety of services including maintenance and refurbishing for small and large vehicles. The following table 1.6 lists the nature and number of these informal workshops and the kind of services these offered to repair and maintain vehicles.

Table 1.6: Categories of Workshops at Research Site (*Akhtar ka Ahata*)

Sr. #	Categories of Workplaces	No. of Units
1	Auto-Repair Workshops	27
2	Brake, Shock and Kamani (Suspension) Maker Workshops	15
3	Auto-Electrician Workshops	13
4	Spray Painter Workshop (To re-paint Vehicle)	7
5	Truck Decoration	8
6	Truck Body Making	10
7	Auto Frame Repair Workshops	7
8	Vehilce Body Dentor Workshops (To repair damaged vehicle body)	8
9	Shops selling New Spare Parts	9
10	Radiator Repair Workshops	6
11	Poshish (Upholstry) Maker Workshops (To refurbish Vehicle seats)	5
12	Kharad (Lathe) Machine Workshop	5
13	Clutch Plate Repair Workshop	3
14	Dholkey (Silencer) Repair Workshop	3
15	Welding Workshop	3
16	Resturants	2
17	Tire Shopto repair and sell used tyre	2
18	Shops selling old Spare Parts	1
19	Meter Repairing Workshop	1
20	Disel Laboratory	1
	Total	**136**

These small informal workshops were small enterprises established by various individuals who had the requisite skills to offer a particular service. Each of these skilled and expert individuals in a particular trade was popularly referred to as the *Ustaad*[40]. These informal workshops not only offered employment to adult men but also absorbed young children as apprentices. These young boys of different ages performed various tasks all day long and helped the *Ustaad* and adult workers to complete various repair jobs. These boys were spending all day and part of their evenings in these workshops performing various work related tasks. The following table 1.7 presents the age break-up of the workforce at *Akhtar Ka Ahata:*

Table 1.7: Age Cohorts of Work Force at Research Site (*Akhtar Ka Ahata*)

Number and Age Break-up of Workers at Akhtar Ka Ahata	
Age of Workers	**No of Workers**
15 Years and Above	413
10-14 Years	194
5-9 Years	17
Total	**624**

The majority of the workforce at *Akhtar Ka Ahata* was above 15 years. Moreover, not all of these informal workshops had child labourers. Out of the total 20 categories of workshops and businesses, child labourers were found only in five categories. The categories of the workshops that employed child labourers, and age break-up of the workforce in these workshops will be discussed in the third chapter.

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[40] *Ustaad:* Master artesian or skilled person is called *Ustaad.* He is well respected and revered.

Most of the workforce primarily came from the residential area of *Dhok Hassu* to work there. However some would come from other nearby residential localities. The majority of children working at these informal workshops were also residing in *Dhok Hassu*.

This particular locality, *Dhok Hassu*, of a low-income group is situated at the outskirts of Rawalpindi city, adjacent to the federal capital Islamabad. Both Islamabad and Rawalpindi are also called twin cities due to their geographical proximity. Rawalpindi is situated on the northern side of the Punjab Province, and serves as a business and trade hub in the area.

Dhok Hassu used to be an agricultural area at the periphery of the Rawalpindi city center. However, during the 1970s, the establishment of *Pir Wadhai* Bus Station initiated the gradual transformation of *Dhok Hassu* into a residential area for low-income groups and slums. According to the National Census of 1998, the population of *Dhok Hassu* was 25,643. The housing settlement consisted of small two or three room houses, mostly in depleted conditions, built along narrow streets. The municipal authorities, over the years, have managed to pave/metal surface the streets, the sewage drainage was mostly covered, electricity, natural gas, and at some places piped water were also available within the community. A row of shops lined up most of the main narrow roads in the area. Moreover, street vendors selling vegetables and fruits along these roads were another common sight. These business activities made commuting on the narrow roads quite challenging particularly during the evening hours. The grid-lock of pedestrians, push

carts, bicycle riders, motor cyclists, and auto-rickshaws would create commotion around sun-set.

1.9   Research Methods

The research methodology adopted relied both on qualitative and quantitative approaches. It was felt that both methods had to be used for the best possible results. This was in conformity with Bernard's view that, "whatever our theoretical orientation, a sound mix of qualitative and quantitative data is inevitable in any study of human thought and behaviour"[41]. Bernard also indicated that the term 'ethnography' as a noun means a description of a culture, or a piece of a culture, and as verb it means the collection of data that describe a culture. He further argues that data collection methods could result both in words and numbers (Bernard, 1993). There is general consensus among anthropologists that a mix of both qualitative and quantitative techniques is a useful approach in collecting data from the field.

1.9.1   Participant Observation

The uniqueness and flexibility of this research tool is in its ability to provide both emic and etic observational results. This tool was of great help to understand *Ustaad-shagirid* (Master-Apprentice) work relations. Denzin (1989b, P.157-8) defines the Participant Observation as *"a field strategy that simultaneously combines documents analysis, interviewing of respondents and informants, direct participation and observation, and introspection"*.

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[41] "Research Methods in Anthropology: Qualitative ad Quantitative Approaches", Bernard, Russell H., Sage Publication, London, 1993, p 1

During the field activities, the research keeps the researcher involved with the community as a participant with a view to observe it. At the same time, the researcher maintains his role of being a participating observer. Bernard (1993, P. 136-7) describes participants observation as *"establishing rapport in a new community, learning to act so that people go about their business as usual when you show up; and removing yourself every day from cultural immersion so you can intellectualize what you've learned, put it into perspective, and write about it convincingly"*.

It was challenging to take part in the everyday routine of children and their *Ustaads* as there was a sense of initial disbelief on the intention of the research. The fact that the phenomenon of child labour has become controversial, any research effort is regarded with a sense of suspicion. However, participant observations helped in building a rapport with the community and gradually their trust that lead to more in-depth information as parents, children and *Ustaads* opened up their lives. The observational results generated through in-depth interviews, observations of activities, casual conversations, and semi-structure interviews greatly helped in carrying out analysis at various levels.

The field work carried out for 18 months starting from March 2008 till August 2009. During this period the participant observations took place for 12 months starting from June 2008 till May 2009. The participant's observations helped in understanding the challenges and opportunities these children face at the world of work. The research ensured frequent unobtrusive interactions with the children to observe their routines at the

work places. In addition, during conversations and interviews conscious efforts were made to overcome the intrinsic power imbalance between the researcher and the interviewee child. One way was to ensure that the researcher kept a low profile during conversations by sitting at a lower setting and letting the child sit on a chair, stool or *charpai* (cart). Some children gradually opened up while others opened up relatively quickly and showed a fondness in telling stories and sharing views about their lives.

The participant observations helped in recording children's activities at the workshop during the morning, afternoon, early evening and sometimes also at night (due to increased business). At the same time, it helped in observing children's workplace environment within which the child interacts with various adults around him and vice-versa. The participant observation not only helped the researcher to establish substantial rapport with the parents, children and *Ustaads* but also helped in collecting the necessary and relevant data.

1.9.2   Key Informants

The key informants helped the researcher to have an insight into practices of the *Ustaad* and the *Shagirid* at the workplace. Interviews carried out with the key informants provided detailed information on the dynamics of children joining the occupation, learning processes and then graduating by mastering the trade. Bernard, while describing key informants, states "*good informants are people with whom you can easily talk, who understands the information you need and are glad to give it to you or get it for you*" (Bernard 1993, P 166).

The key informants were provided orientations to understand the concept of "child labour" as a neutral concept and not something that is aberration. Pelto and Pelto (1978, P 72) also suggested training informants "to conceptualize cultural data in the frame of reference employed by the anthropologists".

These key informants were from within the community, and had strong bonds of friendship with various *Ustaads*, and parents of children who were going to workshops. During the period of field research the key informants have remained actively engaged with the researcher.

1.9.3   Semi-Structured Interviews

Pelto and Pelto (1973, P 77-8) indicate that both participants observations and key informant interviews methods have exposed anthropology to serious critique on grounds of quantification, representativeness, specificity of research procedures and lack of comparability. They also point out that more recently anthropologists have developed refinements in various research techniques. Bernard (1993, P 237) while describing structured interviewing states that it "*involves exposing every informant in a sample to the same stimuli, The stimuli may be a set of question or they may be a list of names, a set of photographs, a table full of artifacts, a garden full of plants, etc. The idea is to control the input that triggers each informant's response so that the output can be reliably computed*".

In this research, three sets of semi-structured interview schedules were developed and conducted with parents, children and *Ustaads.* The questions were pre-tested and fine

tuned to ensure that these are constructed in line with the cultural understanding of the informants.

1.9.4   Sample Size

Under this research a systematic random sampling technique was used that allowed everyone in the population to stand equal probability of being randomly selected for the sample. Bernard (1993) indicates that probability samples are based on taking a given number of units of analysis from a list, or sampling frame, which represents same population being studied. Probability or representative sample allows each individual (from the sampling frame) exactly the same chance as every other individual being selected.

In this regard, the workshops at the research site, *Akhtar ka Ahahta*, *(including adjacent smaller Azeem Market and Malik Rahmat Ka Ahata)* were coded. There were a total of 136 small informal workshops/business situated at the *Akhtar ka Ahahta* having a combined workforce of 624 persons. These 136 small informal workshops/businesses were grouped into 20 categories, and only five categories employed children under the age of 14 years. These five categories of workshops/businesses included Auto-Repair workshops, brake shock and *Kamani* Maker Workshops, Auto Electrician Workshop, Spray Painter Workshops, and Truck Decoration Workshops. A sampling frame of all children under 14 years of age was developed, which consisted of 211 child labourers. Since all children were boys, therefore, this research only focused on boys working in the informal workshops. In order to select sample of 70 children, every 3rd child among the

total children working in each category of workshops was selected. The following table provides the sample frame and the sample number of child labourers from each category of the workshops:

Table 1.8: Sampling Frame and Sample of Child labourers

	Categories of Workshops	Sampling Frame	Sample
1	Auto-Repair workshops	82	27
2	Brake Shock and Kamani (Suspension) Maker Workshops	45	15
3	Auto Electrician Workshop	33	11
4	Spray Painter Workshops	24	8
5	Truck Decoration Workshop	27	9
	Total	211	70

Furthermore, the parents and *Ustaads* of every second sample child were also interviewed. In total 70 children and 35 parents and 35 *Ustaads* were part of the sample.

1.10   Problems Faced During Data Collection

In the beginning, it was challenging for the researcher to view the phenomenon of child labour as a value free concept. However, intimate discussions with the community and detailed and long interactions with both parents and children helped the researcher to understand more fully the questions around the established notion of child labour. The issue of child labour is sensitive for the target communities of *Ustaad* (employers). During the field research, in the fall of 2008, one labour inspector visited the research site (*Akhtar Ka Ahata*) and issued notices to some workshop entrepreneurs (*Ustaads*) for

violating Employment of Children Act 1991. A couple of *Ustaads* narrated that the labour official was reprimanding them about employing children at their workplace. He had instructed two *Ustaads* to visit his office the next day. However, one *Ustaad* later informed that with the 'help' of a concerned labour official the issue was 'settled'[42], and the children continued to come and work at his workshop. One *Ustaad* from the research area did raise concerns about whether this labour inspection had something to do with the researcher's presence at their workplaces. However, the researcher's rapport with the senior *Ustaads* and community elders helped reassure him about the impartiality of the research. This incident could have been detrimental to the whole research. However it was the level of rapport between the researcher and many *Ustaads* that helped in preventing any crisis. The *Ustaads* were confident that information generated was meant for academic work. This rapport with the community helped the research to continue and the data collection exercise without hindrance.

1.11 Operational Definitions

It is appropriate at this point to present operational definitions for the purposes of this research. The following are key operational definitions:

- **Child:** An individual who is under the age of 14 years. The labour legislation in Pakistan allows persons above the age of 14 years to start full time employment[43] in non hazardous sectors. Since, it is commonly accepted that a child under five years of

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[42] Labour Inspection in Pakistan is generally believed to be of low standard where violation of labour legislation could be settled with bribes. Although Labour Inspection has been restricted in Punjab province during the period of research, child labour inspection could still be possible under Shops and Establishment Act.

[43] This refers to the with Government of Pakistan's Employment of Children Act 1991, and also to ILO Convention 138 of Minimum Age that allows ratifying states to permit children above 14 years of age to work albeit in non-hazardous occupations.

age is too young to be engaged in work, therefore this research has focused on children between 5 to 14 years of age.

- **Light Work:** Work can be qualified as light if it meets two conditions, first if it is 'not harmful to a child's health and development' and, secondly not prejudicial to a child's attendance at school and participation in vocational training nor the capacity to benefit from the instruction received"[44]. The clause 3 under article 7 of the ILO Convention 138 entrust (national) level competent authority to determine what can be described as light work, number of hours to work and condition under which this work is performed.

- **Child Labour:** The term 'child labor' is often 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;

  . Interferes with their schooling

  . Deprives them of the opportunity to attend school;

  . Obliges them to leave school prematurely; or

  . Requires them to attempt to combine school attendance with excessively long and heavy work"[45].

- **Worst Forms of Child Labour:** worst forms of child labour are defined as the following:

  . "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

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[44] ILO Convention on Minimum Age (No 138) (http://www.ilo.org/ilolex/cgi-lex/convde.pl?C138)
[45]Child Labor: A textbook for university students, ILO, 2004, p. 16.

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"[46].

- *Ustaad*: A master artesian or skilled person who may also own a workshop.

- **Work:** "Work is the application of human energy to things, which application converts, maintains, or adds value to the worker, the thing worked on, and the system in which the work is performed"[47].

- **Workshop**: an informal enterprise either performing repairing or refurbishing services to different kind of vehicles or carrying out decorative activities for vehicles.

- **Labour**: It is understood as "work" (see above the definition of work).

- **Idleness:** A person who is doing nothing of value. For the purpose of this research it refers to such child who is not going to school (never been to school or dropped out) and spending time in playful activities, which is considered by parents as waste of time.

- **Deviancy:** Consisting of actions or behaviors that violate cultural norms including formally-enacted rules and informal violations of social norms. Parents fear that

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[46] ILO Convention 182 (http://www.ilo.org/ilolex/cgi-lex/convde.pl?C182)

[47] "Social Anthropology of Work", Wallman, S., (ed.), London: Academic Press, 1979, p 4

children can develop behaviors that are socially and culturally unacceptable and lead to crime.

1.12   Significance of the Study

The concept of child labour and associated discourse is a relatively new phenomenon. There is a large body of academic work attempts to present the incidence of child labour within the context of economic and legal perspectives.

The economic perspective debates whether child labour is a product of poverty or the cause of it. It also argues that children from poor families end up into labour to generate income to satisfy the household's immediate consumption needs. However, research also indicates that not all poor families send their children into labour, as children of many poor families continue education[48].

The legal perspective envisages child labour as violation of children's rights and their exploitation by parents and market. This perspective takes the view that children become victims as both the family and the market exploit them to fulfill their respective needs. The family exploits children to generate income to gratify its consumption needs. The market exploits children to maximize its profits through their cheap labour. This perspective then demands a legal ban on child labour and retribution for those who violate the rights of children.

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[48] Child Labour: Text Book, International Labour Organization, 2004, p. 102

In other words, these discourses view child labourers as victims of poverty and exploitation that exist due to structural constrains within a society.

Both these perspectives, despite having their strengths, take on a unidirectional approach. The whole gambit of social and cultural environment within which child labour exists is not fully included within the analysis of these two perspectives. The economic and legal perspectives also do not analyze the incident of child labour as a value free concept. Thus, the analysis presented by both the economic and legal perspectives does not necessarily provide a deeper understanding of the child labour phenomenon.

The discourse around the cultural norms and social practices that perpetuate the existence of children at the work place has not been widely analyzed. The agency of the individual to carve out a certain course of action certainly has a social and cultural context. Moreover, the concept of cultural abhorrence to idleness that encourages children to struggle and carry out hard work has not been explored sufficiently either. The presence of children in the world of work also needs to be analyzed within the context of transforming children into functional adults that finds legitimacy in the age old cultural norms and tradition of workplace based skills learning from an *Ustaad* (skilled artesian).

There is relatively limited available anthropological research around the phenomenon of child labour. This ethnographic research makes an attempt to understand the traditional and cultural determinants of child labour to provide a fuller picture. By doing so, this research will try to contribute towards existing limited anthropological discourses around

the incidence of child labour. Furthermore, the research findings will provide useful recommendations for both policy and programmes trying to target the incidence of child labour.

1.13   Theoretical Framework

This research has been embedded in the theoretical discourse of structure and agency. It, while using the existence of child labour in society, attempts to bring an additional perspective about whether social cultural structures predetermine how choices for the individuals are shaped or whether it is the human agency that plays a proactive role beyond determinism of the social structures.

1.13.1 Functionalism

During the early 20th century, Functionalism emerged as a school of thought in anthropology. This perspective hinges firstly on the application of the scientific method to the objective social world and, secondly, it uses an analogy between the individual organism and society.

The functional analysis' focuses on scientific technique, and indicates that the social world can be studied the way the physical world is observed. The social world can be examined with research techniques such as participant observation, social surveys and interviews. Emile Durkheim presented many of the ideas that made the foundation of functionalist analysis, and he also made use of scientific techniques in the sociological research. The functionalist's second focus is on the organic unity of society. In this

organic unity he emphasized needs which must be met for a social system to exist and the ways in which social institutions satisfy those needs.

Under the functional analysis it can be argued that every society will have an education system, and the education system has particular functions to perform that provide essential contribution for the survival of the whole social system. It is like the human body that has many organs, for example the heart that pumps blood all over the body, and the collective functions of these organs ensure that the whole body survives.

The two prominent anthropologists Bronislaw Malinowski and A. R. Radcliffe-Brown had the greatest influence in the development of the functionalist theory. It was Malinowski who first propagated the functionalist theory and subsequently, Radcliffe-Brown further qualified it and presented the structural-functionalist theory.

The functionalist theory relies on the fundamental metaphor of the living organism, having multiple parts and organs that are organized into a system to sustain the organism, and keep essential functions going. Along the same parameters, functionalism postulated members of a society as cells and societal institutions as the organs, whose function is to sustain the life of the collective entity, despite the frequent death of cells and the production of new ones. Functionalist analyses examine the social significance of phenomena, that is, the purpose they serve a particular society in maintaining the whole (Jarvie 1973).

Malinowski also suggested that individuals have physiological needs and that social institutions are developed to meet those needs. There are also culturally derived needs and four basic "instrumental needs" categorized as economics, social control, education, and political organization that require institutional devices for fulfillment. Moreover, each institution has personnel, a charter, a set of norms or rules, activities, material apparatus (technology), and a function. Malinowski believed that uniform psychological responses are correlates of physiological needs. He argued that satisfaction of these needs transformed the cultural instrumental activity into an acquired drive through psychological reinforcement (Voget 1996).

1.13.2 Structure-Functionalism

On the other hand, Radcliffe-Brown paid attention to the social structure. He argued that a society consists of systems of relationships maintaining itself through cybernetic feedback, at the same time the institutions are organized groups of relationships functioning to maintain the society as a system. Radcliffe-Brown, following Auguste Comte, believed that the social constituted a separate 'level' of reality distinct from those of biological forms and inorganic matter. Moreover, he was of the view that explanations of social phenomena had to be constructed within the social level. He postulated that individuals were replaceable, temporary occupants of social roles. Unlike Malinowski's emphasis on individuals, Radcliffe-Brown considered individuals irrelevant (Goldschmidt 1996).

It is important to point out that structural functionalism focuses on the positive and negative functions of social structures. One type of structural functionalism is societal functionalism. It aims to clarify the role of social structures and institutions in society. It also explains the relationship among structures, and how these structures limit individuals' actions. Structural functionalists consider negligible or absence of control of individual over the ways particular structures operate. In fact, the structural functionalists visualize individuals in terms of social positions. Thus, instead of individuals, the positions are ranked according to their respective contribution level for the survival of society. High-ranking positions offer high rewards that make them worth an individual's time and effort to occupy (Ritzer, 2006).

In the tradition of structural functionalism, Talcott Parsons has also made a significant contribution. He placed importance on value consensus, and pushed the boundaries by asserting that social life is a living system. He described social life as a system, interconnecting different parts (structure) and also used the analogy of biological system to depict the functionalist aspects. He suggested that in order to obtain a stable system, values needed to be institutionalized and behavior is structured. A state of social equilibrium is reached where the various parts of the system are in a state of equilibrium. The mechanisms of social control that discourage deviance helped maintain social equilibrium and order in the system.

Parsons postulated that any system must satisfy four needs to survive. Firstly, *adaptation,* that helped each system to adapt to its environment. Secondly, *goal attainment* referred

the ability of each system to mobilize resources to achieve its goals and obtain gratifications. Thirdly, *integration* indicated the system needs to maintain internal co-ordination among its parts and develop ways to deal with deviance. Fourth, *pattern maintenance* demanded each system must maintain, as much as possible, a state of equilibrium. Since, Parsons relied on cybernetics – the science of systems, therefore, he postulates that any system must be controlled by sub-systems. He described four types of action systems, the cultural system, the social system, the personality system, and the behavioral organism. Each of these systems compelled actors to perform a specific functional imperative. The behavioral organism took care of adaptation, the personality performs goal attainment, the social controls integration, and the cultural is responsible for the latency function. (Carib,1984).

This comparison between society and an organism lead to assume the possibility of a self-correcting feature of the social systems. Just as the organism always corrects imbalances, for example disease, to continue to function, social systems also work to maintain equilibrium. Subsequent to external shocks that disturb the balance among social institutions, the social system's self correcting mechanism restored the balance. It was the socialization of members of the society in line with its basic values and norms that helped to achieve social equilibrium. In situations where lack of socialization did not create adherence to agreed cultural and social norms and functions, the social control mechanism came into play. These mechanisms segregated the deviant individual through disapprovals and activated certain institutions like schools and prisons.

Robert Merton's theory of structural functionalism has been called "middle range" because he moved away from trying to analyze society as a whole toward studying different levels of the social world such as organizations and groups. In this context, Merton rejected the organic analogy although maintained the essence of functionalism (Henslin, 2005). He agreed with the concept that the society as a whole composed of parts that work together. In order to refine functionalist analysis he questioned three interrelated assumptions of many functionalists.

Firstly, he rejected the assumption of *functional unity of the society*. This assumption suggested that any part of the social system functional for the entire system, thus making all parts work together for the maintenance and integration of society as whole. He argued that a society with a variety of faiths and religions would tend to divide rather than unite. Merton argued that functional unity is a matter of degree and requires investigation rather than simply assuming its unity.

Secondly, he questioned *universal functionalism* that states that all cultural or social forms have positive functions. He also questioned the assumption that any part of society may be functional, dysfunction, or non-functional. He argued that poverty could be seen as dysfunctional for the poor, but functional for the non-poor and society as whole. He suggested, instead, that the persisting cultural forms have a net balance of functional consequences.

Thirdly, the assumption of *indispensability* which suggested certain institutions or social arrangements was indispensable to society. Merton questioned this asserting that the same functional requirements could be met by a range of alternative institutions. He, thus, suggested the concept of 'functional equivalent' or 'functional alternatives'. He argued that political ideology like communism could act as an alternative to religion. Merton argued that parts of society need to be analyzed in terms of their respective effects or consequences on the society as a whole and on the individual and groups within the society. He asserted that these effects could be functional, dysfunctional and non functional (Merton, 1968).

Merton employed the term 'function' to refer to the beneficial consequences of people's actions, as these keep the group in equilibrium. On the other hand, the dysfunctional consequences harm society and undermine a system's equilibrium. He also introduced the concepts of 'manifest' and 'latent' functions — referring, respectively, to intended and unintended consequences (Henslin, 2005).

Within this context of structure functional analysis, it could be argued that the society developed social institutions like 'informal apprenticeship training arrangement' (*Ustaad-Shagirid*) in order to ensure twin purposes, transfer knowledge to younger generations and to avoid the risk of their becoming dysfunctional or delinquent. The changing needs in the way knowledge was transferred and brought about changes in this social institution of informal 'apprentice training arrangement' and evolved into formal 'school'. This created equilibrium among social institutions of family, education and market (economy).

However, the failure or non-functionality of school (education) results in lack of enrolments and higher drop-outs. These young members of society are at risk of becoming dysfunctional and delinquent. Such an eventuality would create imbalance among the social institution of family, school (education) and the market (economy). The self-correcting mechanism, in the absence of improving the functionality of school, would create or revive such social institutions, for example 'informal apprenticeship training arrangement' (*Ustaad-Shagirid*) that would help prevent deviance or delinquency and promote functionality among the young. This *functional alternative*' arrangement, in the face of non-performing school, acts as a social control mechanism and ensures that members adhere to agreed cultural norms and functions.

This functional alternative offers the *manifest function* of imparting children with some occupational skill and it also fulfills a *latent function* to help avoid deviancy and delinquency among out of school children. In the context of deviance/delinquency avoidance and to promote functionality amongst the members, the self-correcting mechanism through resorting to 'functional alternative' may create equilibrium (perhaps artificial) among family, education and market (economy).

However, the question that arises is why some poor parents do not opt for or reject school as a medium of knowledge to be transferred to children for their future roles and responsibility as adults? Is it the non-functionality of the social institution '*school*' or the choice of parents about the future of their children? Moreover, it may be presumed that

the 'apprenticeship training arrangement' is sustained as an institution, at least in the non-industrial countries, due to its perceived positive effects. However, what were the causes that made this 'functional alternative' succeed?

This has been the challenge within the theoretical tradition of functionalism. It only offered a deterministic view of human action. Its critics argued that the functional theory only portrayed human behaviour as determined by the system. Moreover, the functionalistic approach has been criticized to be teleological, meaning that parts of a system exist for their mutually beneficial relations. This reasoning treats effect as the cause (Carib, 1984). The functional approach in the face of mounting criticism gradually faded. *"The beginning of this period (from Second World War to 1980s) was marked by the emergence of structural-functionalism theory, and until at least the late 1960s this approach exercised certain dominancy over the scientific field. As early as the late 1950s and early 1960s, however, significant challenges to functionalistic theory had developed. By the mid 1970s, functionalism had diminished."*[49]

Without going into the debate as to whether functionalism still holds a significant position in social sciences, I would turn towards the social action theory or interpretive perspectives to explore further the interaction between the individual and the social structure.

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[49] *"The Centrality of the Classics"* by Jeffrey C. Alexander in "Social Theory Today", Ed. Giddens, A. and Truner J. H., Polity Press 1988, Cambridge, p. 35

1.13.3 Social Action Theory

The social action theory mostly disagrees to assertions that society has a clear structure that compel individuals to behave in a certain manner. However, the chief proponent of the social action theory Max Weber argued that sociology referred to "the interpretive understanding of social action and thereby with a causal explanation of its course and consequences"[50]. He argued that a social action was an individual's action that entails a social meaning. In other words, such an action that considered the behaviour of others would have social meaning. An accident due to lack of any conscious thought would not be considered as social action. However, the consequent arguments or exchange of words between the two individuals (involved in the accident) would be a social action.

Weber identified two categories of meanings that could be associated with the social action. Firstly, *aktuelles Verstehen* could be translated as direct observational understanding; as one observes someone's facial expression changing in anger. Secondly, *erklarendes Verstehen* meaning explanatory understanding; here the meanings of an action are important in terms of the motives that necessitate it (Tucker, 1965).

Thus, for *aktuelles Verstehen*, it is possible to see a young boy unscrewing the wheel of a vehicle in an auto-repair workshop and explain it as child performing a task at workplace. However, *erklarendes Verstehen* would require an understanding as to why the child was performing the tasks at the work-place. Did this child want to earn some money? The alternative, is the child undergoing a skills training process as an apprentice to become an

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[50] "Society and Economy" by Max Weber; edited by Guenther Roth and Clause Wittich, 1977 (http://books.google.com.pk/books?id=pSdaNuIaUUEC&printsec=frontcover)

auto repair mechanic in the future? Were parents of this child cruel to put him into labour? Or, did they want their child to acquire a skill and become financially independent at a young age?

Weber in his study, The Protestant Ethic and the Spirit of Capitalism[51], while developing a complete causal explanation, emphasized the need to determine what has given rise to the motives that led to the actions. This was an attempt to discover connections between the events and establish a causal relationship. Weber's work on the rise of capitalism states his belief that social actions, especially the ones involving a vast number of people acting similarly, could result in major social change like the start of capitalism.

While using the same causal explanation, the question that arises is 'what' makes a large number of parents decide to send their children to the workplace? Moreover, what would this large social action, where many parents behave in same manner and send their children to workplace, result in? Similarly, why are parents making a choice to reject school, or vice versa, and opt for the workplace as an alternative place for their children. Perhaps social structure, the school, needs to be looked in a holistic picture for these connections. This brings us back to the complex question of the agency of human action and the deterministic aspect of social structures.

I will now try to discuss this argument further within a unique perspective that saw both human agency and social structure as two faces of the same coin.

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[51] Max Weber, "The Protestant Ethic and the Spirit of Capitalism", translated by Talcott Parsons (http://books.google.com.pk/books?id=fo9OIS7I0XAC&pg=PT1&dq=The+Protestant+Ethic+and+the+Spirit+of+Capitalism+1958)

1.13.4 Structuration

Anthony Giddens put forward a unique concept of *"Structuration"* – the term he borrowed from the French language – to move away from the dualism of the deterministic (structure) and voluntaristic (individual action) approaches and attempted to find a middle ground. He "sets out a highly original conceptualization of the relation between action and structure, agent and system, individual and society"[52].

Giddens argued that society is not static instead it is an active flow of social life. He considered individuals as knowledgeable about the social structures they produced and then reproduced through their conduct. He stated that society could be conceptualized as a complex flow of recurrent practices that form institutions. It is important to understand how an action is structured in the daily context of social practices, while recognizing at the same time that the structural elements of action are reproduced by the execution of the action. "Giddens thus proposes that the dualism of agency and structure should instead be understood as complimentary terms of a duality, the 'duality of structure'. By the duality of structure', wrote Giddens, 'I mean that social structures are both constituted by human agency, and yet at the same time are the very medium of this constitution'"[53].

This co-relation between agency and structure could help to shed light on the challenges that families with potential child labourers encounter. The family's decision to take the child out of school (or never send child to school) and into the workplace is better

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[52] "Anthony Giddens" by Anthony Elliott in "Profiles in Contemporary Social Theory", Edited by Anthony Elliott and Bryan S. Turner, published by Sage Publications, London, 2001, p. 294
[53] ibid, p. 294

explained under Giddens theoretical perspective of *Structuration*. Some parents reject formal school education for their children as too huge an investment both in terms of time and resources especially as there is no certainty that there will be an immediate employment at the end of the academic journey. Instead, parents opt for the *Ustaad-Shagirid* arrangement for their child. Such an action of the parent to send child to work by rejecting school then produces and reproduces the phenomenon of child labour. However, it would create a better understanding if the phenomenon whereby the agency of the parent rejecting schooling for the child and finding refuge in the *Ustaad-Shagrid* arrangement is seen within the Marxist perspective of dialectical materials and the two-class model perpetuating conflict.

1.13.5 Marx's Dialectical Material and Two-Class Model

Children who enter into labour mostly come from poor families that make-up the working classes. These working classes are constantly struggle to access resources. Karl Marx provides a unique perspective on the conflicting aspects of society, which offers a theoretical foundation to this discussion. Marx viewed people both as producers and the products of society. People make society themselves by their own actions. Marx built his idea of history on the premises of a dialectic. The dialectical movement represents the conflict of contradictions. It is the conflict that forms the basis of dynamic principles and source of change. The tension between incompatible forces leads to change. This struggle eventually results in collision of incompatible forces. Consequently, a sudden change creates a new set of rules at a higher level of development. The dialectic process starts again as a contradiction between a new set of forces begins. Marx argued that the source

of change embedded, in particular, in the contradictions of the economic system and the society in general. His focus on economic factors meant that this view became known as 'dialectical materialism'. (Marx, K. and Engels, F., 1971)

For Marx the two-class model was the crux of his dialectic of social change. He postulated structure of all societies in simplified terms of two-classes, the ruling class and the subject class. The ruling class, the bourgeoisie, has the power due to its ownership and control over means of production. The subject class, the proletariat, is powerless because of its lack of ownership of means of production. The conflict between these two classes originates because the labour of the subject class produces results that are solely appropriated by the ruling class (ibid, 1971).

The absence of a well functioning school education for all children and parents compelled to rely on alternative means of informal human resource development (for example, informal skills training through an *Ustaad-Shagirid arrangement)* may only be expanding the proletariat class. School education has been designed in such a way that it requires at least 16 years of time investment and corresponding financial resources to become eligible for a share in the society (in terms of meaningful employment). However, even this long-term investment may not be enough to develop ownership and control of means of production, and in fact children of the proletariat (working classes) continue to be denied meaningful economic engagement in the process. Thus, such a bleak future prospect compels poor parents to participate and create a culture of child labour that may provide some solace to the proletariat. However, dialectical materialism

may perpetuate the conflict between these working classes and the ruling class – the bourgeoisie. It is the bourgeoisie that continue to occupy the decision-making role in resource allocation or lack of it, for social services like education.

1.13.6 Piaget's Theory of Development

In psychological theories that stressed the role of biology or nature, Piaget's theory of cognitive development made a substantial contribution (Piaget; 1950). His focus has been the way in which children's thinking abilities develop. He postulated that cognition does not just get gradually better – children do not simply become more and more cognitively competent. They undergo a series of transformations in how they think.

Piaget suggested that the development of human thinking passes through distinct, separate stages and identified four of the following:

Stage 1   Sensori-motor thought
Stage 2   Pre-operational thought
Stage 3   Concrete operational thought
Stage 4   Formal operational thought.

Stage 1, the sensor motor thought (first two years), encompasses the first two years in a child's life. During this time, children cannot think in an abstract way, except linking inputs through sensory means and making reactionary movements. Stage 2, pre-operational thought (2-7 years), around the age of 2 years the child starts having complete abstract thoughts. This results in acquiring language, using imaginative play and forming the ability to build memory. At stage 3, concrete operation thought develops (7-11 years), the child makes a quantum jump in intelligence around the age of seven – jumps from intuitive feelings to logical reasoning. Stage 4 is formal operational thought (11 years to

adulthood), where the ability to think hypothetically and beyond the boundaries of direct experience develops. In other words, it enables a person to play out 'what if' possibilities in the mind (Ibid; 1950). The presence of children at the workplace starts mostly after the age of seven years and intensifies after 11 years. Children in stage 3 and stage 4 are capable of being useful in the workplace.

1.13.7 Erikson's Model of Psychosocial Development

Building on the Freud's model, Erickson presented development as a mastering series of multiple challenges but expanded beyond the age of the genital stage. Erickson emphasized "the importance of adolescence as being particularly important in forming a sense of identity, followed by phases in adulthood that focus on acquiring intimacy, developing skills and competence, the capacity for mature love, to care for others and ultimately to attain 'wisdom'"[54]. The following is Erickson's model[55] of psychosocial development:

Table 1.9: Erickson's Model of Psychosocial Development

Stages of life – the challenge to be maters	What is gain if challenge is resolved	Age	Equivalent Freudian stage
Basic trust versus mistrust	Hope	Infancy	Oral
Autonomy versus shame and doubt	Will-power	Early childhood	Anal
Initiative versus guilt	Purpose	Age of play	Phallic
Industry versus inferiority	Competence	Primary School	Latency
Identity versus Identity confusion	Fidelity	Adolescence	Genital
Intimacy versus Isolation	Love	Young Adulthood	
Generativity versus stagnation	Care	Middle adulthood	
Ego integrity versus despair	Wisdom	Maturity	

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[54] *Theories of child development* by Wendy Stainton Rogers in "Children in Societies: Contemporary Theory, Policy and Practice" by Foley, P., Roche, J., and Tucker, S., eds. 2001, p. 212.
[55] Ibid, p 213

Various stages play a role in an individual's development through life. Erikson also considers these stages not only important at a particular age but also when these are resolved as the tensions continue throughout various stages of life of the individual.

It is significant to take note that the development theory may help understand how a child experiences the world. However, critics of the development theory argue the issue of power when not considered could construct a limited view. These critics argue that "children's 'incompetence' may be a matter of powerlessness, less a matter of their immaturity than of the way in which adults deny children power, all in the name of 'doing what is in their best interests"[56]. Thus, they raise the question of whose interests are being served.

1.14 Split Pyramid Model: Depicting Cultural and Economic Determinants of Child Labour

Based on the hypothesis and assumptions a model has been developed that attempts to identify factors, within the interplay of cultural and economic determinism, which perpetuates child labour practices. It is argued that parental overriding concerns revolve around the need to ensure their children grow into functional and responsible adults. Poor parents are chiefly concerned about their out of school male children whereby they are not involved in any productive activity geared towards a better future. Moreover, another associated fear is that idle male children may become deviant due to the possibility of their acquiring bad company and developing amoral and criminal habits. In South Asian cultures both idleness and deviancy are abhorred and actively discouraged. These strong

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[56] Ibid, p 212

cultural under currents coupled with limited available choices to the poor families result in alternative career paths for their out of school male children. These choices, whereby a child is placed at a workplace, become a moot point. The economic determinism suggests that the poor parents' immediate income needs restrict their abilities to pursue a child's education through private means. In fact parents, in order to mitigate the family's immediate consumption needs, consider children's employment a legitimate option to generate money.

Diagram 1.3   Split Pyramid Model: Cultural & Economic Depicting Determinants of Child Labour
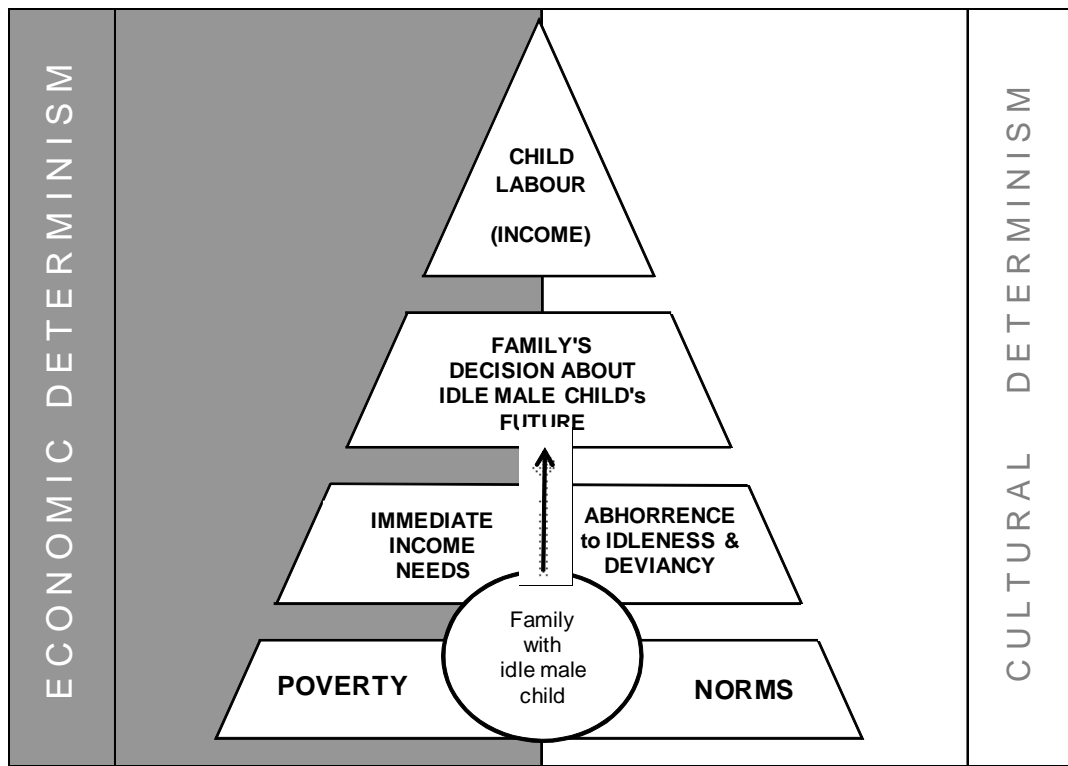
The model above presents the dilemma of poor parents regarding the human resource development needs of their out-of-school child (idle) on the one hand, and family's immediate income needs on the other. Typically, a child that either has never been to school, dropped-out from school due to poor educational performance or teachers' harsh

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behavior, or taken out of school due to perceived non-relevance of education most likely ends at a workplace. Parents will not let that child remain out of productive activities due to the norms that abhor idleness and associated possible deviancy.

The family's poverty would limit its choices to find alternative means and options to continue the child's school education. Such parents due to poverty, for example, cannot arrange private schooling or private tutors at home to improve the child's poor school performance. Moreover, in line with the popular economic determinism's key argument, this model also postulates that the family's poverty reinforces the decision to place the child at the workplace that would generate additional income and mitigate income needs of the family.

This model will be put on test in this research that would help to confirm, revise or drastically change the reasoning built into this. We will come back to this analysis in the final seventh chapter.

Chapter-2

Literature Review

The role that families assign to children may vary from one culture to another; however the well-being of children and the desire to prepare them for their future responsibilities remains a key concern for parents and societies. The manifestation of this desire and its interpretation differ in accordance with the cultural settings and socio-economic conditions in which families find them. Poverty coupled with cultural norms accepting and promoting children's responsibilities in the world of work gives multiple roles to children beyond education and play.

Both anthropological and economic scholarship has tried to understand the phenomenon of a child's presence at the workplace. Culturally the phenomenon is understood in terms of tradition vis-à-vis the social construct of child development to enter adulthood, whereas economically it is viewed from the perspective of how poverty affects the family. However, there are overlaps between the two and the next section will attempt to understand the phenomenon more fully.

2.1   Cultural Discourse on Child Labour

The 20th century witnessed the rise of literature attempting to understand child work and its various manifestations. It has greatly shaped our understanding about the nature of children's involvement in the world of work. Children perform a wide range of activities and tasks outside school, the home and the playground. These activities and tasks are

categorized into acceptable and unacceptable forms of work primarily on the basis of age, nature of work and conditions in which it is being performed. It needs to be understood that there are certain types of work that are acceptable for children to perform, though the understanding of such work remains limited. Moreover, such understanding, regarding roles of children, are defined differently in different cultural setting and may change over period of time. Nonetheless, the international legal normative categories various types of child work as light work, child labour, hazardous forms of child labour and worst forms of child labour. However, this global text on child labour often comes into conflict with cultural practices often followed by poor communities. The argument around cultural determinants of child labour primarily hinges on traditions and norms prevalent among these communities.

Historically, there existed two spaces for children, private (home) and public (play and work) spheres where boundaries were not very well defined. Aries clearly indicated that societies before the dawn of the modern era tended to let children integrate with the adult community and take part in practical life. He states, *"... as soon as the child could live without the constant solicitude of his mother, his nanny or his cradle-rocker, he belonged to adult society[1]"*. He argues that the word child has a different meaning as compared to how it is defined in the 20th century. *"Language did not give the word 'child' the restrictive meaning we give it today: people said 'child' much as we say 'lad' in everyday speech. The absence of definition extended to every sort of social activity: games, crafts, arms. There is not a single collective picture of the times in which children are not to be*

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[1] Aries, Philippe, "Centuries of Childhood: A Social History of Family Life", Vintage Books, New York, 1962, p. 128

found, nestling singly or in pairs in the trousse hung round women's necks, or urinating in a corner, or playing their part in a traditional festival, or as apprentices in a workshop, or as pages serving a Knight, etc.[2]" Thus, children would learn trades and life skills by mingling with adult society through play and apprenticeship. The idea of a transitory period between childhood and adulthood was non-existent. This transition period was later conceived and promoted as a preparatory period for the move from one stage to another stage of human development.

Mead in her classical work *"Coming of Age in Samoa"* identifies how Samoan children were being educated. *"The four or five little boys who all wished assist at the important business of helping grown youth lasso reef eels, organized themselves into a highly efficient working team; one boy holds the bait, another holds an extra lasso, others poke eagerly about the holes in the reef looking for prey, while still another tucks the captured eels into his lavalava."[3]* She also shows how young girls of six or seven years required to learn different skills in addition to taking care of younger sibling. The little girl *"... learns to weave firm square balls from palms leaves, to make pin-wheels of palm leaves or frangipani blossoms, to climb a coconut tree by walking up the trunk on flexible little feet, to break open a cocoanut with one firm well-directed blow of a knife as long as she is tall to play a number of groups games and sing the songs with them, to tidy the house by picking up the litter on the stony floor, to bring water from the sea, to spread out copra to dry and to help gather it in when rain threatens, to roll the pandanus leaves for weaving, to go to a neighbouring house and bring back a lighted fagot for the chief's*

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[2] Aries, Philippe, ibid., p 128
[3] Mead, Margaret, "Coming of Age in Samoa", Dell Publishing Company, Inc. New York, 1973, p. 126

pipe or the cook-house fire, and to exercise tact in begging slight favours from relatives."[4] Apart from the fact that in traditional societies, adults were comfortable with children growing up while participating in adult life, the roles for boys and girls were also well defined from the onset of childhood.

However, such practices where children would learn a task along with adults gradually became unacceptable. Aries argued that during the sixteenth and seventeenth centuries the moralist and reformist passionately fought for an idea of education confined to children. *"This was how these moral champions of moral order were led to recognize the importance of education"[5]*.

Aries further stated that literature in the 16th and 17th centuries propagated and convinced parents that they were spiritual guardians, that they were responsible before God for the souls, and indeed the bodies too, of their children. *"Henceforth, it was recognized the child was not ready for life and that he had to be subjected to a special treatment, a sort of quarantine, before he was allowed to join the adults."[6]* Children were then subjected to receive training for life. It was believed that this training should be provided by the school. Aries asserts, *"traditional apprenticeship was replaced by the school, an instrument of strict discipline, protected by the law-courts and the police-courts"[7]* In the developed world both family and school together took children away from society.

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[4] Mead, ibid, pp: 125-126
[5] Aries, op.cit., p 412
[6] Aries, Op.cit., p 412
[7] Aries, Op.cit., p 413

Such a practice of allowing children to take on 'adult responsibilities' though abandoned to a large extent in the developed world (Western Europe and North America), continued in many regions across the world, including South Asia. Scheper-Hughes (1987) indicated that in the most traditional societies *"children are expected to contribute to the economic subsistence of the household. Their value and status within the family are achieved, instrumentally based, and usually increase with age"*[8] In contrast, the modern and industrialized societies started to have fewer children and invest heavily in each child. Consequently, in modern and industrial societies, Scheper-Hughes argues, *"the instrumentality value of children has been largely replaced by their expressive value. Children have become relatively worthless (economically) to their parents, but priceless in terms of their psychological worth"*.[9]

This also changed the discourse around children vis-à-vis their roles and responsibilities within the family and society, as Zelizer (1985) argued that *"while in the 19th century, the market value of children was culturally acceptable, later the new normative ideal of the child as an exclusively emotional and affective asset precluded instrumental or fiscal considerations"*[10]. Consequently, the rising normative labelled such non-conforming parents who accepted wages or labour contribution of a useful child as mercenaries or insensitive.

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[8] "Child Survival: Anthropological Perspectives on the Treatment and Maltreatment of Children", Scheper-Hughes, N., (ed.), , Dordrecht, Boston, Lancaster, Tokyo: D. Reidel Publishing Company, 1987 p. 11

[9] Scheper-Hughes, Ibid., pp 11-12

[10] "Pricing the Priceless Child: The Changing Social Value of Children", Zelizer , V. A., (1985). New York: Basic Books, p. 11

Furthermore, the emergence and expansion of a large informal sector primarily in the urban setting created more opportunities for children to find apprenticeship and employment. Ray Bromley (1978) identified that analysts of urban employment in the developing world have used 'two sector' terminology, activities in the 'traditional' and the 'modern' sectors. He also points out that subsequently these terminologies were renamed while dividing the economy into 'informal' (like traditional) and 'formal' (modern) sectors.

Bromley provided the distinctions, based on activities, between the informal and formal sectors. The formal sector is characterized by difficult entry, frequent reliance on overseas resources, corporate ownership, large-scale operations, capital intensive and often imported technology, formally acquired skills, often expatriate and protected markets (through tariffs, quotas and trade license). On the other hand the informal economy is characterized by ease of entry, reliance on indigenous resources, family ownership of enterprises, small scale operations, labour-intensive and adapted technology, skills acquired outside the formal school system and un-regulated and competitive markets. Informal activities are largely ignored, rarely supported, and sometimes actively discouraged by the governments. Given these characteristics of the informal economy, it further thrived on the cultural tradition that hinged on the instrumental value of children and making them useful to the household and community.

Dutch anthropologist, Olga Nieuwenhuys (1994) considered the notion of child labour inadequate to analyse the work that children perform. She argues that this *"notion works*

from the ingrained assumption of an immature specimen of the human race being exposed to a certain type of undesirable activity"[11]. Research focussing on children's work in peasant societies, she claimed, has seriously suffered due to pre-conceived assumptions about which activities are suitable for children and which are not. She traced the moral basis of such judgement to the ideals of socialization introduced by colonial powers in former colonies and reflected in their labour legislation.

Nieuwenhuys identified the three following categories of work:

- extracting resources from the physical and social environment
- activities concerning 'un-paid' allocation, preparation and distribution of these resources and
- activities that relate to the care of human beings.

She asserted that many of these activities are aimed towards the production of socially-valued goods and services but many may not be recognized as such – particularly when carried out in the context of the household. When children are not present to carry out child minding, housekeeping or errands, other services would have to be bought and domestic help to be hired. Thus, she asserts, *"household based work though difficult to value exactly, represents in itself an important assets"[12]*. In other words, this analysis questioned, in many ways, the constructs of the child labour concept that views work of children at the work place only.

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[11] "Children's Life worlds: Gender, Welfare and Labour in the Developing World", Nieuwenhuys, O. London: Routledge, 1994, p. 119
[12] Nieuwenhuys, O. Ibid. p. 120

There are certain cultural norms around gender, age and idleness that also contribute towards the existence of child labour. Delap, while describing the importance of economic and cultural determinism around the child labour debate, suggested that economic factors certainly influence decision making about child labour. While using data from her research in the slums of Bangladesh she suggested that four factors cannot be explained purely in economic terms. She suggests that the decision to deploy child labour instead of available adult labour is often made on gender norms. Secondly, gender also plays a role while deciding to deploy male or female child labour. Thirdly, the age subordination plays its role in deciding what tasks are assigned to children. Fourthly, she suggests that the cultural importance of avoiding idleness plays a key role, which stems from the fear of deviancy (Delap; 2001). This fourth aspect around idleness and deviancy also forms one of the focuses in this research.

Another aspect is the way child perform work and child labour are described. There are researchers who do not agree that children's work is harmful to them. Alec Fyfe (1989) made a distinction between child work and child labour. Though these two concepts are used interchangeably, Fyfe argued that all work is not harmful to children. In fact, he asserts that *"there is little doubt that many children welcome the opportunity to wok, seeing it in the rite of the passage to adulthood. Work can be a gradual initiation into adulthood and a positive element in the child's development"*[13].

The social construction of child labour and the notion that the child should be removed from labour is a modern phenomenon. The traditional concept in most societies has been

[13] "Child Labour", Fyfe, A., Oxford: Polity Press, 1989, p 3

that children should contribute towards the maintenance of the family. Children start work early in life by entering into apprenticeship. These practices are coming into conflict with laws and conventions that prohibit child labour. However, in many countries, including in India and Pakistan, despite the presence of legislation against child labour the state does not make any serious effort to end child labour. Weiner and Noman (1995) in their ground breaking work on child labour argued that there are certain cultural beliefs held by government officials and opinion makers in India that allow child labour practices to continue. They argued "*the Indian position (on child labour) rests on deeply held beliefs that there is a division between people who work with their minds and rule and people who work with their hands and are ruled, and the education should reinforce rather than break down this division. These beliefs are closely tied to religious notions and to the premises that underlie India's hierarchical caste system*"[14].

Further, there is literature available that describes the notion of child labour as a western concept that does not recognise the roles that children need to perform in other parts of the world. Jo Boyden (1990) tried to make sense of how images and perceptions about childhood have permeated in the globalized world from the North to the South. He emphasizes the fact that "*as the 20th century progressed, then, highly selective, stereotyped perceptions of childhood of the innocent child victim on the one hand and the young deviant on the other – have been exported from the industrial world to the South. They have provided a focal point for the development of both human rights legislation at the international level and social policy at the national level in a wide range of countries.*

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[14] "The child and the State in India and Pakistan", Weiner, M. & Noman, O., Oxford University Press. Islamabad, pp. 5-6

It has been the explicit goal of children's rights specialists to crystallize in international law a universal system of rights for the child based on these norms (of the modern and industrialized societies) of childhood"[15]. Significant debate has taken place among academics to culturally understand the concept of children's presence at workplaces.

International conventions on child labour have also been analysed from this perspective. Some academics have suggested that the formulation of these conventions has primarily been dominated by western understandings of children and their roles and responsibilities. Myers (2001) questioned the definition of a child that has become the baseline for international child rights norms. He suggested that international child labour policies have unjustly adopted European and North American values while ignoring more representative global views. He discussed the historical context of three international conventions that deal with the issue of child labour; ILO Convention 138 on Minimum Age, Convention on the Right of Children, and ILO Convention 182 on Worst Forms of Child Labour. He stated that these three conventions in a period of 25 years have shown some improvement in understanding the issue of child labour from an international perspective, not only the European and North American points of views. "*Comparison of these three conventions in their historical sequence indicates a progression of children's rights thinking about child labor, first from globalized Northern ethnocentrism (ILO Conventions 138), to a more open and culturally adaptable approach still set within Northern concepts of children's rights (the CRC), and from there to a more democratic model better structured to accommodate diversity while*

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[15] "Childhood and the Policymakers: A Comparative Perspective on the Globalization of Childhood", Boyden, Jo., in James. A., and Prout, A., (eds.) *Constructing and Deconstructing Childhood: Contemporary Issues in the Sociological Study of Childhood*. Basingstoke: The Falmer Press, 1990, p 191

focusing on a realistic social objective against which progress can be monitored (ILO Conventions 182)"[16].

2.2   The Economic Discourse on Child Labour

Economic determinism has remained dominant within the large body of available scholarship linking poverty of families and the presence of children at the work place. Ilahi, Orazem, Sedlackek in the Wold Bank Discussion Paper (2005) "How Does Working as a Child Affect Wages, Income and Poverty as an Adult?" maintains that *"parents have their children specialized in schooling rather than go to work in part because they expect that children will earn enough as adults to repay the lost earnings as a child. However, children from poor households may not have the luxury of waiting to grow up before entering the labour market. Sending their children to work may be the only option poor parents have to sufficiently raise income to meet current consumption needs"*[17].

Moreover, economic determinism tends to see the phenomenon of children in the world of work from the demand and supply prism and presents the determinants of both sides. On the supply side, the major determinants are identified as poverty, skill training, household size, a dysfunctional education system, labour substitution within the household, a rise in the status of income earning members within household, lack of bequests, and the inability to access the credit market and limited availability of financial

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[16] Myers, W. E. "The Right Rights? Child Labor in a Globalizing World", The ANNALS of the American Academy of Political and Social Science, Vol. 575, No. 1, May 2001, p 53

[17] "How Does Working as a Child Affect Wages, Income and Poverty as an Adult?" by Ilahi, N., Orazem, P., Sedlacek, G., Social Protection Discussion Series, No. 0514, World Bank (2005), p 1.

resources. On the other hand, the demand side factors are identified as employers' desire to cut down on production cost to remain competitive, lower and flexible wages of children, flexibility of working hours (generally longer), suitability of child labour for some products, a rise in the informal sector of the labour market, lack of implementation of labour legislations and and ineffective penalty structure for violators. (see Ali, 1999; Dehejia and Gatti, 2002; Jamil 1995).

Regarding the demand side it has been argued that the specific characteristics of child workers, for example their 'nimble fingers', make them much more attractive to certain employers to perform certain tasks. A 1992 Unicef study in Pakistan found that 90% of the workers in the carpet weaving industry were children. However, it is debatable whether children possess special characteristics to perform tasks that adults cannot. Edmonds (2003) in his research indicated that in Nepal, Pakistan and Vietnam mostly activities of child labourers could be substituted by adult workers.

There are various researches that indicated a co-relation between child labour and household poverty (Grootaret and Kanbur, 1995; Hamid, 1994). Some researchers including Rajan (2001) find that in an economy with inefficient child labour, greater income inequalities have been linked with more child labour.

Basu and Van (1998) in their seminal theoretical paper capture the role of poverty vis-a-vis child labour. They assumed that children work only when subsistence limitations bind and subsequently focussed on how this supply behaviour could result in multiple

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equilibria in the labour market. This only established the normality of child leisure, or confirmed that households did not have enough cash. They have attempted to investigate the adult work force and wages to determine how the role of family income affects the choices between school attendance and child labour. They have put forward a model that indicates altruistic partners would withdraw their children from labour once adult wage has increased beyond a certain critical level. Their model has strengthened the argument for compulsory education for children.

The link between poverty and the supply of child labour has been explored by various researchers with different results for boys and girls. Bhalotra (2007) has also investigated the hypothesis that child labour is compelled by poverty. She has used a large household survey from rural Pakistan and estimated labour supply models for boys and girls in wage work. Her findings indicate different results for boys and girls. She found evidence that at least "*poverty compels boys to work. This suggests that cash transfers offered to households supplying child labour will be effective in reducing child labour amongst boys. In the case of girls, the evidence is ambiguous. While the hypothesis that poverty compels girls to work cannot strictly be rejected, the results in this article and in related research suggest that girls may work even when poverty is not compelling, possibly because the perceived return to their education is relatively low*"[18].

She further suggests designing gender specific interventions to address the child labour issue. "*While poverty reduction may reduce work and increase schooling amongst boys,*

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[18] "*Is Child Work Necessary?*" Sonia Bhalotra, Oxford Bulletin of Economics and Statistics, Vol. 69, No. 1 (2007), p. 50

to achieve similar results for girls, it may be necessary to also raise the returns to schooling for girls, to do which it may be necessary to first alter attitudes to girls' education"[19].

There also exists an argument that indicates that children from relatively rich backgrounds are prone to work whereas those from poorer backgrounds are more likely to attend school. Skoufia (1995) has found that in India families may have been experiencing difficulties in employing farm labour or leasing out land. Employing family labour on the farm may have less monitoring costs. Thus, the children of land rich households are more prone to work and less likely to attend school as compared to the children of land-poor households.

Similarly, others researchers have also found that poverty does not always create a supply of child labour. There is empirical evidence that suggests that family assets could also increase the incidence of child labour. Cockburn (2001) asserted that although child labour and poverty were considered to be associated, there was weak empirical evidence to establish the link. He used a simple agricultural household model with missing labour market to demonstrate his point. His analysis of rural Ethiopian households' data indicated that certain assets would produce child labour-increasing effects, while other assets create child labour-decreasing results.

In this regard, Cockburn indicates a worrying scenario where, "*the income opportunities provided by asset ownership appear to dominate, concern hoes (boys only), small*

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[19] Ibid, p. 50

animals and permanent crops, which increase the relative probability of children working rather than attending school. Also, results obtained without site variables suggest that land ownership may increase child work and reduce schooling due to the specialisation of children in land-intensive herding activities. Generally speaking, access to assets that are used in child work activities (complements to child work) is more likely to increase child work and less likely to increase child schooling. Income is found to have a clear positive impact on child schooling and, when it is instrumented, a negative effect on child work"[20].

Nardinelli (1990) also argued that the gradual reduction in children's workforce participation in British industrialization can be understood by changes in the demand and supply of child work. The demand for skilled workforce subdued the need to have child workers. He maintains that higher and better wages for the adult skilled workforce reduced the family's reliance on children's income. Moreover, the benefit of long-term returns on the investment of the child's education influenced the family's decision making to choose school instead of labour for their children.

Psacharopoulos (1997) in his empirical analysis of household surveys in Bolivia and Venezuela tackled the issue of child labor in relation to the educational attainment of working children. He argues the fact that *"(when) a child is working reduces his or her educational attainment by about 2 years of schooling relative to the control group of non-working children. Grade repetition, a common phenomenon in Latin America, is closely*

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[20] "*Child Labour Versus Education: Poverty Constraints or Income Opportunities?",* John Cockburn, Centre for the Study of African Economies (CSAE) and Nuffield College (Oxford University), (2001) p 29 (http://www.csae.ox.ac.uk/conferences/2000-OiA/pdfpapers/cockburn2.PDF)

associated with child labor. Working children contribute significantly to total household income. Thus, beyond the issue of child labor having an adverse effect on the child's physical development, the fact that a child is obliged to work has detrimental effect on the accumulation of human capital, and of course on the subsequent private and social returns from it"[21].

On the other hand, some researchers have tried to view child labour from the inter-generational perspective to see the link between poverty and child labour. Venkateswar (2007) while using the intergeneration frame-work suggested that poverty could be circumvented. She says, *"The notion of intergenerational span of time is a useful framework to apply when assessing the long-term benefits of schooling and education, especially for the children who are 'first generation learners', and even who for a variety of reason drop out of schools. The cycle of poverty and lack of alternate income-generating opportunities is circumvented not so much by schooling and education as by securing some permanent employment obtained through the offices of the families who have employed them as children to work in their homes. Such employment, often with additional benefits or superannuation provisions attached to them, kick starts a course of event whereby the next generation finally reap the fruits of schooling or go on to pursue a higher degree. They thereby transcend the deeply entrenched cycle of poverty and failure of landless whose only asset is their labour. Despite not completing their own schooling, or their own alienation or exclusion from the prevailing schooling system, many children employed as domestic servants, through their propinquity with the socio-cultural milieu*

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[21] "*Child labor versus educational attainment Some evidence from Latin America*", George Psacharopoulos, Journal of Population Economics, 1997

of the families within whose 'homes' they worked, have absorbed the values of education, and have understood the opportunities that it provides, and will apply it to their own children"[22].

However, parents do not always agree about the value of education as they are not sure about its "practical" value. Toor (2001) states that, "*It is indisputably true that child labor is not an aberration due to lack of awareness of the sanctity of childhood or the importance of education. On the contrary, studies have shown that poor, rural people have a conscious critique of the kind of education imparted by government and private schools alike, which neither prepares children for the future nor corresponds with their reality and is hardly ever a means of social mobility"[23].* Thus parents may not show continued interest in public school education.

She further asserts that it would not be possible to understand or resolve the issue of child labour without contextualizing it against the neoliberal international political economic system. She maintains that, "*The real issue is, of course, that child labor is a function of poverty but that poverty is not just an unfortunate feature of life in Pakistan. Poverty is structurally created, maintained, and now under the process of intensifying. The structural reasons are both domestic and international and, under the current*

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[22] Sita Venkatewar, "Robbed of Childhood: Child Labour and Domestic Service in South Asia", in Behera, Deepak, K., eds., "Childhood in South Asia", Pearson, New Delhi, 2007, p. 246

[23] *"Child Labor in Pakistan: Coming of Age in the New World Order"* Saadia Toor, Annals of the American Academy of Political and Social Science, Vol. 575, Children's Rights. (May, 2001), p 221

international political regime, are unlikely to be reversed without political intervention"[24].

At the same time, others have suggested that all work is not harmful to children, and removing children from work may not be in their best interest. Marcus (1998) argues the international focus on child labour issues rests on the northern and international trade-focused agenda and on erroneous assumptions regarding the nature of children's employment. While describing socially responsible actions towards working children, he suggests that "responsible action must be based on an analysis of how the *'best interests' of working children can be promoted. Working should not be assumed to be against children's best interests. These can only be identified with reference to local circumstances, and to current and possible future options for children and families. Thus action which safeguards children's or family income, facilitates their access to education and does not endanger their health, even where this means that they remain in work, is usually more responsible than simply removing them from work without putting alternatives in place. Only where children face extreme hazard and exploitation, should they be removed from the workplace instantly*"[25].

Having discussed both cultural and economic discourses on child labour, the following section will make an attempt to discuss the human resource development (HRD) perspective around the issue of child labour.

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[24] Ibid, p 221

[25] *"Child labour and socially responsible business",* Rachel Marcus, Small Enterprise Development Vol.9 No. 3, September 98, p 11

2.3   Human Resource Development (HRD) Perspective on Child Labour

There is relatively limited literature that has explored child labour from the human resource development (HRD) perspective. The HRD perspective attempts to look at the issue of child labour as workplace education for the benefit of the community and family (Cho & McLean, 2002). On-the-job training for children is one way of enhancing their skill set and providing them career opportunities. In Kenya, for example, the sector that is creating more employment is in the *jua kali* - small, roadside businesses. Children in these workplaces perform the role of apprentices and learn skills from skilled people that facilitate children's future employment (McLean, 1996). Moreover, the trade unions in Brazil's gemstone industry set up vocational training centers where child workers are allowed to attend and learn skills. These vocational training centers help children acquire various skills needed to work in the gemstone industry (Myrstad, 1999).

In a study carried out in Bangladesh, Ethiopia, the Philippines, and Central America with three hundred working children, a large majority expressed the desire to combine work with school (Woodhead 1999). These children recognized the high cost of attending school that was required to pay the costs of tuition, books and related costs. Moreover, they also realized the opportunity costs of the potential loss of income by not working. These children also knew about the benefits they could reap from obtaining an education. This study revealed that children do not have the luxury of choice between working and getting an education. Going to school and benefiting from education was desirable, whereas working was a necessity.

The HRD perspective suggests that child labour should be managed rather than eradicated. Since, the majority of the population in developing countries is illiterate and children are out of school, workplace education is significant alternative for children's development. "Controlling, not eliminating, child labor will encourage organizations using child workers to develop collaborative relationships with schools so that there will continue to be an inflow of human resource from schools into business. This is a way of making coordinated improvements in work-place education system. Creating such coordinated activities may well be the outcome of community-based organization development"[26].

The long-term effect of child labour may not be readily available in the literature. Basu (1998) argues that long term consequence of child labor is a 'child labor trap', as he assumes that if a child works more, his productivity as an adult falls. He presented a model that described that a child labourer, "acquires no skills and so as an adult earns very little and has to send his child, in turn, to work full-time. This equilibrium depicts what may be called a child labor trap."[27] Alternatively, he describes a situation where "a child goes to school, earns adequately as an adult and so can and does send his child to school. It is a virtuous cycle".[28] For Basu the long-term effects of child

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[26] "*Should Child Labor be eliminated? An HRD Perspective*", Budhwani, N. N., Wee, B., and McLean, G. N., Human Resource Development Quarterly, vol. 15, no. 1, Spring 2004, p 115
[27] "*Child Labor: Causes, Consequences and Cure, with Remarks on International Labor Standards*", Kaushik Basu, World Bank Policy Research Working Paper No. 2027, The World Bank, December 1998, p. 46-47
[28] Ibid., p.47

labour are negative as his model indicates that these children would have low accumulation of human capital and correspondingly small future incomes.

Nonetheless, parents while keeping in view their limited resources do look at medium term advantages[29] of sending their child to school or to work. They measure the results each of the options would produce. Chamarbagwala (2004) has empirically examined the relationship between rates of return to schooling, child labour in India using individual-level household data from the Employment and Unemployment Schedule of the National Sample Survey Organization (NSSO). Her empirical results *"indicate that higher rates of return to education decrease child labor and increase education amongst boys and decrease child labor amongst girls. The rate of return to primary school has a strong impact on boys' participation in child labor and schooling while girls' participation in child labor responds to changes in the rate of return to middle school."[30]* In order words, if schooling does not offer an adequate return on the investment the poor parents particularly would reject school education to find alternative means of a human resource development mechanism for their children.

2.4   South Asian Context on Education and Child Labour

Traditional and non-industrialized societies, like in South Asia, continued to accept the presence of children in the world of work. Before British colonization of India (almost all of South Asia) the concept of *Maddarrass* (School for religious teachings and to learn

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[29] For example, parents chief concerns is that will their child would be able to become financial independent in next seven or eight years

[30] Chamarbagwala, R. M., "The Role of Capital-Skill Complementarities in Child Labor and Schooling" (Ph.D Dissertation) Indiana University, Bloomington 2004, p. 61

languages) and *Sansikrit* College (for Hindu students) were prevalent during the *Mughal* Era. Moreover, children would acquire various skills in agriculture, blacksmith, goldsmith, carpentry, construction, weaving, pottery, painting, architecture, and commerce through apprenticeship by entering into the world of work at an early age. However, it was the British who introduced the school system and developed certain curriculum to train children for future jobs suitable to the functioning of the colonial system in India. More importantly, the British succeeded in replacing the vernacular languages (Persian, Arabic, Urdu and Sansikrit) with the English language as a medium of instruction in school and colleges to the resentment of the locals. "Lord Macualay succeeded in introducing English language as medium of instruction instead of establishing national education system"[31].

Although the British introduced the school system in South Asia it was never a blanket system catering to all children, that is, compulsory education. Even today most countries in South Asia have not made primary education compulsory nor have they reversed the British colonial policy with respect to primary school education. Weiner and Noman (1995) indicated that before World War I, the Indian National Congress introduced a private bill in the central legislature in New Delhi demanding compulsory primary education. This bill received support from some of the leaders of Indian National Congress and the Muslim League, however majority of the members of the Central Legislature, most officials, and representatives of princely states opposed it.

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[31] Bokhari, Syed Shabir, "Macualay *aur Barei-i-Sagheer Ka Nizam-i-Taleem* (Macualy and Education System of South Asia)", Published by Tufail Art Printers, Lahore, 1986, p. 92

The crux of the argument against compulsory primary education has been that *"poverty forces children to drop out of school to find employment to augment the income of their families. It is an argument widely subscribed to by all political groups"[32]*. Moreover, another argument has been that education would make the poor unsuited for boring manual work that society requires. However, the Prussian government found an alternative solution *"which emphasised vocational training for working class children. The children of the poor were compelled to attend the Volksschule, where they were taught skills that would enable them to remain in the working class. It was a policy that probably contributed to the technical quality of German Products"[33]*. In other words, due to a variety of reasons, marginalised segments of society in South Asia could not benefit from school education. Thus the traditional concept of children going directly into the adult world through the path of apprenticeship is still in vogue.

Behera (2007) linked the problem of child labour with poverty, insufficient educational system and employment. She states, *"A highly visible problem in recent decades in South Asia is child labour. Many children work either as unskilled or as apprentices in skilled production. While unskilled child labour is due to the problem of poverty and infrastructural bottlenecks in education and employment, apprenticeship is a complex system within which skills and ethical training are imparted and future employment guaranteed. Children, working as apprentices in trades such as weaving and pottery work in domestic settings, are not neglected or abused although they certainly are not*

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[32] "The Child and the State in India and Pakistan" Weiner, M., and Noman, O., Oxford University press, Karachi, 1991, p. 186
[33] Weiner and Noman, Ibid, p. 116

given the separate spaces, resources, and consumer goods taken as normative in the West.[34]"

She pointed out that child labour is both the cause and consequence of poverty. However, she also acknowledges the role of cultural norms in the prevalence of child labour. *"Tradition and culture also play a role, and perceptions of the nature of childhood and the role and responsibilities of children towards their elders and siblings often decide whether a child is sent to school or into labour. In some societies this is especially true for girl children"[35]*.

2.5   Child Labour Research in Pakistan

In the last two decades numerous public and private agencies in Pakistan have carried out research on different aspects of children activities at the work places. Mostly, these researches are action oriented, carried out in one or two industries and in a certain geographical location and through an economic perspective. A common feature of these studies is their focus on child rights and little attention is given, beyond poverty, to the reasons why these children are at the work place.

One of the major researches on child labour in Pakistan has been the first and only national child labour survey carried out by the Federal Bureau of Statistics in 1996. It estimated 3.3 million child laborers in Pakistan. The results of the study have been

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[34] Behera, Deepak Kumar,, "Introduction", in Behera, Deepak Kumar, eds. "Child in South Asia";Pearson, New Delhi, 2007, pp. 7-8.
[35] Behera, ibid, p 8.

discussed in chapter 1 in more detail. However, it would be useful to have an overview of the determinants of child labour as identified by this national child labour survey.

According to survey findings, the factors responsible for child labour include large populations with higher population growth rates; almost three-fourths (70%) of the total population in Pakistan was living in rural areas, with subsistence agriculture activities; low productivity and prevalence of poverty; unpaid family helpers especially in agricultural activities; discriminating social attitudes towards girls and women; and inadequate educational facilities.

The Labour and Manpower Department, Government of Punjab carried out a series of action researches to gauge the situation of children present in various industries in the province. In this regard, researches were carried out in the Carpet Weaving Industry[36], Punjab; Auto repair workshop[37], Sialkot; Football Manufacturing Industry[38], Sialkot; Power Looms[39], Faisalabad; Tanneries[40], Kasur; Brick Kilns[41], Sialkot; Surgical

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[36] "Child Labour in Carpet Weaving Industry in Punjab", Awan, A. Saeed and Khan, A. Abid, Centre for the Improvement of Working Conditions and Environment, Department of Labour, Government of Punjab, and UNICEF 1992

[37] "Child Labour in the Auto Repair Workshops in District Sialkot", Labour and Manpower Department, Government of Punjab, Lahore, 1998

[38] "Child Labour in the Football Manufacturing Industry", Awan, A. Saeed, Labour and Manpower Department, Government of Punjab, Lahore, 1996

[39] "Kids of Textile Paradise: A Survey of Power Looms, Child Workers and their Families - A Survey of Faisalabad District", Labour and Manpower Department, Government of Punjab, Lahore, 1998

[40] "Child Labour in Tanneries of Kasur: A Survey Report", Labour and Manpower Department, Government of Punjab, Lahore, 1998

[41] "Child Labour in the Brick Kilns: District Sialkot", Labour and Manpower Department, Government of Punjab, Lahore, 1998

Instruments Manufacturing Industry[42], Sialkot; Steel Furnaces and Spare Parts Manufacturing Industry[43], Lahore; and Light Engineering Industry, Gujranwala.[44]

The objectives of these studies have been to determine the number of child labourers in each of these industries, working conditions, wages, and working hours. All of those studies indicated that most child labourers were in the age cohort of 10-14 years, with long working hours per week, and low wages. Although, these researches did take into account the view of parents, and employers, the analysis is limited to poverty.

However, Khan (1998) looked deeper into the issue while explaining the phenomenon of child labour in the auto repair workshop. She established the link between the desire of target families to make their children skillful and the presence of children at the auto repair workshop. This led her to recommend formal education with training as a preferred option for improving the conditions of those child labourers.

Similarly, Zulfiqar (1999) tried to assess the skills of development needs of children in the slums of Karachi. The idea behind his study was to look at the socio-economic conditions of the households and try to arrange training facilities according to their demand, which would facilitate households to earn a supplementary income from other sources and eliminate their children from work and send them to school. Zulfiqar

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[42] "Child Labour in the Surgical Instruments Manufacturing Industry", Awan, A. Saeed, Labour and Manpower Department, Government of Punjab, Lahore, 1996
[43] A Survey of Child Labour in Steel Furnaces and Spare Parts Manufacturing Industry, Baghbanpura, Lahore", Labour and Manpower Department, Government of Punjab, Lahore, 1998
[44] "A Survey of Child Labour in Light Engineering Industry Gujranwala", Labour and Manpower Department, Government of Punjab, Lahore, 1999

highlighted the families demand to get some training for their children and place them in jobs. The study covers some employers' issues like literacy level of the child labourers, their skill, and source of training and constraints in the promotion of business. The main reasons to hire children were to cut the cost of production because children were low paid and could work flexible hours. The study found that 75% of the children were illiterate, the average daily work time was 15 hours, and the income of children accounted for half of the family's income.

Burki and Fasih[45] using the data of the 1996 Child Labour Survey for the Punjab province only, attempted to identify major supply related determinants of child labour in Pakistan. They found that the decision to send a child to labour is a simultaneous decision-making process. The analysis showed that the probability of children with some skill becoming part of the child labour force is high. The younger children have to decide between work and enrolment in school and the mother's education positively affects the child's schooling decisions. On the other hand, the literacy of the head of the household has no significant impact on the decision to work.

Rehman in his study[46] of carpet weaving families from two villages of Punjab villages, Kalokey (District Sheikhupura) and Kalekey (District Hafizabad), showed that severe economic pressures over the years have caused hardships to these families and made them send their children for carpet weaving work. The carpet industry provided them

[45] A.A Burki, and, T. Fasih: "Households' Non-Leisure Time Allocation for Children and Determinants of Child Labour in Punjab, Pakistan", *Pakistan Development Review*, Pakistan Institute of Development Economics, Vol.37, No.4, 1998, 6p
[46] Saeed ur Rehman, "Carpet Weaving Children and Their Families: A Survey of Kalokey (Sheikhupura) and Kalekey (Hafizabad)", *Pakistan Academy of Social Sciences,* 1996, 53p.

refuge. Export oriented products such as hand woven carpets rely on cheap labour and have boomed in recent years. The study found that 72 families had been engaged in carpet weaving for 1 to 6 years. About 46% children surveyed were 10 to 12 years old. About 54 children had never attended any school in the past and only 9% were going to school at the time of the study. On average, a carpet weaving child worked 6 days a week and for more than 8 hours a day. The daily income of the children from carpet weaving ranged from Rs.10/- to Rs.50/- per day. About 73% children were not aware of hazards involved in their work. A physical examination showed that 94% children suffered injuries on their fingertips.

2.6   Children at Workplaces

Three international conventions attempts to explain various concepts regarding children's economic activities. These include the Convention on the Rights of the Child; ILO Convention on Minimum Age (No. 138); and ILO Convention on Worst Forms of Child Labour (No. 182). However, the two ILO conventions provide an in-depth view and set some specific standards on children's involvement in the world of work.

It is argued that all work done by children should not be classified as child labour. *"Children's and adolescent's participation in work that does not effect their health and personal development or interfere with their schooling, is generally regarded as being something positive. This includes helping their parents around the home, assisting in a family business or earning pocket money outside school hours and during school holidays. These kinds of activities contribute to children's development and to the welfare*

of their families; they provide them with skills and experiences, and help to prepare them to be productive members of society during their adult life"[47].

The ILO, while describing children's work, identifies five broad categories. These categories are Light Work, Economically Active Children, Child Labour, Worst Forms of Child Labour, and Hazardous Forms of Child Labour. Each of these categories of child work is discussed below.

2.6.1   Light work

The ILO Convention on Minimum Age (No. 138) describes the light work for children. Work can be described as 'light work', as per article 7 of the ILO Convention 138, when following two conditions are applicable:

"- not harmful to a child's health and development and not prejudicial to child's attendance at school and participation in vocational training nor the capacity to benefit from the instruction received"[48].

The convention allows 13 to 15 years old children, and even relaxes it to12 years old children, to be involved in light work. Majority of rural children support their families in agricultural or herding activities. Children's such participation in family-farm activities help them acquire valuable skills, build self-worth and contribute to increase the household income. This participation in work has a fruitful impact on children's development.

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[47] Child Labor; A Text Book for University Students, ILO. 2004. P 16
[48] ILO Convention on Minimum Age (No 138) (http://www.ilo.org/ilolex/cgi-lex/convde.pl?C138)

2.6.2   Economically Active Children

A child can be involved in various activities including economic activities that may also generate income. ILO describes such children as economically active children. It states that *"'economic activity' is a broad concept that encompasses most productive activities undertaken by children, whether for the market or not, paid or unpaid, for a few hours or full time, on a casual or regular basis, legal or illegal; it excludes chores undertaken in the child's own household and schooling. To be counted as economically active, a child must have worked for at least one hour on any day during a seven day reference period. 'Economically active children' is a statistical rather than a legal notion."*[49] All economically active children are not considered as child labourers.

2.6.3   Child Labour

The definition of 'Child Labour' is much narrower than the definition of 'economically active children'. This definition does not include all children above 12 years of age who are spending few hours in permitted light work. Moreover, it also excludes those children above 15 years of age who are working in non-hazardous occupation or processes.

The ILO defines the concept child labour succinctly. *"The term 'child labor' is often 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; and*

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[49] The end of child labor: Within reach. (ILO Global Report 2006), p 6

- *Interferes with their schooling:*

- *By depriving them of the opportunity to attend school;*

- *By obliging them to leave school prematurely; or*

- *By requiring them to attempt to combine school attendance with excessively long and heavy work"*[50].

Article 32 of the UN Convention on Rights of the child states that *"States parties recognize the right of the child to be protected from economic exploitation and from performing any work that is likely to be hazardous or to interfere with the child's education, or to be harmful to the child's health or physical, mental, spiritual, moral or social development*[51].

It is pertinent to note that not all 'work' performed by children could be considered an absolute form of 'child labour'. *"Whether or not particular forms of 'work' can be called 'child labour' depends on the child's age, the type and hours of work performed the conditions under which it is performed"*[52]. In other words, various variables like age, nature of work, duration of work, and condition of work determines if certain work can be characterized as child labour or not.

2.6.4   Worst Forms of Child Labour

Children also found to be working in un-acceptable forms of labour. This requires immediate action to put an end to children's involvement in worst forms of labour. ILO

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[50]Child Labor: A textbook for university students, ILO, 2004, p. 16.

[51] Convention on the Rights of the Child (www.unicef.org/crc)

[52] Op. cit. ILO, 2004, p. 16

formed a Convention on the Worst Forms of Child Labour (No. 182) in 1999. Under the article 2 of this convention all persons under the age of 18 years were declared as children. It defines worst forms of child labour in the article 3 as below:

"(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 harm the health, safety or morals of children"[53].

The worst forms of child labour can be further classified[54] as by 'definition' and by 'condition'. Occupations like commercial sexual exploitation of children, use of children in pornography, bonded labour, or children's involvement in armed conflict come under the category of worst forms of child labour by 'definition'. The working environment of these occupations could not be made safer. Nonetheless, these occupations or activities are illegal for adults as well.

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[53] ILO Convention 182 Worst Forms of Child Labour, Article 3 (http://www.ilo.org/ilolex/cgi-lex/convde.pl?C182)

[54] Op. Cit. ILO 2004, p. 46

2.6.5 Hazardous Forms of Child Labour

The ILO Convention 182, under its article 3 clause 'd' describes hazardous forms of child labour as, *"(d) work which, by its nature or the circumstances in which it is carried out, is likely harm the health, safety or morals of children"*[55]. Any person below the age of 18 years is described as a child and not allowed to work in hazardous occupations. The ratifying states need to determine hazardous occupations within its particular socio-economic context.

However, it is important to highlight that the hazard is due to 'condition' of work, therefore, altering the condition of work could make it non-hazardous. The hazardous occupations *"affecting the health and safety of the children who do them, .. can in some cases be changed by altering the circumstances"*[56]. Therefore, some hazardous forms of work can be made non-hazardous by making the conditions non-hazardous. Once the hazardous work is made non-hazardous by altering the conditions in which the work is performed it becomes acceptable for a person above 15 years of age to carry out this work. Countries, after ratifying the ILO convention 182, are required to ascertain hazardous occupations in consultations with national employers' and workers' organizations.

2.7 Categories of Child Work

Child work can be categorized as concentrated and visible child labor; concentrated and invisible child labour; dispersed and visible child labour; and dispersed and invisible

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[55] ILO Convention 182, article 3, clause d, (http://www.ilo.org/ilolex/cgi-lex/convde.pl?C182)
[56] Child Labour: A text book for university students, ILO, 2004, p. 47

child labour. There will be more girl child labour if the category of work is invisible. The table 2.1 below presents these categories[57]:

Table 2.1: Categories of Child Labour

Concentrated & Visible (more boys)

Tailors, metal workers, wood workers, bakers, cooking shops, workers in small repair shops (automobile), service workers in markets (shoe shine, car washers), porters, cleaners, venders, stone & brick breakers, construction sites, agriculture (plantation or harvesting), employed in fishing industry.

Concentrated & Invisible (More girls)

Brick Kilns, Carpenters, helpers & carriers at construction sites, factory workers or helpers producing pottery, glass, metal products, plastic goods, Traditional carpets & textile weavers, cigarette makers, workers in match, explosive and fire work factory

Categories of Child Labour

Dispersed & Visible (boys/girls)

Delivery boys, messengers, self employed children providing services or goods on the street, hotel restaurant workers, entertainer, dancers, camel jockeys, conductor and helpers on long distance transport, herders or caretakers of livestock.

Dispersed & Invisible
more girls in domestics, more boys in apprentices)

Domestic servants & children working in family based industries, apprentices & attendance to skilled craftsmen, children of refugees or recent immigrants to the city who are engaged in traditional occupation, thieves, pick pocket & those involved in drug industry or pornography.

2.8   Global Child Labour Situation

The International Labour Organization (ILO) makes global estimates under three categories, i) economically active children, ii) child labour and iii) children in hazardous work. In general, 'economically active children' include all children whether doing paid or un-paid work that is linked to the market; 'child labour' is a narrower concept that

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[57] These categories are referred to by the ILO's International Programme on the Elimination of Child Labour

excludes all children above 12 years who are permitted to perform light work and those above 14-years permitted to carryout non-hazardous work, and 'hazardous child labour' refers to work that jeopardizes the child's safety, health, and moral development.

In May 2006, ILO presented (ILO Global Report 2006) global estimates of child labour. The report estimated that in 2004 there were about 317 million economically active children aged 5 to 17. These included 218 million as child laborers and out of these 126 million were thought to be involved in the worst forms of labour. The worst forms of labour were described as hazardous labor that impedes the mental, physical, emotional and moral development of those children. It also indicated that for the narrower age group of 5 to 14 years olds there were 191 million economically active children, 166 million child labourers, and 74 million children in hazardous work.

The ILO global report indicated that the number of child laborers in both age groups of 5-14 years and 5-17 years fell by 11 per cent over the four years from 2000 to 2004. This decline has been reported to be much greater for those engaged in hazardous work as it was 26 percent for the 5-17 age group and 33 percent for 5 to 14 years-olds. Boys continued to be more involved in dangerous jobs than girls.

According to ILO, Asia and the Pacific region has 122.3 million economically active children ages 5 to 14 years in 2004, still the highest number of working children worldwide. The report also indicated that in the global decline the share of Asia and the Pacific region was limited.

ILO argues that child labour is a neglected element of the poverty trap and maintains that poor people are forced to select labour for their children to achieve a degree of immediate security. It further maintains that child labour is not only the result of poverty but it also perpetuates poverty. "By turning a blind eye to the abuse of your workers, it impoverishes and even destroys the human capital that is necessary for the economy to grow in the future".[58] It also suggests that child labour is a central obstacle to children's right to education, and protection from violence, abuse and exploitation

2.9   International Legal Framework on Child Labour

Globally there are three international conventions that form the basis of international legal standards vis-à-vis child labour. These conventions include the Convention on the Rights of the Child (CRC); ILO Convention on Minimum Age for Admission to Employment (No 138); and ILO Conventions on Worst Forms of Child Labour (No. 182). However, it is the ILO Convention 182, and ILO Convention 138 that enshrines the principles and parameters of child labour and checks and tries to eliminate child labour including its worst forms.

Among the International Labour Conventions, there are eight fundamental conventions and two of these deals with the issue of child labour. All ILO conventions have the legal status of international treaties. The ILO's conventions are adopted by a two-third majority of ILO's conference delegates, which consists of representation of government,

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[58] "*The end of child labour: Within reach*" p 2, ILO 2006

employers' and workers' organizations from each of ILO's member states. The ILO's member states are required to report on the state of their law and practice within the area covered by the fundamental conventions, whether it has been ratified or not.

The following sections briefly discuss these three conventions.

2.9.1 Convention on the Rights of the Child

This convention is also referred to as the United Nations Convention on the Rights of the Child. This international convention sets out civil, political, economic, social and cultural rights of children. The United Nation's Children Fund (UNICEF) has been the force behind this convention and the United Nations General Assembly adopted this Convention on 20 November 1989.

Ratifying states are bound to it by international law and the United Nations Committee on the Rights of the Child monitors its implementation. Subsequent to ratification national governments are periodically required to report to, and appear before, the United Nations Committee on the Rights of the Child. Countries are examined regarding progress made on the implementation of the convention and the status of child rights in their country. A total of 193 countries ratified the CRC by December 2008. The CRC defines a child as any person under the age of 18, unless an earlier age of majority is recognized by a country's law. The convention has 54 articles and Article 32 specifically deals with the

issue of child labour. Article[59] of the CRC makes it mandatory on ratifying state to ensure that a child is to be protected from economic exploitation and from performing any work that is likely to be hazardous or to interfere with the child's education.

2.9.2   ILO's Minimum Age Convention (No. 138)

ILO's Minimum Age Convention (No. 138) came into force in 1973. This convention has 18 articles and is one of the eight fundamental conventions of the ILO. It demands from member states to set minimum age for employment at 15 years. Nonetheless, it also gives flexibility to countries with an under developed economy and limited educational facilities to fix 14 years as the minimum age for employment. Those children who are enrolled in school can perform light work from the age of 13 years (12 years for developing countries) that is only for few hours a week in non-hazardous occupations and under supervision. No one under the age of 18 years is allowed to work in hazardous occupation. However, if by altering the conditions of work the element of hazard is removed then person above 16 years of age can also work there. This conventions requires the states to develop legislation and put in place an enforcement mechanism which does not allow boys or girls below the minimum to be admitted to work The

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[59] "*Article 32:*

1. States Parties recognize the right of the child to be protected from economic exploitation and from performing any work that is likely to be hazardous or to interfere with the child's education, or to be harmful to the child's health or physical, mental, spiritual, moral or social development.
2. States Parties shall take legislative, administrative, social and educational measures to ensure the implementation of the present article. To this end, and having regard to the relevant provisions of other international instruments, States Parties shall in particular:
(a) Provide for a minimum age or minimum ages for admission to employment;
(b) Provide for appropriate regulation of the hours and conditions of employment;
(c) Provide for appropriate penalties or other sanctions to ensure the effective enforcement of the present article."

following table 2.1 provide various ages of children, as identified by ILO Convention 138, and the nature of work they can carry out.

Table 2.2: Child Labour Ages as per ILO Convention 138

Light Work	General Minimum Age	Hazardous Work
	In general	
13 years	15 years (Not less than the age of completion of compulsory schooling and in any case not less than 15 years)	18 years (16 years under certain strict conditions)
	Where the economy & educational facilities are insufficiently developed	
12 years	14 years (Not less then 14 years for an initial period)	18 years (16 years under certain strict conditions)

This Convention demands ratifying countries to take measures for the elimination of worst forms of child labour. The hazards involved in the work for children could be due to the nature[60] of the work and the circumstances[61] in which such work is carried out.

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[60] For example welding torches, scavenging, grinding or glazing of metals, working with tobacco, chemicals, and other poisonous materials etc
[61] For example excessive hours, night work, and confinement

Both the nature and circumstances of work negatively affect a child's development or in worst case scenario leave him or her stunted, deformed, or disabled to work in the future.

2.9.3 ILO's Convention on Worst Forms of Child Labour (No. 182)

ILO's Convention on Worst Forms of Child Labour (No. 182) came into force in 1999. It has 16 articles and is one of eight fundamental conventions of the ILO. This Convention defines child as a person below the age of 18 years and demands immediate action for the elimination of the worst forms of child labour. It also outlines the types of 'worst forms of child labour' and also set parameters to determine 'hazardous forms of child labour'. Both worst forms of child labour and hazardous forms of child labour have already been discussed under section 2.6.4 and 2.6.5 respectively.

The convention also demands from ratifying States to designate monitoring mechanisms; ensure effective enforcement, take preventative measures for the removal from work, and rehabilitation and social integration of the children concerned among other state actions.

2.9.4 Child Labour and Ages

International conventions such as ILO Convention No 138 and No 182 have identified a range of age specific benchmarks for allowing children to enter the world of work. The ILO convention 182 on Worst Forms of Child Labour prohibits the involvement of any person below the age of 18 years to enter the worst or hazardous forms of child labour.

However, persons above the age of 15 years can still work in those occupations where the conditions have been altered to make them non-hazardous.

Convention No. 138 allows a person to enter the world of work at the age of 16 or 15 years or even 14 years (for developing countries) and seek full time wage employment. As discussed above, this convention allows a child at the age of 12 years to enter into the world of work provided it is for a few hours a week, non-hazardous and does not compromise the child's time from school education and play, and jeopardize the child's moral or physical well-being. However, ratifying states are required to make an effort to increase this age.

Diagram 2.1 presents the spectrum of work nature and corresponding ages from which a person can start work. The age limit increases as one moves from right to the left of this diagram. There is no age limit for a person to carryout household chores but for light and regular work the age of 12 years and 14 years are introduced respectively for developing countries. However, for hazardous work no person below the age of 18 years is allowed to carry out those tasks. Diagram 2.1 presents certain ages and the permissibility to perform various kinds of work in line with ILO standards.

Diagram[62] 2.1: Basic Distinctions in ILO's Child Labour Standards

Basic Distinction in ILO Child Labour Standards

Age in Years

18

15*

12**

Work excluded from minimum age legislation***	Light work	Non-hazardous work	Hazardous work	Unconditional worst forms of child labour

* The minimum age for admission to employment or work is determined by national legislation and can be set at 14, 15 or 16 years.

** The minimum age at which light work is permissible can be set at 12 or 13 years

*** For example, household chores, work in family undertaking and work undertaken as part of education

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[62] Op. cit. Child Labour, p. 17

2.10   Pakistan's National Legal Framework on Child Labour

Pakistan has made various international commitments on child labour and also framed a host of laws to prohibit children's entry into work.

2.10.1 Pakistan's International Commitments on Child Labour

Presently, Pakistan has ratified the Convention on the Rights of the Child (CRC) and thirty-six Conventions of the ILO, including the Convention No 138 on the Minimum Age and Convention No 182 on the Worst Forms of Child Labour. Following is the full list indicates all those ILO conventions that one way or the other relate to child labour.

Table 2.3: Child Labour Related ILO/UN Conventions Ratified by Pakistan

ILO C No	Convention Name	Date of Ratification
C 6	Night Work of Young Persons (Industry) Convention, 1919	14.07.1921 (By Govt. of British India)
C 29	Forced Labour Convention, 1930	23.12.1957
C 59	Minimum Age (Industry) Convention (Revised), 1937	26.05.1955
C 81	Labour Inspection Convention, 1947	10.10.1953
C 90	Night Work of Young Persons (Industry) Convention Revised), 1948	14.02.1951
C 105	Abolition of Forced Labour Convention, 1957	15.02.1960
C 182	Worst Form of Child Labour Convention, 1999	11.10.2001
CRC	UN Convention on the Rights of the Child (1989)	12.11.1990
C 138	Minimum Age for Workers (1973)	06.07.2006

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2.10.2 Various National Legislations on Child Labour

In Pakistan, the issue of Child and Worst Forms of Child Labour has been addressed in a number of national legislations. The Constitution of Pakistan, under its Article 11 (3) prohibits work by children below 14 years of age in factories, mines or hazardous work.

- Factories Act 1934 (prohibits employment of children under 14 in factories)

- Shops & Establishments Ordinance 1969 (prohibits employment of children under 14 in shops and commercial enterprises).

- Employment of Children Act 1991, prohibits employment of children in certain occupations/processes, and regulates children's employment in other sectors.

- Mines Act, 1923 (prohibits employment of persons under 14 years near mines, and under 18 in underground mines.)

- The Shops and Establishments Ordinance, 1969 (section 20 prohibits employment of children in shops and establishments; this a punishable offence)

- Road Transport Workers Ordinance (prohibits employment of under 18 years person in any transport related work and under 21 as drivers)

- Bonded Labour System (Abolition) Act, 1992 (prohibits employment of children in lieu of loan (*peshgi*).

Employment of Children Act 1991:

The Employment of Children Act (ECA) is the main law that prohibits and regulates the employment of children in industry and businesses. This law defines a "child" to be a person who has not completed 14 years of age. This law prohibits the employment of children in any occupations that are listed in its Schedule's Part I (total of four occupations) and in any workshop listed in its Schedule's Part II (total of 34 processes). The ECA in its Part III regulate child labour by describing hours and period of work for children, weekly holidays and health and safety issues of children. This has also made the ECA open to criticism. "ECA is sometime criticized for legitimizing child labour as it regulates employment of child in *establishment* in which none of the occupations or process referred to in ECA's schedule are carried on"[63].

Broadly speaking, the ECA defines any person below the age 14 years as child does not allow their employment in occupations and process as listed in its Schedule. A penalty of imprisonment up to one year or a fine of up to Rs.20,000 is prescribed for initial violation of this law. This law also authorizes any person police officer or inspector may file a complaint of the commission of an offence under this Act in any court of competent jurisdiction.

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[63] "Child Labour: The Legal Aspects", Jillani, A., SPARC, 2009, p 30

18th Constitutional Amendments and Devolution of Labour Issue:

The Government of Pakistan has introduced 18th constitutional amendment that has devolved host of subjects, including labour, to the provinces. "Consequent to the promulgation of the 18th Constitutional Amendment, items 26 and 27 of the Concurrent Legislative List reflecting concurrent legislative competence of the Parliament and the provincial legislatures in relation to 'welfare labour; conditions of labour, provident fund; employer's liability and workmen's compensation, health, insurance, including invalidity pensions, old age pension', and 'trade union; industrial and labour disputes', respectively also stands abolished. However, the states obligation in respect of ensuring universal labour freedoms and guarantees remain intact"[64]. This constitutional amendment has now labour legislation including those on child labour to the provinces. The Employment of Child Act 1991 still holds, however now provinces are free to introduce new legislation on child labour if they choose to.

2.11   Pakistan's National Policy on Child Labour 2001

The Government of Pakistan in 2001 announced National Policy and Plan of Action for the Elimination of Child Labour. The policy set out for progressive elimination of child labour from all sectors of employment; immediate eradication of the worst forms of child labour; formation of a regular monitoring and inspection system to supervise implementation of the National Plan of Action; prevention of entry into the labour market

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[64] "Pildat Briefing Paper No 40: 18th Constitutional Amendment and Devolution of Labour Ministry", Sattar, B., PILDAT, June 2011, p 9

of underage children by offering educational opportunities ensuring at least a primary-level (5th grade) education and the teaching of vocational skills to target children.

The Government also established a fund of Rs. 100 million for the rehabilitation of bonded labour and education of working children. The Plan envisages the roles of not only various government agencies, but also Non-Government Organization, trade unions and international agencies in government's effort to combating child labour from Pakistan. Since 2001, the National Policy and Plan of Action to Combat Child Labour has not been revised.

2.12   Pakistan's National Education Policy 2009 and Child Labour

In 2009, the Government of Pakistan introduced National Education Policy that recognizes the educational needs of child labourers. It identifies child labourers as one of the factors among others as hindrance in achieving a hundred percent literacy in the country. This policy sets special measures to ensure educational needs of child labourers are met, and the section on Literacy and Non-Formal Education articulates, "Government schools shall initiate non-formal education (NFE) stream for child labourers. Children involved in various jobs or work shall be brought within the ambit of non-formal education system through need-based schedules and timings"[65].

This educational policy also tries to address the educational needs of older child labourers while recognizing their special income needs. It suggests, "Special literacy skills programmes shall target older child labourers, boys and girls (aged between 14 and 17

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[65] National Education Policy 2009, Section 5.4

years). Special educational stipends shall be introduced to rehabilitate child labourers"[66].

These policy measures were introduced after an extensive consultative process that the Ministry of Education carried out with various stakeholders including concerned government offices, representatives of employers and workers organization, and non-government organizations in 2007-08.

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[66] National Education Policy 2009, Section 5.4

Chapter 3
Area and Demographic Profile

3.1.   Profile of Pakistan

The first section of this chapter provides an overview of Pakistan in terms of its history

and culture in order to contextualize this research.

Pakistan gained independence from the British in August 1947. With regard to size, its

total landmass is 796,095 square

kilometers[1], and it has four federating

Map 3.1: Map of Pakistan

units, namely the provinces of

Balochistan, Khyber Pakhtunkhwa

(formerly North West Frontier Province),

Sindh, and Punjab. It also has a tribal belt

called Federally Administered Tribal

Areas (FATA) and the Gilgit Baltistan

area. Pakistan's four neighbours are

India, China, Afghanistan and Iran and it

also has sizeable coastal line with the

Indian Ocean. Map[2] of Pakistan is presented here.

Culturally, Pakistan is a diverse country with various ethnic groups consisting of

Punjabis, Sindhis, Pushtoon, Blochis, *Serakies* and so on. Islam, as a religion, is common

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[1] Government of Pakistan's Official Website: Accessed on 24 Feb 2010. http://www.pakistan.gov.pk/#
[2] CIA's website: accessed on 24 Feb 2010. https://www.cia.gov/library/publications/the-world-factbook/geos/pk.html

to more than 95% of the population and has influenced the cultural tradition of each of the ethnic groups. However, despite the common religious influence on these cultures, each group has its own language, dress code, cultural norms and practices. The national language is *Urdu* and has the status of *lingua franca* across the country.

With regard to the weather, the country experiences all four seasons, during the summer it is hot, humid and extreme temperature can soar to more than 50 degree Celsius in central parts of the country. The winters are mild in most regions and extremely cold in the northern regions. During spring the temperature remains moderate.

Map 3.2: Map of Punjab

The province of Punjab is the most populated province of the country. According to the 1998 census, about 56% of Pakistan's population lives in the Punjab[3] province that has 35 districts.

The focus of the next section will be on the district of Rawalpindi, which is situated in the northern part of the province. Map[4] of Punjab, with the district of Rawalpindi highlighted, is presented here.

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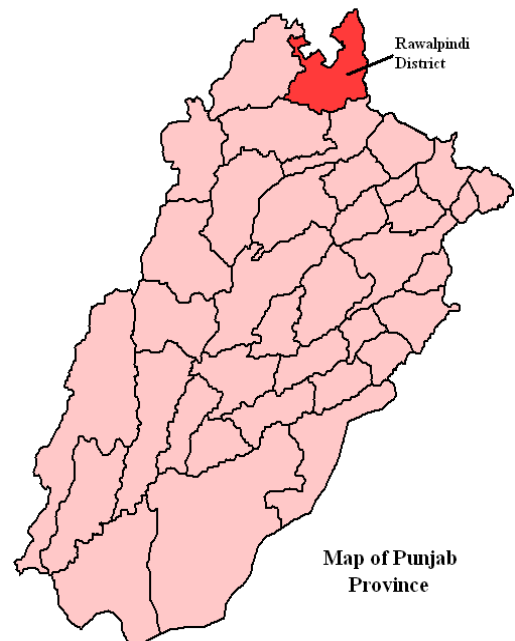
[3] http://www.statpak.gov.pk/depts/pco/statistics/pop_by_province/pop_by_province.html
[4] http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Rawalpindi_District

3.2.   Profile of District Rawalpindi

The district of Rawalpindi, where this research was carried out, is situated in the *Potowar* Plateau of northern part of the Punjab province and adjacent to the capital city of Pakistan, Islamabad. The district has been given the status of a City District due to its high population density, and its economy is mostly commercial, industrial and service oriented.[5] The district has an area of 5,286 square kilometers and a population of about 2.5[6] millions spread over 8 towns that collectively have 175 Union Councils.[7]
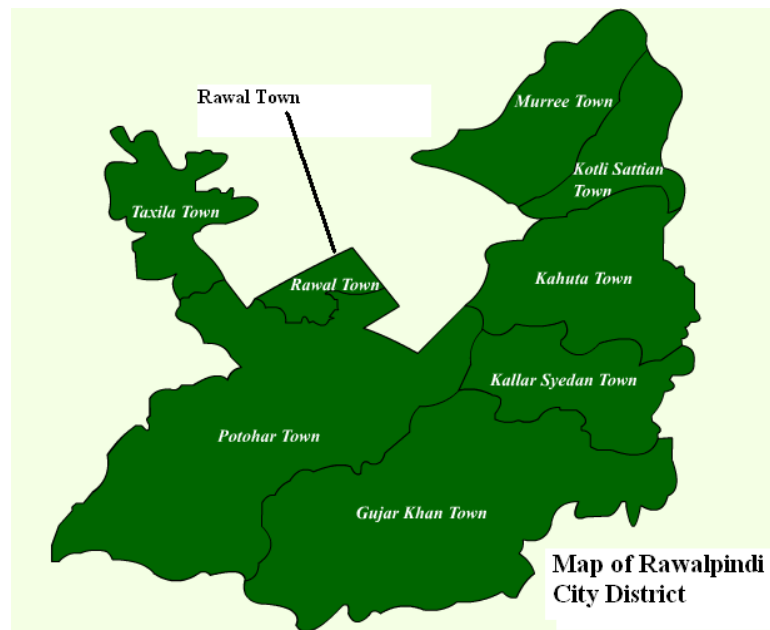
Map 3.3: Map of Rawalpindi City District[8]

The following sub-sections provide a description of the people of Rawalpindi, their origins and their cultural roots, its seasons, geographical location and economic

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[5] Local Government Ordinance 2001 for Punjab Province (www.nrb.gov.pk)
[6] Census 1998
[7] Official website of City District Rawalpindi (www.rawalpindi.gov.pk)
[8] Ibid

importance in relation to the rest of Pakistan. It is important to understand the various characteristics of the district and the general milieu, as that is what will provide a contextual framework for this research.

The district takes its name from its Headquarter town "Rawalpindi" which means the abode of *Rawals*. The district comprises of eight towns namely Rawal, Murree, Kotli Sattian, Kahuta, Kallar Syedan, Gujar Khan, Pothar and Taxila. The city district is bound in the north by the Islamabad Capital Territory, Abbottabad and Haripur districts of Khyber Pakhtunkhwa Province; on the west by Attock district; on the South by Chakwal and Jhelum districts and on the East by the river Jhelum, across which lie the Bagh, Rawalkot and Kotli districts of Azad Kashmir.

The ethnic groups[9] living in the district are *Rajput*, amongst whom the important sub-divisions are *Bhatti, Rawal, Janjua, Chohan, Awan, Mughal, Qureshi, Syed, Dhunds* and *Sattwas* who inhabit the Murree and Kotli Sattian Hills and the *Ghakkars*. Some of the other tribes of the district are the *Jat, Malyar* and *Pathan*.

The people in general have a lighter complexion than their compatriots in the rest of Punjab. These people in general are reasonably well built, sturdy, rugged looking and of medium height. The people of *Pushtun* origin are also found in the city of Rawalpindi, as they have migrated from different parts of the Khyber Pakhtunkhwa Province and Federally Administered Tribal Areas (FATA) to find employment and livelihood in an urban environment.

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[9] Based on various interviews with the community elders and district officials

3.2.1. Climate, Temperature and Rainfall

There are wide variations of climate between various parts of the district. Murree and Kotli Sattian Tehsils have severe winter and snow and a mild summer, while Gujar Khan, Rawalpindi and Taxila towns have hot summers and moderate winters. The average rainfall in the district is 1,550 millimeters. The coldest month is January and the month of June becomes the hottest. The temperature variation is below 0 to 45 degree centigrade across the district. The hilly areas of the district receive snowfall during the month of December, January and February.

During the summer, the rainfall begins in the middle of July and ends in the beginning of September. During the winter season, the rainfall, peculiar to this district, starts in January and lasts till the beginning of March. Due to winter rain, wheat cultivation in Gujar Khan, Rawalpindi, Kahuta and Kotli Sattian town is possible. The valleys near Sohan receive more rain than other parts of the district. In general, the rainfall is regular and sufficient throughout the district for maturing of crops of both harvests.

3.2.2. Economic Significance

The agricultural activity in Rawalpindi district is relatively limited due to its un-even topography and dependency on the rain. People are also involved in trades, and finding employment opportunities in the armed forces of the county. The district has various manufacturing units, including some in the textile and petroleum sector, that provide employment to a significant number of people. Rawalpindi itself is the business and

commercial hub not only for the district but also for the adjacent districts. The bazaars and large markets offer a variety of locally manufactured goods including those that are either imported or smuggled into the country. These smuggled goods include clothes, electrical and electronic gadgets. Rawalpindi also offers markets to sell and buy agricultural products ranging from grains, vegetables and fruits. In addition there are gold and silver markets that sell ornaments made from gold and sliver.

Various large, well-known, industrial units, including textile and petroleum industries, are situated in the district. Among these include Kohinoor textile mills and Attock Oil Refinery. These large and small scales manufacturing units provide sizeable employment to the people of the district and from adjoining districts. However, it is the informal sector consisting of the service industry that offers the biggest employment prospects. The thriving informal auto-repair and service workshop industries absorb many people from all ages and offer employment and livelihood opportunities.

The city also has an international airport, a railway station and a busy bus station that caters for many travelers every year. The *Pir Wadhai* bus station, situated in the Rawal Town of the District, provides a link to the northern part of the country and to the Punjab as well as further down south to the province of Sindh. It is among the busiest bus stations of the country. Adjacent areas to the bus station are not only offer congested residential areas for low-income groups but also houses various micro and small businesses, including repair and maintenance workshops related to the transport industry.

Many children start their work in these workshops and spend many years learning various skills there.

3.3.   Profile of *Dhok Hassu*: (Research Site)

The locality of *Dhok Hassu* consists of two union councils (no. 5 and no. 6). The *Dhok Hassu* is situated on the periphery of Rawalpindi, towards the federal capital Islamabad. The city of Rawalpindi primarily falls in the Rawal Town, which has a total of 46 union councils. A few decades earlier, the area of *Dhok Hassu* used to be cultivated by the locals. However, the expansion of the city and the urbanization process gradually transformed agricultural land into an urban residential area for low-income groups.
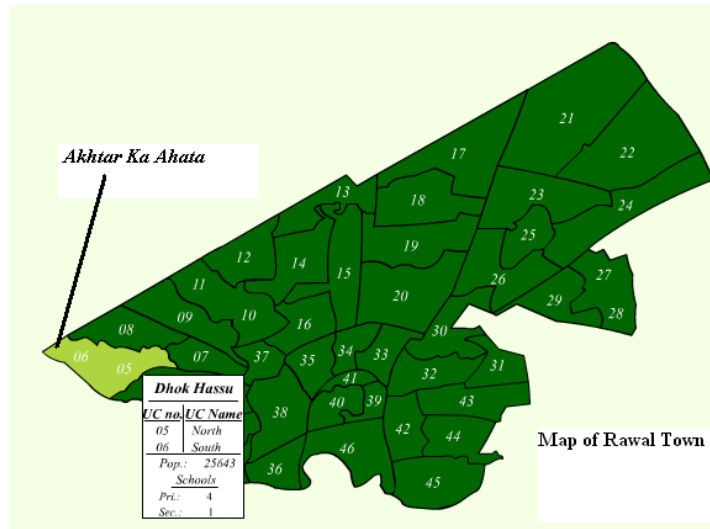
Map 3.4: Map of Rawal Town[10]

It was the establishment of *Pir Wadhai* Bus Station in this locality during the 1970s that initiated and exacerbated the transformation of *Dhok Hassu* into a congested residential area for low to medium income groups. It has also developed congested commercial areas

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[10] Official Website of District Rawalpindi (www.rawalpindi.gov.pk)

that provide opportunities for small businesses including the informal auto-repair industry.

3.3.1. Population, Ethnic Groups & Living Patterns

The 1998 population census indicated the population of *Dhok Hassu* at 25,643[11]. Since then the population has increased and the size of the present population of *Dhok Hassu* is between 50,000 and 55,000.[12] This rise in the size of the population can be attributed to the population growth and inward migration. People came to Dhok Hassu looking for employment and livelihood opportunities from other parts of the district and other districts too. Different ethnic groups live together and predominantly these belong to various Punjabi clans. There are also a significant number of *Pushtuns* living in the area, who have migrated from *Khyber Pakhtoonkhwa* Province and FATA. These communities live in harmony and there are no reported incidents of ethnic violence among these groups.

Living Patterns: The present day *Dhok Hassu* consists of small houses, mostly brick and mortar, narrow streets and bazaars and various commercial compounds. People belonging to poor segment of the society and from low to middle income groups were residing in *Dhok Hassu*. Their main source of income is employment in small-scale enterprises in the informal sector. Many men and boys find work at various informal workshops situated within the community. Women mostly stay at home and are primarily responsible to take care of their children and other household chores. People are relatively conservative in

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[11] Official website of City District Government of Rawalpindi. (www.rawalpindi.gov.pk)
[12] Based on multiple interviews with the local residents, and municipal authorities of Rawal Town

general, and women observe basic *purdah* (covering of their heads), however women of all ages do visit market places to buy various household items, and occasionally to buy items like clothing, artificial jewelry, and cosmetics.

Community Infrastructure: The residential areas indicate lack of organization and haphazard growth. The streets are not designed according to any set pattern and similarly the sizes of houses are quite different from each other. Mostly, these houses are small and may have a small courtyard or a staircase leading to the roof top for an open space. The structure of these houses is mostly *pacca* but many are in a dilapidated condition. These are small houses, with two or three rooms, a small kitchen and a separate toilet and bathroom. Most houses have a running water facility, but the supply of water is not regular. Some of these houses invariably have a "boring" system to extract underground water. All the houses have an electricity connection and most also have a natural gas connection.

The local government system has managed to provide basic municipal services in the areas. Most of the streets are either paved or have metallic surfaces and are lined with a sewage drainage system. The power supply, natural gas, and piped water connection are also widely available. Rows of shops lined up most of the main streets in the area and a maze of narrow streets link up the housing areas with the main roads and bazaars. The main streets have lines of shops selling all kind of commodities and services. There is also a plethora of street vendors selling fruits and vegetables in the area.

3.3.2. Language, Dress Code, Food and Religion

Language: It was observed that the *Urdu* language was universally understood, however, most people would speak different dialects of the *Punjabi* language. These dialects ranged from *Pothari* to *Jehlum* versions. The *Pushtu* language was also spoken by the people, however most *Pushtuns* could also understand and speak *Punjabi* easily. The influence of the *Urdu* language on the *Punjabi* language was evident as many *Urdu* words were also used during conversations taking place in *Punjabi* language.

Dress Code: In *Dhok Hassu* the dress code was the same as in the rest of the District. Most adult males would typically wear *shalwar*[13] and *Kameez.*[14] Some young people were also seen wearing trousers/jeans and shirts in addition to the traditional *shalwar kameez*. In winters, sweaters or jackets were also worn to keep warm. Women only wore *shalwar, kameez* and *dupatta.*[15]. When these women went out of their homes they took either a large shawl or a *burqa*[16] to cover their body. In *burqa* women also hid their faces but those women who took a *shawl* covered their heads only. *Pushtun* women were more conservatively dressed than most *Punjabi* women.

Food: Wheat forms the staple food, as *rooti* (bread) was served with every meal. The daily consumption during lunch and dinner included lentils, vegetables or meat, or a combination of these. Breakfast consisted of tea and *paratha* (bread cooked in oil). Tea

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[13] Lose trouser
[14] Tunic
[15] Long scarf
[16] Long cloth women wear to cover themselves from head to toe

was served to guests and served after lunch and dinner as well. On special days, rice would be cooked at dinner-time.

Religion: Islam was the religion common to all residents in *Dhok Hassu*. However, within Islam, people in the area followed different sects. The majority was from the *Sunni* sect, followed by *Wahibwis* and *Shia* sects. Overall there has been religious harmony among the residents and no history of sectarian violence.

3.3.3. Educational Opportunities

In *Dhok Hassu*, the government had established seven government schools. Except one all other government schools were established in small rented houses. There were four government schools for boys and three for girls. These school buildings were small and children were crammed into tiny class-rooms, particularly in lower grades. Table 3.1 provides information on the number of government primary, middle and high school for boys and girls in the *Dhok Hassu* (The girls high school also has middle school section).

Table 3.1: Number of Government Schools in *Dhok Hassu* (Research Site)		
Level	Male	Female
Primary	2	2
Middle	1	0
High	1	1
Total	4	3

The schools were not well maintained and the class-rooms had very few teaching aids. These government schools do not charge any school fee and annually provided free books. However the quality of education was of a poor standard. Primarily children from

poorer background were enrolled in these government schools. These schools did not offer sports or recreational activities to children and school children were frequently subjected to corporal punishments. The poorer families from *Dhok Hassu* primarily had their children enrolled in these government schools. Parent teacher meetings were not held and schools did not maintain any active link with parents to ensure that the children were paying their full attention to their studies. The records available with the District Education Office indicated that in *Dhok Hassu* the government schools (primary, middle and high) enrolment for boys stood at 2963 and for girls 1683[17]. In other words, the seven government schools had combine enrollment of 4646 boys and girls. The table 3.2 below provides the enrollment of boys and girls at primary, middle and high government school in *Dhok Hassu*.

Table 3.2: Government Schools Enrollment in *Dhok Hassu* (Research Site)		
Levels	**Male**	**Female**
Primary	1802	820
Middle	809	574
High	352	289
Total	**2963**	**1683**

Total school enrolment also indicated that more boys (64%) were going to school than the girls (36%). Since all the government schools are within the limits of *Dhok Hassu* or in the adjacent localities, the children were not required to walk long distances. The majority of the children therefore walked to their schools in the morning, in small groups. Young children were accompanied by their elder siblings or an older child from the

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[17] Records available with the District Education Office for academic year ending in 2009

neighborhood. These children primarily belonged to the low-income groups of the area. The number of children from this income group who were not going to school could be visible wasting time in streets and near their houses.

There were numerous small private schools in *Dhok Hassu*. These were catering to the low and medium income groups who value education for their children and could also afford private schooling. These groups were not satisfied with the performance of government schools and therefore preferred private schools. The average school fee at these private schools was rupees 300. Parents were also required to buy book, copies, pencils, school uniform, shoes and also contribute monthly for children's extracurricular activities.

There were 23 private schools in the area, which were being run in private houses of different sizes. In *Dhok Hassu*, the enrolment of the private schools for boys stood at 3728 and for girls it was 3171. These 23 private schools had total combine enrolment of 6899 boys and girls. The total enrolment of boy and girls in the private schools stood at 6,899. The enrolment statistics for each primary, middle and high levels of private school is presented in table[18] 3.3.

Table 3.3: Enrollment in Private Schools in *Dhok Hassu* (Research Site)		
Level	**Male**	**Female**
Primary	2237	2220
Middle	932	634
High	559	317
Total	**3728**	**3171**

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[18] Data on private schools enrolment was collected from 23 private schools operating in the *Dhok Hassu*

These private schools did not have any playgrounds but buildings were kept functional. The school premises were also kept relatively neat and clean. Classrooms maintained various teaching aids, including wall charts and maps. The majority of these schools were co-educational, except one school that had separate campuses for boys and girls. All private schools were offering education from 1st grade till 10th grade. Table 3.4 presents the comparison between the enrolment of government school and private schools in *Dhok Hassu*. Clearly private schools have 60% share of total school enrolment across both genders. It also meant that the value of education for the children among the low income group was not as pronounced as among the relatively higher income groups. Unlike government schools the girls enrollment in private schools was significantly higher.

Table 3.4: Comparison of Government & Private Schools Enrollment in *Dhok Hassu*				
Categories	**Males**	**Females**	**Total**	**%**
Government Schools	2963	1683	**4646**	40%
Private Schools	3728	3171	**6899**	60%
Total	**6691**	**4854**	**11545**	100%

Data from both government and private schools of *Dhok Hassu* indicated higher school dropouts, particularly for boys, as children progressed towards higher classes. Table 3.5 presents average class size and drop out in government schools of *Dhok Hassu*. It indicated 10% dropouts when boys moved from primary level to middle school and 41% dropouts at high school level. Children from poor families typically went to government schools as the education cost was much less as compared to private schools. Government

schools reflected a substantial school dropout rate of boys indicating that those children could then potentially enter the world of work as child labourers.

Table 3.5: Government Schools in *Dhok Hassu* - Average Class Size and Dropout				
Levels	Male		Female	
	Average Class Size	School Drop-out v%	Average Class Size	School Drop-out %
Primary: (Grades - Nursery, 1, 2,3,4 and 5)	300		137	
Middle: Grades- 6, 7, 8	270	10%	191	-40%
High: Grades - 9, 10	176	41%	145	-6%

However, government school enrolment indicated an increase in class enrolment for girls at middle school (40%) and high school (6%) levels as compared to the government primary school level. Nonetheless, if only middle school and high school enrolment was compared, there were 24% school dropouts of girls. The increase in school enrolment for girls after grade 5 was attributed to a shift of some girls from private school to the government schools, as many private schools did not have the capacity to offer middle school education.

Table 3.6 presents average enrollments and drop out in the private schools of *Dhok Hassu* for the academic year ending in 2009. Average school enrolment at primary level for boys and girls was 373 and 370 children respectively. These private schools have also indicated drop-outs of girls at middle school (43%) and high school (57%) levels as

compared to the enrolment levels at the primary level. On the other hand the dropout of boys has been found at 17% and 25% at middle and high school levels.

Levels	Male		Female	
	Average Class Size	School Drop-out %	Average Class Size	School Drop-out %
Primary: (Grades - Nursery, 1, 2,3,4 and 5)	373		370	
Middle: Grades- 6, 7, 8	311	17%	211	43%
High: Grades - 9, 10	280	25%	159	57%

Table 3.6: Private Schools in *Dhok Hassu* - Average Class Size and Dropout

Both government and private schools in *Dhok Hassu* did not succeed in retaining all enrolled boys and girls between them. However, the school dropout of boys was more significant in the government than in the private schools of the area.

3.4.   *Akhtar Ka Ahata*: The Workplace for Children

The locale of this research is *Akhtar Ka Ahata,* situated in the Union Council No 6 of *Dhok Hassu*, Rawalpindi. It was a congested residential area for low to middle levels of income groups. The *Akhtar Ka Ahata* was the name of a compound that had two large interconnected courtyards that were also connected to one market and one smaller compound.

The market was called *Azeem* Market and the smaller compound was called *Rehmat Ka Ahata*. These compounds and market housed numerous small informal workshops that provided repair and maintenance services for large and small vehicles. These compounds and the market consisted of 14 Kennal of land (7000 square yards). The whole area is popularly known as *Akhtar Ka Ahata*, and in this research the same reference is being used. The map of the research site is presented on the next page and it depicts the location of *Akhtar Ka Ahata* and how it connects with the adjoining residential areas.

Picture 3.1: Business at *Akhtar Ka Ahata*

These workshops employed children of different ages to help carry out various repair jobs. The informal workshops in the *Akhtar Ka Ahata* offered employment to adult men and boys who were predominantly residing in *Dhok Hassu*.

Diagram 3.1: Map of *Akhtar Ka Ahata* & adjoining Residential Area of *Dhok Hassu*
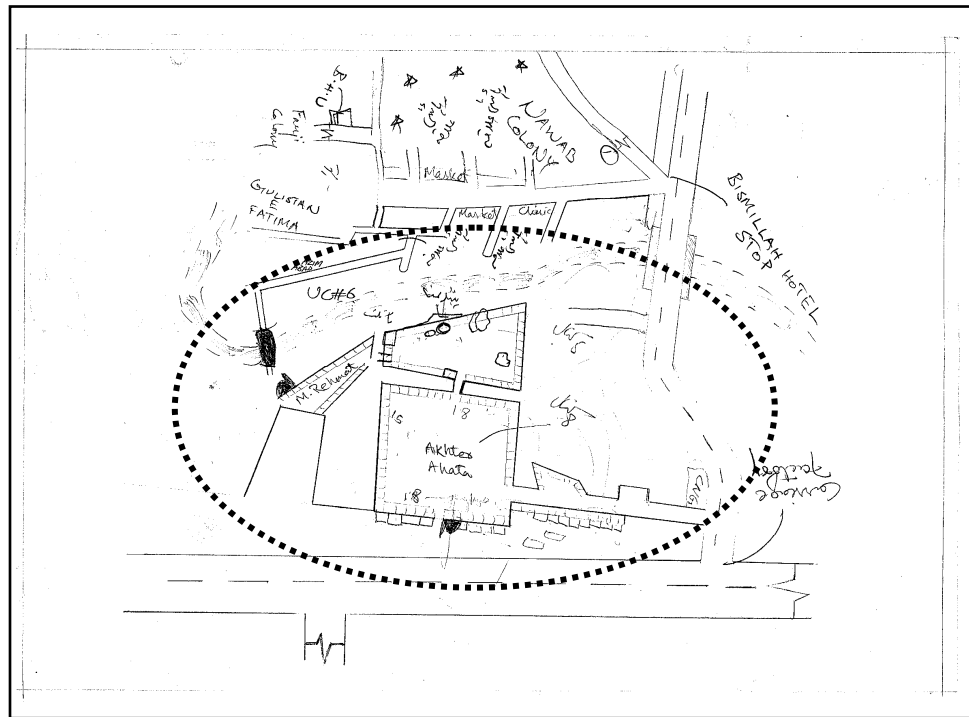
Picture 3.2: Panoramic View of *Akhtar Ka Ahata* (work place of children) in *Dhok Hassu*, Rawalpindi

In *Akhtar Ka Ahata*, small one-room workshops were lined around its three courtyards. These interconnected courtyards had multiple openings linking to the highway (IJP road that divides Islamabad and Rawalpindi), to one link road (*Dhok Hassu* Road), and into many small streets leading into the residential areas of *Dhok Hassu*.

The significance of *Akhtar Ka Ahata* was primarily due to its proximity to the *Pir Wadhai* bus station, which generates a lot of auto-repair, maintenance and refurbishing business. However, business was also generated from the nearby large residential areas. The mushroom growth of small informal business related to the transport industry provided numerous employment and livelihood opportunities to locals.

3.4.1. Arrangements of Workshops and Nature of Occupations

These workshops were small and had an average size of fifty square feet, with one main entrance and a couple of ventilators close to the ceiling. The structure of these shops was generally shabby but consisted of brick and mortar. At the end of the day, the doors of the shop were locked. During the night, a few men were informally assigned to provide security to the compound. Each shop had an electricity connection, one ceiling, a pedestal fan, one tube light or a light bulb. Generally, the ventilation and day-light inside these workshops were of poor quality. The electric wiring was not properly done and damaged wires and open electric connections were a common sight.

The shop would have one cart (to lie down), a few stools and chairs, a couple of tool boxes, racks to keep tools, a water cooler, a few glasses, and a tape-recorder and/or radio. Some shops would also have a steel cupboard to keep expensive tools under lock and key. No shop had any worktable to perform tasks or proper tool boards or tool trays. Invariably, each shop would have various nails in the wall to hang tools, work clothes, and electricity bills. A total of eighteen categories of informal workshops and two categories of business were operating in the research site. The eighteen categories of workshops were offering different kinds of repair and maintenance services for various vehicles, the business were selling food and spare-parts. The table 1.6 presented in chapter 1 page 38) provides the list of categories of these workshops.

These workshops were small informal enterprises owned and maintained by skilled and semi-skilled technicians. These technicians were called *Ustaad* (master technician). They had not learnt their occupation from any skills training institute, instead they had acquired these skills informally from the older generation of mechanics and technicians. These skill-sets were informally developed through experimental methods and transferred from one generation of *Ustaad* to the next without any manual, books or formal educational system of knowledge transfer.

Ustaads offered employment to adult workers and also allowed children to work in their workshops. The general norm was that as and when customers would bring in some vehicle to be repaired, the *Ustaad* would carry out that repair job and involve the child to

support in the repair activity. The *Ustaad* would pay monthly and daily wages to his employees, the adult workers and the child labourers respectively.

Each workshop had an open space in front of the shop, which was not covered or paved. There were no strict demarcations of the open work area among the neighboring workshops. Thus space was rather freely used amongst the adjacent workshops through mutual understanding. Thus workers and child labourers would work under the direct heat of sun. In case of rain, the work would come to a standstill.

The actual work of repairing, maintaining and refurbishing of vehicles was carried out in front of the workshop in the open space. If a certain part of the vehicle was detached, for example the engine, then that part was brought into the one room workshop for repairing. Mostly, the vehicles were brought close to the workshop and the necessary service would be provided in the open. In case a vehicle required longer repairs, say more than a day, the vehicle remained parked in front of the workshop.

In case a truck needed to be decorated most of the design and artwork was done within the workshop, which was generally a clean, organized and a well lit up work area. However, the application of the art-work on the truck was done in the open outside the workshop.

The following table 3.8 presents the kind of services these workshops/businesses provided:

Table 3.8: Description of Services Offered by Informal Workshops & Business at *Akhtar Ka Ahata*		
S. No.	Category of Workshops	Brief Description of Services
1	Auto-Repair Workshops	These workshops offers repair and maintenance services for various vehicles. These primarily include repairing engine, gear box, steering and wheels and tie-rod.
2	Brake, Shock and *Kamani* (Suspension) Maker Workshops	These workshops repair various kinds of brake arrangements for the vehicles. These include disc break to hydraulic brakes. These workshops also carry out shock repairing services.
3	Auto Electrician Workshop	These provide services to repair all electrical work in the vehicle, including wiring, ignition connection, electrical connection to the head lamps, tail lights, indicators, meter reading lights, fuses and connections with the battery.
4	Spray Painter Workshops (to re-paint vehicle)	These offer services to re-paint the whole or part of vehicle body. Damaged vehicles, after getting their dents removed or new parts installed at a separate workshop, come here for re-paint job. These workshops can also scarp the old paint and re-paint the vehicle in a new colour.
5	Truck Decoration Workshops	This deals with aesthetics of Truck Decoration. Truck owner are fond of decorating their trucks. This interest has evolved from simply painting art work on the trucks to pasting small patches of colour full plastic in special geometric patterns. These small patches are also arranged to put together images of various birds, animals and objects. During night time, these small plastic patches would make the vehicle illuminated under the lights of other vehicles.
6	Truck Body Making	These workshops fabricate complete body for a truck chassis. This body is fabricated on the chassis.
7	Auto Frame Repair Workshops	Vehicles completely damaged in an accident, can get the frame of vehicle repaired in these workshops.
8	Vehicle Body Dentor Workshops	These workshops can completely restore the minor or major damaged body of any vehicle. These dentors can bring back the original cuts and shape in the damaged vehicle's body.

S. No.	Category of Workshops	Brief Description of Services
9	Shops Selling New Spare parts	Businesses that sell new spare parts for various vehicles
10	Radiator Repair Workshops	These workshops can clean clogged radiator and also repair these radiators.
11	*Poshish* (Upholstery) Maker Workshops	These workshops can change the upholstery of different vehicles. Provide extra cushioning in seats.
12	*Kharad* Machine Workshops	Lath machine workshop, to repair and make small tools, parts
13	Clutch Plate Repair Workshop	These workshop repair the clutch plates of various vehicles
14	*Dholkey* (Silencer) Repair Workshop	This workshop repairs the silencer of different vehicles
15	Welding Workshop	To carry out welding jobs
16	Restaurants	Provide Lunch, dinner and endless rounds of tea.
17	Tyre Shops	Repairs old and damaged tires and also buy and sells used tyres.
18	Shops Selling Old Spare parts	Business that sells old spare parts for various vehicles
19	Meter Repairing Workshop	This workshops repairs the speed meter and display for various gauges
20	Diesel Laboratory	Carry our tests on various lubricants.

3.4.2. The Child and Adult Workforce

The *Akhtar Ka Ahata* only had male entrepreneurs, male workers and male customers. The total workforce at the research site was 624, including adults and children. Predominantly, the workforce consisted of adult men, including older boys above the age of 15 years. The child labourers (below the age of 14 years) were 34% of the total

workforce at *Akhtar Ka Ahata*. However, there were very few children below the 9 years of age, merely 3% of the total workforce. Table 3.9 presents the number and percentage distribution of workforce in *Akhtar Ka Ahahta.*

Table 3.9: Number and % Distribution of Work Force at Research Site *(Akhtar Ka Ahata)*		
Age of Workers	**No of Workers**	**% of Workers**
15 Years and Above	413	66%
10-14 Years	194	31%
5-9 Years	17	3%
Total	**624**	100%

Out of the total workforce at *Akhtar Ka Ahata*, 194 children were in the age bracket of 10-14 years and 17 were in the age bracket of 5-9 years old. There were 20 categories of informal workshops and businesses, children were found to be working in five categories of workshops in the research area: These were, 1) Auto-Repair Workshops; 2) Brake, Shocks and *Kamani* (Suspension) Maker Workshops; 3) Auto Electrician Workshops; 4) Spray Painter Workshops; 5) Truck Decoration Workshops. Table 3.10 below provides information about the number of workshops units with and without children.

These five categories of workshop represented 51% of workshops operating in the *Akhtar Ka Ahata* that had employed 100% the child labourers and 49% of the adult workforce. The child labourers included both in the age cohort of 5-9 years and 10-14 years. Remaining 49 % of the workshops did not employ child labourers and had 51% share of

the adult workforce of the *Akhtar Ka Ahata*. Following table 3.10 gives the number and percentages of workplaces with and without child labourers.

Sr.#	Description	No. Units	No. Workers 15+ years	No. Child Labour 10-14 yrs	No. Child Labour 5-9 yrs
**Table 3.10: Number and % Distribution of Child Labourers, Workers, and Workshops - Categorized against workshops with and without child labour**
1	Workshops with Child Labour	70	202	194	17
	% share	51%	49%	100%	100%
2	Workshops & Business without Child Labour	66	211	0	0
	% share	49%	51%	0%	0%
	Total No	**136**	**413**	**194**	**17**
	Total %	**100%**	**100%**	**100%**	**100%**

For adult workers in the area, the presence of children at the workshops represented normalcy. Adults and children were involved in the act of carrying out vehicle maintenance and repair at these workshops. The children primarily played the support role to help the adult workers complete the jobs at hand. During the process to help complete various jobs, these children gradually learned to perform the same tasks. However, this learning process was very informal, slow and long.

Table 3.11 below presents the number break up of child labourers and adult workforce against each category of the workshops and businesses operating in the *Akhtar Ka Ahata*. The single biggest category with child labourers was found to be of the auto-repair workshops category. There were a total of 27 auto-repair workshops, with 73 child labourers in the 10-14 year age cohort, 9 child labourers in the 5-9 year cohort (total 82 child labourers), and 71 workers above 15 years of age.

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Sr.#	Description	No. Units	No. Workers 15+ years	No. Child Labour 10-14 yrs	No. Child Labour 5-9 yrs	Total
	Table 3.11: Number of Child Labourers and Adult Workers against Each Category of Workshops and Business at *Akhtar Ka Ahata*					
1	Auto-Repair Workshops	27	71	73	9	**153**
2	Brake, Shock and *Kamani* (Suspension) Maker Workshops	15	44	40	5	**89**
3	Auto Electrician Workshop	13	37	33	0	**70**
4	Spray Painter Workshops (to re-paint vehicle)	7	27	21	3	**51**
5	Truck Decoration	8	23	27	0	**50**
6	Truck Body Making	10	41	0	0	**41**
7	Auto Frame Repair Workshops	7	29	0	0	**29**
8	Vehicle Body Dentor Workshops (to repair damaged vehicle body)	8	23	0	0	**23**
9	Shops Selling New Spare parts	9	21	0	0	**21**
10	Radiator Repair Workshops	6	17	0	0	**17**
11	*Poshish* (Upholstery) Maker Workshops To refurbish vehicle seats	5	16	0	0	**16**
12	*Kharad* Machine Workshops	5	14	0	0	**14**
13	Clutch Plate Repair Workshop	3	11	0	0	**11**
14	*Dholkey* (Silencer) Repair Workshop	3	11	0	0	**11**
15	Welding Workshop	3	9	0	0	**9**
16	Restaurants	2	9	0	0	**9**
17	Tyre Shops (to repair and sell used tires)	2	3	0	0	**3**
18	Shops Selling Old Spare parts	1	3	0	0	**3**
19	Meter Repairing Workshop	1	2	0	0	**2**
20	Diesel Laboratory	1	2	0	0	**2**
	Total	**136**	**413**	**194**	**17**	**624**

3.4.3. Occupational Safety and Health

None of these workshops had any first aid box, or any medicine that would be of use if a

worker encountered an injury. Moreover, no occupational safety and health related

protective measures were available. It was also observed that none of the workshop put up any pictorial or text instructions on how to avoid work related injuries. The universal remedy for a work related injury was the application of brake oil lubricant. A qualified doctor was approached only in case of a life threatening injury.

3.4.4. Light Entertainment

These workshops would have a few posters depicting famous Pakistani and Indian movie stars. Generally, the tape-recorders or radios would remain switched on for a significant part of the day, with loud music, songs and the news. However, the radio would be switched off during prayer times or when work pressures were high. The radio/tape-recorder was under the control of the *Ustaad* and no child could switch it on or off unless instructed by the *Ustaad*. The only time children found for play or other leisure activities was during their weekly holiday.

3.4.5. Utilities at Workplace

In this large premise, there was only one toilet to cater to all workers, young and adult, including the customers. This toilet consisted of roughly four by four feet space, had five feet high walls and was without any roof. An adult standing in the toilet would be visible from the chest and above to outsiders. The toilet had one wooden door with a bolt to lock the door from the inside. Inside the toilet, there was an Eastern toilet, a couple of utensils for washing, and no running water. The toilet drainage was linked to a nearby open sewerage through a concealed pipe.

Each user would fill the washing utensil from a nearby hand-pump. After toilet use, washing one's hand with soap was an individual choice that not everyone adhered to, particularly the young ones. Anyone who wished to wash hands would have to bring his own soap. The users from the workshop would therefore often bring their own soap to wash their hands after using the toilet.

3.4.6. Drinking Water

The source of drinking water was the same hand-pump situated near the toilet. It was a typical metallic hand-pump with one lever to pull ground water manually. Around the hand pump a small cemented floor was built. Children, working at these workshops, were frequently also tasked to fill water coolers and bottles from this hand-pump during the day.

Picture 3.3: Metallic Hand-pump to get underground water in *Akhtar Ka Ahata* (top). One child labourer filling plastic bottle from the same hand pump (bottom).

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The water cooler, the water bottles and the glasses (mostly plastic glasses) also showed signs of aging, and their exteriors were soiled with grease and dust.

3.4.7. Food and Eating Patterns

The *Akhtar Ka Ahata* had two restaurants that would primarily serve lunch, dinner and tea. These restaurants would have many customers during lunchtime, as the majority of the workers would order lunch. Some workers would visit the restaurants to have their lunch whereas many would have the lunch delivered to their workplaces. Lunch would start after midday and last until 3 pm in the afternoon; however food would be available all day until dinner-time. At lunchtime, the *Ustaad* would order lunch, and food would be served on a matt inside the workshop. Children were asked to lay out the food, bread, and water on the matt and all of them would eat together. It was the *Ustaad* who would fill his plate first or in the presence of a guest, the guest would be served first.

In some workshops cooked food would be brought from home of the *Ustaad* and the *roti* (bread) was bought from the local restaurant, and all workers at the workshop would have lunch together. Generally a set hierarchy was maintained in getting the food, after the *Ustaad* the most senior worker would take his share and the youngest child would take his share in the end. Eventually, everyone would get his share of food.

The restaurants at *Akhtar Ka Ahata* would cook a variety of food, which included lentils, vegetables, mutton, chicken, rice, and *roti*. Typical dishes included *Daal* (lentil), *Chanay* (chick-pea), mixed *sabzi* (mixed vegetable), Chicken *Karahi*, and Mutton *Karahi* served

with *roti* (bread). Different varieties of cooked rice were also available including *Biryani* (rice cooked together with chicken, mutton or meat). Food was also served with *raita* (yogurt diluted with water and flavored with salt and spices) and a plate of salad that consisted of sliced tomatoes, green chilies, onions or cucumbers. The food had a high content of spices and oil. *Tarkay wallee dall* and *sabzi* (fried lentils and vegetables) were favorite dishes in addition to chicken *karahi*, and *Channa (chickpeas).*

The popular beverage enjoyed, mostly during winters, by the workers and offered to customers and guests was *doodh pati* (tea leaves over boiled in milk mixed with a generous amount of sugar). It was considered a gesture of hospitality and friendship if *doodh pati* was offered to someone. During the day, many rounds of *Chai* (tea) were served among the workers. It was the responsibility of the child at the workshop to fetch it from the restaurant and serve it. During the summers, the chilled cola drink was also offered but only to valued customers and special guests.

3.4.7. Mosque

The *Akhtar Ka Ahata* had one mosque where workers of the area and also nearby residents would offer prayers. There would be relatively larger numbers of people to offer evening prayers than the two prayers in the afternoon. *Pushtun* workers would offer their prayers more regularly than the *Punjabi* workers. Despite the fact that both *Sunni* and *Shia* sects followers were present in the *Ahata* there was sectarian harmony. During the month of *Ramadan* (fasting) everyone would fast and no one was seen eating or drinking

publically during the day-time. Some children from the work area would also pray in the mosque.

3.5. Profile of Child Labourers in *Akhtar Ka Ahata*:

The *Akhtar Ka Ahata* offered ample opportunity for boys to find work of one sort or the other. The multitudes of informal workshops were found to be beyond the application of labour laws, as hardly any labour inspector visited this area. Therefore, observance of labour laws was practically non-existent in these workshops.

The workshops owners, the *Ustaads,* had some information about the prohibition of child labour under the labour laws. However, they were not concerned about these labour laws and would readily allow children to work for them. The proof was 211 children under the age of 14 years who had been found working at *Akhtar Ka Ahata* at different workshops. Boys as young as 7 years of age, albeit limited in numbers, were also present in different workshops performing various tasks. However, the majority of the child labourers were 10-14 years of age. Table 3.12 presents the number and percentage distribution of child labourers against these age cohorts.

Table 3.12: Number and % Distribution of Child Labourers against Age-Cohorts at *Akhtar Ka Ahata*			
Sr. #	**Age Cohorts**	**No of Child Labourers**	**% Share**
1	5-9 years	17	8%
2	10-14 years	194	92%
Total		**211**	**100%**

These child labourers remained busy providing assistance to their respective *Ustaads* or performing various tasks delegated to them. They were not allowed to drift away from their workplaces or assigned tasks. None of the children would be allowed to 'waste' time by indulging in playful activities with other children at the workplaces. Similarly, it was not common to find these children fighting amongst each other at the workplace. The *Ustaad* and elder workers would usually keep a strict control on these children. However, on occasions there were incidents of brawls among children that served as amusement for others. The timings at the workshops were demanding for the adult workers and extremely challenging for child labourers.

All of these children belonged to low-income families and were involved either in learning to carry out mechanical, electrical, break/shocks repair work of different vehicles, or on how to carry out spray painting jobs of damaged or worn-out vehicles. There were also those children who were learning how to decorate a truck with intricate designs made out of small patches of glittery and colorful plastic.

3.5.1. Sample Child Labourers: Age Groups and Work Experiences

The Government of Pakistan has ratified ILO Convention 138 on Minimum Age that allows children above 14 years of age to enter into employment. Therefore, working children below the 14 years of age were the focus of this research. This age group was further categorized into 5-9 year and 10-14 year cohorts. Out of a total of 211 children, the sample consisted of 70 children. The sample also reflected the age distribution that was present in the total number of child labourers at *Akhtar Ka Ahata*. The 89% of the sample children were from the 10-14 years of age cohort while 11% were from the age cohort of 5-9 years. Moreover, the sample children represented all the five categories of the workshops that had child labourers. Table 3.13 provides the number and percentage break-up against the age-cohorts of the child labourers:

Picture 3.4: Child Labourer, 13 years of age, also worked on electric run machine

Picture 3.4: Child Labourer, 11 years of age, cleaning tools

	Table: 3.13: Number of Sample Child Labourers against two Age Cohorts		
	Age Cohorts	**Number of Child Labourers**	**Percentage**
1	5-9 years	8	11%
2	10-14 years	62	89%
	Total	**70**	100%

In order to determine at what age these children initiated work, three age cohorts, 5-8 years, 9-11 years and 12-14 years were developed. The data indicated that a majority, 72%, of these children entered the world of work when they were 9 to 11 years of age. There were only 11% and 16 % who started work from the ages of 5-8 years and 12-14 years respectively. Clearly, the preferred age to send sample children to work was 9-11 years. Table 3.14 presents the age of entry to work for the sample children.

	Table 3.14: Number and % distribution of Sample Child Labourer's Age to Start Work		
	Age Cohorts	**Number of Children**	**% of Children**
1	5-8 years	8	11%
2	9-11 years	50	72%
3	12-14 years	12	16%
	Total	**70**	100%

The majority of sample children, 54%, had spent one or less than one year learning their respective occupations. However, in terms of skill acquisition they had only acquired a negligible skill level. The majority of these children mainly helped *Ustaads* by carrying

out endless errands and small tasks required running around. Nonetheless, these were useful support tasks to carry out the main activities and these children were a useful part of their respective workshops. Among the sample children there were also those who had spent more than four years of learning time. They had developed a higher degree of proficiency in their occupations and enjoyed the confidence of their respective *Ustaads*. These were, 6% of the sample children who had spent 4-6 years at the workshops and had accumulated enough skill competencies for the *Ustaad* to delegate a significant part of the assignments to them. The table 3.15 presents work experience of sample children.

	Table 3.15: Number and % Distribution of Sample Child Labourers' Work Experience		
	Experience in Years	**Number of Children**	**% of Children**
1	0-1 Years	38	54%
2	1-2 Years	15	21%
3	2-4 Years	13	19%
4	4-6 Years	4	6%
	Total	**70**	100%

3.5.2. Educational Background of Sample Child Labourers

Out of the total sample, the majority of child labourers, 74%, did go to school and 26% could never attend the school. This clearly indicated that most of the parents of the sample child labourers wanted their children to go to school and continue education. However, none of those enrolled could survive in the schools and dropped out of the education system. All of those children who went to school in the beginning also reported corporal punishment at schools. Table 3.16 below provides information about sample children's exposure to school education.

	Table 3.16: Number and % Distribution of Sample Child Labourers Exposure to Schools		
	Grades Completed	**No. of Children**	**% of Children**
1	Never Went to School	18	26%
2	Went to School and Dropped Out	52	74%
	Grade	**70**	100%

Although, all of those sample children who went to school at the beginning dropped out of schools, however, they all dropped out between 2nd and 4th grades. All of these children successfully moved from 1st grade to 2nd grade, additionally none could climb to the 5th grade. This indicated that as the curriculum in higher classes became more demanding children could not cope with their studies and continued to drop out.

The following table 3.17 provides information about the educational level of those sample children who did go to school.

	Table 3.17: Number and % Distribution of Sample Child Labourers Who Went to Schools and Grades Completed Before Dropping Out		
	Grades Completed	**No. of Children**	**% of Children**
2	Grade 1	0	0%
3	Grade 2	12	23%
4	Grade 3	19	37%
5	Grade 4	21	40%
6	Grade 5	0	0%
	Total	**52**	100%

It is important to note, as mentioned earlier that all children reported frequent corporal punishments at school. This point will be further elaborated in chapter 6.

3.5.3. Occupations of Sample Child Labourers:

Out of the total categories of workshops and business at *Akhtar Ka Ahata* children were working in five categories of informal workshops. These workshops have two important aspects regarding the current and future employment generation potential for child labourers. The parents of these children may or may not be aware of this aspect. Firstly, these occupations provided ample opportunities to transfer a higher skill-set that enables these children to eventually learn and perform complex tasks. Secondly, these occupations also had a higher degree of future demand, and provided the ability to absorb future adult workforce at relatively better remuneration. Table 3.18 presents the number of sample children working against five categories of workshops in *Akhtar Ka Ahata*.

Sr. No	Occupation	10-14 years	5-9 years	Total	%
	Table 3.18: Number and % Distribution of Sample child Labourers Against Five Occupations				
1	Auto-Repair Workshops	23	4	27	39%
2	Brake, Shock and *Kamani* (Suspension) Maker Workshops	12	3	15	21%
3	Auto Electrician Workshop	11	0	11	16%
4	Spray Painter Workshops (to re-paint vehicle)	7	1	8	11%
5	Truck Decoration	9	0	9	13%
	Total	**62**	**8**	**70**	**100%**

In total, as indicated in table there were five occupations that attracted child labourers. These occupations were:

a. Auto-Repair Workshops

b. Brake, Shocks and *Kamani* (Suspension) Maker Workshops

c. Auto Electrician Workshops

d. Spray Painter Workshops

e. Truck Decoration Workshops

The first two occupations were linked to mechanical engineering, and the third was based on electrical engineering. The fourth occupation was associated with chemical engineering and application of paints. However, it was the fifth occupation, truck decoration that had a strong base in artwork and aesthetics. This particular occupation was one that was growing and had a niche market.

Graph 3.1: % of Child Labourers Employed in Different Occupations
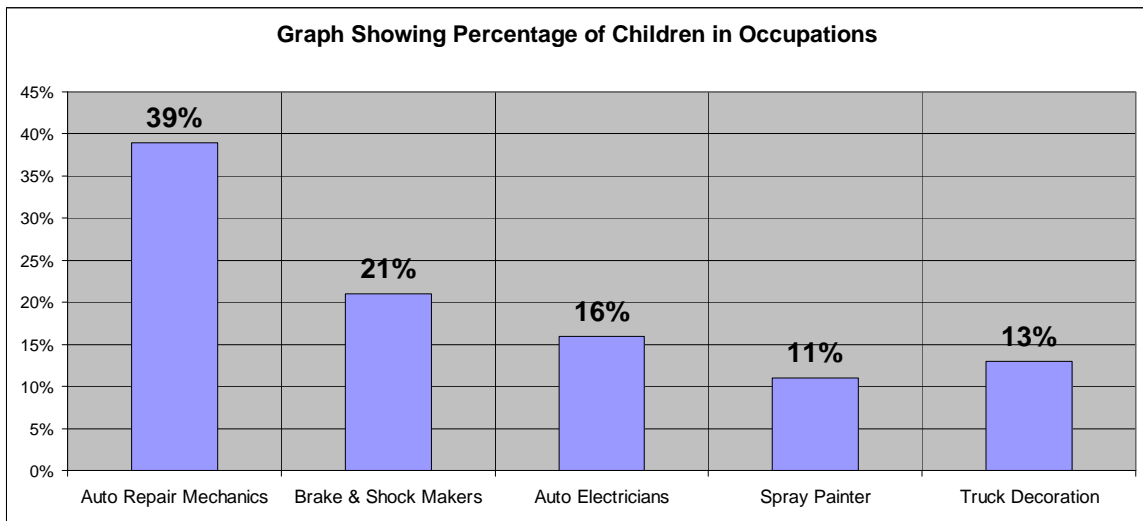
The majority of children, 60%, were working in the first two categories of occupations, based on mechanical engineering. The rest of the three professions, auto-electricians, spray painting, and truck decorations had more or less attracted an equal number of children.

3.5.4. Working Hours

The working hours for the sample children were quite demanding, as work would start around eight in the morning and continue until late at night. The level of business activity at each of the workshop also determined how late a workshop would remain open. The approaching deadlines to complete a job would also extend the working time. Children

were expected to come to the workshop early in the day and were expected to work till 10 pm or some time late. However, the younger boys, below or around the age of 10 were allowed to go back at dusk. On average, children were following a challenging routine of spending 12 hours a day and six days a week at the workshops. Despite the official weekly holiday on Sunday, these workshops would remain open on Sunday and close their work on Friday.

3.5.5. Injuries at Workplace:

The sample children frequently experienced work related cuts and bruises. The frequency of work related injuries was high and 100 % children reported receiving such injuries. None of the children were found to be without any scar, cut or bruise on their hands, arms, feet, or face. On a daily basis, these children experienced serious hazards at their workplaces. In one instance, an 11-year old child, working in an auto-repair workshop, had mistakenly hammered his own index finger while performing a repair job. Even though he screamed in pain and the blood came out of the finger, the reaction of the *Ustaad* was quite casual. First, the *Ustaad* told the child to stop making a noise and then he asked another worker to pour brake oil on the wound. The screaming child had to endure the pain and the only remedy provided was the application of brake oil, and wrapping the wound with a cloth. The child was asked to re-start his work after a break of an hour or so. The *Ustaad* encouraged the child as he appreciated his physical endurance and ability to withstand injury and pain.

3.5.6. Corporal Punishment at Workplace

All of the sample children (100%) experienced excessive corporal punishments from their *Ustaads*. This included slapping, punching, and kicking. *Ustaads* would not hesitate in using tools or belts (fan belt, timing belt) to hit these children. There was excessive use of abusive language against these children. All children were subjected to both physical and psychological abuse.

3.5.7. Ethnic Background:

Most of the sample children (71%) were of *Punjabi* ethnic origin and the rest *Pushtuns*. However, all children could speak and understand the *Punjabi* language. The *lingua franca* of the workplace was the *Punjabi* language, due to the fact that largely workshops and small business were run by *Punjabi Ustaads* and entrepreneurs.

3.5.8. Family Relation of Child Labourers with *Ustaad*:

The overwhelming majority, 76%, of the sample children had no family relation with their *Ustaads*. In other instances, the *Ustaads* were either paternal or maternal uncles who had accepted these children as their apprentices.

3.6.   Profile of Families with Child Labour

Families of child Labourers belonged to low-income groups. The level of parents' education was extremely limited and mostly they were illiterate.

3.6.1. Family Size, Ethnic Background & Education

The predominant number of sample children, 87%, belonged to families that had more than seven immediate family members. This included parents, siblings and in some instances an uncle, aunt or a grandparent living with the family. These families lived in small houses situated in a congested street of *Dhok Hassu*. Adult females in the family had the responsibility to manage the house and adult males were responsible to earn a livelihood for the family. The concept of child spacing was non-existent and these families tended to have as many children as they could during first few years after marriage. The small gap between the ages of siblings also put more pressure on the limited resources of the family. Table 3.19 provides information about the size of sample child labourers' families.

	Table 3.19: Number and % Distribution of Size of Sample Child Labourers' Families		
	Family Size	**Number of Families**	**% of Families**
1	Members 6 or Less	7	10%
2	Members 7 to 10	61	87%
3	Members 10 to 12	2	3%
	Total	**70**	**100%**

The mothers in large families generally had poor health, presumably due to bearing many children. These families were clearly under pressure as they had to provide food, clothing, health, education and shelter for a large number of people.

The majority, 71%, of these children belonged to *Punjabi* families and the remaining were from *Pushtun* families. The *Pushtun* had migrated some 20 years ago from the

Mohamand Agency of Federally Administered Tribal Areas (FATA) bordering Afghanistan. These *Pushtun* children could also understand the *Punjabi* language and were able to speak and comprehend it easily.

Pie Chart 3.1: % Distribution of Child Labourers' Ethnicity

Ethnic Origin of Child Labourers in Percentage

Pushtoon Children, 29%

Punjabi Children, 71%
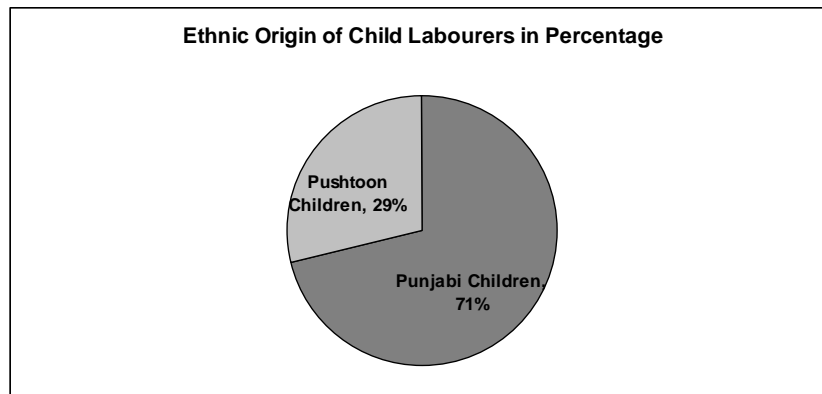
The parents' educational credentials were extremely poor. The majority of fathers, 87%, and all mothers were illiterate.[19] Those fathers who did attend school in their childhood, completed only a few years of school education and none passed primary level. Among the siblings, there were only two instances where elder sibling had completed middle level school. A certain level of keenness had been observed among parents to enroll their younger children (6-7 years), both boys and girls, in school. However, these children tended to drop-out from school before completing primary education. Most of the sample children, 74%, went to school but all of them dropped out before completing their primary education and subsequently entered the world of work.

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[19] Illiterate was defined as a person who cannot read or write basic Urdu language text (National language).

3.6.2. Occupations, Income, Assets, and Housing Patterns

Fathers of these children had a low-income employment with the government, private organization/enterprise or as a daily wage earner. The monthly income of the family increased where other adult male family members were also employed and contributed to the family income. Although, a significant part of the children's income came into the family, it was not considered by the family of any value.

None of the mothers of these child labourers had any employment history, and all mothers were housewives. The primary function of the mother was to take care of the children and the house. The maintenance of the house, kitchen, laundry and cleaning were the responsibilities of the mother and the girls. Education for girls beyond primary education was not promoted if at all. Families rather preferred their girls to learn how to perform household chores and assist their mothers.

The majority of these sample child labourers' families did not represent the bottom poor. Table 3.20 provides information on the sample child labourers' families' income:

Table 3.20: Number and % Distribution of Sample Child Labourers' Families Monthly Income			
	Monthly Income	**Number of Families**	**% of Families**
1	Less than Rs 6000	21	30%
2	Between Rs. 6001-10,000	26	37%
3	Between Rs 10,000-16,000	23	33%
	Total	**70**	**100%**

33% of the families had an average monthly income of Rs. 10,000 to Rs. 16,000. Another 37% were earning an average Rs 6000 to Rs. 10,000 per month. There were only 30% of the sample families who were earning less than Rs 6000 per month. In many of the families, where the older children were above the age of 18 years, and who had been full time workers, the household income was higher.

However, it was not a straight forward task to document the family income as the family would tend to conceal this information. In many instances, the claimed family income and the family life style would not match. Those families who reported, for example, less than rupees 6000 monthly income would still have luxury items such as a television set, mobile phone, relatively higher electricity bills, and the up-keep of a small house. It would be impossible to meet the household expenditures for a larger size of family and within the reported monthly income. Certainly, these families did not come under the category of the bottom poor, that is, earning less than $2 per day. The graph 3.2 below categorizes family on their size and income. The majority of sample child labourers, 87% came from families with 7-10 members. These families were almost equally distributed to three income brackets.

Graph 3.2: Family Size and Family Monthly Income of Sample Child Labourers
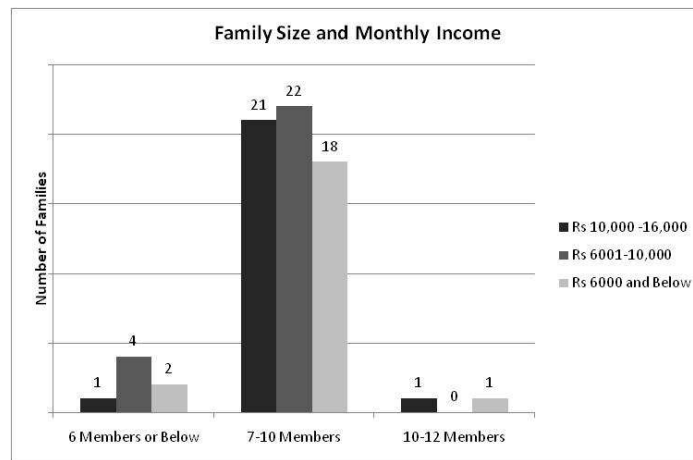
Mostly these families had various life style gadgets in their houses. These included a television, mobile phones, a cycle/motor cycle and refrigerators. The most common electronic gadget owned by these families was a television set, and 86% families owned one. Table 3.21 provides the complete list of appliances and percentage distribution of ownerships by the sample children's families.

Table 3.21: % of Sample Child Labourers Families with Lifestyles Appliances		
	Appliances Ownership	**% of Families**
1	Television set	86%
2	Mobile telephone	79%
3	Cycle or motor-cycle	60%
4	Refrigerator	41%
5	Land telephone line	17%

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Many of the sample child labourers' families, 57%, owned their house while the remaining lived in rented houses. However, there was a lingering desire among the families living in rented premises to find ways to buy their own living quarters. All houses had access to electricity, and an overwhelming numbers also had access to natural gas for cooking, and the majority was connected with running water. The following table presents the status of these services to the houses of sample children's families.

Table 3.22: % of Sample Child Labourers Families with Access to Services		
	Services	**% of Houses**
1	Electricity Connection	100%
2	Natural Gas (for Cooking) Connection	93%
3	Running Water Connection	83%

The structure of 87% houses was *pacca*, and these were built using brick and mortar, plastered and whitewashed from inside. These were small houses (41% less than 3 *marlas*, and 37% 4 to 6 *marlas* plot size – 500 to 800 square feet). Typically these houses had two rooms, one kitchen, one toilet, one bathing room, a small lobby linking the house with a front door, and a stair-case making the roof accessible. Very few houses had a small courtyard.

These houses were lined on both sides of narrow and cluttered streets. The data indicated that most of the child labourers did not come from the bottom poor families, as they were living in owned or rented houses, owning assets such as a television, mobile phones,

motor cycles and were benefiting from electricity and natural gas (for cooking) connections in the houses.

3.7. Profiles of Sample *Ustaad's*

In *Akhtar Ka Ahata* the majority of *Ustaads* were from the occupation of auto-repair workshops. These *Ustaads* would easily find room to squeeze in at leastone child as a worker. *Ustaads* in all these five occupations did not regret employing children as young workers. All these *Ustaads* had a steady stream of business.

There were a total of 35 *Ustaads* in the sample and they belonged to all five categories of the workshops that had child labourers. The following table 3.23 presents the number and percentage of sample *Ustaads* (employers) against five occupations.

Table 3.23: Number and % Distribution of Sample *Ustaad* Against Five Occupations			
Sr. No	*Ustaad's* Occupation	Number of *Ustaad*	%
1	Auto-Repair Workshops	11	31%
2	Brake, Shock and Kamani (Suspension) Maker Workshops	8	23%
3	Auto Electrician Workshop	7	20%
4	Spray Painter Workshops (to re-paint vehicle)	5	14%
5	Truck Decoration	4	11%
Total		**35**	**100%**

3.7.1. Educational Profiles of *Ustaads*

Many of the sample *Ustaads* (60%) were illiterate and had never been to any school. However, significant numbers (40%) did go to school in their childhood and complete primary education. Many of these realized the value of education but would also promote the benefit of skills that children acquired at their workplaces. It is important to mention that most of these *Ustaads* entered these professions at a young age as child labourers. This was also one of the reasons that they did not hesitate from employing a child; for them toiling children at the workplace was part of the normalcy of growing up and taking on more responsibilities.

Table 3.24: Number and % Distribution of Sample *Ustaad's* Educational Status			
Sr. No	*Ustaad's* Educational Status	Number of *Ustaad*	%
1	Illiterate	21	60%
2	Under Primary	0	0%
3	Primary Pass	14	40%
Total		35	100%

3.7.2. Age Profile of *Ustaads*

The majority of these *Ustaads,* 63% were young men in their mid twenties and still displayed playful mannerisms in carrying out their business activities. The rest, 37%, *Ustaads* were in their thirties and above and much more focused and determined in their interactions.

Table 3.25: Number and % Distribution of Sample *Ustaad's* Age			
Sr. No	*Ustaad's* Age	Number of *Ustaad*	%
1	20-29 years	22	63%
2	30 years and above	13	37%
Total		**35**	**100%**

3.7.3. Marital Status of *Ustaads*

A predominant number of these *Ustaads,* 74%, were married with one or more children of their own. These *Ustaads* had married at a relatively young age. The ability to earn a steady monthly income was a sufficient reason for their parents to marry these men at relatively young age.

Table 3.26: Number and % Distribution of Sample *Ustaad's* Marital Status			
Sr. No	*Ustaad's* Marital Status	Number of *Ustaad*	%
1	Un-Married	9	26%
2	Married	26	74%
	Divorced/Widowed	0	0%
Total		**35**	**100%**

However, regardless of them being married or their age, the *Ustaads'* dealing with child labourers would invariably be stern.

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Picture 3.6:   Only toilet at *Akhtar Ka Ahata* with four short walls and no roof

Picture 3.7: *Phairy walla* **(Street vendor) selling sweet cakes at** *Akhtar Ka Ahata*

Picture 3.8: Child Labourer at workshop

Chapter 4
Decision Making Processes About Children's Future

A multitude of factors affect families' perceptions and their decision-making processes about the roles and responsibilities of children towards the family and themselves. Clearly, cultural norms influence perceptions about children and the kinds of functions they must perform. Poorer economic conditions also play a significant part in families envisaging certain roles for their children. However, the family's overriding concerns about the future of their children were influenced and shaped by the cultural norms and restricted by economic constraints; determine the roles and responsibilities for their children.

4.1.   Child's Lack of Interest in School Education

The data collected indicated that all parents were unanimously in favor of education and considered school as the first entry point for a child into the world outside the home. In social gatherings people would discuss the need to send young children to school and the focus would be on the importance school plays for a child's future. Data indicated that most parents enrolled their children in school, while some failed to do so due to a variety of reasons.

The majority of families aspired to keep children in school, as it would lead their children towards a life of comfort and ease. The data showed that most of the sample children (74%) did enroll in school indicating that education remained the first choice for their

families. However, all of these children dropped out of school between 2nd and 4th grades, well before completing their primary education.

A wide spread reason cited by parents for discontinuing the education of their children was lack of interest or inability of their child to continue school education. This argument squarely placed the 'blame' on children for rejecting school education. However, a detailed examination of this perception brought to fore factors that contribute to children's disinterest in education. Some of the reasons given by parents for discontinuing children's education are given below:

- *"This child did not pay attention to his school education".*
- *"The School also refused to keep him in school due to his lack of interest ".*
- *"His (child) mind does not work properly in education".*
- *"He refused to go to school"*
- *"He was very naughty and disobedient and does not want to study at school"*
- *"This child used to waste his time in streets after school"*

School education even at the primary level demands a certain level of back-up educational support from the family to help the child continue education. This was a challenge for the parents who were mostly poor and illiterate themselves. The majority of fathers, 87 %, were illiterate, and only 13 percent were either literate or had attended a few years of school education below primary level. All mothers were found to be illiterate. The lack of back-up educational support from parents to their school going children placed more pressure on the child as he would not be able to do his homework or learn his school lessons properly.

Parents would then complain that their children were unable to apply their minds to school education and gradually lost interest in their studies. Mapping the children's 24 hours time span when they were going to school provided useful insights. The children, after attending school, would typically spend their time playing in the streets, watching television programs in the evening and playing with siblings. They were also required to go to the mosque to learn the Quran (holy book); it was rare to find children doing their school home-work. The pie chart below gives a snapshot of the average time distribution of a 24-hour-cycle of the sample children when they were attending school.

Pie Chart 4.1: % Average Time Distribution of Child Labourers When Attending School

While Attending School: Percentage Distribution of 24-hours Cycle

Meals 8%
Religious Edu 8%
Play, Leisure, TV 21%
School 25%
Night Sleep 38%
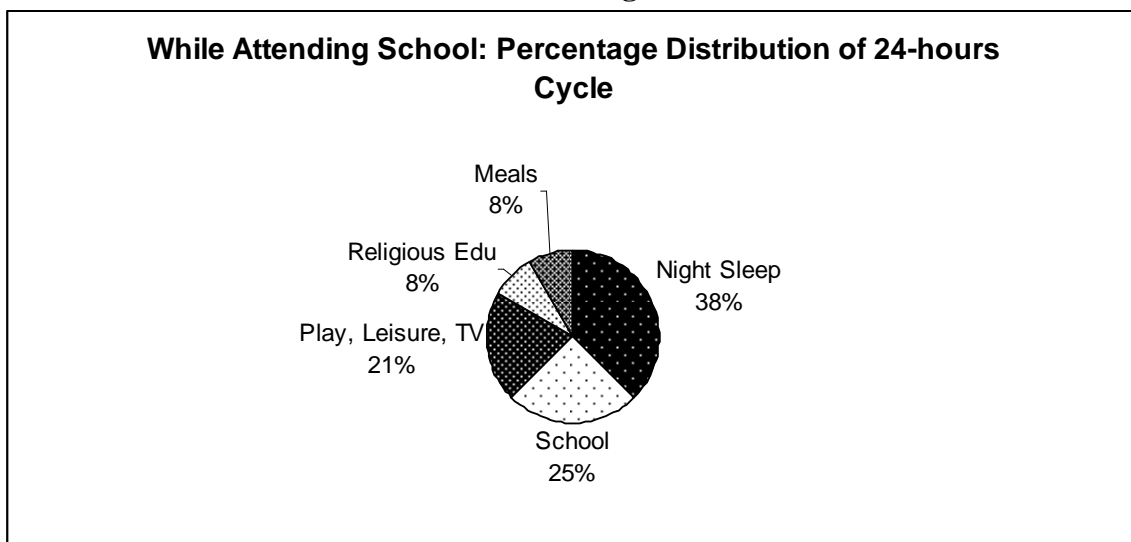
The lack of educational support from the parents resulted in the children losing interest in their studies. This situation was exacerbated by the fact that the quality of teaching at government schools and the level of effort put in by the teachers had not been sufficient to help children improve their learning at school. This lack of quality school education resulted in increased pressure on the children, who were unable to cope with the lessons

without additional educational support. In addition, there was a lack of interaction between the parents and the teachers regarding the school performance of the children. The teachers were using outdated teaching methods and they also maintained an aggressive attitude towards children. The teachers would not explain the basic concepts to children, and teaching methods primarily relied on rote learning. At the same time children were given a large amount of homework on a daily basis. This situation that resulted from the neglect of children's academic life placed a huge educational burden on them.

The children's ability to learn school lessons declined with time and when their performance became weak they would be physically punished by the teachers. Corporal punishments at schools were a frequent occurrence and this would further complicate the situation as many of the children, without the knowledge of the parents, found refuge by running away from school and spending time on the streets. All children, who went to school, reported excessive corporal punishments at school that included humiliation, slapping, beating with a stick and physical punishments that involved assuming awkward physical positions.

Case Study: Corporal Punishment in School

A 13-year old child, from a family of 7, narrated his ordeal of corporal punishment at the hands of the school teacher. The child's father was illiterate and a plumber. The child had abandoned school education and was learning to become an auto-mechanic from his *Ustaad*. He said that corporal punishment and humiliation was a common practice of school teachers. He shared one incident of severe punishment that he received from his mathematics

teacher while studying in 4th grade in a government school. Despite working on multiplication techniques for various months the child could not master them. Once, when he could not solve a mathematic problem on the blackboard, his Mathematics teacher started beating him. The teacher slapped him and then repeatedly hit him multiple times with a wooden stick. The child suffered multiple bruises on his hands and on the back. These kinds of corporal punishments were a regular feature at the school and were not limited to the Math's teacher alone. He said that many other children would also suffer punishments at the hands of different teachers for not doing homework or memorizing their lessons.

These children were facing a twin challenge, that is, lack of quality school education coupled with corporal punishment in schools, and the absence of educational support at home. This twin challenge resulted in their gradual but continued disinterest in school education. The children also started running away from school without informing the parents or the teachers and instead they started spending time on the streets. Eventually these children either abandoned school, or the parents terminated their school education or they were expelled from school due to poor performance in the annual examination.

4.2. Cultural Abhorrence to Children's Idleness

In typical stereotype Pakistani families, male children are expected to be obedient, hardworking, receive education, become economically active and financially support their families. Under this narrative any out of school child who is not involve in any productive activities will be considered idle. If such a child, who was about to reach or has attained puberty, would be strictly admonished for his idleness[1]. The parents' main

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[1] Parents would consider a child idle if he is not going to school and spending time in playful activities at home, or worst in street

fear would be the fact that such idleness could easily develop into deviancy[2]. Parents tend to change their perceptions about children around this age as they were expected to show an increased level of responsibility towards their future.

There was an overwhelming need shown by the parents to ensure a good upbringing for their children. One of the main worries parents had was the need to inculcate a value system in their children. For them, it was important that their children have a sense of respect for elders, be obedient, kind, and hardworking. The sample parents constantly gave these messages in the shape of advice, instruction, and admonishment to make their children develop these attributes. Moreover, the overriding concern among parents was the fear of idle children becoming delinquent[3]. The parents wanted their children to develop good habits. In the environment that the families were living in *Dhok Hassu* there was a strong possibility that their idle children would become involved in activities that were unproductive and even criminal. For parents, in such a situation, the possibility of their children become rebellious and delinquent was high.

Similarly, the concept of 'dignity of work and effort' as opposed to idleness was culturally valued and vigorously promoted by parents, elders, and the community. Children were constantly given messages to fulfill their responsibilities and work hard, even if they had to endure physical and psychological difficulties in the process. Children from young age were frequently encouraged to develop habits that made them

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[2] Deviancy is defined as consisting of actions or behaviors that violate cultural norms including formally-enacted rules and informal violations of social norms. Parents fear that children can develop behaviors that are socially and culturally unacceptable and lead to crime.

[3] A person who is typically under the age of 18 and commits an act that otherwise would've been charged as a crime if they were an adult.

hardworking and principled in their work ethic at a young age. Some of these culturally developed messages are given below:

- *"Na karsain kam na khasain choori"*
  (If one does not work hard one cannot reap the sweet fruit);
- *"Mahanat day beghair khakh nahin"*
  (nothing can be achieved without hard work) and similar other sayings.
- *changa o jera ziyada mehnat karay*
  (the best is the one who toils the most)

Such sayings were constantly quoted by parents to encourage their children to become hard working and inculcate in them abhorrence for idleness. There was a strong belief that working hard will bring blessings to the family. Therefore a child who was placed at work generally won appreciation and cultural legitimacy from family and friends. Such a child was socially and culturally perceived as one who was not only toiling to learn a skill but would have an easy start in life to shoulder the responsibilities of his parents. The idea was that efforts made at the present time would help the child and his family in the future in monetary (better income) and social (respect for the family) terms.

Social concepts that promote hard work and served as an antithesis to idleness were repeatedly shared with children. Many parents had a strong belief that a constant struggle despite all odds helped in achieving something substantial in life, otherwise one could not progress in life. Some of the statements of parents in this regard are quoted below:

- "*In villages peasants till lands, sow seeds, water it, take care of saplings, and after toiling day and night for long period they enjoy the fruits of their efforts with a good yield. Similarly, parents need to ensure that children work hard to get ready for the future", reflected a mother of a child who was working in a spray-paint workshop. She was*

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> *explaining the need for children to become responsible and hard working.*

- *"Learning a skill is very important, as it helps in life. Those who do not work, lose their image in society. There is no sweeter fruit than the result of your hard work. We ensure that our children understand this fully", indicated a father, a cook by profession, whose child was a school dropout from 3rd grade and now learning to become an auto-mechanic at an auto-repair workshop.*

- *"There is dignity in work. An idle person fails and gets humiliated in society. I do not want my child to waste time in streets. I have seen such boys get into all sorts of troubles including crimes and drugs. Whatever you sow so shall you reap. My child could have continued his school education but couldn't. Now he is learning how to decorate trucks", this was stated by a father of a 10 year old child learning the skill of truck decoration work.*

Social values that were ascribed to the work carried out by hand (manual work) also won people's respect. The respect for such work increased when the person performing such a difficult task was a child. Culturally, the concepts of dignity of hard work and abhorrence to idleness were robustly promoted among children. Those children who were believed to be hard working and focused on their goals were often praised and quoted as role models to other children. A grown up child from a poor family and idle, in other words, not going to school or learning a skill or a helping parent, would sooner or later be forced into the world of work to learn a skill.

4.3.   Deviance Avoidance through Work-place Skill Learning

The sample parents were unanimous that once schools failed, their idle children were susceptible to develop deviancy due to wasting time in the streets. The fear that child would pick up bad habits, including smoking, substance abuse that may also lead to

stealing and street crimes. The worst case scenario fear was that child by spending time in streets may become part of criminal gangs. Notwithstanding parents' desire for their child to excel in education, they fell short of alternative options when their children dropped out of school. A child around the puberty age and not going to school would invariably spend more time in the streets and could easily develop deviant habits ranging from smoking, street crimes to substance abuse. Involvement of children in such negative activities would not only be a great personal loss for the parents but would also result in a severe backlash from the community and the extended family. Therefore, the parents of these children relied on workplace skill learning, as a mechanism to avoid possible deviancy in them.

Case Study: From Streets to Workplace

One 40 year old man, who was a daily wage earner and feeding his family of six, shared how he managed to put his elder child into some productive activities. His eldest child was 13 years of age and went to an auto workshop to learn skills. The father gave an insightful account of why his child goes to an Ustaad. "We are poor people. I cannot afford the expenditure of his education. His fate only allowed him to complete 3rd grade. My child started bunking school and for more than three years he wasted time. He used to spend time in the house or in the streets. I became worried when his mother informed that he had been frequently involved in street brawls with other children, and was also stealing money from home. I used to beat him almost daily in the evening. That was a difficult time. With no school option, he would spend most of the day in streets. The only choice I could think off was to find a suitable Ustaad who could teach him some skill and keep him occupied the entire day. With great difficulty, I arranged for him to go to this auto repair workshop to learn some skill. Now, I thank God he is off the streets and regularly goes to the Workshop. The Ustaad is also happy with my son's work, and told me that he is good at learning this skill. Soon, in a few years, my son will be able to start his own small workshop. We are now satisfied with him.

Case Study: Avoiding Streets through Workshops Skill Learning

The father of a 12 year old child labourer, who was learning to become a mechanic of brake and shocks of the vehicles, shared how he saved his child from possible delinquency. "School mera mnda chad chukiya see teesrai jammat whech. Saari saari dehari aye galiyaan whech phirda see. Phelay ussan ziyada parwaa na keetee. Phair anain dostiayaan paa litiyaan. Oo munday theek nain saan. Meri biwi dassya kay cigarette wee peenay shroo kar ditay saan. Saonoon tay fikar lag gaye kay kithay awara garad na ban jaye. Baar dostain which tay soot, gaal galoch, maar kutaai, tay naal phaer chars, tay chorri chikaari sab chalda jay. Niri badnaami khandan dee. Main change kutiya munday noon tay pher Ustaad kool bitha dita kaam sikhan wastay gadiyaan dee breakan da. Hun theek hay".

(My son had left school in 3rd grade. He used to waste time all day in streets. In the beginning we did not bother much. After some time, he started developing friendships with some bad boys. My wife also told me that he started smoking. We got worried that he might become a vagabond. In bad company children develop the habit of smoking, get into street fights, also start substance abuse and even commit petty crimes. It also brings a bad name for the family. I gave him a beating and then made him sit with the Ustaad to learn the skill of fixing brakes and shocks. Now he is fine."

In most families it is not just the parents that have a say in decisions regarding the child's future. The extended family members (grandparents, uncles and aunts) also proclaim the right to reprimand the parents that their child is becoming *awara (a vagabond)* if he is not studying or working. For such poor families, the best and most viable option is to place their children in the care of an *Ustaad.*

After leaving school and before starting work with an *Ustaad* most of these children had remained idle for about a year. These children would primarily spend their time in the

streets. The parents' idealistic values of seeing their child attain a bright educational career in the future were replaced with more practical concerns. They had to ensure their child adopt a certain vocation that would enable him built a career and support himself. Mostly, it was the decision of parents to send their children to an *Ustaad* to learn a skill. The decision to stop a child from school was usually supported by the extended family and social circle, and in many instances even encouraged by them.

This decision was also influenced by the environment in which they lived where they would see young boys, sometimes from their neighborhood or family, working with an *Ustaad* and becoming a functional member of society in a span of few years. The cultural and social norm to place a child with an *Ustaad* further pressurized the families of these children.

> "*Learning a skill from an Ustaad is good. Now he is small but still he will earn something by going to the workshop. When he will learn the skill, then his life will be much better. He will be able to support us too. He will also transfer this skill to others. This would be like Sadqa-Jariya[4]", opined the mother of an 11 year old who was learning auto-electrician skill.*
>
> "*My child will stay away from street-fighting and other sinful activities. He will learn this skill and not become a burden on the family", was the view of a Father of a 12 years old child working in a truck decoration workshop.*

Parents' strong belief had been that the children's skill learning at the work place would help avoid the development of deviant behavior in their children. Parents were also

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[4] Islamic concept about good deeds that have multiplying effect to generate Allah's blessings, both in this life and the life after

confident that children's time at the workplaces would help them learn the lessons of life and taking responsibilities.

4.4. Child Labour: Employment or Skills Learning

It is important to describe the operational definition of 'work' that was used among the community members. In multiple interviews with parents and *Ustaads*, they would describe a certain child "*Kaam tay janada aye" (goes to work),* and not to school. Here the *Punjabi* language word *kaam* when translated into the English language becomes 'work', which could be further understood in employment. However, when these parents were probed about whether it meant that their child has *naukri* (an employment), the responses were important. The parents would qualify their initial response, stating that naukri *nain, halay tay kam sikhh raya jay (*child does not has an employment, presently he is only learning the skill). This was the parents' view, even though the child would bring home some money on a daily or weekly basis from the *Ustaad.* This money could also be described a daily or weekly 'wage' or a 'stipend'.

Clearly, such a position of parents indicates a divergence of views between the community and child right activists. From the standpoint of child rights activists, and indeed many of the researchers, the presence of children at the workplaces could still be an employment arrangement as opposed to a skill learning one. On the contrary, parents were of the view that children at the workplaces learned skills and were not engaged in employment.

4.5.   Youth Employment: School Education versus Workplace Skill Learning

For parents, another concern was the future of their children in terms of early entry into the world of work as part of the productive youth[5] force. Before making a decision about the future of their idle child, parents were compelled to evaluate the efficiency of continued school education in comparison to skill learning at the workplace. Although, parents felt school education was important for character building and making children aware of the world, their chief concern remained whether continued education of their children would lead to gainful future employment. Indeed school education, for many poor families, served as a stepping-stone for upward social mobility. However, for these parents the poor school performance of their children forced them to rethink the options.

These parents' limited financial resources denied them enough room to invest money and time required for a reasonably higher education of their children. Moreover, another obstacle they encountered was the absence of an immediate link after the completion of 10th grade schooling with immediate employment. At the same time, parents also knew that even 10th grade education might not be enough for their child to secure a job that could lead to a meaningful change in the social and economic status of their family.

The parents also expressed the view that even if a poor family makes an effort to get their child higher education (10th grade certificate or above) it might not be enough to find employment. The parents felt that they lacked the necessary clout or *sifarish* (the right connections) needed to secure an employment for their youth. The general view was that

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[5] "Pakistan Employment Trend 2008: Youth" published by Ministry of Labour, Manpower and Overseas Pakistanis, Islamabad defines youth as 15-24 years of age, p 9.

securing an employment in the public or private sector required the push of strong political and/or administrative connections. They believed that without such strong connections (with a minister, or MNA[6] or MPA[7]) securing an employment for their youth was not possible. They were of the view that another option to secure employment for their youth was through heavy bribes, which they could not afford either. In order to support their arguments parents quoted examples from the neighborhood where some families who did not have such clout failed to find employment for their educated youth (with 10th grade certificate).

Moreover, it was also believed that if after matriculation the child did not do well in college then he would encounter difficulty in finding a reasonably good employment only on the basis of his matriculation certificate. In addition, at that stage the child would not be willing to learn any skill from the *Ustaad*. This would then take away the chance for the child to become independent and a functional member of the family and society in any meaningful way. These families also believed formal education lacked quality, required long-term investment of time and resources that they did not have, and did not guarantee future employment. In other words, the ideals of education were quickly suppressed by the pragmatism of their every-day realities.

The option of skills and vocation learning from proper training centers was not known to all of these families, especially at the stage when children were taken off or dropped out of school. Moreover, matriculation (10th grade) is the minimum educational qualification

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[6] Member of National Assembly (MNA)
[7] Member of Provincial Assembly (MPA)

required to enter the skills training centers. None of the sample children could even complete primary school thus sending their child to a skill training center did not occur as an option in the parents' decision making.

On the other hand, the parents believed that the option of informal skill learning at workshops for their idle children was a practical and meaningful alternative. For these parents the established linkages between the informal skills training phase and employment in the near future was an extremely attractive option for their idle children. Evidence to this effect was available within the communities where such children acquired skills in a few years at the workplaces, transformed into productive youth, and had entered into a gainful employment or initiated their own enterprise.

Ustaads were unanimous in saying that skilled children can easily find employment in early youth; and they also had similar reasoning like the parents. The *Ustaads* were of the view that education needs lots of time and even after completing matriculation a young person may not find a job. Even if he found a job it would be around rupees two to three thousand a month and that too as a mere helper and no prospects for growth. *Ustaads* indicated that their skilled children may start earning rupees eight to ten thousand rupees a month by the time they were 16 years of age. With the passage of time such skilled person's monthly income would increase.

Parents felt that a boy soon after ten years of age could start skill-learning. This age was considered appropriate enough for a child to take care of himself, pay attention to the

Ustaad, and take increased responsibilities. This was further supported by evidence that none of those children who entered school, studied for the purposes of this research, could complete primary education, and soon after dropping out from school entered the workshops.

The field data was also in line with the national situation regarding youth's involvement with the world of work. The National Labour Forces Survey 2006-07, indicated 14.1 million youth aged 15-24 years were in work force, making 35% of population 15 years and above. It also indicates that "in 2006-07 more than half of the youth labour force (62.2%) had either less than one year or just primary education, and just 2.7% had attained a university degree"[8].

This is the background of decision-making where these families chose workplace based skills learning for their idle children instead of their continued education. The parents were not short of justifications for their children's entry to the workplace.

- *"School tay chal nahin sakia. Agar bacha umar day hasab naal kam sikh lay, tay uss bachay daye mustaqbil wastay bara faida mand hay. Naukari wastay tangee mohtajee nahin hoey gee"*
  (He could not perform at school. If a child learns a trade according to his age, it is inevitable that it will be fruitful for the child in the future. He will not face the problem of finding him an employment)", shared by one mother of a 9 year old child from auto- workshop.

- *"Bacha sirif kam de jaga tay hunar sikh sakda jay. Hor koi jaga nain jithay bacha hunar sikh lay tay baad wech changa guzar wee ker lay. Agey appna karobaar wee shrooo kar sakda hay."*

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[8] Pakistan Employment Trends 2008: Youth", op.cit., p. 40

(A child can learn skills only at a workshop as there is no other place where he can learn skills and later earn a good living. In future, he could start his own business too)", was the view of the father of a 12 years child working in spray paint workshop.

- *"Hunar sikhan da bachay nu mustaqbil whech faida hay. Aistaraah bacha mehnat da aadi wee ho janda jay tay zimandariyan chukan wastay sakht jaan wee ban janad jay. School dee taleem dey muqabalay which hunar sikhan baad rozgaar jaldee mil janada jay."*

(Learning a trade is bound to help a child in future. Skill learning makes children hard working and hardened to endurework responsibilities. Unlike school education, skill learning gives assured employment at young age)", shared by father of 13 years old child working in a brake and shock repair workshop.

Mostly, parents found advantages for their child to start learning a skill form an *Ustaad* instead of continued school education. Yet, they still felt that their child had lost something by not being able to continue their school education. The parents did understand that those children who could complete the full cycle of education to its logical end (college, professional colleges, or university) would benefit eventually and succeed. However, the cost of such a choice both in terms of time and finances was discouraging for these families who often had limited means.

4.6. Reasons for *Ustaad* to Allow Children to Work

The *Ustaad* also preferred allowing children to work on their workshops, as it was easy to manage business with them. *Ustaads* unanimously indicated that a child from the age of 10-12 years could come to the workplace. However, there were a few who also indicated that children below the age of 10 years could also start learning skills. However, the

basic motive of the *Ustaad* to allow a child to come to his workplace was not teaching the novice skills. It was to the *Ustaad's* advantage to have a helping hand and children can be easily manipulated to run errands. In addition, they are cheap labour for the *Ustaad.* Teaching children skills was not the first motive of the *Ustaad.* The following were some of the statements of the sample *Ustaads*:

- *"Jera munda prahi whech fail aye, unoon kam tay panday naye maan piyo"* (Parents send those children to work who are failures in school education)
- *"Ghareebe de waja naal wee maan pioy munday noon parah nahin sakday tay kaam tay paan dainday nay"* (Due to poverty parents cannot send their children to school and instead send them to work)
- *"Jiss waylay munda awaara hoon lagay taan wee ainoon kaam sikhaan wastay minat karday nay. (When a child is wasting time in streets, his parents would send their child to work)*

All sample *Ustaads* agreed that allowing children to work in the workshop would eventually help them perform their jobs better. In the beginning these children were complete novices. However, they soon started learning how to perform various tasks at the workshops. They quickly learn to carry out mundane tasks like washing tools, cleaning the workplace, arranging and locating the right tool, running around to get various things done. This support helps *Ustaads* and adult workers perform their jobs better. When these children have learnt the skill reasonably well, the *Ustaad* would delegate most of the basic tasks to these children to complete. This would allow the *Ustaad* to accept more business, get it performed by semi proficient children and supervise that work. Although, the business would flourish and gain profits for the *Ustaad* too, these children would still receive relatively little money in terms of wages,

yet all this time the parents would remain indebted to the *Ustaad* for teaching their children the skill.

4.7.   Costs for Parents: Work Place Skill Learning Versus School Education

Another dimension of the research was the 'cost of school education' that played a significant role in the presence of limited financial resources available to the poor families. Although, the government has made education free of cost and provides free books to children in government primary schools, there were a host of other education related costs that parents had to bear. These education-related expenses included purchasing school uniforms/school shoes, copies and stationary. Even these were too high a cost for the families to sustain. These families were large with many children and the combination of the cost of food, clothing, housing, and health already exceeded their monthly income thus making education for children a luxury.

A basic estimate was carried out, with the extensive inputs of parents and *Ustaads,* to determine the annual cost incurred by parents to keep their child in primary school or alternatively for work place based skill acquisition. These costs are estimated only and calculated to develop a broader picture of parents' expenditure on children in both the scenarios. However, these estimates make the point clearer that poor parents do not have much of a choice when it comes to choosing between school-education and learning skills at a workshop with an *Ustaad,* given the incurred costs. Table 4.1 lists these costs.

	Table 4.1: Estimated Average Annual Costs Borne by Parents & Government to Keep Child in School		
S. No.	Description	Average Annual Expenditures (Rs)	
		For Parents	For Govt.
1	School Books	0	500
2	Copies and Stationary	600	0
3	School Uniform	1000	0
4	School shoes	350	0
5	School Bag	150	0
6	Lunch Money (Rs 2/daily X 192 Days)	384	0
8	Stipend for Education	0	0
	Total	**2484**	**500**

The basic listing of eight categories indicated the average financial resources that parents were required to allocate on one child's school education and also expenditures that the government incurs. However, costing regarding the school building, teacher's salaries and other allied government expenditures have not been factored in to keep the analysis less cumbersome. It was obvious that parents had to spend on an average more than Rs. 200 a month and annually more than Rs. 2400 to keep one child in school.

In contrast, the analysis of costs involved to keep a child in the workplace skill-learning environment depicted an interesting scenario from the parents' point of view. The same basic listing of eight categories of various costs factors have been employed indicating that average financial resources that parents may require to allocate to one child's workplace-based skill learning and also the expenditures that an *Ustaad* will incur in the process. The parents did not need to spend a single rupee on a child's workplace based skill learning. In fact, it was the *Ustaad* who took care of everything from tools to raw

materials and the repair business was brought in by the customer. Table 4.2 provides list of costs incurred to place child at the workplace.

S. No.	Description	Average Annual Expenditures (Rs)	
		For Parents	For *Ustaad*
1	Workplace Tools	0	Provided
2	Raw Materials	0	Provided
3	Workplace Uniform	0	0
4	Workplace Shoes	0	0
5	Workplace Tool Box	0	Provided
6	Lunch (Rs 20 X 280 Days)	0	5,600
8	Entry Level Wage for Child (Rs. 600 x 12 Months)	0	7,200
	Total	**0**	**12,800**

Table 4.2: Estimated Annual Costs Borne by Parents and *Ustaad* to Keep Child at Workplace

The *Ustaad* also provided free lunches to the child while at the workplace and food was of the same quality that the *Ustaad* himself enjoyed. Moreover, at the end of each day, the *Ustaad* would give at least Rs 20 to the child (at the entry level) as daily wage or pocket money and at the end of the week at least Rs 50 to the child. The basic estimation indicated that the accumulation of all costs borne by *Ustaad* would be close to rupees 13,000 annually. The *Ustaad* would incur these minimum costs for every child at the entry level in the workplace. This was in addition to the skills that the *Ustaad* transferred to the child during a one-year period.

Clearly, both scenarios made the choices abundantly clear for the parents to make up their mind about the child's developmental needs. This was also the reason that the majority of the *Ustaads* indicated that there were many poor parents who want their boys to start workplace based skills learning as compared to continuing to study at school or

wasting time in streets. Around 43% sample *Ustaads* indicated that despite many parents wanting to send their child for workplace based skill learning, they did not need more children. However, around 57% said that due to an increase in the workload they needed to induct more children and were looking around to find suitable child candidates. In fact, one *Ustaad,* Imran Khan, running a small auto-workshop indicated that he needed to have seven more children at his workplace, though he already had one child worker. *Ustaad* Imran had ran an auto-repair workshop successfully and maintained an excellent reputation in the market.

4.8. Child's Income to Meet Family's Consumption Needs

A frequent argument with reference to the child labour discourse is the link between the income generated by child labourers and gratification of poor family's consumption needs. An attempt has been made in this research to explore this link in a holistic manner.

Interested parents and a willing *Ustaad* will allow a child to start coming to work more or less from 10 years[9] of age and onwards. Various *Ustaads* indicated that the entry age was roughly around 10-years of age for the auto-workshop and spray painting occupations and 12 years of age for the truck decoration occupation. This is the age from where the child is mature enough to carry out both complex instructions and demonstrate the ability to undertake multiple tasks. According to Piaget's theory of development where he identified four stages of development; the last and 4th stage called 'Formal operational

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[9] However, there were instances where children below the age of 10 years were also found at these workplaces.

thought' starts after the age of 11 years. Children at this age start developing their ability to think hypothetically and beyond the boundaries of direct experience (Piaget, 1950).

Studying the sample children it was observed that in the beginning a child was totally raw and actually knew nothing about the world of work, its mechanics, and the ability to interact with the *Ustaad,* co-workers, customers, other shopkeepers in the vicinity. Moreover, the child had no prior knowledge or experience of the skill set required for performing tasks at the workplace.

The mere presence of a child at the workplace did not make the child entitled to any meaningful income, even if he was from a poor family. Children from the entry level till the time they had spent at least a few years in the trade would keep receiving small amounts of money from their *Ustaad* on a daily and weekly basis. Certainly, the wage would increase from the entry level with the passage of time.

Table 4.3 on wages was developed, based on the information gathered from various *Ustaads,* and child labourers, in the occupations of truck decoration, auto-workshop, and spray painting regarding the wages[10] that child labourer would get in these three professions. The minimum starting wage that these children received at the entry level was Rs 20 per day and Rs 50 on the weekend (monthly accumulation of Rs 600).

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[10] For details discussion on the development of this wage estimation, refer to chapter 5, Section 5.11 "Child Labour Income: Current and Future Projections"

	Truck Decoration		Auto-Workshops		Spray Painting	
Table 4.3: Monthly Estimated Income Projections for Child Labourers Across Three Occupations						
Age	Experience (years)	Monthly* Wage (Rs)	Experience (years)	Monthly* Wage (Rs)	Experience (years)	Monthly* Wage (Rs)
10 years	-	-	0	600	0	600
11 years	-	-	1	800	1	1200
12 years	0	900	2	1200	2	1800
13 years	1	1500	3	1800	3	3000
14 years	2	2400	4	2100	4	3500
15 years	3	3600	5	2400	5	4500
16 years	4	4600	6	3300	6	6000
17 years	5	7500	7	4500	7	9000
18 years	6	10000	8	6000	8	10500

* Till the age of 14 years, the monthly wage is mostly given on daily and weekly basis.
Amounts indicated here are the estimations made in discussion with Ustaads of these three occupations

However, it was around the age of 14 years, after a few years of experience had been accumulated, that the child would start receiving a relatively substantial monthly wage from the *Ustaad.* The chart above indicates that from the age of 14 years onwards these children would cross the threshold of Rs 2000 per month and were given a monthly wage. During peak business times in the month when extra repair jobs were successfully handled by this now grown up and experienced child, the *Ustaad* would give him additional money.

During the first two years of work, children were hardly able to earn any significant amount of money. In the first year at work, with almost a negligible set of skills, these

children received less than Rs 1000 a month. Almost half of the sample children, 54%, were earning less than Rs. 1000 a month. Their monthly incomes ranged between Rs 600 to Rs 1000 a month. Another 21% had an average work experience of eighteen months and were on average earning Rs 1400 monthly. Table 4.4 presents the average monthly income of the children.

Table 4.4: Average Monthly Income of Sample Children		
No. of Sample Children	% of Children	Average Monthly Income (Rs)
38	54%	600
15	21%	1400
13	19%	2500
4	6%	5700
70	100%	

Those children, earning less than Rs 2000 a month, would receive this money in small chunks on a daily or weekly basis. Thus a child who was earning Rs 600 a month would receive daily Rs. 20 during the five days of the week and Rs 50 on the 6th day of the week, the weekend. Money coming into the house in small amounts, part of it consumed by the child, did not figure too significantly for the parents. In other words, a majority of the sample children, 75%, were not earning enough to significantly contribute and help the family meet its immediate consumption needs.

In an effort to trace the end use of the money that children received from the *Ustaad* as daily and weekly money, the consumption patterns of these children was looked at. The field data indicated that children consumed some money themselves, but a large share of their small earnings did actually end up with their parents, particularly with the mothers. The concepts of responsibilities towards their respective families were inculcated in the

minds of these children. Most of the children, 69%, gave most of their earnings to parents and another 21% gave all their earnings to the parents. There were 10 % children who kept all the money with themselves for their own use. Usually the mothers used the money as disposable cash for small kitchen expenditures and/or kept it as small savings.

Pie Chart 4.2: % Distribution of Usage of Sample Children's Income

Earnings of Children: Who Uses It

□ Give to Parents ■ Most to Parents, Little for myself □ Keep myself

10%

21%

69%
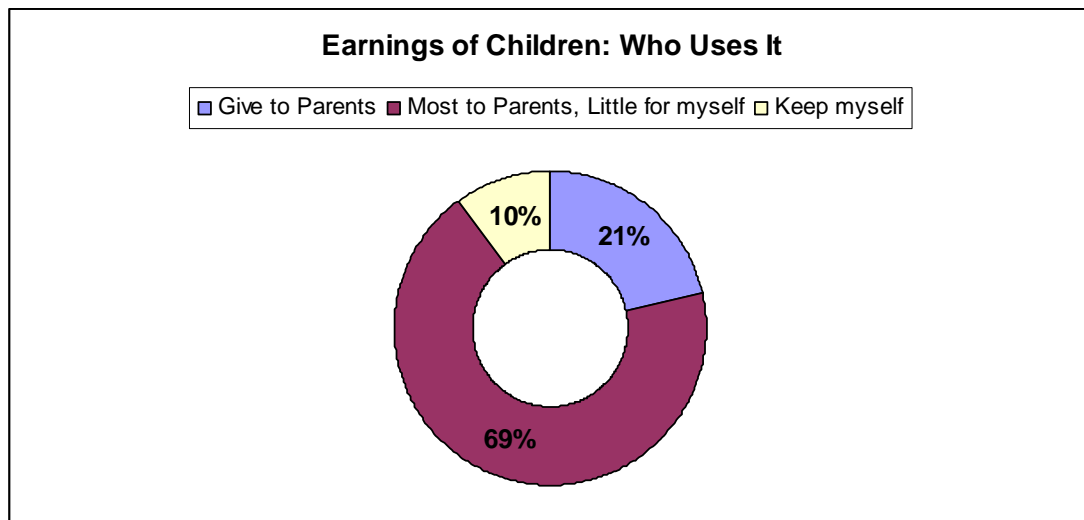
However, parents and the *Ustaad* had a different perspective on the link between a child's income and the gratification of family's consumption needs. None of the parents viewed a child's income as a substantial source to meet the family's needs. The child's income remained invisible and did not necessarily bring substantial relief to family's consumption needs.

The most overriding concern of the parents had been to ensure that the child become financially independent in the near future. The following are some quotes of the sample parent, the *Ustaad*, and the child labourer regarding the income of these children:

- *"It is not the income generated by the child that we are after. Look, if the child does not learn skills and stays idle that is not good. We think about the child's future. For us the first choice is education of our child, and if he cannot succeed in education then at least he should learn a skill or a trade"*, remarked one sample father, who was an auto-riksha (three wheeler vehicle) driver.

- *"These parents', whose children have been working for a couple of years or so, hardly get any money from their child's income. Parents do not really rely on that income. Mostly it is used by the child. At this stage, parents motivation is not really the money but their desire for the child to learn the skills, and the hope that soon the child will start earning good money"*, was the explanation given by an Ustaad associated with the auto-workshops.

- *"I give most of the money to my mother, and some times I also get part of that money back if I need it. Part of the money I spent to buy sweets, chips, (other exotic edibles) videogames, and as you know watching movies at the internet café during weekends. Those are very entertaining and sexy. Sometimes, I also buy a toy with my earnings"*. While giving his version, the 13 years old child, working in auto repair workshop, showed both his childhood innocence and effects of his exposure to an unfriendly adult environment - where sex and violence were discussed freely in front of children.

Even though the parents' chief claimed concerns were about the future of the child and the desire to make him a skilled person, the child's income was still bringing in some relief. The field data also indicated that in the majority of instances, 71 %, parents reported that the major portion of child's small income was spent by the family while some of it was spent by the child. The parents shared that the child's income was partly helpful to buy food items or pay the utility bills. However, all the sample parents have clarified that the child's income was hardly any contribution to the family income. In any

case, the children were giving a significant part of their little income to their mothers. In significant number of cases (29%) parents reported that children consumed their earnings.

Table 4.5: Parents Views on Consumption of Child Labourers' Income

Parents views on Consumption of Child's Income		
All Consumed by Child	10	29%
Most Consumed by Family and Some by Child	25	71%
Total	**35**	**100%**

However, these children were sent to an *Ustaad* with the hope that after learning the skill, in their teens, they would become a source of financial strength for the family. For these parents, immediate economic gratification form the child's income was not a motivation to place the child at the workplace. However, the small amount of money that trickles into the house on a daily or weekly basis did not figure too prominently in the minds of parents as compared to their desire to make their child skillful for his financial independence in the near future.

4.9. Process and Arrangements to Place Child at Workplace

When parents made-up their minds that the child now needs to be handed over to the *Ustaad* for the skill learning, the process to find a suitable *Ustaad* becomes more important than to gauge the aptitude of the child for a particular occupation. However, some discussion may take place based on here-say or a father's observations regarding the suitability of a trade for the child. In the end, this was not an important enough consideration to choose a suitable occupation. The focus was on locating a reliable

Ustaad who could succeed in transforming the child and making him skilful in a few years. It was convenient, and reassuring, if the *Ustaad was* already known to the family.

By and large parents were careful in picking the right *Ustaad* regarding his credibility and reputation and they would not leave their child with just any *Ustaad.* The following criteria were usually adopted by parents in selecting an *Ustaad* to train the child:

. living in the neighborhood,
. a relative, an acquaintance, or father's/uncle's friend
. has been identified through a reference
. has a good moral reputation
. does not take drugs

The agreement of the *Ustaad* to allow the child to come to the workplace would be considered a major success. Parents did not really put in any demands from the *Ustaad* in terms of wages, except that he agreed to admit the child in his workshop. No terms and conditions were determined about the arrangement. The data indicated that all parents simply reached a verbal understanding with the *Ustaads*. In fact, the parents expressed their gratitude to the *Ustaad* for letting their child come to his workplace. Many parents did indicate to the *Ustaad* that he had full control over the child to make him learn the occupation. The following is a quote from a father of a 12 year old child labourer, who was learning the skill of spray-painting.

> *"chamri tadee tay hudiyan sadian, lakun bacha hunar sikh lay (we don't care if your beating bruises the child, but spare his bones, and ensure that the child learns the skill)"*.

This father's child was learning how to spray paint vehicle. Obviously, such liberty from the parents gave a free hand to the *Ustaad* and complete control over the child. The sample children were receiving excessive corporal punishments from their respective *Ustaad.*

It was the *Ustaad* who would ensure that the parents agree to his terms and conditions for letting the child come to the workplace. The *Ustaad* decided the time the child was required to spend at the workplace, including when to start work in the morning and when to finish in the evening. He would also determine the remuneration to be given to the child. It was also demanded that the child be punctual in attending the workplace, and that he should not take holidays from his daily work routine.

There was no clear plan or schedule indicating how much time it would take to make a child an accomplished skilled person. None of the parents indicated if the *Ustaad* gave any clear idea how many years the child would be required to learn this occupation. In general, the *Ustaad* might indicate that some children could learn the skill in six years or more depending upon how attentive and focused the child was.

No parents reported any specific discussions or negotiations about the remuneration that the *Ustaad* would give to the child. Typically it was left to the discretion of the *Ustaad*. As mentioned above lunch for the child would be the responsibility of the *Ustaad*. The *Ustaad* would also apply a certain set of criteria to take a child on. The following were the key factors that the *Ustaad* would keep in mind while deciding about whether to take a child as a worker or not:

- the child should be around 10 years of age
- he should appear obedient and docile,
- he has an eagerness to learn,
- he pays attention to the work.

It was abundantly clear to the *Ustaads* that poor families, with children failing in school were compelled to find alternatives in workplace-based skills training arrangements for them. They were also aware that this was a survival strategy of the parents to secure the

future of their children. Moreover, these *Ustaads* also knew that parents wanted to ensure their children stay out of the streets. The abundance of such children looking for an appropriate *Ustaad* had reduced the bargaining power of the parents. This had allowed the *Ustaads* to manipulate the situation to his advantage and only allowed children to come to their workplace on their own terms and conditions.

The data indicated that parents were reluctant to resend their idle children for further education. It has been discussed in various sections earlier that there are key factors that appear to compel parents to send their out of school children into labour. The prominent motivating factor are the cultural norms that give priority to workplace based skill acquisition as opposed to idleness for an out of school child; relying on workplace skills learning to avoid deviance among out of school child and to secure his future. Other factors included a relatively higher cost of education, a child's lack of interest in schooling, poor quality of formal school education, and an uncertain link of education with future employment. However, immediate economic gratification from the child's income was not a motivation for the sample parents to place their child at the workplace. Regardless of the fact that a child did bring a small amount of money home, it appeared to serve as a negligible incentive for parents' initial decision to place the child at the workplace. Instead, it should be re-iterated and emphasized that the parents desire to make their child skillful for financial independence in the near future was the chief motivating factor to place child at the workplace.

Chapter 5:
Human Resource Development Patterns of Children at Workplace

The *Ustaads* of the informal workshops actively looked for boys to work in their businesses without feeling any remorse or guilt about it. They were of the view that employing children was a service to both the children and their families. Employing children also made business 'sense' to these *Ustaads,* as the children would remain on their toes, all day long, to carryout endless tasks in the workshop for meager wages. At the same time, these *Ustaads* and parents argued that children could learn skills at the workplace enabling them to become functional members of the family in their early youth. One of the *Ustaads* who was running the business of spray painting business summed up his views as follows:

> *"Poor parents leave their school-drop out children with us to teach them skills. While learning skills these children do provide us some help. Human beings can only learn at a younger age. It is mutually beneficial to both the parties, as these children need to learn the skill and we need a helper in our business. However, it is the child who gets the most benefit. In due course of time, the child learns the skill and eventually becomes an independent and functional adult."*

It is important to understand the environment in which these children acquire these skills. Moreover, for a deeper understanding a systematic review of the norms and values prevalent at these workplaces is also essential. Similarly, the analysis of the modes of knowledge transfer and propensity of success in imparting skills to children are also presented. Finally, an effort has been made to assess child labour as an alternative path for human resource development and gauge the prospects of income generation in the immediate future for these children.

5.1. Workplace and Work Environment

The *Akhtar Ka Ahata* would become fully alive with its business related activities from eight in the morning. Major business activities continued throughout the day and slowed down just after sunset. Many workplaces continued well after sun set, whereas some even continued to work late into the night to meet their respective business deadlines. There were only men and boys present and one could hardly see any women, certainly not as workers or as entrepreneurs. The *Akhtar Ka Ahahta* and its leading alleys were not paved and were rather un-even, and remained littered with different kinds of small and large vehicles parked for numerous kinds of repairs.

The sounds of metal being banged, grinded and molded, along with songs (Punjabi songs from the Pakistani Cinema, and *Urdu/Hindi* songs from the Indian Cinema) kept a buzz in the *Akhtar Ka Ahahta*. The air was polluted with the smell of rustic metal and different vehicle lubricants. The clothing and mannerisms of the *Ustaads* and their child labourers could easily distinguish them from the visitors and customers. The lack of personal up-keep, dirty clothing, loud interpersonal communication, and rough mannerisms could be described as the hall mark of these *Ustaads* and child labourers.

These small workshops in the *Akhtar Ka Ahata* offered a variety of automobile related services. These workshops were mostly owned by *Punjabi Ustaads* however there were also some *Pushtuns* who owned workshops as well. The *Punjabi* language was the *lingua franca* to communicate between the two communities. One could hear the frequent use of

swearing in the *Punjabi* language whether these were aimed at child labourers, adult co-workers, or simply as part of their banter, or of venting their anger.

Invariably these shops, lined up around the *Akhtar Ka Ahata*, were not very spacious. Most of these shops had less than fifty square feet of covered area. All shops had an electricity connection to run electrical tools, a ceiling and/or pedestal fan and a couple of bulbs or a tube light. These workshop rooms were not properly ventilated and generally had little sunlight inside the shop if the front wooden doors were closed. Most of the vehicles repairing activities were carried out in the open space in front of the shop. These spaces were a prime area for repairing business activity. The work was mostly carried out in the open therefore natural factors like rain did affect their work.

These shops were primarily used as a safe place to keep all tools, gadgets and spares to run the business. Sometimes one shop was shared by two businesses; for instance in the *Ahata* an auto-workshop mechanic and auto-electrician entrepreneurs had jointly rented a small shop. Both would keep their tools and accessories separately inside the shop and performed maintenance jobs outside in the open space in front of the workshop.

The work environment was not organized, and tools were not properly arranged. The *Ustaad* would mostly perform tasks while sitting on a *pehree* (very low stool) and the child would sit on the ground. During the performance of various jobs the clothing, hands and face of workers, particularly of children, were soiled in all kind of lubricants and dirt. The workers kept a separate set of clothes to wear at the workshops and these were rarely

washed. These workers also endured frequent work related injuries and children were especially vulnerable. The most common injuries were cuts and bruises inflicted while performing various tasks.

Children were found working in five categories of workshops. These included Auto-Repair Workshops, Brake, Shocks and *Kamani* (Suspension) Maker Workshops, Auto Electrician Workshops, Spray Painter Workshops, and Truck Decoration Workshops. These five occupations are discussed in more detail below:

<u>Auto-Repair Occupation</u>: In Pakistan the sale and purchase business of second hand vehicles has been thriving due to its affordability. However, these vehicles need frequent repair and maintenance services. The *Ustaads* and their adult and child workers from the informal auto-repair occupations had been playing an important role to keep these second hand and used vehicles in running condition. The auto repair workshops offered maintenance services for various vehicles, including repairing engines, gear boxes, steering wheels and tie-rods among others. The tools and equipment were not of the best quality to perform these jobs, however, the mechanics managed to repair almost all mechanical faults. People brought their private and commercial vehicles for minor and major repairs. These mechanics had the skills to open up the engine, gear box, steering wheels and repair these and then reassemble them back to make the vehicle fully functional.

At these auto repair workshops children performed various small tasks enabling their *Ustaads* to complete the job. These include all the support functions, ranging from cleaning tools and instruments, to running around and providing the right tools to the *Ustaad* when a repair job was being carried out, as well as performing other small support activities. Children were required to spend considerable learning time periods at work, at least eight years, to develop advanced level knowledge of skills so that they became equipped to perform various assignments independently.

The inflow of business was good, and these auto-repair workshops frequently got small and medium repair jobs. Invariably, the major repair assignments would also be available that included a complete engine overhaul or its substantial repair.

Brake, Shock and *Kamani* (Suspension) Maker Occupation: This profession was associated with the auto repair workshop business. In this occupation, repair jobs for various kinds of brake arrangements for vehicles were carried out. These breaks include conventional pad-brakes, disc brakes, and hydraulic brakes. The most complex task was to repair the pipe network in the vehicle that carry brake fluid into the brake situated in the wheel. One of the difficult tasks was to diagnose why brake pressure was not equally distributed across the four wheels. This occupation also needed children to carry out small tedious jobs of repairing brakes by sliding under the vehicle. Children needed to spend at least six years of learning time to develop advanced level of knowledge in this occupation.

Auto Electrician Occupation: This occupation was also associated with the auto-repair occupations and brake, shock maker occupation. In the auto-electrician occupation the vehicles' complete electrical system was repaired. This repair work included vehicle wiring, multiple electrical connections with head lamps, tail lights, indicators, speed meter, car music system, fuse change, and ignition connection. The electric connection with fuses and the battery was another aspect of repair and maintenance job that was performed. Children were very handy for Ustaad to perform the tedious small and tedious tasks in this profession. It would take at least six years of learning time for a child to master this occupation.

Spray Painter Occupation: This occupation offered services to re-paint the entire vehicle or at least part of it. Damaged vehicles, after having their dents removed or new parts installed at a separate workshop, were brought there for the re-paint job. Before spray painting, the old paint was scratched off and new paint was applied to the vehicle.

Children become very 'useful' in this occupation, as they were assigned to perform these tedious jobs. These jobs primarily include scratching out the old paint with sand paper to make the surface of the vehicle smooth for the application of the new paint. This particular occupation is hazardous for children as chemical fumes are inhaled by children while performing various spray painting tasks. In these workshops both adult and children do not use any safety equipment. Again the average time for a child to master all related tasks in this occupation took a six year period.

Ustaads have a rather casual attitude about the hazards of spray painting, thus hardly any worker seen using safety equipment while performing various tasks. Even if few *Ustaad* acknowledged the health hazard of spray painting but in practice they do not use any safety equipment. Occasionally, an adult worker may be seen using a mask. However, majority of adult workers and particularly children do not consider spray painting dangerous. Some parents realized that chemical in spray painting is hazardous for the health of children however they appear to trust more *Ustaad* and his views. Parents' chief concern is if their child is learning the skill or not.

In this occupation the workers hands and clothes were invariably soiled with paint, chemicals and various lubricants. Workers kept separate working clothes to carry out their spray painting related tasks.

Truck Decoration: Amongst the five occupations, only truck decoration was an occupation where children were learning it in a relatively clean environment without soiling their hands, face and cloths in oil, grease, or dust. In other occupations like auto repair workshops children performed work while lying on the ground, and using lubricants that soil them and their clothes. The *Ustaad* in the truck decoration occupation would make sure that the workshop was kept clean and better organized. Various moulds and large colorful plastic sheets were also kept clean. The tools were properly cleaned and maintained. More importantly the workers, including children, maintained a high degree of cleanliness in the truck decoration occupation.

This occupation deals with aesthetics of truck decoration. The truck owners were fond of decorating their trucks. This occupation had evolved from simply painting art work on the body of the trucks to pasting small patches of colorful plastic in special geometric and floral patterns. These small patches were also arranged to put together images of various birds, animals and objects to give colourful look to the truck. During the night, these small plastic patches were illuminated in different colours lit up by the lights of other vehicles.

In the beginning, the children employed in this occupation would perform basic tasks like cutting some basic patterns. From these basic tasks, children were gradually taught intricate designs, how to cut patterns and then make a floral or geometric pattern. Children would develop a high degree of proficiency in six years period.

Picture 5.1: Truck Decoration work in progress

This work was carried out in a squatting position. There was a large floor level worktable that would make working relatively easier. This worktable was used to cutout the large colorful imported plastic sheets in different patterns and shapes. The floral and geometrical designs were also prepared on a large paper sheet on this table. However,

sticking the plastic cutouts was carried out on the trucks parked outside the workshop. Some workshops only produced the plastic cutouts and then handed them over to those who prepare intricate patterns and carry out the actual sticking on the trucks.

5.2. *Ustaad:* : The Center of Gravity

The word *Ustaad* is from the *Urdu* language meaning 'Master' or 'Expert' of a certain occupation. The *Ustaad* needs to spend years of rigorous effort to learn a skill, or vocation and master it before he could attain the title of *Ustaad.* The word *Ustaad* can also be used when referring to a smart and experienced person.

In traditional societies, the artisans and musicians after spending almost a lifetime practicing their vocation or discipline, under the supervision of their *Ustaad*, would earn the title of *Ustaad* from peers. During the advanced stages of skill learning a disciple could also be called *Chotay Ustaad* (young master). When the *Ustaad* was convinced that his disciple had attained a sufficient level of proficiency in the trade, the disciple would be awarded the ceremonial title of *Ustaad.* In some places, a special ceremony called *Dastaarbandi* (turban tying ceremony) is organized where in the presence of professionals of the trade and community the *Ustaad* ties a turban around the head of his *Shagirid* (disciple). This symbolically indicated that his disciple has graduated and become an *Ustaad* himself. However, these days it is not necessary to spend a life-time to acquire skills and earn the title of *Ustaad.*

In these workshops, a hierarchy of informal cadre was observed. Those *Ustaads,* who had completed their active life and retired, would be fondly called *Dada Ustaad* (Grand Master). However, the *Dada Ustaad* had no active role in the day-to-day business activities at the workshop. Sometimes he would visit and receive due consideration and respect from the workers. The center of gravity was the *Ustaad* especially if he was also the owner of the workshop. It was the *Ustaad* who made all decisions about how to run the workshop, who should be hired or asked to resign, what timings should be observed, which tasks should be delegated, the determination of rates for various jobs performed to be charged form the customer, any discounts to be given to the customer, wages to be awarded, productivity and efficiency of jobs performed and finally all dealings with the customers. He was the boss and therefore would maintain a strict control over the workers all the time.

General Hierarchy at Workshops
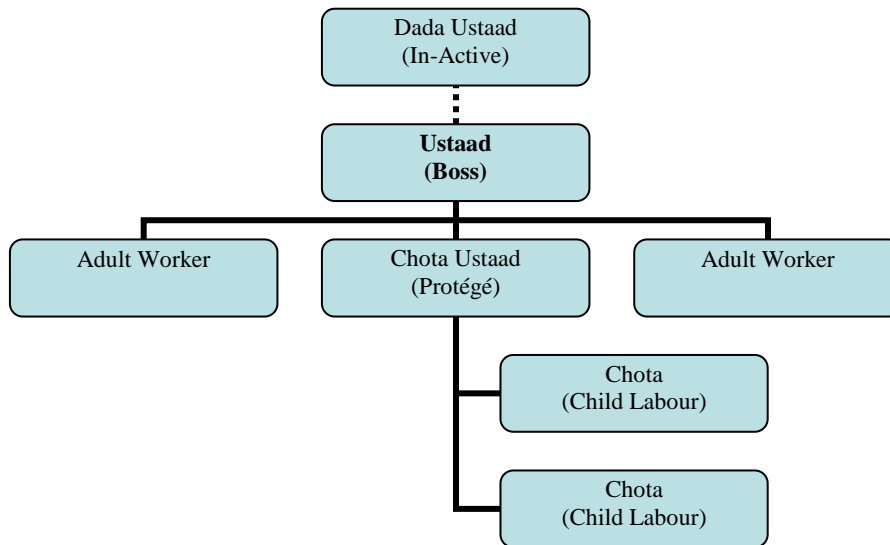
Typically, the *Ustaad was* supported by his *protégé*, a young man in his late teens or early twenties, who was also sometimes referred to as *Chotay Ustaad.* This lieutenant was the trusted number two of the *Ustaad* who also provided his advice to the *Ustaad,*

took charge of the delegated tasks and kept an eye on the rest of the work force (in case there were more workers), and tools and spare parts. The *Chotay Ustaad* also assumed the role of the *Ustaad* in his absence and ensured that the business kept functioning. He would receive special attention from the *Ustaad* both in terms of favours and remunerations. There could be other adult workers in the workplace that may also be referred to as *Chotay Ustaad* but their status was certainly lower than the *protégé*.

The lowest and the weakest part of the hierarchy called *Chotay* or *Chota* or (little one/Child Labourer) or *shagirid (apprentice/* child labourer) would be between 7 to 14 years of age. It was this *chota* who in most cases shouldered the responsibility of providing all necessary assistance and back-up support on various tasks performed in the workshop. This child was like an intern who was there to assist the adult workers in performing various tasks.

In many ways, he would not only perform jobs related to the main task performed at the workshop but also undertook many other errands. These small tasks would include cleaning the workshop, bringing tea and food, and serving the guests. However, when the child joined the workshop as a novice, his primary responsibilities would be cleaning the workplace/ tools and serving tea to workers and guests.

5.3.   Stigmatization of Children at Workplace

One of the striking aspects of child labourers in these workplaces was their behavior and mannerisms that largely represented the kind of treatment they were receiving from their

Ustaads. These children spent an average of 12 hours at the workplace on a daily basis. It was the *Ustaad* who determined what the children would do during their time at the workplace. He would outline the child's tasks, the time allocated on each task, when the child needed to take a break, what to eat, and where to go. He would also determine the nature and intensity of punishment[1] that a faltering child would receive and the kind of the language to be used towards the children.

These sample children belonged to relatively poorer families, who lived in the nearby low income residential area of the *Dhok Hassu*. As discussed in Chapter 4, the majority (74%) of these children did attend the formal government schools; however they dropped out from school and ended up in these workshops. All of these children had dropped out between 2nd grade and 4th grade and none could complete primary education. There was a general belief among the *Ustaad* and child labourers that intelligent children go to school and continue their education to higher levels whereas the slow and poor performers dropped out of school. This becomes a stigma and continues to haunt many of these child labourers. The fact that they were unable to pursue further education would often be used to humiliate them. These children would get very disappointed especially when their parents would also taunt them by saying things like "*this child could not cope with the educational pressure and failed in school*". The following are statements of some of the child labourers indicating their ordeal in schools and how they ended up becoming child labourers:

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[1] Detailed discussion on punishment is presented in Chapter 6

- *A 13-year-old's journey from school to an auto mechanic workshop was told to us in his words, "I was in grade four at a government school and used to endure frequent and severe corporal punishments from the school teacher on poor educational performance. My parents also used to criticize my poor school performance. Eventually, my fear of the teacher made me dislike school studies and then abandon the school altogether. I used to waste time in streets and get involved in all sorts of brawls. Finally, my father brought me to this workshop and entrusted the Ustaad to teach me the skill of auto mechanic. I still remember my school times. I have recently started learning this skill, and spend at least 12 hours here from nine in the morning till late in the night. My family says that since I was a failure in school, I should at least learn this skill to support myself in life".*

- *The same was the case of a 10-year-old, working in a Truck decoration workshop. The fact that he received corporal punishments in school eventually landed him in the workshop as a child labourer. He shared this story gradually and after he developed a degree of trust. "I studied in school untill grade three. I used to be very naughty. The school teachers used to beat me so much. They would hit me on my head and hands, and once due to a severe beating I lost some of my nails. My father did speak to the teachers about the punishment but he continued to beat me. I complained to my mother and wanted to discontinue school education. Eventually, my father took me out of the school and now I am learning the art of truck painting. Sometimes, my Ustaads say I should not fail in performing tasks here like my past poor performance in schools. But I still remember my school times."*

- *The story of a 14-year-old, working at an auto-mechanic workshop was a little different. "I failed three times in third grade, and my parents used to scold me so much about it. Then I did not like school as the teachers also used to beat me ruthlessly. I would run away from school during mid-day breaks. My parents found out about it and eventually they handed me over to my Uncle to learn the auto mechanic trade. I am learning this skill for the last four years and daily spent at least 14 to 15 hours a day at the workshop. I earn around rupees 3000 a month and give most of it to my mother. I am now happy with my present state as I have learnt many things and when my Ustaad will declare that I*

have graduated and become an Ustaad myself then I will start my own business. Yes, some people do not give me respect now. Since I am learning this skill, I will earn myself respect when I am older and have learned the skill fully."

The social standing of these children at workplaces was low and they endured a harsh treatment from adults. It was obvious from the attitude of the children and from what they told that they were at the workplace in an effort to become useful for their families. They were conscious about their dirty work clothes, soiled hands and face, as customers would tend to avoid shaking hands with them and stand at a distance. One 13-year-old child labourer in an auto-electrician workshop shared his experience:

"People generally do not treat me kindly, they keep admonishing me and maintain a distance. Some say that I am in a dirty profession, while performing the job my clothes get stains, and my hands and face also get soiled. This makes me feel angry."

However, younger child labourers, for example those below nine years of age, would generally encounter a sympathetic attitude from adults both at the workplace and in their own neighborhood. The general view about younger child labourers had been that such children should have been in schools. However, this view changes as the child advances in age, and pragmatism takes over the views of the community. One *Ustaad* in the spray paint workshop, while discussing a 12-year-old child labourer at his workshop, shared the following:

"It would have been better if this child had continued his school education. Now that he is here, he must work hard to learn this skill."

Nonetheless, these children had accepted their existing reality and were resigned to it. Most of them would describe themselves as happy with what they were doing, as at least 74% reported that they were satisfied with their current state of affairs. The majority of these child labourers, (80%), also reported that their families were also happy with them. Table 5.1 provides levels of satisfaction of children and their families.

Table: 5.1: % Distribution of Child Labourer's and Their Family's Level of Satisfaction with their (Child) Work		
Description	Yes	No
Child Labourer satisfied with Work	74%	26%
Child Labourer's family satisfied with Child Work	80%	20%

However, the burden of responsibility and pressure of the workload were obvious from their demeanour and their expressions. They often had a stern facial expression and a blank look in their eyes depicting the premature onset of adulthood.

5.4.   Nick Names of Children at Workplace

The child labourers in many instances had more than one name. Usually, they would have a full name and a nickname given by their parents and then they would also have a nickname given to them at their workplaces. At home these children were either called by their original names or by a nickname given by their parents, as opposed to their workplace based nick-name. However, at the workplace if the child was given a name

that would invariably become his identity. In one instance, a child's given name was *Suleman*, his nick name at home was *Bablu* (given by parents), but at the workplace his *Ustaad* and other colleagues at the workplace would call him *Pappu* (pretty), which the child abhorred. Table 5.2 below indicates sample children with and without nick names given at the workplace:

Table: 5.2: Numbers and % Distribution of Child Labourer's Nick Name at Workplace		
Description	**No of Children**	**%**
Child Labourer With Nick Names	33	47%
Child Labourer Without Nick Names	37	53%
Total	**70**	**100%**

Almost half the children (47 %) were given workplace related nick-names, and the remaining 53% were not given any nick names. The child labourers were often given nicknames that were in most instances demeaning and derogatory. The *Ustaad* or the co-workers would select a name that would either highlight certain physical features or a personality trait of the child. Mostly, these names may have derogatory undertones, for example, *Kodu* (stunted growth/Short height); *Maskeen* (meek), *Pappu* (beautiful and attractive) and so on. Sometimes, the given names of children were shortened, for example, *Jamshed* may be called *Jamma*.

Children also had different reactions to their names. There were many who would prefer not to be called by their new workplace names; however, due to their powerlessness in

front of the *Ustaad* and adult workers, they were forced to endure these names. Out of the total sample children 33 had nick names given to them at the work place. Table 5.3 presents these sample children's approval or disapproval of their workplace nick names.

Table: 5.3: Numbers and % Distribution of Child Labourer's Approval of their Nick Name		
Description	**No of Children**	**%**
Children Approved their Nick Names	11	33%
Children Disapproved their Nick Names	22	67%
Total	**33**	**100%**

The majority of the children (67%) that had nick names at work place did not like them. Many children divulged the fact that they disliked their work place nickname however they were unable to do anything about it.

It was also observed that older children or adult work colleagues within the same or adjacent workshops would pick on those children who were at the age of puberty (12 to 14 years) and who had a fairer complexion. Typically fair complexion was perceived by workers as a characteristic for being 'attractive'. These children were given names like *Pappu* (beautiful and attractive), *Koolla* (soft and supple), *Chamak Challo* (a reference to a beautiful girl who wears glittery clothing and seduces men with her actions) and so on. These children were particularly targeted, ridiculed and made victims of sexual innuendos. More than name calling these children also had to endure physical advances from their older colleagues, which would include pinching their cheeks or buttocks. On

occasion, these children were subjected to bear hugging, kissing on the cheeks, and arm twisting. Sometimes, an older boy jokingly or teasingly would grab the child tightly from behind and squeezed him despite the child's disapproval and protests. However, during this research the issue of sexual abuses did not really investigated as it fell beyond the scope of this research. During the course of data collection no serious issue of sexual abuse came to the attention. Nonetheless, the power imbalance between the child and the adult at the work place make children vulnerable to and thus existence of sexual abuse of these children cannot be ruled out.

5.5. Norms at the Workplace

The word *Ustaad* (master or expert) also carries with it religious connotations and cultural reverence. The *Ustaad* is entitled to enjoy the utmost respect from his "disciples". The prevailing belief is that no follower can afford the displeasure of his *Ustaad* as such a person would be looked down upon by his peers and by the community in general. Disrespect to one's *Ustaad* was seen as an ultimate sin, which a *shagirid* (disciple) dared not to commit. If a disciple left his *Ustaad,* the disciple was accused of being disobedient and disrespectful to the *Ustaad.*

Similarly, the same set of values was followed in the *Ustaad-Shagirid* (Trainers-Child Labourer) arrangement at these workshops. Parents felt indebted to the *Ustaad* if he had accepted their child to be his *Shagirid* with the hope that in a few years the child would be made skillful in the same discipline. The *Ustaad* was given full control of the child for

the time he was at his workshop. The child was told that the *Ustaad* was like a father whose instructions needed to be followed at all the times.

The *Ustaad* felt this arrangement was useful as it allowed them "to control the unruly children and made them useful"[2]. This strict control arrangement was perceived as useful to "tame unruly children and enable them to become responsible, functional and independent future adults"[3]. Children were expected to be completely obedient to the *Ustaad, s*how eagerness to learn, and pay attention to their assigned task, and quickly grasp new ideas. When a new child started coming to the workplace, the *Ustaad* would ensure in the beginning that the child was warned about the consequences of disobeying the rules.

The unwritten rules at these workshops were very strict and children had to adhere to these. Any violation of these rules would lead to punishments from the Ustaads. These rules were aimed at ensuring that children are disciplined to maximize their functionality in the performance of the activities at the workshops. The list of these rules for child labourers to observe is given below:

- Be attentive all the time to the *Ustaad's* instructions
- Act quickly to perform the tasks
- Pay close attention to the task assigned
- Must not waste time in any playful activities
- Ensure tools are not lost, and made available quickly.
- Must not talk to the customers
- Obey all commands of the *Ustaad.*
- No holidays without the *Ustaad's* prior approval.

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[2] One *Ustaad* from truck decoration sector
[3] One Ustaad from Brake and Shock Maker workshop

Also there were certain norms that child labourers were required to observe. Some of these norms are listed below:

- While responding to the *Ustaad,* keep your gaze down

- Must not look into the eyes of the *Ustaad*, it is a sign of disrespect

- Must not raise your voice in front of the *Ustaad*

- Endure the *Ustaad's* punishment, as it is good for the child labourer.

- Not to cry after receiving a work related injury, as the children are told only girls cry when they are hurt.

- Must not talk back to the *Ustaad.*

All the *Ustaads* described the work environment at the workshops as child friendly, where children's best interests were protected by them. Some of the quotes of the sample *Ustaads* are given below:

- *"Ustaad is like a father for shagirids (child labourers). We treat our shagirids like our own children".*
- *"The whole responsibility lies with the Ustaad, and he has to discipline the children".*
- *"It was the Ustaad responsibility to think about the child's best future and take measures to that effect like we did for our own kids".*
- *"Ustaad was responsible to ensure that the child learns the skill".*
- *"The grooming of children was the responsibility of the Ustaad more than that of the parents".*

Clearly, the *sample Ustaads* considered themselves as duty bound to ensure that their children were made responsible and skills were transferred to them. In this regard, the *Ustaads* clearly enjoyed full control of the child's time at his workplace.

On the other hand, the sample parents also had similar views of respecting about the *Ustaad-Shagirid* relationship, despite realizing the potential of child's exploitation at the workplace. Although, parents of the older child labourers, who have acquired certain level of 'skill', realize that *Ustaads* were not compensating their children enough in wages. However, child's lack of full mastery of the skill prevents these parents to send their children to other workplaces. Moreover, child is still learning the skill and they hope that *Ustaad* will make their child fully skilled. On the other hands, the parents of younger child labourers did realize that their children had to undergo a tough routine at the workplace but they believed it was good for the child to become disciplined and learn it. Injury at the workplace is considered inevitable and corporal punishment[4] of children as an essential part to discipline the children. *Ustaad* is not questioned too much on this. In general, the parents were satisfied with skill transfer for their children through an *Ustaad* at a workplace. The following are some quotes of the sample parents regarding the effectiveness of this skill transferring arrangement:

- *"The Ustaad is an excellent mentor who transfers skills to a child. Ustaad has great social stature. It was the Ustaad who builds the life of his disciples"*
- *"Ustaad helps a child to build his future life"*
- *"Ustaad succeeds in transferring skills to raw children. It is a useful arrangement".*

Clearly, it demonstrates that parents hold the *Ustaad* in high esteem and were fully convinced that he would be able to shape the future of their children. Parents' total

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[4] Detailed discussion on punishment is presented in Chapter 6

conviction and trust on the capabilities of the *Ustaad* let him take full control of the child at all times.

5.6.   24-hours Cycle Time-Distribution of Child Laborers – Capturing Change

The majority of the children (74%), as discussed earlier, were going to school before switching to the workplace as child labourers. This brought major change in their daily routine from a broad mix of schooling, playing/leisure, and sleeping routine to predominantly labouring and sleeping routine. Even the average sleep time has reduced (5%) after the switch from school to labour.

The daily routine of a child labourer became extremely demanding as he was now required to spend long hours in an adult environment that had a new set of rules to follow under the direct control of an adult, the *Ustaad.* The *Ustaad,* in most instances, may have one to four children under his control, thus the interaction was highly personalized and strict with little breathing space for the child.

In contrast to school days, the 24-hour-cycle of a child at the workplace was generally split into two broader halves, working/learning time and sleeping time. This was in sharp contrast to the child's earlier 24-hour daily cycle, when he used to go to school. The range of daily activities included education to sports/play, TV/leisure, family time and sleeping.

These two patterns of sample children's average daily time, while they were in school, pie chart 5.1, and as labourers, pie chart 5.2, are presented below:

Pie Chart 5.1: % Distribution of 24-hours cycle on Different Activities While at School

While Attending School: Percentage Distribution of 24-hours Cycle

Meals 8%
Religious Edu 8%
Play, Leisure, TV 21%
Night Sleep 38%
School 25%
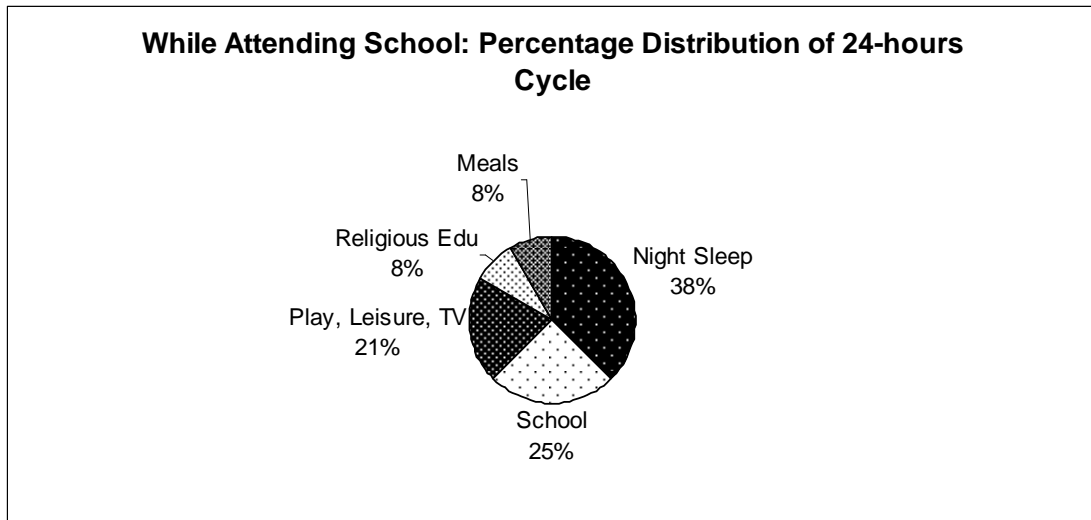
Pie Chart 5.2: % Distribution of 24-hours Cycle on Different Activities While at Workplace

While Attending Workshop: Percentage Distribution of 24-hours Cycle

Meals 8%
Play, Leisure, TV 8%
Night Sleep 33%
Workplace Skill Learning 51%
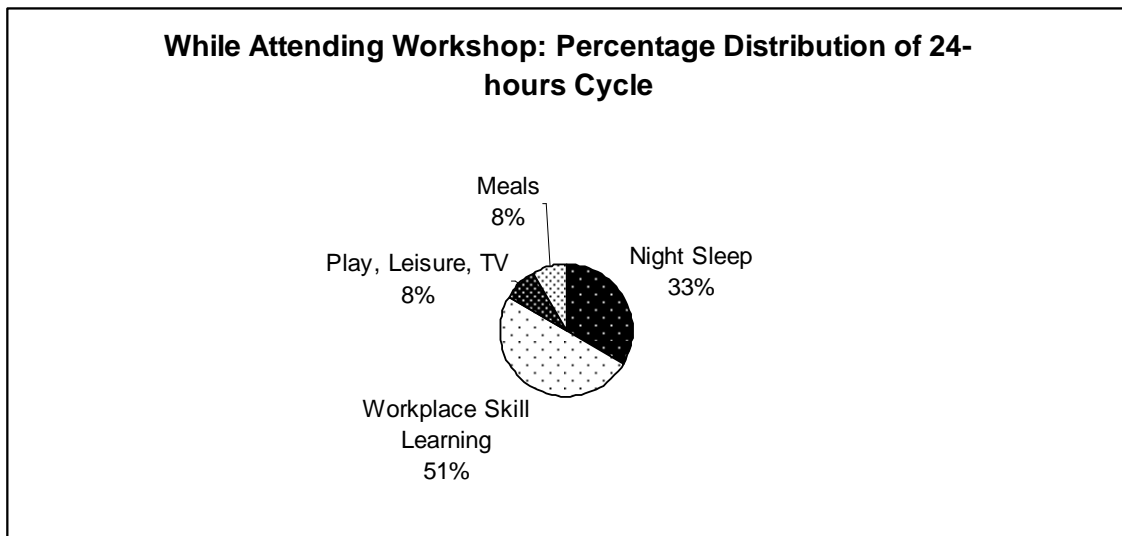
The 24-hour cycle during school days was proportionality distributed amongst various categories of activities ranging from education, play/leisure to night sleep. The time distribution clearly indicated that children have the opportunity to education, play, leisure

time with the family and friends, proper sleep time. In fact children on an average were spending 25% and 38% of their time on school education and night sleep respectively from the 24 hour daily cycle.

However, as soon as these children started going to a workshop, they were required to spend on an average 12 hours in skill learning under the direct supervision of an *Ustaad.* In other words, at the tender age of ten-years or so they were spending the whole day, till late evening at the workshops. This means that they had to abandon or drastically compromise on almost all other daily activities including play leisure, and time with the family. The sample children were spending 51% and 33% of their time at the workshops and for night sleep respectively from the 24 hour daily cycle. Clearly, the sample children had 5% less time for sleep and 21% less time for leisure than before when they were attending school.

These children started their daily work routine early sometime 7 or 8 in the morning, before the arrival of the *Ustaad.* They would clean the workplace, tools and would place the tools and gadgets at their right places. These children would also attend to any customer until the *Ustaad* arrived later in the morning. After running around and performing all kinds of support tasks these children would go back home late around 8 or 9 in the evening. By the time these children would come back home they would not have enough energy or time left to get involved in any other leisure or playful activities. They were required to follow this routine six days a week round the year. The weekly holiday was on Friday instead of the government declared Sunday.

By any standards, this strenuous routine was demanding for the children, however both parents and *Ustaad* religiously ensured that children adhered to this routine. Although these children, over a period of a few years, learned to perform workshop related tasks, this was at the cost of their all other developmental needs.

Parents were aware of the demanding routine that their children were going through however they viewed it as essential and good for the future of children. Parents realized that their children spent long hours (average 12 hours daily) at the workshop. Interestingly, this was a source of pride for them that their child was toiling at the workplace and making a concentrated effort to learn the skills. These children had little opportunity to indulge in play or sports. Older boys did tend to spend time at the internet café, watching movies and cartoons but that too mostly during the weekends. However, the fact remained that these children were enduring a tough routine that primarily revolved around work and sleep. However parents still felt it was necessary for their children to adhere to this routine. They justified their views in different ways. Some of these justifications are given below. :

- *"Insaan bhattee say guzar kay hee sona banta hay* (one needs to endure challenges to be successful in the future)"

- *"This tough routine will enable my child to learn the principles of lives. He will succeed and overcome the difficulties in his future life"*.

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- *"A tough daily work routine savess my child from wasting his time and he is also learning this occupation of brake and shock making".*

- *"My child's daily work routine is good for him. He will become independent in the near future. You see the acquired skill never goes to waste."*

- *"Today he (son) is spending a lot of time to learn the skill of truck decoration, and in future he can have his own business. Moreover, he will be able to transfer these skills to others and will also become a source of livelihood for other people".*

5.7.   Skills Training Arrangement

This section will focus on the processes of children's initiation at the workshops and the teaching methods that *Ustaads* employed to transfer skill-sets. Lastly, the curriculum and learning duration of these trainings will also be analyzed.

5.7.1.   The Processes of Child Labourer's Initiation at the Workshop

When these children came to the workshops they did not have any idea about the expected roles they were supposed to perform and how to behave. Similarly these children had never performed such tasks.

In the homes, these boys were used to being pampered by their mothers and sisters where everything is done for them and no household chores needed to be performed by them. Domestic chores like cleaning the house, washing utensils, cooking food and tea, serving family members and guests were primarily performed by the mother, sisters or other female family members. Most of the sample boys indicated that they were accustomed to

going to school, playing in the street or spending time in front of the TV. From such an environment they entered the workplace where their initial and primary tasks also included to broom the workshop and serving tea to workers and customer. At homes, where roles of boys and girls were stereotypically divided on gender lines, these sample boys were never allowed to touch the broom as it was supposed to be the job of women and girls only. Additionally, these children used to spend most of the time at home where they were given attention and care by the elder family members. Their daily routine was set and meals were provided on time.

However, when these children joined workshops their roles changed drastically. The adjustment of children in the new environment took some time and was a difficult process for them at a psychological level. In this patriarchal society, where roles for boys and girls are clearly defined, these 'girly' tasks of cleaning and washing at the workplace have quite negative impacts on the self-esteem of these boys. Most of the initial tasks assigned to these children were the same that were being performed by girls in their homes. During the initiation period the following four tasks were immediately assigned to the children:

- broom the workplace;

- wash and clean tools;

- Fetching tea/food from restaurants and serving it to the *Ustaad* and others; and

- Recognize tools and handover appropriate tool to the senior workers and *Ustaad* when asked for.

Some *Ustaads* indicated that during the initial period, the children were kept to a very strict work regime. They were dealt with harshly and even severely punished. The logic appeared to be to determine if the child had the ability to endure workplace pressures and challenges. In the views of the *Ustaad*, if the child had to run away (drop-out) from the workplace then it would be better if it happened during the initial period. This would save the *Ustaad* from wasting valuable time on someone who was unable to take on work pressures.

However, there were other *Ustaads* who pointed out that during the initiation stage the child was looked after well so that he felt welcomed. "*During the first week we treat the child as a guest, in the second week he would be required to bring tea and water. After one month the child would be dealt with strictly*". The *Ustaads* generally found the child entrants were invariably irresponsible towards work and more interested to 'waste time in playing games'. In the beginning, these children were unaware of the norms at the workplace and had playful habits. Thus, the *Ustaad* had to put in a great effort to control these children and the most effective way identified by the *Ustaads* was to create fear through the use of harsh language and inflict corporal punishment on the children. However, there were some *Ustaads* who stated that these children also need encouragement and motivation on good performance.

The *Ustaads* constantly instructed these children to be obedient, attentive, agile, and responsible. Moreover, the *Ustaads* also believed that children at the work place could

only be disciplined through strictness, fear, and tight control. Although, the *Ustaads* did realize that appreciation of a child's work was useful for motivation, however they largely believe that the application of restriction was crucial to maintain a tight hold over the child.

In addition to the basic tasks, the child was required to start memorizing the names of the tools and familiarize himself with his new surroundings; develop an acquaintance with other men and children at the work area and the overall work environment. The child was told the whereabouts of the toilet, from where to fetch water, and the restaurants from where tea and food would be brought. Most importantly, the child was forewarned not to go out of the workshop and "waste time" in play or other similar wasteful activities.

Many children reported that young entrants at the workplace were treated nicely in the beginning and they did not face punishment or a harsh attitude from the *Ustaad*. However, this changed with every passing day, and pressure built up as the child was expected to quickly learn various tasks assigned to him. Failing to perform the tasks properly or committing mistakes would enrage the *Ustaad* who would not only swear at the child but also physically punish him.

5.7.2. Teaching Methodology

Teaching a child a skill was not a separate activity of the *Ustaad* than his regular business tasks. The child was simply brought into the world of work as an instrument to keep the business functioning. Teaching children skills was a whole day's work whereby the

Ustaads would use children as helpers. Children were instructed to be obedient, show eagerness to learn, pay attention to the task and quickly absorb the information. *Ustaad's* teaching methodologies primarily hinged on the mix of four techniques; to make the children learn through observation, give them verbal instructions, demonstration and let them carry out practical work.

Diagram 5.1: Teachings Methodologies of *Ustaads* at the Workplace
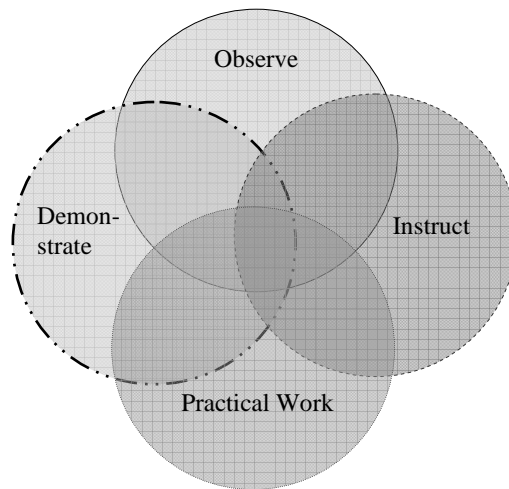
The combination of observations, demonstration, instruction and practical work were systematically employed by the *Ustaads* to transfer skills to the children. Initially, the child was asked to observe how to perform a particular task. This activity was frequently repeated with various assignments. The child was also asked to sit beside the *Ustaad* and pay close attention to see how the *Ustaad* carried out the tasks. The child was given an opportunity to closely observe a demonstration of repairing or maintenance assignments. Although, the *Ustaad* was performing the work brought in by a customer, he also used this as an opportunity to demonstrate to the child how that task could be performed. At

this stage not many instructions were given to the child, but he might be asked to pass the tools around.

Gradually, the *Ustaad* would also start giving instructions and explaining how basic tasks were performed. This helped to build the knowledge base of the young learner. The child would also be quizzed while the *Ustaad* performed certain tasks, for example asking the child about the tools, sizes of the tools and which ones were the most appropriate to carry out a certain activity. One *Ustaad,* from truck decoration workshop explained the teaching methodology as follows:

> *"We demonstrate to the child and also give him instructions on how to perform certain tasks. After the initial few months, we monitor his progress more strictly and instruct him to be careful and attentive towards his work. Due to our efforts the child would learn enough in the second year and gradually become more useful for us."*

Soon after the initiation period the *Ustaad* would start delegating basic tasks to the child and let him carry out the practical work in a real life situation. The process of practical performance started with the basic and gradually moved towards more complex tasks. Initially, the child performed the task under the watchful eyes of the *Ustaad* whereby instructions were also given as how to perform the tasks correctly. After countless repetitions of a particular task the *Ustaad* developed a level of confidence on the child's ability to perform it independently.

Peer learning was also employed to help the child quickly grasp how to perform certain tasks. A child who knew how to perform a certain task was asked to do it jointly with the one who did not know it. However, the majority of children indicated that the *Ustaad* could teach the task better than a fellow child worker. An interesting aspect had been the practice of competition between the children that the *Ustaads* relied on to encourage children to perform a particular task better. This served as an incentive for children to quickly learn how to fully perform tasks independently.

However, the most prevalent method was the heavy reliance on brute force to ensure children quickly learn how to perform tasks and remain obedient. The *Ustaad* would not tolerate any thing that he considered a mistake or deviation from his laid out rules. If a child made a mistake he was bound to receive psychological torture through liberal use of profanities that may also lead to corporal punishment. In most cases, the punishment would be a mix of psychological torture and corporal punishment. However, in extreme cases, the punishment would include hitting the child with various objects available in the workshops. These objects would include sticks, fan-belts, hammers, and other similar tools to physically harm the child. Parents also did not object too much if their child was punished. They believed that punishments were given for the child's own benefit. The *Ustaads* were of the firm view that physical punishments compelled children to 'quickly learn' how to perform various tasks and also remain focused on the work.

The child labourers could receive a punishment for various mistakes including if the child came to work late, skipped a day without first taking the permission of the *Ustaad*,

misplaced a tool, brought the wrong tool or the wrong size of the tool, broke anything, dropped anything, did not follow instructions, forgotten instruction, bungled-up the work, over used supplies, talked to the customer too much, and so on and so forth.

Across all of the five trades, *Ustaads* considered physical punishments as the best remedy to overcome a child's laziness. This helped the *Ustaads* to obtain better productivity from children in the performance of various tasks. Moreover, *Ustaads* were of the view that the fear of punishment would enable children to perform tasks without mistake. More importantly, they thought that punishment would expedite the children's learning curves and they could quickly learn to perform relatively complex tasks. If child quickly learned how to perform the complex tasks it would reduce work pressure from the *Ustaad*.

5.7.3. Skill Learning Durations at Workshops and the Curriculum

Theses workshops were small enterprises and not skill training centers for children. Therefore, the prime motives of the *Ustaads* were to carry out business activities. Teaching children the skills was a secondary motive as it would help reduce the work pressure from the *Ustaad*. Therefore, teaching children the skills was an informal process. One *Ustaad* in an auto-repair workshop shared the following:

> *"It depends on the intelligence of the child and how quickly he learns the skill. Typically it could take more than eight years to learn this occupation of repairing vehicles".*

The parents were not too worried about the total duration their children would spend in learning the skills from the *Ustaad.* Thus skill learning would be a long process that was not structured and lacked organization. For parents, it was more important that their child

was accepted by the *Ustaad* than how much time their child would require to learn the skill. The following are comments by some of the sample parents:

- *"The Ustaad did not mention how much time child will need to master this skills"*

- *"The Ustaad informed us that some children learn the trade in six years and some take more time. He also said that it will depend on the child and how quickly he will learn it. The important thing is that my child is with the Ustaad and he will eventually learn the skill"*

Teaching a child a skill was carried out under an informal arrangement. There was no prescribed curriculum or lesson plan to be followed at the workplace. Thus, there was a complete absence of any yearly, monthly or weekly targets for training the child. Moreover, there were no books, manuals, design books, copies, charts, stationary, teaching aids, or set curriculum. Even in occupations, for example the auto-repair workshops where the manuals were available, as these come with the vehicles, but those were only in the English language. Mostly the *Ustaad* were illiterate and even if they could read and write it was in the Urdu language. The *Ustaad* would not refer to the vehicle manual, even if it was available, rather they would rely on each other's experience to repair the vehicle. There was no question about using any literature to be used as curriculum while teaching the child skills. Since there was no set curriculum, there was also no practice of applying a skills training duration in any of the occupations.

In any case, these workshops were actually enterprises that provided services of repairing, maintaining and refurbishing vehicles. Work in these enterprises was directly

linked to the business they would receive. The nature and volume of this work was completely unpredicted. *Ustaads* kept children at the workplace to help perform as and when certain repair business would come to the *Ustaad*. This arrangement would place the children in a very long and slow pace of learning skills.

However, the rule of thumb regarding skill learning at these workshops was to start from mundane and basic tasks and gradually move towards medium and complex tasks. It primarily depended on the personal style of each *Ustaad,* even within an occupation, as how he would like to carry out his training program and train the child to learn various tasks.

Similarly, the time duration vis-à-vis learning a practical task was also quite flexible. The *Ustaad* involved children in those tasks that were required to carry out the business. In many ways children were put on a 'training programme' that relied heavily on a multi-tasking approach where children were involved in multiple activities. This skill teaching lacked organization and a systematic approach to transfer skills.

In order to develop broader contours of workplace based skill training arrangements an effort was made to determine the total training duration required. The sample *Ustaads* provided useful information in developing time duration projections for each of the occupations. Each occupation consisted of various key tasks that children were required to learn. First, a list of various tasks within a particular occupation had been developed. Moreover, each task had been further categorized into three levels of proficiency, that is,

basic, medium and advanced level of proficiencies. Then, average months required in learning each level of proficiency of one task were calculated. This helped build the total number of months required to completely learn one particular task. Subsequently, the total number of years was computed to learn all tasks in one occupation. Moreover, based on discussions with various *Ustaads* an average age of entry in a particular occupation was also determined. The following table 5.4 indicates various ages of entry and number of years required to learn all tasks in the five occupations:

Table: 5.4: Average Age of Entry and Duration of Skills Learning		
Occupations	**Average Age of Entry**	**Duration**
Auto Repair Occupation	10 years	8 years
Truck Decoration Occupation	12 years	6 Years
Spray Painting Occupation	10 Years	6 Years
Break and Shock Maker Occupation	10 Years	6 Years
Auto-Electrician Occupation	10 Years	6 Years

The average age for entry to work in the four trades was 10 years, and for the occupation to truck decoration was 12 years. All these ages of entry to work for these occupations were in violation of ILO Convention 138 on Minimum Age that Pakistan has ratified. The total time duration to learn four occupations was 6 years, and for the occupation of auto-repair was 8 years. In other words, when a child reached the age of 16 or 18 he should have learned his trade provided he had started work around 10 years of age.

Auto-Repair: This occupation is primarily linked to mechanical engineering of automobiles. The children were put through a rigorous test without any textbooks, notebooks, and conceptual understanding of mechanical engineering. They were supposed to learn about the vehicle's mechanical engineering, maintenance and repairing aspects through verbal means only.

As mentioned earlier even the vehicle manuals, which contained various instructions about the vehicles and diagrams of different mechanical operations, were never referred to. One of the reasons was that those manuals were in the English language and *Ustaads* could not read or write in English.

Working in an auto-repair workshop entailed seven broad tasks. Table 5.5 lists various tasks of auto-workshop and the corresponding estimated time durations. The initial two tasks were the basics where the children were made to acclimatize themselves with the workshop environment and memorize names of various tool and recognize them. During this time they also performed various housekeeping tasks that included cleaning the workshop and tools and serving the workers and the guests. Simultaneously, these children were also asked to recognize the tools and their sizes.

It was from task three that serious skills learning work began and continued till task seven. Learning the first two tasks were completed in the initial two months, however tasks like cleaning the workplace and fetching tea from the restaurant continued to be performed by children even if they had moved to higher tasks within the occupation.

Table 5.5:   Tasks and Learning Duration in Auto Workshops Trade

TRADE: AUTO WORKSHOP Tasks and Learning Duration					
S. No.	Tasks	Total Duration	Basic Level Duration	Medium Level Duration	Advance Level Duration
1	Chai Lana (Fetch Tea), Jharoo (Cleaninng)	1 Month	-	-	-
2	Auzaar Ke Pechaan (Recognition of Tools)	1 Month	-	-	-
3	Wheel, Nuts Kholna, (Opening Wheel and Nuts); Auzar aur Purzoon Ke Safai (Cleaning of tools and Engine Parts)	12 Month	2 Months	4 Months	6 Months
4	Hissa Kholna (Openning Vehicle Parts)	24 Months	4 Months	8 Months	12 Months
5	Gear, Engine Kholna (Opening Gear Box and Engine)	24 Months	4 Months	8 Months	12 Months
6	Gear and Engine Banaana (Fitting Engine and Gear Parts)	24 Months	4 Months	8 Months	12 Months
7	Nukas ke Pechaan (Identification of the Problem)	12 Months	2 Months	4 Months	6 Months

In task 3, children were taught how to unscrew wheels, unscrew various nuts; how different sizes of tools could be used to perform a certain mechanical function, and how to clean various parts of the engine. Children would spend around a 12 month period while improving their level of proficiency from basic to advanced within this task learning period. Children would spend the next 24 months in task 4 where they were taught how to open various parts of vehicles. During these 24 months the children would develop an advanced level of knowhow and mastery to perform this task.

When the children were ready to start task 5, they would get the opportunity to learn how to open the gear box and the engine. It would take at least another 24 months for the

children to develop an advanced level of proficiency in this task. However, this was estimated time for a child to learn the task, and some children took longer. Task 6 was an advanced level of skill learning where children were taught how to repair the faults of the gear box and the engines of vehicles. Children would spend around 24 months learning task 6 to develop an advanced level of competency. However, this may be prolonged depending upon the individual child's abilities to absorb all the information and carry out instructions independently. Task 7 is one that distinguishes men from boys. In this last level he was taught how to identify problems with the engine or gear box. Here the grown up children sharpened their diagnostic abilities to identify the problem with a particular vehicle and recommend a course of action to rectify it. It is pertinent to note that by the time this stage is reached many children would be close to 18 years if they had not already entered adulthood.

Auto Repair Workshops:

Picture 5.2: Children performing various cleaning tasks in Auto-workshop

Picture 5.3: Children performing various repair tasks in Auto-workshop

Picture 5.4: Children performing tasks in Auto-worksho

Truck Decoration: This particular occupation is linked to art work, artistic designs, color schemes to convert the exterior of an ordinary looking truck, even a bus, into an exotic looking colorful vehicle. This occupation appealed to those with strong aesthetic and artistic sensibilities. This art work could almost cover every conceivable space on the body of the truck leaving only the windscreen and side windows. Individual truck owners in their desire to outdo each other, convert their truck into a moving piece of an art work. This is a booming business and many workshops offer these services. In order to perform various tasks, the *Ustaad* looked for children to join their workshops. The occupation of truck decoration would take a child six years to completely learn all seven tasks, and the corresponding three levels of proficiencies.

Table 5.6: Tasks and Learning Duration in Truck Decoration Trade

S. No.	Tasks	Total Duration	Basic Level Duration	Medium Level Duration	Advance Level Duration
* *TRADE: TRUCK DECORATION*					
1	Chai Lana (Fetch Tea), Jharoo (Cleaninng)	1 Month	-	-	-
2	Ticky (small patch) Cutting	6 Months	1 Month	2 Months	3 Months
3	Tari Dori Lagana (Glittri Strips Making)	6 Months	1 Moth	2 Months	3 Months
4	Tukkry Berfee Lagana (Small Rectangle, trinangle patch pasting)	12 Months	2 Months	4 Months	6 Months
5	Gari Ka Kaam (Applying art work to vehicle)	12 Months	2 Months	4 Months	6 Months
6	Tari Katana (Cutting Star shapes)	12 Months	2 Months	4 Months	6 Months
7	Machali (Fish) Moor (Peacock) Kabootar (Pigeon) Jehaz (Airplane) Banana*	24 Months	4 Months	8 Months	12 Months

To summarize: task 1, would be acclimatization with the work environment where the children were supposed to broom the workplace, run around to perform various errands

including fetching tea from the restaurant and serving it to workers and customers. Subsequently, in tasks 2 and tasks 3 children were involved in support level functions whereby they were taught to cut small patches from the plastic sheets and prepare glittery strips. Both levels would require on an average 6 months each to develop proficiency levels from basic to advance. In task 4, children were taught to produce some complex designs with small colourful plastic square, rectangles and triangle patches. These patterns of geometric shapes would be used to fill spaces within a larger design. That larger design would have a core consisting of an intricate art work that would be taught in the final stage. Task 4 would require 12 months of training for the child to develop an advanced level of proficiency.

In task 5, children were taught to apply the art work on the body of truck that would primarily consist of sticking plastic patches, and stripes. This would require a 12 months period to develop an advanced level of proficiency. Task 6 would consist of cutting complex shapes like stars and mathematical shapes in the same shapes, and would require another 12 months to learn. However, it was task 7 where the mosaic artwork consisting of various categories of designs, which formed the bulk of the work involved in truck decoration, were taught. However, the core of these designs was a complex and intricate artwork that depicts animals, birds or objects. This intricate image could be of a fish, tigers, horses, lions, peacocks, pigeons, airplanes or such similar objects. In any truck decoration assignment, the focus was an assortment of these images on various sides of the truck around which entire patterns were further developed. This task would require at least 2 years training period to develop an advanced level of proficiency in it.

Truck Decoration:

Picture 5.5: Truck Decoration: Various tools, and patterns

Picture 5.6: Children and *Ustaads* performing various tasks in Truck Decoration Trade

Spray Painting: The occupation of spray painting also generates good business primarily through repainting of second hand vehicles. The people would bring their used and damaged vehicles, cars and vans, to get these partly or fully repainted. The spray painting occupation had four tasks. In task 1, like other occupations, children were made to familiarize themselves with the work environment and asked to perform mundane tasks. It was task 2 where children began the skill learning component. The children would roughly spend 18 months in learning the right technique to apply sandpaper and strip old paint off. In task 3, children would learn the application of *puteen* (mixture to apply on the vehicles body to cover cracks and before the application of paint) to smooth the surface of vehicle's body. The correct application of this task was important, as any mistake at this stage would comprise the quality of spray paint results afterwards. Children would spend thirty months in this level to develop their proficiency from basic to advanced level. In the last, task 4, children were required to spend 24 months to learn how to prepare and apply paint on the vehicle. In these 24 months children were expected to develop an advanced level of proficiency of the spray application. It was estimated that the child in a period of approximately six years learns the occupation of spray painting vehicle.

Table 5.7: Tasks and Learning Duration in Spray Painting Trade

S. No.	Tasks	Total Duration	Basic Level Duration	Medium Level Duration	Advance Level Duration
TRADE: SPRAY PAINTING / Tasks and Learning Duration					
1	Chai Lana (Fetch Tea), Jharoo (Cleaninng)	1 Month	-	-	-
2	Raeg Maal say Munjhai (Application of Sandpaper)	18 Months	4 Months	6 Months	8 Months
3	Puteen Lagana (Application of Puteen)	30 Months	8 Months	10 Months	12 Months
4	Spray Paint Karna (Application of Spary Paint)	24 Months	6 Months	8 Months	10 Months

Spray Painting

Picture 5.7: Children preparing to spray paint vehicle

Picture 5.8: Children in spray paint workshops

5.8. Human Resource Accumulation in Children

In these occupations, children would remain with the *Ustaad* for at least the next six to eight years. During this period these children would learn to carry out various tasks under the watchful eyes of their *Ustaad.* These children developed an advanced competency level to perform tasks independently within a period of few years. Some children proved to be fast learners than others, and therefore moved on to better monthly remuneration. However, the competency level would not necessarily increase with the number of years spent at the work place. In the absence of any formal skill grading at the workshops, tasks categorization was carried out to identify proficiency levels of sample children within each occupation. All tasks within each occupation were listed and divided into four categories of proficiencies. These categories were labeled, in ascending order, as proficiency levels; 'negligible', 'basic', 'medium' and 'advance/expert'. The sample Children's proficiencies were ranked against these four levels, as described below:

- Negligible: Child cannot perform the task
- Basic: Child started learning the task
- Medium: Child can perform part of tasks under supervision
- Advance/Expert: Child can perform task independently

5.8.1. Years of Learning and Competency Levels of Children

The rule of thumb was that the increased working experience would facilitate the accumulation of human resource among the sample children. In the majority of cases, after the passage of two years at workshops most of the children would develop a medium level of competency in their respective occupations. This meant children would be able to carry out medium level of tasks under the supervision of their *Ustaads.* The graph 5.1 presents numbers of years the sample children have spent at the workplace. Out

of the total sample 70 children, the majority of children (54%) had limited experience of one year or less at the workplace. Children with one to two years of work experience were 21% of the sample. In other words 75% of the sample children had less than two years of work experience. Children with more than 2 years of work experience were 25% of the total sample.

Graph 5.1: % Distribution of Work Experience of Sample Children
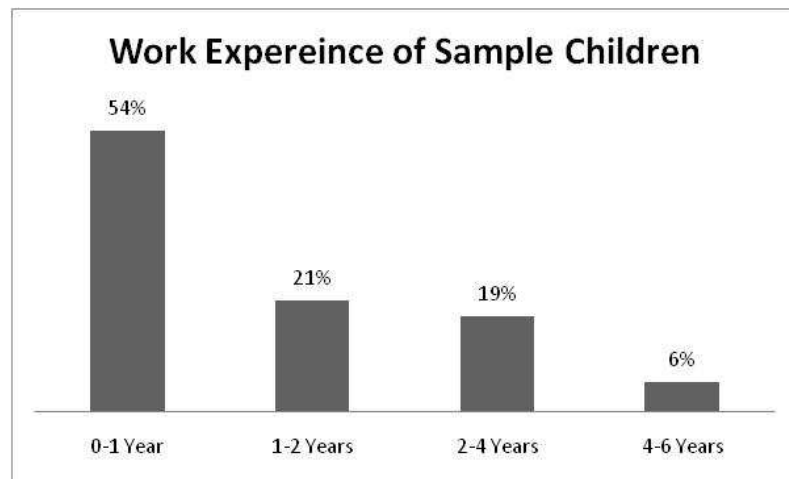
One year was not a sufficient period for the children to develop a higher competency level. "*Ek saal wech tay bachay dian ackhaan wee nahin khul diay, kaam kiss tarah sikh sakda hay*" (In one year the child could hardly acclimatize himself with the workplace, what skill he could learn in this short duration), was the opinion of one *Ustaad* in the Truck Decoration workshop. At the beginning of the skill learning process these children found it difficult to have quick start. These children needed to work for a few years before they start picking the real skill at these workplaces. Thus clearly the skill competency level among most of the sample children was negligible.

The yearly work learning time and the competencies of the sample children are presented in graph 5.2. The key findings were that majority of the sample children had limited experience and depressed level of competencies. The filed data depicted that majority of the sample children (39 in numbers, 54%) had a 'negligible' level of competency, as most of them had one year or less work experience. In the negligible category there were three children with 1 to 2 years and one child with 2 to 4 year of work experience but they could not move ahead to undertake complex tasks.

Graph 5.2: Sample Children's Yearly Experience and Competencies
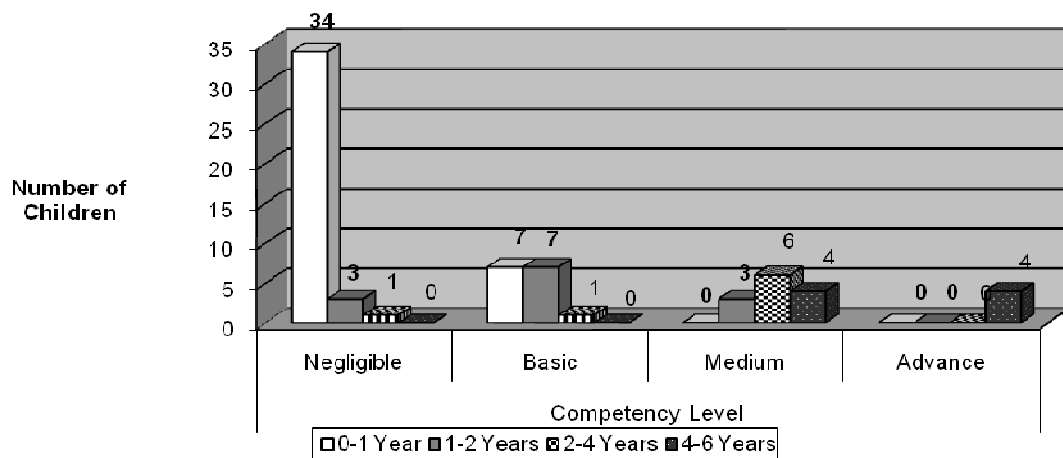
In the next basic level of proficiency, there were significant numbers of sample children (15 in numbers, 21%). Out of these almost half had spent around one year and other half had spent 1 to 2 years in this level. There were 19% of the sample children who had developed medium level competencies after spending 2 to 4 years. The 'medium' level competency clearly demonstrated that children had developed these competencies in different time durations. There were children who attained 'medium' level competency in 2 years while others spent 3 to 4 years to attain the same skill level.

The 5 years of work experience appeared to be a period to attain an advanced skill set. However, a minority of sample children (6%) could develop advanced level competencies, as they had already spent 4 to 6 years at the workplaces learning their respective occupations..

Table 5.8: Competency Level of Sample Children		
Competency Level	**No. of Children**	**%**
Negligible	38	54%
Basic	15	21%
Medium	13	19%
Advance	4	6%
Total	**70**	**100%**

In other words, as also evident from table 5.8 above, from a large majority of sample children, 75% had negligible to basic level of competencies, indicating that they had not spent many years at the workplace. Moreover, these children were performing basic support level functions in helping their respective *Ustaads* run their enterprises.

5.8.2. Competencies and Income

The field data indicated that the remunerations for sample children were not dependent on the number of years spent at the workplace. The level of remunerations was clearly linked with the competency of the child to perform tasks related to occupations. The remuneration remained low due to limited skill competency level during the first two years after the child's entry into the workshop. During the low level of skills, that is, 'negligible' and 'basic', the remunerations were limited.

Graph 5.3: Incomes, Experience & Number of Sample Children Against Level of Competencies
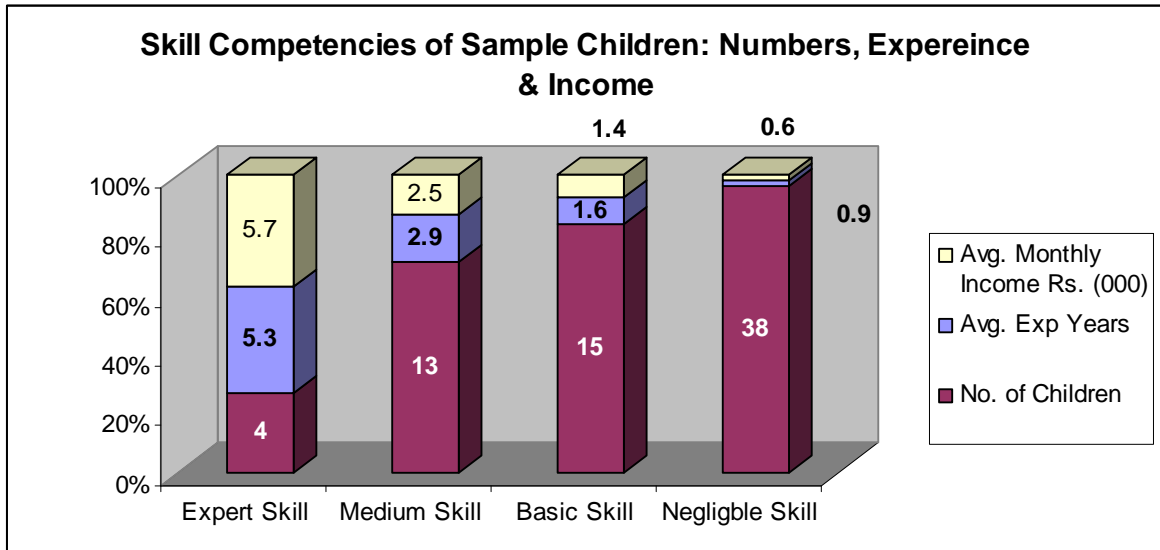
Graph 5.3 indicates that the majority of these children (38 number, 54%) had negligible skill sets, as they also had less than one year (average) work experience, and therefore were getting an average monthly income of Rs. 600. In the basic skill category there were 15 children (21%) and they had an average work experience of 18 months, and were earning an average of Rs. 1400 monthly.

In the medium skill category, there were 13 children (19%) and had an average of 2 years and 9 months of work experience and were earning an average of Rs 2500 every month. In the advanced/expert skills category there were only 4 children (6%), and they had on an average of 5 years and three months of experience and their average monthly income was Rs. 5700. These children would receive better remunerations as soon as they enhanced their competency level to 'medium', which means almost three years after

entry into the workshop as a novice. During negligible and basic level skills set the sample children were receiving insignificant money in wages.

Across the sample child labourers, the remuneration of children had increased with a positive change in their skill competency levels. This trend had also been observed across the five occupations. The three occupations namely Auto-Repair; Brake, Shock and *Kamani*; and Truck Decoration, had children with all four level of competencies. In all the five occupations, children's remuneration increased with enhancement in the skill competencies. The following five graphs present separate pictures of skill competencies of sample child labourers in each of the five occupations. All the graphs also confirm that income was directly linked to the competency level across the five occupations.

Graph 5.4: Auto-Repair Occupation - Incomes, Experience & Number of Sample Children Against Level of Competencies
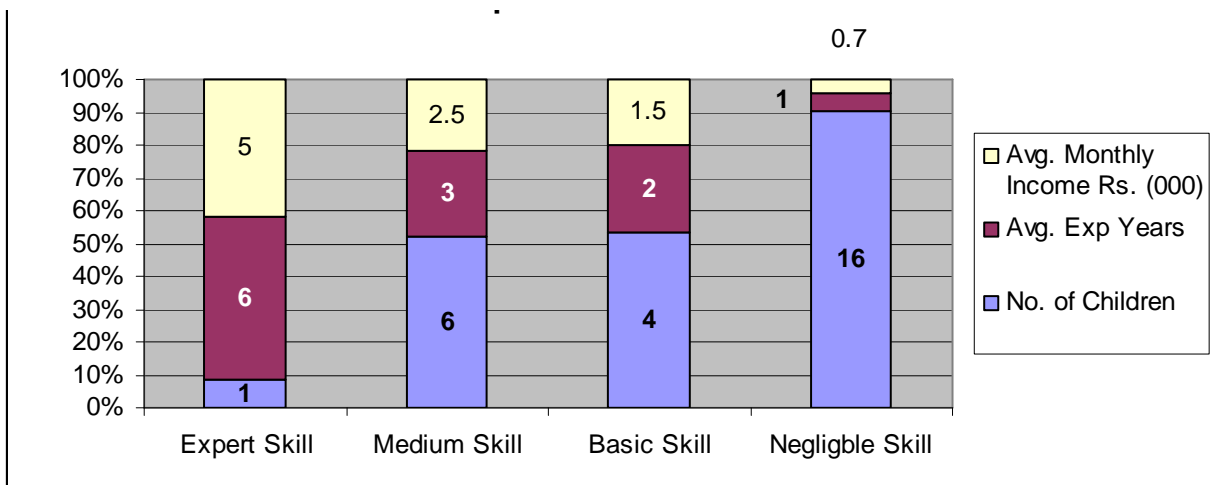
Graph 5.5: Break, Shock, Kamani Occupation - Incomes, Experience & Number of Sample Children Against Level of Competencies

Break, Shock, Kamani Skill Competencies: No. of Children, Experience & Income
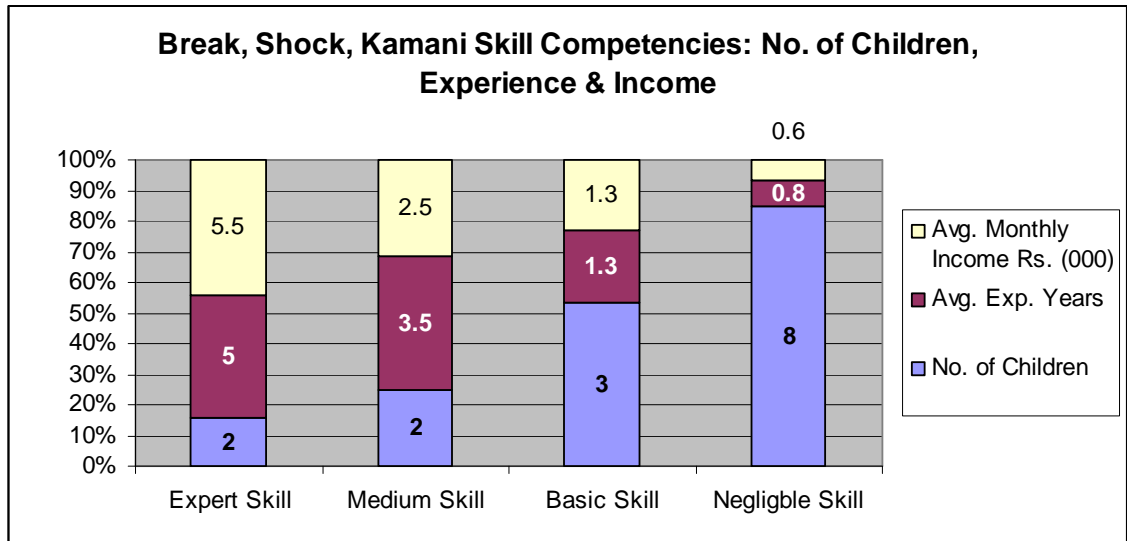
Graph 5.6: Auto-Electrician Occupation - Incomes, Experience & Number of Sample Children Against Level of Competencies

Auto-Electrictian Skill Competencies: No of Children, Experience & Income
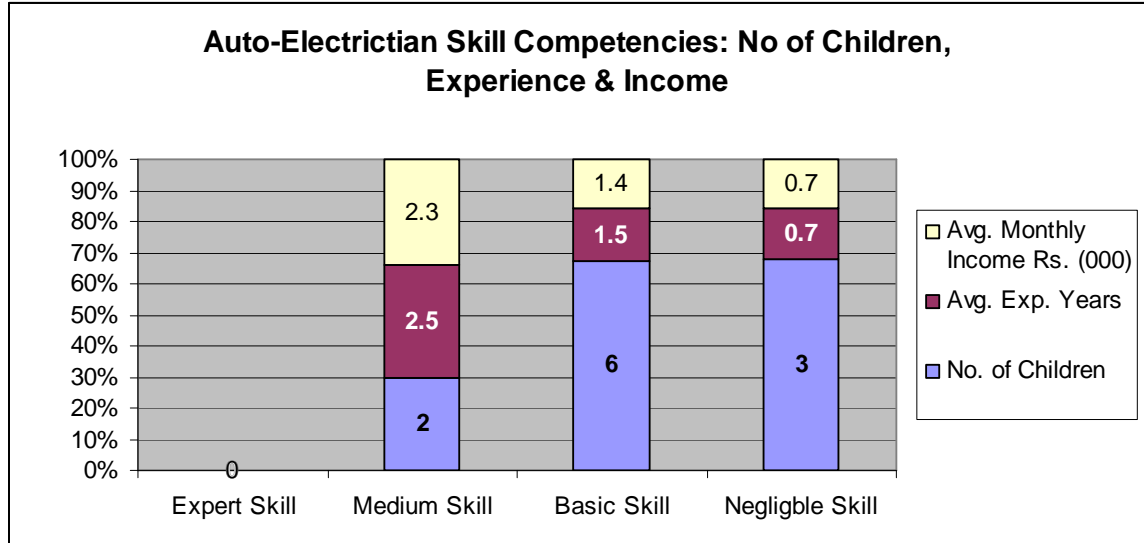
Graph 5.7: Truck Decoration Occupation - Incomes, Experience & Number of Sample Children Against Level of Competencies

Truck Decoration Skill Competencies: No of Children, Experience & Income
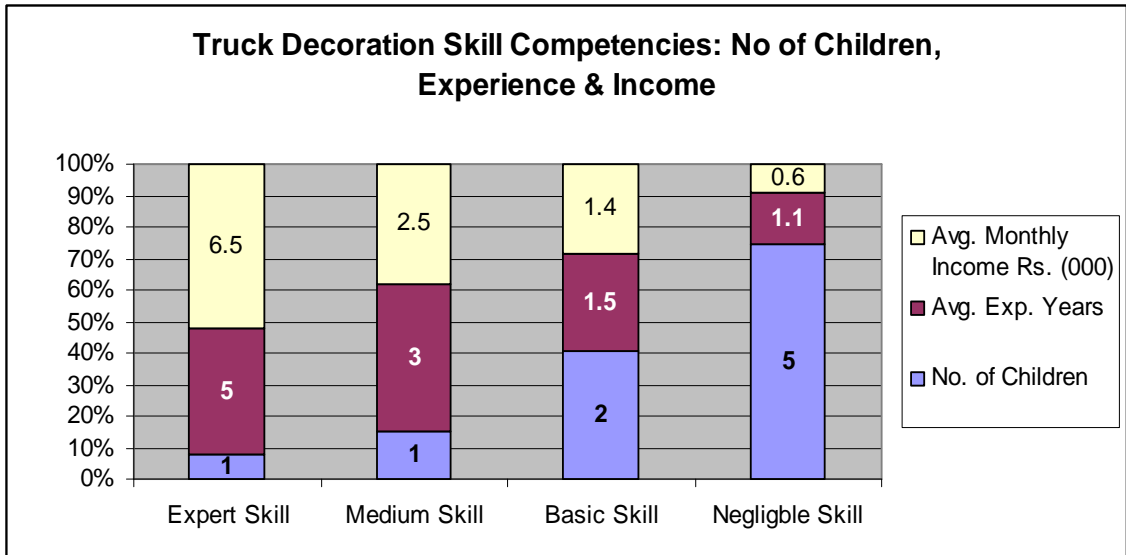
Graph 5.8: Spray Paint Occupation - Incomes, Experience & Number of Sample Children Against Level of Competencies

Spray Paint Skill Competencies: No. of Children, Experience & Income
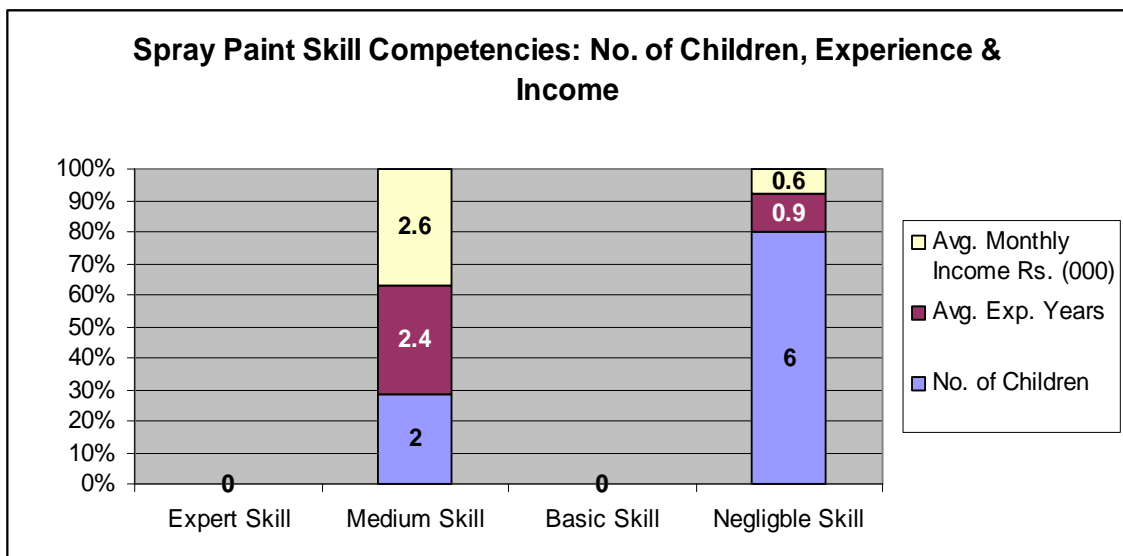
Another important aspect had been that the consistency of wage determination across the five occupations showed consistency. All the sample children that had negligible skills level were getting an average monthly income of Rs 600 to Rs 700. On the other extreme, all sample children with expert/advance skill set were earning average monthly incomes of Rs 5000 to Rs 6500 across the five occupations.

Moreover there was no mechanism available that would determine sustainability of the monthly wage or stipend for these children. It was the *Ustaad's* prerogative to determine what he found suitable as the monthly wage or stipend for the children at his workshop. Parents and children would not argue about the wage that the *Ustaad had* determined. For Parents the consideration was not the wage but an opportunity for their children to learn the skill. However, this need of the parents continued till the time child fully developed mastery of the skill, which typically takes many years after the children start learning the skill.

5.9. Absence of Standardization in *Ustaad-Shagirid* Skills Training

As discussed earlier, these workshops had been informally organized, where one spin off was their unintended function as an informal training center to build the capacity of children in a particular occupation. It was the *Ustaad* that determined how things were taught and assignments were performed at these workshops. Each *Ustaad* had his unique style to teach children and there was no standardized approach in carrying out certain tasks or training children. This was also due to the fact that these occupations did not have any prescribed curriculum, training manuals or lessons plans. Moreover, there were

no organizations or small entrepreneurs association that would oversee the training aspect of these workshops. The result is that, the children underwent a haphazard training arrangement totally dependent on the whims of one person, the *Ustaad.*

In addition, there was no mechanism available that would certify the skill competency level of these children. This increased the dependency of the children on their respective *Ustaads* till the children completely acquired the skill. These children after 'graduating' from these workshops would continue to remain in these informal workshops and had a limited chance to find skilled employment, for example, in the well organized auto industry of the country.

5.10.   Workplace Politics: *Ustaad*'s Exploitation of Children

The sample *Ustaad* found the arrangement convenient for the development of their business. As discussed above, these children after going through a tough work routine become an essential helping hand of the *Ustaad* to perform various tasks related to the business that customers brought in. One *Ustaad,* from spray painting workshop provided a useful insight into the time that children spent at the workplace and how it was useful for his business:

> *"The children's work gives me profit, especially when they have acquired some mastery of skills. I can finish my job easily and don't need to worry about the workshop when I have to go somewhere. Moreover, I did not need to work too hard. These children work according to my instructions even in my absence. Most repair related jobs that the customer brings to us, need basic level of maintenance or repair tasks and these can be handled by my shagird (child Labourer) very well. Even, the complex tasks that I need to perform, my shagird helps me do it quicker. It is totally*

> *beneficial for us to have children at the workshop. Yes, we also teach them how to perform these tasks too, which is good for their stable future."*

None of the *Ustaads* felt that keeping a child at their workplace had any disadvantage to them. They all were quite satisfied with the arrangements and regarding the time that a child spent at their workplace. Field data has indicated that these children were spending on an average 12 hours at the workshops, and *Ustaad* in the start would give them Rs 600 to 800 a month. Even when child had developed medium level competencies his wage remained low allowing the *Ustaad* to reap more profits from his business.

Another interesting observation was the fact the *Ustaad* sometimes deliberately slowed down the training process for his child labourers. This would begin after child entered an advanced level of skill learning. At this time some *Ustaads* deliberately would not allow the child the opportunity to harness his gained skill and develop a fuller understanding of it. In such a scenario, the child would be asked to spend time on relatively less complex tasks. This hampered the child's ability to further develop his knowledge of the skill. Moreover, this would allow the *Ustaad* to keep such trained child under control and subservient for a longer period of time to get most of jobs done at fraction of the cost.

Such a child would be of great value to the *Ustaad* as he could perform various tasks without much close supervision. This would allow the *Ustaad* to maximize his profits, as he could charge a handsome fee to the customer for a repair job that his *shagirid* (child labourer) would perform in a fraction of the price.

5.11. Child Labour Income: Current and Future Projections

The income level of the predominant number of sample children was found to be modest. As discussed earlier, the analysis of the monthly income of these children indicates that the majority (38 numbers, 54%) of the sample children only received average Rs 600 per month. Another significant number of sample children (15 numbers, 21%) were getting an average monthly income of Rs 1400. Still reasonable numbers of sample children (13 numbers, 19%) were earning an average monthly salary of Rs 2500. There were only a few (4 numbers, 6%) sample children who were making a monthly average salary of Rs. 5700.

Table 5.9: Average Monthly Income of Sample Children

Average Monthly Income (Rs)	No. of Sample Children
600	38
1400	15
2500	13
5700	4
Total Sample Children	**70**

Clearly, majority of the children had basic level of skills and were performing helping functions at the workplace. Although, it was observed that some the children under the research were performing relatively significant technical work, however they were not being compensated accordingly.

In any case, all the sample children were looking at a 'brighter' future where they would be able to earn a 'handsome' income. In order to develop future income projections of the sample children various *Ustaads* provided inputs based on the income their existing workers were getting. These workers include children below 14 years of age, and children between 15-18 years of age.

Projection lists were developed, first to identify the age of entry for child labourers in different occupations. Secondly, estimation was made on how increased competencies with the passage of time would translate into the corresponding wage increase for child labourers. The *Ustaads* were asked to identify the average time required for a child to develop basic, medium and advanced level proficiencies for each of the identified tasks in all five occupations. Lastly, the *Ustaads* were asked to identify the prevalent monthly wage/salary (average) for child labourers for each of those tasks with basic, medium and advanced levels of proficiency.

These lists were developed in three occupations, namely truck decoration, auto repair workshops, and spray painting. However, the underlying assumption remained that the children had also been developing their competency in the skill acquisition accordingly. It is important to indicate that not all children would improve their competencies in the same training duration.

The following table 5.10 provides information on prevalent average monthly wages for workers from 10 years of age to 18 years of age in the occupations of auto-repair

workshop, truck decoration, and spray-paints. These estimated income projections assume that child labourers would also improve the proficiency of the skills in the given duration.

Table 5.10: Monthly Estimated Income Projections for Child Labourers Across Three Occupations						
	Truck Decoration		Auto-Workshops		Spray Painting	
Age	Experience (years)	Monthly* Wage (Rs)	Experience (years)	Monthly* Wage (Rs)	Experience (years)	Monthly* Wage (Rs)
10 years	-	-	0	600	0	600
11 years	-	-	1	800	1	1200
12 years	0	900	2	1200	2	1800
13 years	1	1500	3	1800	3	3000
14 years	2	2400	4	2100	4	3500
15 years	3	3600	5	2400	5	4500
16 years	4	4600	6	3300	6	6000
17 years	5	7500	7	4500	7	9000
18 years	6	10000	8	6000	8	10500

* Till the age of 14 years, the monthly wage is mostly given on daily and weekly basis.
Amounts indicated here are the estimations made with Ustaads in these three occupations

In both auto-workshop and spray-painting children were entering mostly from the age of 10 years however, for truck decoration the entry age was 12-years. Interestingly, the auto-workshop that was extremely complex did not promise a 'brighter' future income. It started offering Rs. 600 a month at the age of 10-years and projected a future monthly income of Rs. 6000 at the age of 18 years.

On the other hand, in Truck-decoration the monthly income at the entry age of 12-years was Rs. 900 and it would shoot up to Rs. 10,000 by the time the child would reach 18 years of age and had also fully mastered all the tasks in this trade. Lastly, the child who

entered the trade of spray painting at the age of 10 years received a monthly income of

Rs. 600, and by the time he would be 18 years of age and would have learnt all the tasks,

would be able to earn Rs. 10,500 a month.

Graph 5.9: Income Projection for Child Labourers (10 to 18 Years) in Three Occupations Against Minimum Wage
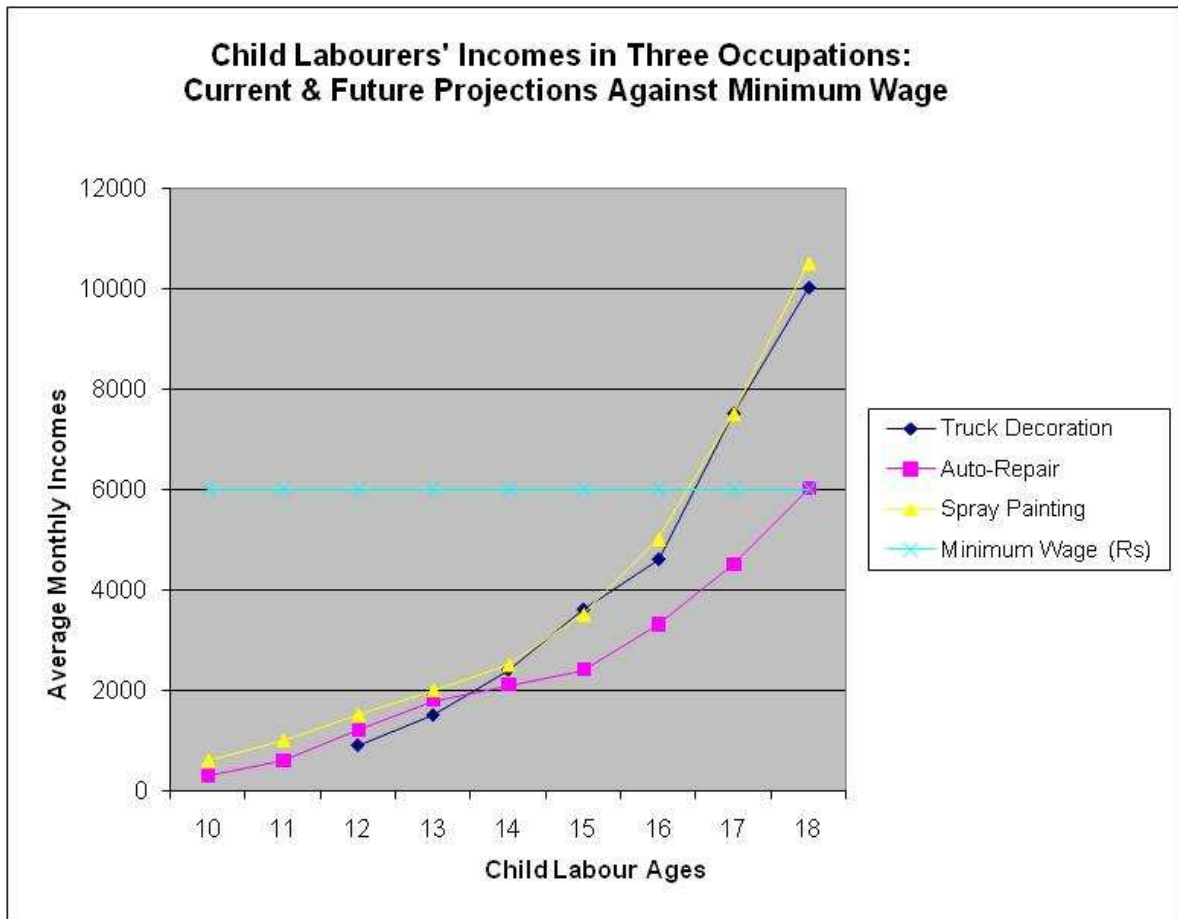
The above graph 5.9 is plotted on two parameters; ages of child labourers and average

monthly income from three occupations; namely Truck Decoration (line with diamonds),

Auto Repair (line with square) and Spray painting (line with triangle). In 2008-2009, the

labour laws in Pakistan determined monthly minimum wage of Rs. 6000 for an illiterate

person. The graph above indicates that although these sample children started on very

low wages as young boys, soon with the passage of time and learning of their respective trade their monthly income would start indicating an upward movement. This progression in monthly income would be slow for the first four years of skills learning at the workplace, as they could barely cross the mark of rupees 2000 per month. However, the projections indicate that the monthly income would double in the following two years to rupees 4000 and more than quadruple in next four years time to more than rupees 10,000 a month –at least in the occupations of truck decoration and spray painting.

This is what parents were looking at; a future for their children where they could become functional and financially independent. These children would be able to support their respective families and could also start their own workshops in the not very distant future. From the sample parents and sample *Ustaad*'s perspectives, a child who had been rejected, expelled, taken out of school or who had never gone to school was saved from wasted his life and the *Ustaad-Shagirid* arrangement would make him a functional and independent member of his family and of society. The *Ustaads* clearly saw their particular occupation flourishing as it had been during the last many years. They were also positive about the future of these children to find better wages at an early stage. The following views were expressed by various *Ustaads.*

- *"Yes, after learning the trade these children can become independent".*
- *"A skilled person becomes independent at a young age".*
- *"School education is better only when you can get a good job at the end. Skill learning is very important for the children who cannot go to school and this helps them become independent at an early stage".*

- *"A skill will enable a child to start his own work where ever he desires".*
- *"Yes to some extent, a skilled person becomes self sufficient, but education is also important".*
- *"Skill with education was very necessary. Skilled children are more valuable than others."*
- *"Educated children have 50% chances and skilled children have 80% chances of getting early employment".*

On the other hand, sample children had indicated a different course of action regarding their future plans after completing skill training at the workshops. The majority of children (77%) indicated that they would like to start their own business instead of getting a better salary from their *Ustaad.* Out of the total sample children, only 23% indicated that they would like to get better salary from their *Ustaad* after developing mastery of their skill.

Pie Chart 5.3: % Distribution of Sample Children's Future Plans After Completing Skills Training at Workshops

Children's Future Plan After Completing Skills Training

Get Better Pay
23%

Start Own Business
77%
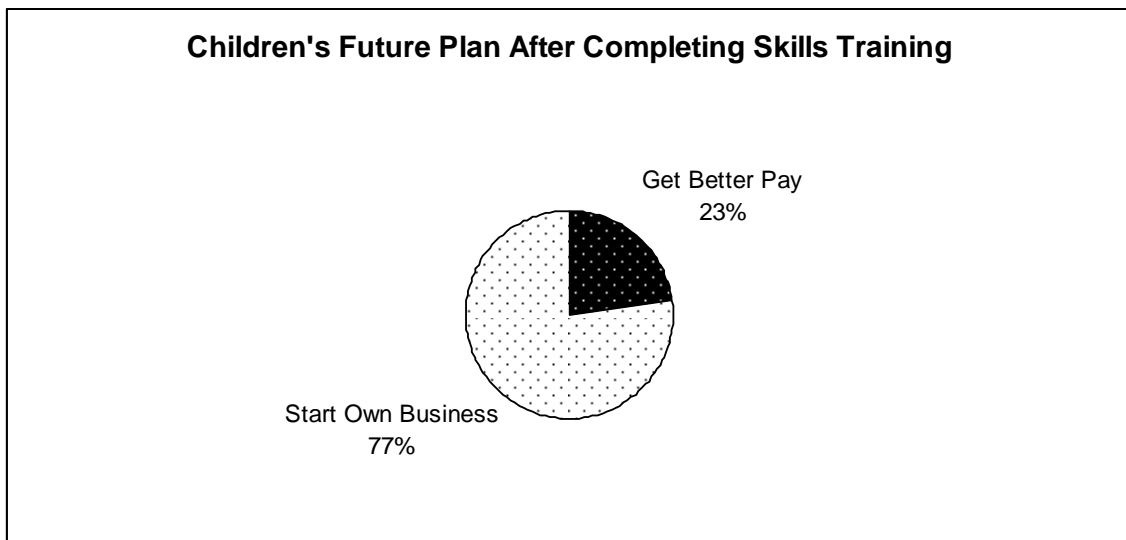
The socio-economic conditions within which the families of the sample children found themselves, such prospects of better future wages for their children were extremely

attractive. The possibility for a child to start earning a future monthly wage of Rs 6000 to Rs 10,000 from the age of 18 years onward was what the parents of these children aspired and looked forward to.

The sample parents of the child labourers had showed confidence about the possibility of a good future for their children in terms of better future wages or their children starting their own businesses. Most parents were happy with the current performance of their children at the workshops and were hopeful that their children would do well in future and support the family.

5.12.   Two Models of Knowledge Transfer: Workshop *Ustaad* versus School Teacher

Since many sample children were school dropouts, it would be useful to have a comparison on how knowledge is transferred in schools as compared to in the workplace. The teaching methodology practiced both at the workplaces and government schools are primarily different but have some similarities. This section will mainly focus on the teaching methodology at the workshop and will briefly discuss school based teaching methodologies. Lastly, the section will also touch upon some of the similarities between the two models of knowledge transfer.

The teaching methodologies at workshops were informal. There were no prescribed curriculum, books, no copies, no stationary and not even any teaching aids. *Ustaads* would make the child observe how various tasks were performed, and then let the child perform those tasks himself. There was no home work, but the child had to spend around

12 hours at the workshop. Moreover, one *Ustaad* may have one to three children with him.

On the other hand, the teaching methodology at school is based on class room environment and rote learning. The teachers rely on books, copies and black boards to transfer knowledge to children. Children are required to memorize lessons by heart, and sent home with large amounts of homework to further memorize the lesson. The child would be required to spend around 6 hours in school. One teacher may have 40 to 60 students in government schools.

The one common factor among both teaching methods at school and workshops had been the excessive use of psychological and corporal punishment against children as a means to discipline the child and transfer knowledge. The majority of the children (74%) were school dropouts and all have reported frequent corporal punishments at school. Moreover, all sample children (100%) had reported corporal punishment at the workshops.

The frequent use of punishments appeared to be an un-written theme of teaching methodologies both employed in school and also at the workshops. However, since the child spent only six hours at school, and one teacher had to attend to around 50 children, the exposure to corporal punishments was limited. On the other hand, at the workshops sample children were spending around 12 hours daily, and one *Ustaad* would have one to

three child labourers, therefore the exposure to corporal punishments of the children at the workshop was much higher.

One interesting aspect of this comparison was that the entire 'curriculum' and the corresponding time to cover this curriculum ranged from six to eight years. Keeping in mind the entry age to these professions was around 10 years, it was around 18 years of age that the child labourers would becomes almost fully skilled. It was also interesting that the whole knowledge of skills was transferred from *Ustaad* to *Shagirid* without using any written document or literature.

In other words, a child who did not complete his primary education and switched from school at the age of 10-years or so to the workplace based skills learning would have a stronger chance of finding employment. A child labourer, after a period of six to eight years of skill training at the workplace, becomes fully functional and independently capable of earning a reasonable living. This child's future wage would significantly above the minimum monthly wage[5]. The data has already identified that child after six to eight years of training at the workplace would start to earn around Rs 10,000 monthly, which is more than the minimum wage.

On the other hand, a child who remained in a government school after class four, in the next seven years would be able to complete matriculation (10 years of schooling), but with no guarantee of employment. It is important to question- whether 10 years of

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[5] In 2008-2009, the government of Pakistan had determined Rs 6000 as minimum wage for unskilled worker

schooling[6] would ensure a monthly wage of Rs 10,000 or whether seeking employment at a younger age would achieve the same result.

The level of awareness among the sample parents, the *Ustaad* and the children regarding the value of education had been found to be higher. They all agreed that pursuing school education to a higher level could certainly act as a catalyst in the lives of the children and guarantee a good future. However, for parents it was also clear that when the child could not succeed in school coupled with their limited means they were left with no option but to opt for skill training opportunities for their child at the workshop.

It was useful to analyze why a child from a poorer family does not produce better results at school but starts showing positive signs to acquire skills at a workshop with an *Ustaad.* To examine both the models, that is, the school model and workplace model, it would be useful to study various factors including motivation of the *Ustaad*/teacher, teaching methods, systems of instruction, the operating environment, and the daily time spent learning and transferring knowledge.

It is important to understand the motivation of the *Ustaad* to train a child and take him under his wing. Apart from the fact that he needs a helping hand, hiring a trained adult would cut his profits. Moreover, a child could be easily manipulated to perform mundane and minor tasks. It is not possible for an *Ustaad* to manipulate an adult worker in the same way or to such an extent as he could a child.

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[6] Children complete 10 years of school education after they attained 14 years of age.

A trained child would also do all those tasks at a fraction of the cost of an adult worker. The *quid pro qou* is that the *Ustaad* also gradually teaches the child the same skill set. For the *Ustaad*, it is also good business practice that a child learns the skill as it lessens the work burden on the *Ustaad* without reducing his profits. This motivates the *Ustaad* further to ensure that the child pay attention to what was taught and quickly learns it.

On the other hand, the teacher is not personally motivated. He/she receives a monthly salary regardless of the performance of the children at the school. The teacher does not really bother if some children are not performing better in their studies. Moreover, in the school environment one teacher has to deal with a class of around 50 pupils. On the other hand, in the workshop one *Ustaad might* have anywhere between one to three children. This *Ustaad/*teacher to student ratio also plays a critical role in the child's performance in ensuring positive results.

Similarly, a child spends on average of 12 hours daily work routine at the workshops. There the child performs various practical tasks that appeal to the child's imagination. In contrast while at school a child spends 6 hours or so with the teachers and basically listening to lectures and trying to memorize various lessons, which could become boring and tedious. The environment both in school and the workplace is abusive and violent. Both teachers and the *Ustaad* resort to psychological abuse and corporal punishment while trying to discipline children. However, the level of psychological abuse and corporal punishment in the workshops is much higher than in the schools.

As has been seen in this chapter, the most critical factor that convinced poor parents to choose workplace-based skills training for their children was its direct link to the strong possibility of the child becoming a functional and skilled adult and his ability to earn a 'considerable' amount of money in early adulthood (around 18 years of age). Moreover, the child's time investment of six to eight years at the workplace for skill learning was also remunerated by the *Ustaad.*

On the other hand, if the same child had continued school education for another six to eight years, he would have the possibility to pass grade 10 (matriculation). However, children with matriculation cannot find employment that would pay them monthly wage of Rs 8000 to Rs 10,000 per month. Moreover, during those six years of school education parents would have to keep spending on the child's school education.

In sum, poor parents, whose major concerns are practical form their own point of view and from the child's find it easier to opt for the *Ustaad-Shagirid* Model than the school, as they believe it offers a better future for their children. Families of 74% children initially sent them to school however all of these dropped out before completing primary education and were sent to an Ustaad to learn the skills. The families of the remaining 26% children never sent them to school and opted *Ustaad-Shagirid* Model as their first choice for their children.

Chapter 6
Exposures to Adult Violence and Injury

6.1.   The Context of Violence

Violence against children and resorting to corporal punishments were accepted norms within the *Dhok Hassu* community and were carried out almost daily at the *Akhtar Ka Ahata*. Corporal punishment, – a common form of violence against children, – was common both at home and in schools as highlighted by the South Asia Report of UNICEF (2001)[1]. Corporal punishment is an intentional infliction of physical pain subsequent to misconduct for the purpose of deferring future misconduct. (Kennedy 1995). Both parents and teachers use corporal punishment for the purpose of disciplining children. Moreover, local cultures even considered corporal punishment necessary to facilitate learning and to instill discipline among children. The following is a case study of one 12 year old child, who endured extreme corporal punishment at the workplace:

Case Study: Workplace violence against a Child

One 12-year-old child working in an auto-mechanic workshop at Akhtar Ka Ahahta showed-up to work after one day absence for which he did not seek the prior approval of his Ustaad. Seeing the Shagirid (child labourer) in front of the workshop the Ustaad got angry. He remembered all the unfinished tasks of the previous day that that child was supposed to perform. He also remembered that the child did not take prior permission for leave. First, the Ustaad questioned the child about the leave he took and hurled a battery of profanities against his female family members. A minor protest by the shagirid enraged the Ustaad further and the child was subjected to slaps, punches and kicks. The child tried to protect his body in a half hearted manner, but mainly took the assault, and while enduring the kicks, the child eventually fell on the ground. The Ustaad then picked up a fan belt and whipped the child's back, as the final stroke

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[1] Corporal punishment in schools in South Asia – submitted to the Committee on the Rights of a Child, Day of General Discussion on Violence against children 28 Sep 2001,UNICEF (Regional Office for South Asia) p3.

to this violent punishment. During all this commotion the child was screaming loudly due to the unbearable pain. The Ustaad never stopped uttering the choicest profanities during the thrashing. After the Ustaad had vented his anger, he let the child sob in the corner of the workshop for some time. However, soon the child started getting teased and was ordered to stop sobbing like a "little girl" and start doing some work.

In the evening back home, the child, humiliated, bruised, and angry, complained to his parents about the Ustaad's violence hoping that the parents would confront the Ustaad. On the contrary, the parents admonished the child telling him he should not have taken leave from work without first asking for the Ustaad's permission. The parents reminded the child of his school days when he used to bunk classes and waste time in the streets. The parents endorsed the violent act of the Ustaad and demanded that their child behave according to the instructions of the Ustaad. After the child failed in his studies, abandoned school, parents viewed the Ustaad as the only hope to ensure a better future for their child as an accomplished technician.

Children at the *Akhtar Ka Ahata* were frequently given corporal punishments, for disobeying their *Ustaad* or committing work related mistakes. The role of a physical punishment was considered pivotal in disciplining children and making them learn skills. However, the real intention of the *Ustaad* could also be economic, where the *Ustaad* wanted the child to quickly learn how to perform repair jobs on a very limited remuneration. This would help the *Ustaad* maximize his profits as he would get the repair job from his child labourer done at a fraction of cost. These underlying reasons might have helped *Ustaad* to rationalize his resort to violence against children.

Chew argues that "calling violence a rational choice can be a justification bordering on an excuse, as in 'rationalisation.' It is important to understand how some people hurt others because of their self-interest, and not because they are 'evil.' But a person who hurts others might be more likely to stop if he could think of himself only as purely evil.

Calling his act a rational choice allows him to say to himself, 'I may be cruel, but at least I'm rational', or 'It may be cruel, but at least it's effective'."[2] The justification or rationalization of violence against children was also prevalent among the *Ustaad* of *Akhtar Ka Ahata*. *Ustaads* would consider corporal punishment as beneficial for the children, as it would force them to be more disciplined and responsible. One *Ustaad* made the following statement as a justification on giving corporal punishments to children:

> "*Ustaad ke maar say shagirid key jism per phool khiltay hain* (Ustaad's corporal punishment results in blossoming of flowers on child's body, meaning the punishment makes the child responsible and efficient so it is actually a positive thing in the long run)".

These sample children appeared to have been caught in a web of violence. They faced violence at home, in school and at workplaces. The following sections describe the various forms of violence inflicted on children at these places.

6.1.1. Home

The families in *Dhok Hassu* were not averse to the use of violence to discipline their children. Children, from the stage of being toddlers to their teenage years received punishments for "bad" behavior. This included mothers threatening to deny food to children or hitting their back, cheeks and bottom. The fathers severely beat their disobeying older boys. Any mistake ranging from breaking a glass utensil, disobeying a parental order, to teasing younger siblings could trigger physical punishments by the parents. However, mostly, the fathers were associated with the use of physical violence

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[2] Chew, Michael Suk-Young, "Why were workers whipped: Pain in Principal-Agent Model", Economic Journal, Vol. 100, No 403, December 1990, published by Blackwell Publishing, p 1117

and extreme punishment against children. The child would receive physical punishments if he indulged in mistakes such as frequent mischievous acts, being disrespectful to parents or disrespectful to elders, and telling lies.

These punishments could include a few slaps by the mother to a severe physical beating by the father. During the application of physical punishments, the child would also be subjected to verbal abuse. Another form of punishment was the threat to deny the child food or to deny an activity of his choice, for example, not let the child go out and play with other children.

6.1.2. School

Corporal punishment was a common practice at government schools. The Ministry of Education's report[3] while identifying the reasons for school dropout indicated that 77% of school administrators stated teachers' harsh behavior as an important reason. Teachers routinely beat boys who did not behave in the classroom, commit mistakes in learning lessons and did not do their home work. The widespread use of corporal punishment was also frequently reported by the media. A leading English language newspaper, Dawn, in its editorial states, *"although Pakistan has ratified the UN Convention on the Rights of the Child, the rights of its children continue to be abused. Child labour is merely one part of the picture. There is also the matter of corporal punishment, routinely meted out in*

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[3] "Access and Equity in Basic Education" by Dr. Pervez A. Shami And Kh. Sabir Hussain, Published By Academy Of Educational Planning And Management, Ministry Of Education, Islamabad, 2005, p ix

schools across the country despite having been prohibited by ministerial and provincial government directives issued at different points in all the provinces".[4].

In a baseline study jointly carried out by the School Education Department and Plan Pakistan in districts of Chakwal, Vehari and Islamabad with 774 school students of 8-18 years, high incidence of corporal punishment was found. *"The main types of punishments being practices are: physical violence (targeted organ torture, cane beating, and stick) and psychological violence (insults, name calling, isolation, and rejecting behavior) emotional violence (discriminating behavior, indifference by gender, ethnic discrimination) and sexual violence (hitting sex organs, touching sensitive part of the body in a humiliating way, using obscene/lurid words and language). Area wise, 89% students in the rural areas were subjected to one or more than one form of punishment, as compared to urban areas, where 92% students claimed to have been punished by the teachers"[5].*

A similar high level of corporal punishment was also reported by the sample children in the *Akhtar Ka Ahata* who had been to school before joining the workshops. A large majority of the sample children (74%) did attend school before abandoning it. All of them had reported receiving corporal punishments in school. Forms of punishments that the sample children were subjected to included both physical and psychological. Some of these are listed below:

. subjected to humiliation and degradation

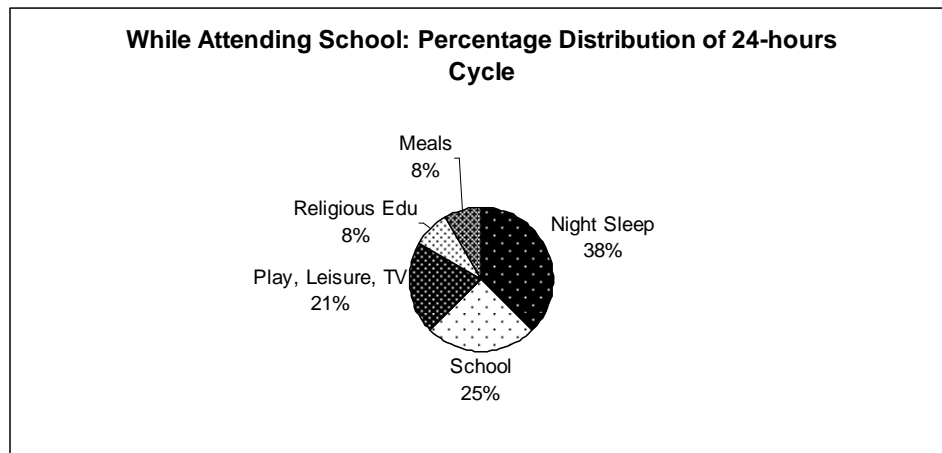---

[4] "Corporal Punishment", Editorial, Daily Dawn, 2 May 2009
[5] "Assessment of Corporal Punishment", A Baseline Study jointly conducted by Plan Pakistan and Government of Punjab School Education Department, April 2009

- being made to stand in class room during lesson
- being made to stand in a corner of the class room
- being slapped
- being hit with a ruler on the back of the hand
- sticking pencils between the fingers, and then pressing the hand with force
- being hit on the hand with a wooden stick
- being hit on the body with wooden stick
- Murga banana[6]
- Profanities

All of the above punishments had been reported by the sample children who did attend school before joining the workshop. The three most commonly given punishments had been slaps, application of a wooden stick to hit the hands and *Murga Banana.* Children also reported some extreme incidents of punishments. The pie-chart 6.1 below presented the time distribution of the sample children when they were attending school:

Pie Char 6.1:% Distribution of 24-hours Time Cycle While Attending School

While Attending School: Percentage Distribution of 24-hours Cycle

Meals 8%
Religious Edu 8%
Play, Leisure, TV 21%
Night Sleep 38%
School 25%

However, the school would end before lunch-time and children would go back to their homes. Thus, the chance of receiving corporal punishments (as mentioned in the previous chapter) at school was limited to 6 hours that represented 25% of the child's daily time.

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[6] Being made to bend in an awkward position; child is required to lower the torso so the head is almost between the legs near the knees, and the arms moved from behind the legs near the bend of the knee to hold and twist each ear, while the bottom is raised in the air in an abject humility. Child is asked to stay in this position for 10 to 20 minutes. This brings lot of physical stress on child's body and creates feelings of humiliation.

The rest of the time was free from any such threat, as it was taken up mostly by play and leisure activities in and outside the house. For these children the possibility of exposure to adult violence outside school was very limited, except for parental violence. Even during school time these children were not constantly subjected to violence or any sort of rigorous manual labour.

<div align="center">

Case Study: Corporal Punishment in Schools

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One such incident of corporal punishment in school was reported by an 11-year-old child who, after abandoning school, he started to learn the occupation of spray painting vehicles. His father was illiterate and sold fruit and vegetables in the market. On committing a minor mistake the teacher had thoroughly beaten this child with a wooden stick. The wooden stick had one nail sticking out of it and it therefore, caused cuts on the child's arms. The child's parents never confronted the teacher and the child never went back to school either.

These children were oblivious to what kind of corporal punishment lay ahead for them as they left their schools or dropped out and ended up at the workshops with an *Ustaad.*

6.1.3. Workplace

The children who ended up at the workshop to learn skills came from relatively poor families and had a history of failures in schools. Mostly, their parents were frustrated with the failure of these children in school. Moreover, parents were worried about the future of their children as they had dropped out of school and wasted time in the streets. The fear that the idle child would become a deviant and a delinquent also worried them. This would lead parents to send their children to the workshops.

This dependency on the *Ustaad* also allowed him the freedom to become violent towards the child. In many ways the *Ustaad* would become a symbol of terror who had a free

hand to use all kinds of corporal punishments and psychological torture on the children. In inflicting the punishment *Ustaad* would also use blunt tools to hit the child. In contrast, to schools, where children were spending 6 hours on a daily basis only, at the workplace this time was doubled. The Pie Chart 6.2 also indicates that sample children were spending on an average 51% of their time at the workshops. On an average these children were spending more than 12 hours at the workplace with the *Ustaad*. This meant excessive amount of time during which these children were exposed to adult violence.

Pie Chart 6.2: % Distribution of 24-hours Time While at Workplace

While Attending Workshop: Percentage Distribution of 24-hours Cycle

Meals 8%
Play, Leisure, TV 8%
Night Sleep 33%
Workplace Skill Learning 51%
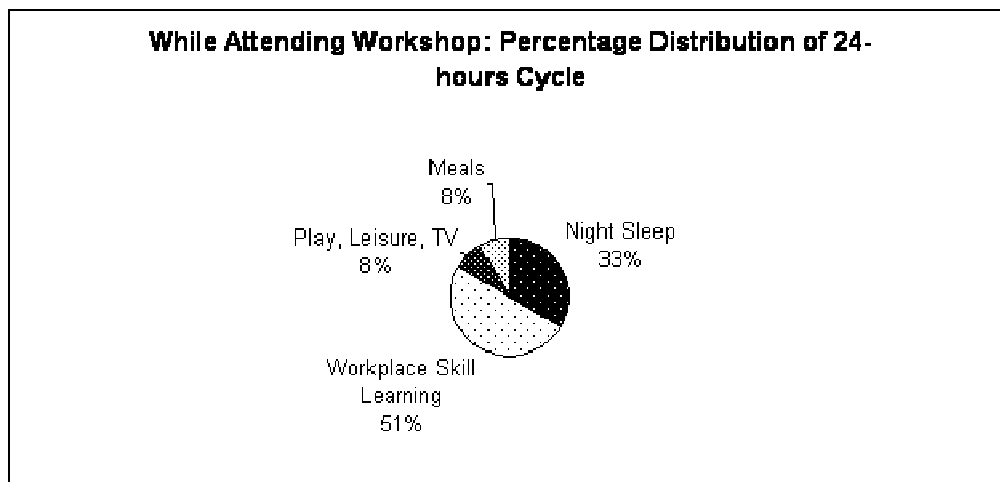
These children were at the mercy of the *Ustaad* during 12 hour work period. Any mistake could incur punishment. As the case study given earlier has indicated, if a child took a day off without the consent of the *Ustaad* that was a major instigator of punishments. If a tool was missing from the workshop the child had to be accountable for it. The child was also threatened with all kind of consequences for his misconduct and mistakes. Threats also included the child being ordered to stay late, that is, beyond 8 pm at night.

In short these children had to walk a tight rope to ensure that the *Ustaad* remained happy with their work. The constant fear of making a mistake and the consequent punishment from the *Ustaad* was a constant worry for these children.

6.2. Faces of Workplace Violence

At the workplace these children were exposed to various kinds of violence, including psychological and physical violence. In many ways, these children were brutalized at the workplace all in the name of making them active workers (not idle).

6.2.1. Psychological Violence

At the workshop the *Ustaad* had a supreme role. He maintained a state of uncertainty and unpredictability in his dealings with the child. The *Ustaad* would keep the child at a distance, interact with him sternly, and adopt a harsh tone of voice with him. The child was made to run around between various tasks. The initial few months of the child entry in the workshop were critical for the *Ustaad.* One *Ustaad* from an Auto-Brake Repair workshop indicated how a new child labourer was typically dealt with at the workplace:

> "*The initial one month* is *a test. We need to be certain if the child can endure the hardship at the workplace. Therefore, we deliberately behave harshly with the child to gauge his endurance level. If the child survives for the first month or so, then he* is *fit to learn the occupation.*"

A child who was supposed to help the *Ustaad* or an adult worker needed to be very attentive. During the repair job, the *Ustaad,* like a surgeon, would require various tools and it was the responsibility of the child to quickly hand over the right tool of the right size. The child would know that if he passed a tool that was wrong it would certainly lead

to profanities often followed by a slap. Even, when a child was performing a task on his own he was required to complete it quickly. Unnecessary waste of time on single tasks would also incur the wrath of the *Ustaad.*

6.2.2. Vocabulary of Profanities

The workshops primarily maintained an environment that is unfit for children. Apart from other work related hazards, the language used in various interactions was observed to be highly obscene and vulgar. The men liberally used profanity in all sorts of verbal interactions at these workshops. Furthermore, the language would become extremely vulgar when the men got angry with each other. The *Ustaads* would also use the same vulgar language in their interactions with the children at the workshops. These bouts of anger, manifested themselves in gesticulations that showed anger as well as verbal abuse. Profanities can be divided into three broad categories. The first category was labeled low intensity abuses, and these consisted of asexual words targeting the personality traits of the child or his male family members. Words like '*kuta*' (dog) and '*khotay*' (donkey) were meant as abuses indicating that the child was impure like a dog and dumb like a donkey. Culturally, *kuta* (dog) is considered an impure animal and if it touches any Muslim, he or she cannot say their prayers until their clothes are changed and ablution performed. Thus, the word *kuta* is considered an abuse. The *khota or kohtay* (donkey) is considered to be a dumb animal that faces difficulty in understanding basic instructions. Calling someone *Khota* or *Khotay* would mean that person is dumb like animal.

Abuses such as *Baigairat* (Dishonored) and *Harami* (Illegitimate child) were meant to question the identity of the child. An abuse like *Pagal da bacha* (son of a crazy man) and *Khotay da bacha* (son of a donkey) could also be categorized as low intensity abuses. In both these abuses the child's father was labeled either 'crazy' or a 'donkey'. The idea was to humiliate the child and make him feel bad.

The second category of abuses can be described as medium intensity abuses. Abuses like *Ganday and Marawani Daya* subjected the child to sexual humiliation by labeling him a male prostitute. Moreover, names that were given to the child's mother, like bitch, can also be placed in the second category. In the third category extreme profanities were used. These abuses targeted the female family members of the child specifying with names of sexual organs or sexual acts. Culturally, the female family members are seen as the "weaker sex", namely the mother and sister, and they were made targets in these sexually explicit profanities. The object of these profanities was to decimate child's integrity and his self worth.

The field data showed that all sample children (100%) had been subjected to the three categories of abuses. It is also important to highlight that these profanities were unleashed on children soon after they entered the world of work at the age of 9 years or even younger. However, many of these children were familiar with some of these abuses well before joining the workplace. These children had frequently been exposed to such language and even used it while playing and fighting in the playground or on the streets. In many instances, some of these abuses were also used in the homes of these children.

However, when the *Ustaad* used these abuses in a work setting, the child would experience an extreme power imbalance between himself and the *Ustaad.* Unlike the playground or the street, here in the workshops the child could not hurl the same abuse back at the *Ustaad.*

Table 6.1: Number of Sample Children Received *Ustaad's* Verbal Abuse

Number of Sample Children Subjected to Verbal Abuse by Ustaad		
Profanities	**Confirmed**	**Not Confirmed**
Low Intensity	70	0
Medium Intensity	70	0
High Intensity	70	0

The frequency of using these three categories of abuses may vary among *Ustaads,* however, all of them would use these abuses. Children did report to their parents about the abusive language of the *Ustaad* but it rendered no reaction. Parents tended not to confront the *Ustaad* on matters they considered 'trivial'.

The following table 6.2 depicts the kind of abuses the *Ustaad* typically used while admonishing the children. The background color of the table is changed to indicate the intensity that particular category of abuse carried.

Table 6.2: Categories & Listing of Profanities Used by *Ustaad* against Sample Children

Intensity	Profanities in Punjabi	English Translation
Profanities used by *Ustaad* against Children		
Intensity	**Profanities in Punjabi**	**English Translation**
Low Intensity	Kuta	Dog
	Khotay	Donkey
	Baigairat	Dishonored
	Harami	Illegitimate (child)
	Pagal da bacha	Son of crazy man
	Khotay da bacha	Son of a donkey
Medium Intensity	**Marawani Daya**	**Male prostitute**
	Ganday	**Male prostitute**
	Kuti Na Putar	**Son of a bitch**
High Intensity	**Bahan Lun**	**Sister's dick**
	Ma Lun	**Mother's dick**
	Phudi Nayan	**Belonged to pussy**
	Phudi Sari Nayan	**Belonged to burnt pussy**
	Bahan Chod	**Sister fucker**
	Maa Chod	**Mother fucker**

One father of a 10 year old child labourer shared the following on the *Ustaad's* punishment to children:

> *"Ustaad da haq banda hay kay munday noo danat kay rakhay. Tay jaray lood paye chapir wee maraytakay munda kaam dhiyaan naal karay. (It is right of the Ustaad to be strict with the child. If the need be Ustaad should physically punish the child too so he remains focused in his work)",*

6.2.3. Violence Among Children at Workplace

These sample children primarily remained busy all day long in their work at the workshops. However, differences among children did emerge and on occasion fights had also broke out amongst them. Children did use profanity to settle their scores. The fight could break out from trivial matters like ridiculing, calling names, or on the decisions about who should carry out certain tasks.

The majority of children (81%) reported fights amongst child labourers. Most fights took place during the absence of the *Ustaad.* On occasion these fights became a source of amusement for others, particularly the adult workers and older children. However, it was the *Ustaad* who would intervene and put an end to the fight. This may not be the case every time.

In one such incident two older boys, who were working on neighbouring auto-repair workshops, had a grudge against each other. They both got into an argument about a tool, a car jack, which had been misplaced. One of the boys had accused the other of stealing the car jack. The exchange of accusations between them turned into both of them using profanities against the female members of each others' households. Their screaming

voices attracted the attention of others including their respective *Ustaads* and some of other adult workers. They all found it amusing. Soon both these boys started pushing each other around and then attacked each other with fists and kicks. Some of the co-workers started egging them to fight more while others were jeering them on. A couple of adult workers even recorded the fight on their cell phones.

After a few minutes (by that time they both had torn clothes and had bruised each other), the *Ustaad*s finally intervened and separated the two. In a lighter mood, both *Ustaads* asked the boys to let go their grudge and hug each other. The boys did not realize what a source of amusement their brawl was for others.

However, most fights, unlike this one, were put to an end by the Ustaad quite quickly and the child who was the culprit would be punished.

6.2.4. Corporal Punishments at Workshops

Children at the workplace were subjected to a variety of corporal punishments. Sometimes, the punishments were administered as part of a calculated plan of the *Ustaad* to prevent child from a possible mischief or as a result of the child's mistake. On most occasions the *Ustaad* would physically punish the child due to his slowness to perform certain tasks, not taking an interest in work, being idle and wasting time, frequent mistakes, wasting time outside the workplace, or disobeying an instruction. The power asymmetry between the *Ustaad* and the child labourer becomes abundantly clear when gauged from the nature of the punishment given to the child. In fact, the *Ustaad* would
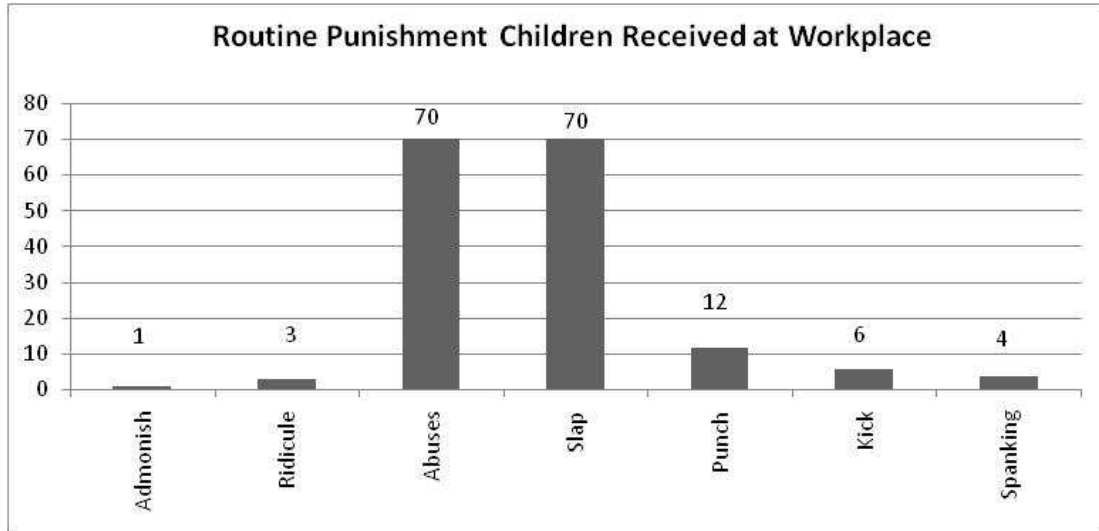
establish his authority through the use of violent force. The following is a list of punishments that children received for various mistakes:

- Admonishment: Verbally telling the child to behave in performing tasks.
- Ridiculed: Humiliating the child for his slowness, slackness and non-attentiveness
- Profanities: use of profanities targeting the child and his family members
- Slapping: Usually hitting the child on the cheeks, neck, and back
- Punching: Hitting the child anywhere on the body, particularly on the back, chest, stomach
- Kicking: Hitting the child's legs and bottom

The nature of punishment depended on the kind of mistakes and the level of the *Ustaad*'s mood or anger. Handing the wrong instrument to the *Ustaad* would lead to an abuse or a slap or both simultaneously. The *Ustaad* usually slapped the child on the back of his neck or on the face. Many of these children were so used to this punishment that they would raise their shoulders and tend to lower their neck or cover their face with hands in anticipation of a slap for their mistake.

Another harsher punishment was to punch the child on the back and sometimes anywhere on the child's body. Another extreme punishment was to kick the child mostly when he was sitting and performing a task. Kicks were aimed at the child's bottom or back. The sample children were asked to identify routine and extreme punishments from the same grid of punishments. Each of these punishments could be described as extreme depending to the extent of their application. Nonetheless, the children universally reported being subjected to the *Ustaad's* abuses and slaps as routine punishment and being kicked around as an extreme punishment.

Graph 6.1: Number of Sample Children Received Routines Punishment

Routine Punishment Children Received at Workplace

Admonish: 1
Ridicule: 3
Abuses: 70
Slap: 70
Punch: 12
Kick: 6
Spanking: 4

Graph 6.2: Number of Sample Children Received Extreme Punishment

Extreem Punishment Children Received at Workplace

Admonish: 1
Ridicule: 1
Abuses: 29
Slap: 37
Punch: 51
Kick: 70
Spanking: 10

For these children abuses and slaps were routine punishments, though some also indicated these as being extreme punishment. Everyone felt that being kicked around was an extreme punishment. During any physical punishment, these children were also universally subjected to all sorts of profanities. In fact, often the *Ustaad* would call the child by first verbally abusing him. A common way of calling a child would be "*kutay, aider aa*" (Dog, come here) or "*Bahan chod, dhiaan daye*" (Sister fucker, pay attention).

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Children also narrated having received extreme physical punishments that go beyond mere slapping, punching and kicking. These beatings include hitting with all sorts of tools that were used to perform various tasks in the occupation. The following are some of the children's experiences of violence against them:

- *"Ustaad excessively beats me. When he* is *very angry, then he even hits me with the hammer. Sometimes, he punches me so hard that I collapse on the floor." (A 12 year old child, learning the skill of truck decoration)*

- *"When the Ustaad* is *angry with me, he punishes me by whipping me with the timing belt (a plastic belt with one jagged side. It is used in the car engine). It leaves red bruises on my body and arm". (A 13 year old child, learning to become an auto- mechanic)*

- *"In anger, the Ustaad does not care how he is beating me. Whatever tool is in his hand, he would beat me with that tool. Even a pana (a small blunt metallic tool to tighten nuts". A 12 year old child, learning to become an auto- mechanic)*

- *"The Ustaad does not like mistakes. He beats me with his big hands. I have to endure it. It hurts so much. He also makes me a 'murga[7]'. (A 12 year old child, learning to paint vehicles)*

- *"Whenever I make a mistake, I am given punishments. Often I get a beating. The Ustaad beats me with whatever instrument he is holding in his hands. Sometimes he hits me with the hammer as well".(An 11 year old child, learning to be an auto mechanic)*

- *"Ustaad gets very angry on my mistakes. He takes me inside the workshop and then gives me a thorough beating. He also swears at me."(A 9 year old child in an auto-repair workshop)*

- *"The Ustaad is temperamental. When he gets angry at my mistakes, he beats me with the Fender (a ruler like long metallic object used to measure lengths of the plastic sheets). (A 13 years old child, learning the skill of truck decoration)*

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[7] Hunched physical posture, where child is asked to pass his arms through the bends of his knees and twist his ear. It is considered a gesture of abject humility.

- *"The Ustaad frequently resorts to abusing and beating. When he gets angry with me, he summons me and first he uses a specific abuse- bahan chod (sister fucker) or ma chod (mother fucker). When he gets very angry, he hits me with plastic pipes. These leave bruises on my body and it hurts for a long time."(An 11 year old child, learning the occupation of a brake maker)*

All sample *Ustaad's* believed in the effectiveness of punishments and its positive affect on the child. The data showed that the *Ustaad's* viewed punishments as playing a vital role to ensure that the child pay attention to his assigned work. The fear of punishments, it was suggested by the *Ustaads*, would make children responsible, alert and they would quickly learn to perform various tasks. Extreme punishments or the threat of them, in their view, acted as a deterrent against the children making the same mistakes again, and causing mischief or being lazy. Most of the sample *Ustaads* (71%) believed that only corporal punishments were an effective method to discipline children at the workplace. 29% of *Ustaads* believed that the combination of corporal punishments and encouragement would produce positive results in children.

Table 6.3: % Distribution of *Ustaad's* on Effectiveness of Punishment to Children

Ustaad's Views on Effectiveness of Punishment on Children		
Corporal Punishment and Encouragement	10	29%
Corporal Punishment only	25	71%
Total	**35**	**100%**

The data showed that universally the sample parents were not averse to the use of corporal punishment to discipline the children. However, around 57% parents indicated

that the *Ustaad* should use both corporal punishment and encouragement to motivate the child to learn skills. Some suggested that the child would respond better if he was given a little encouragement. "*Jaira gur naal mar jaway ussan sakhiyan dain dee kee lor hay* (if one agrees with encouragement, then why should he be punished)," commented one father smilingly.

Nonetheless, by and large, the mantra that parents endorsed to discipline children at the workshops was corporal punishment. "It is important to physically beat the child, so he remains focused on learning the skills", shared a father of a 10-years old child in auto-electric workshop. "If children do not pay attention to what the *Ustaad* is saying then *Ustaad* should physically punish the child", explained another father of a 12 year of child labourers working in the occupation of a truck decorator.

Table 6.4: % Distribution of Parents on Effectiveness of Punishment to Children

Parents' Veiws on Punishment Ustaad can Give to Child		
Corporal Punishment and Encouragement	20	57%
Corporal Punishment only	15	43%
Total	**35**	**100%**

The parents belief in cultural sayings like *chamri tadee tay hudiyan sadian* (while beating *Ustaad* can bruise the child's skin but make sure the child's bones are not broken) gave the *Ustaad* complete power and control over the children to subject them all sorts of corporal punishments.

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These children spent most of their time at the workplace. As discussed in the previous section, these children spent around 12 hours at the workplace. During this time these children were subjected to the worst profanities and violent physical assaults of the *Ustaad*.

Parents also reported that they noticed their children had changed after starting skill learning at the workplace. Some of parents said that their children now remained mostly silent at home. They were also showing a higher degree of responsibility and discipline. Parents were not receiving any complaints from neighbours against these children either. It is, therefore, not a surprise that the large majority of these children, 74%, if given a chance would go back to school and all the sample children were unanimous in rejecting the idea of sending their younger brothers to any workshop for skill learning.

6.2.5. Tools of Violence

The *Ustaad* also used various tools to beat child labourers. Mostly these were not any special tools to beat children, unlike school teachers who carried a wooden role to beat children. In fact, at the workshops any tool could be used to hit children for their mistakes. Some of these tools were blunt objects and others were made of flexible plastic. Below is a list and brief description of each of those tools:

Timing belt: It was made of flexible plastic. Its actual use was to wrap it around a few pulleys of the engine. This belt was narrow with one side plane while the other side was

rough. The worn off 'timing belt' was used to punish children. In a temper the *Ustaad* would use this tool on various parts of the child's body.

Fan belt: This belt was also made of flexible plastic. Its actual use was also to ensure that certain pulleys of the engine function together. This belt was also used to hit children. Typically during a punishment the *Ustaad* would strike the child's back, bottom, and thighs.

Small hammer: The small size hammer was helpful in performing various tasks. However, in a temper some *Ustaads* did not hesitate to use it to beat children. Sometimes, the *Ustaad* would throw the hammer at the child.

Paana or chabbi (instruments to tighten screws and nuts): These *were* blunt small objects. These were also used to hit children. Usually, the *Ustaad* would hit it on the hand, arms or back. On occasion this tool was thrown at the child with intent to inflict physical harm.

Rubber pipes: The rubber pipes or hose pipes that were normally used to transfer water from the tap to another nearby location. These rubber pipes were flexible. These were also used to hit children.

Murgha Banaana: This is a physical punishment to make the child experience physical pain and humiliation. The 'culprit' child is required to lower his torso so that his head almost comes between the legs near the back of the knees. The child is then required to squeeze his arms from behind the legs near the back of the knees, and hold each ear. The child is required to twist his ears while keeping his bottom raised in the air. He is asked to stay in this position for 10 to 20 minutes. This causes a lot of physical stress on the child's body and creates feelings of humiliation.

6.2.6. The Ultimate Punishment

Parents tolerated most of the punishments that the *Ustaad* inflicted on their children. However, if the *Ustaad* decided to terminate the services of the child from the workplace, this would become a huge crisis for the child's family. Parents would try to convince the *Ustaad* to reverse his decision and take back their child. They would also promise that the *Ustaad* would not face any trouble from their child. The child would be severely reprimanded by the parents to behave at the workplace and follow all the instructions of the *Ustaad.* Once a child was asked to leave the workplace then he might be readmitted in the same workshop with a lot of a difficulty due to the reluctance of the *Ustaad.*

> ### *Case Study: Parental Reaction to Child's Possible Expulsion from Workshop*
> *A 13-year-old child in the auto-repair workshop reported that almost one year ago his Ustaad threatened to expel him from coming to the workplace. The Ustaad was not happy with the child's lack of interest in performing workshop related tasks. When news reached the child's father he was very angry with the child. For one entire week the child was dealt very strictly by both father and mother. They constantly reminded the child of how important it was for him to be obedient to his Ustaad and even endure difficulties and punishments to learn the skill. The father had to cajole the Ustaad and reassure him that the child would behave and be much more attentive in performing his tasks. The child was not kicked out of the workshop and the Ustaad gained an even stronger hold on the child.*

6.2.7. Teen-age Aggression Among Sample Child Labourers:

Parents and *Ustaad* would have a higher degree of expectations from children in the age group of 10-14 years. These children were under pressure to learn skills and demonstrate high degrees of responsibility and obedience. These children, despite being just pubescent, exhibit a high degree of control and restraint, due to the extent of discipline

and responsibility placed upon them at such a young age. Interestingly, the element of rebellion, at least its public expression, has not been observed among these children. In front of their *Ustaad* these children exhibited reverence, obedience and self restrained despite the persistent aggressive behavior of their *Ustaad*s. On the other hand, there was a relatively lower degree of expectation placed on children below the age of 10 years, though they also had to undergo a strict regime of following work related instructions and completing tasks assigned to them.

6.3. Workplace Injuries

These workshops, regardless of the nature of business, were not safe places for children. The tools, machinery, and work practices all made children vulnerable to injury. These workplaces did not have any standard practice to prevent injury.

**Table 6.5: % Distribution of Sample Children's views if *Ustaad* Warned about Workplace hazards**

Children's Views if Ustaad Warrned about Health Hazards and Injury at Workplace		
	No of Children	%
Ustaad Warned	61	87%
Ustaad did Not Warned	9	13%
Total	**70**	**100%**

The majority of sample children (87%) reported that the *Ustaads* had warned children about various health hazards at the workshops. All *Ustaads* had also indicated that they did inform children about potential health hazards and risk of injury. However, the quality of such information was basic. During the performance of tasks precautions were not observed, neither were there any safety gadgets like gloves, goggles or helmets.

6.3.1. Nature of Injuries

Children in the performance of various tasks endured injuries. These injuries were rather common place. Mostly children endured cuts and bruises on their hands, wrists, arms and feet. On occasions, children also faced eye irritations due to tiny particles in the air. The universally reported injury at these workplaces was cuts.

Graph 6.3: Number of Workplace Related Injuries Received by Children
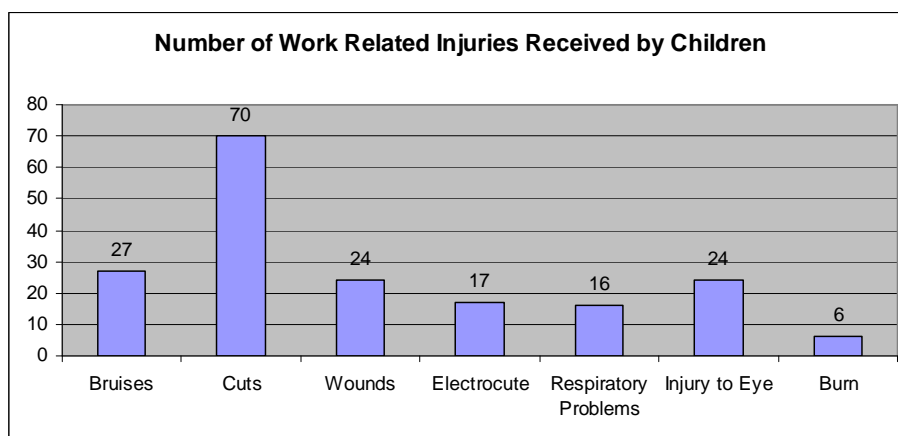
The majority of parents, 71%, were aware of the chance of injuries to their children at workplace but their knowledge was limited to cuts and bruises only. None of the parents received any information from the *Ustaad* about other potential health hazards and injuries to their children at the workplace. None of the parents reported any injury of their children. Some fathers were dismissive of injuries at the work place. One father made the following statement while describing workplace injuries as part of ever day normalcy:

> *"jud kaam sikhan howay tay halky phulke sattan tay lagdian he rahan diyan nay mundian noon. Aina chottan shootan tay pareshaan hoon lagay tay munday kam sikh gaye (When boys are learning skills they do get insignificant cuts and bruises. If we start worrying about these small injuries then boys would not be able to learn the skill)'*

Most parents felt that an injury could only be taken seriously if it required more than 4 stitches, or if a broken bone needed to be plastered to restore it.

6.3.2. Traditional 'Remedies' and Medical Help

The *Ustaad* at these workshops have devised their own remedies to 'cure minor' injuries. If a child or an adult suffered a cut, the universally accepted 'best remedy' at *Akhtar Ka Ahata* was the application of the vehicle's brake oil, "*brake oil khoon band kar dainda jay tay do tin dina whech cut theek* (brake oil stops the bleeding and in a couple of days cuts would be healed)", explained one *Ustaad* in an Auto-Repair workshops. Adhesive tape was also being wrapped to cover the cut. If a finger or another body part was burnt then grease was applied. Sometimes a medicated bandage was applied. In case of a severe cut, the child was taken to a doctor in the market or to a nearby railway hospital.

6.3.3. Attitudes Toward Injuries

In case of injury, the children were encouraged to endure pain and resist the urge to cry. The *Ustaad* expected the child to behave normally even after suffering an injury. One *Ustaad* while commenting on the need for boys to endure pain said that "m*ard ko chotain tu lagty hee rehate hain, aurtuoon ke tarah rona begharity hay (*Men - referring to boys - do get injured, and it is so dishonorable for a man to cry like women do)." In fact, on most occasions the child was expected to re-start his work after applying some break oil on his cut or bruise. The hands of these children were full of bruises and cut marks and most of these children also appeared oblivious to frequent injuries. A cut or bruise could be a big deal for many, but for the sample children it was just another injury. They had

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developed an attitude of normalcy towards injury. In few minutes after the injury, the child would be expected to be back to work to finish the assignment at hand.

Daily exposures to injuries had made these children insensitive towards the pain. The overall context of these children was such that they had to think about completing the work and avoiding the *Ustaad*'s wrath in case their mistake delayed a job being completed. In a way, these children by enduring pain and focusing on avoiding work mistakes were trying to prevent the unleashing of the *Ustaad*'s violent physical and psychological attacks.

6.4. Dynamics of Workplace Violence and Injury

In the troika of *Ustaad,* parent and child it was the latter that had to endure significant challenges. The *Ustaad* enjoyed the most power and the child's agency was not really acknowledged. The parents ensured that *Ustaad*'s control over child was established. This placed the child at a server power disadvantage vis-à-vis the *Ustaad* leading to the child's physical and emotional exploitation.

6.4.1. Child's Endurance: Cannot drop-out from work

The majority of child labourers were school dropouts. The parents did not rescue their children and confront *Ustaads* to prevent physical violence. The main reason for this was past poor school performance and the danger of the child becoming delinquent. Thus these children were left at the mercy of their *Ustaad.* Children would try to hide their work related miseries from their parents, although the younger ones complained to their

mothers in the beginning. The predominant number of children (84 %) did not report punishments to parents received at the work place probably because they knew the reaction would be in the *Ustaad's* favour.

Table 6.6: Number and % Distribution of Sample Children's Reporting to Parents about Workplace Punishments

Children's Reporting to Parents about Workplace Punishment		
	No of Children	**%**
Punishment NOT reported to parents	59	84%
Punishment reported to parents	11	16%
Total	**70**	**100%**

These children were compelled to exhibit patience, dexterity and complete submission to quickly learn the skills. Any resistance, disobedience, mischief or deceit would inevitably result in *Ustaad*'s unleashing of punishments. They had to endure the physical violence for at least four years from the time they entered the workplace at age of 10 years or so. Moreover, they also had to master the skill they were learning. However, the children could not afford to drop out from the workshops, as this was their last chance for them to become "responsible" members of their families.

6.4.2. Parents' Oblivion & Tacit Approval

As discussed above, mostly these children had learned not to complain to parents about work punishment, as parents would not confront the *Ustaad.* In instances where sample parents did confirm confronting *Ustaad* about punishments or injury to their child, the *Ustaad* would place all blame on the child. From the *Ustaad*'s perspective the child received an injury because he was careless about his work, or given a punishment

because of his mistakes at the workplace. In both cases, the blame is placed on the child. The following are some statements of parents on this issue.

- *"I agree with the Ustaad, who explained to me that accidents and injuries take place by chance. Injuring a finger is a routine occurrence at the workplace". (Father of a 12 year old child)*
- *"Yes, I did confront the Ustaad about the injury my child suffered, and he said that the child on his own accord lifted a heavy load, and accidently dropped it on his feet and inflicted injury to himself." (Father of a 14 year old child)*

Parents did not realize that skill learning at workplace was causing frequent injuries to their children. In their calculation, a child's carelessness at the workplace caused injuries or led to punishments. Therefore it was the child who needed to be careful. According to parents' views, children, due to their carelessness, suffered injuries at home, in streets, and at the playground. Similarly, the child also suffered injuries at the workplace. Moreover, parents also believed that children are prone to be restless and run away from responsibilities and make frequent mistakes. This logic made parents convinced that if a child was careful he would not have injured himself and also could have avoided the *Ustaad*'s punishment. *"If the Ustaad hits a child, it is for the benefit of the child. The Ustaad only wants the child to learn skills and that is the best thing for the child's future".* This was stated by the father of a 12-year old child who was learning the skill of truck decoration. Even when children complain about the *Ustaad*'s beating, parents would not comfort the child. In fact the child would be advised to pay more attention on skill learning and the cycle of punishment continues unabated.

6.4.3. Ustaad's Supremacy

The *Ustaad* occupies the most powerful position in the troika of *Ustaad,* parent and the child. The *Ustaad* would ensure that the parent duly acknowledged his favor to keep their

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school dropout or a failure child at his workplace. Thus, the key responsibility that *Ustaad* assumed was to transform a 'useless' child into a functional one. For this *Ustaad* demands full control over the child. The parents inundated under the *Ustaad*'s favor agreed to all demands. This also included the times child would spend at the workplace and the way *Ustaad* wished to discipline the child. These were un-written understanding reached between the parents and the *Ustaad.* Hardly any sample parent confronted the *Ustaad* for frequently punishing their child. If any parent questioned, the *Ustaad* standards response indicated that the punishment was necessary to discipline the child, and it was for child's own good. *Ustaad* takes full benefit of this advantageous position, and would treat the child the way he wished.

6.5. Teddy Bear Imagery: Effects of Violence

Regardless of the frequency and intensity of the beating, every child at *Akhtar Ka Ahata* would receive beatings from their respective *Ustaads* or older co-workers. These children developed different coping mechanism to endure punishments. Many children, particularly above 10 years of age, would discuss their ordeal in a manner as if to boast their ability to endure the harshest punishment, and others would laugh about it. Still there were children for whom discussing their punishments was not an easy experience and they could not articulate their experiences easily.

In order to assess the affects of physical punishment on them, the following simple activity was given to some of the younger children. Each child was given a paper with a pencil sketch of a teddy bear with four limbs and a smiley round face. Four children, who were less articulate about their punishments, were given these sketches. Each child was asked to think about that part of their body that had to endure the most pain due to

punishments and then colour that part of the teddy bear black. The teddy bears colored

black by these children are produced on next page:

Children 'Coloured'' Teddy Bears: Depicting Effect of Violence on Body Parts
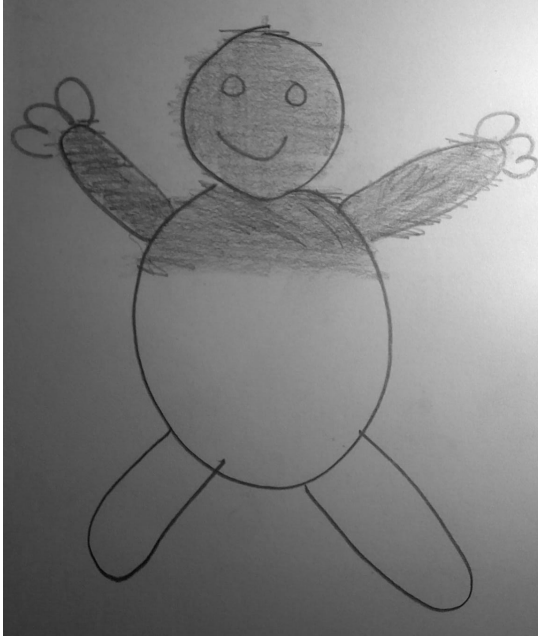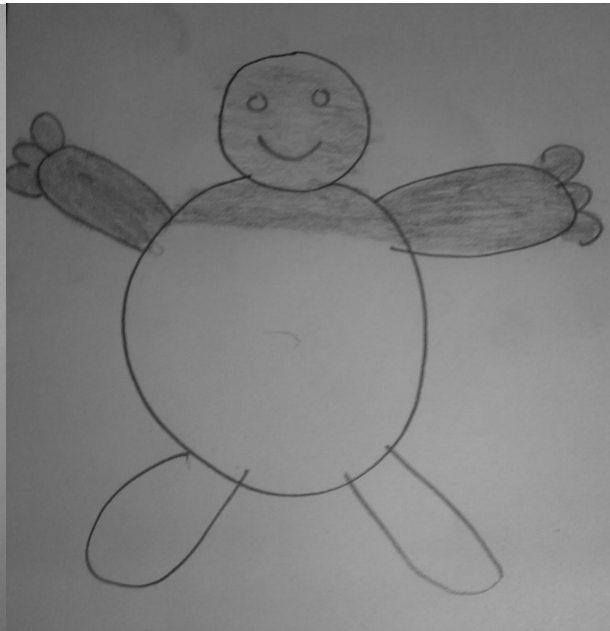

By 9 year old child in auto workshop   by 8 year old child, Brake Shock Workshop

By 8-year-old child in Spray painting   By 9 year old child in Auto workshop

All the children had coloured the neck, shoulder and arms of the teddy bear black. Two children had also blackened the legs. Clearly, these children were receiving punishment that would target their neck, shoulder, arms and also, in two cases, their legs too. The physical punishments that other children had also identified involved slaps, punches and kicking.

6.6. Role of Violence to Imbibe Skills

It is important to state that these *Ustaads* considered themselves like the child's father and claimed to care for child's well being. They also claimed to feel responsible for the children to adopt good habits, become active, stay away from deviant behaviors and remained focused to perform assigned tasks and learn skill in the process.

"*It is the fear of the punishment that makes the child responsible and learns the tasks. When we give severe punishments the children quickly learn the tasks. The execution or threat of heavy punishment make children active, obedient and focused on work*", explained an *Ustaad* in the auto-repair workshop.

These *Ustaad* also used punishment as deterrence against the development of any possible deviant behavior that would take their attention away from skill learning. Moreover, punishment also prevented mistake that children could make due to carelessness. All of the *Ustaad*s were of the view that if punishment was eliminated, these children would never be able to learn these skills.

6.7. Children's Views on Education and Skills Learning

It is evident that these children undergo a strict regime of training to learn skills. The daily training routine at the workshop on an average consumes 12 hours of child's time under the supervision of the *Ustaad*. These children also experience extreme forms of disciplinary techniques at the hands of the illiterate *Ustaad* that range from vulgar abuses and frequent corporal punishment.

Most of these children (74%) had also been to school but dropped out and started learning skills with different *Ustaad*s. The predominant majority of the children fondly remembered their school days and approved of those children who were still continuing school education. Some of the statements of children indicating their feelings on school education and work place skill learning have been reproduced below:

Views on school going children:

- *"I would like to go back to school. Idhar kaya kapray kalay karnay (Who wants to soil one's clothes at the workshops!)"*.
- *"Now I like school, but before coming to this workshop I used to hate school."*
- *"I feel ashamed of myself and consider those at school as good boys"*.
- *"I like the school going children because I also used to get education before joining the workshop. They (school going children) can become doctors, engineers and lawyers."*
- *"School going children were better. They also get vacations but we do not have any!"*
- *"I wish I could go to school! Given a chance, I will prefer school!"*

Children have also shared interesting views on skills learning:

- *"I think that learning an occupation, after completing some school years was more useful. However, I feel ashamed when my Ustaad asks people to read the workshop's utility bills and I can't ."*
- *"The workplace is good, learning a skill is more useful. Education at a government school was of a very low standard".*
- *"Going to school is better, but after learning a skill I can start my own business".*

The majority of the sample children, 73%, indicated that it was more beneficial to go to school and prepare for the future. Some, 27% felt that skill learning was of more benefit. An overwhelming number of the sample children believed that school going children would be better placed in future than they were at the workplace. 74 % percent of the children said that given a choice they would go back to school.

Most of the sample children had seen life under both the supervision of a school teacher and the *Ustaad.* The time consuming and daunting routine at the workshops and the un-predictability of punishments were the factors making them value school education more. All the sample children were unanimous in their desire to send their younger bothers to schools and not to workshops to learn skills. They did not want their siblings to under go the same challenges that they were enduring.

Chapter 7:
Summary and Conclusion

7.1.   Summary

This research has endeavored to explore the debate around the issue of child labour from the anthropological perspective. It delved into the cultural abhorrence of children's idleness that prompt parents to send them to work. Moreover, it also investigates the link between child labour income and the gratification of the family's immediate consumption needs. In this regard, five objectives of the research were developed; first, to document the nature and extent of child labour in the research area; second, to determine the socio-cultural and economic factors that compel parents to send their children for work; third, to examine human resource development mechanisms at the work place; fourth, to map skills transfer to children at the workplace and their future career needs; and fifth, to identify and document children's vulnerabilities to workplace related injuries and adult violence.

In addition, a hypothesis was also developed. The hypothesis stated 'cultural practices compel poor parents to place their out of school male children at the workplace to make them functional members of the society'. Under this hypothesis three assumptions were developed: first, skilled child is culturally accepted and valued; secondly, poor parents send their children to work for a career; lastly, workplace based skill acquisition enables children to become functional members of the family.

This research has been embedded in the theoretical framework of Structuration, which indicates society could be conceptualized as a complex of recurrent practices that form institutions. The poor parents recurrently send children into labour that creates the arrangement (institution) of *Ustaad-Shagirid,* which allows/needs child labour. In the poor communities, parents know about the structure/arrangement of *Ustaad-Shagirid* they have produced and then it is reproduced through their conduct as children are continued to enter and remain in the world of work.

However, action like sending children to labour at a workplace is taken in a social milieu pervasive with certain contradictions. These contradictions are aptly discussed in the Marxist theoretical discourse of the two-class model describing the dialectic of social change. The ruling class, bourgeoisie, has the power due to its ownership and control over means of production. The subject class, the proletariat, is powerless because of its lack of ownership of the means of production. The conflict between these two classes originates because the labour of the subject class produces a result that is solely appropriated by the ruling class. Conflict notwithstanding, the families who decide to send their children to labour always comes from the subject class, the proletariat.

This research has been carried out in informal auto-repair and auto refurbishing workshops in Rawalpindi City of the Punjab Province, Pakistan. These workshops were located in *Akhtar ka Ahata* - a relatively large premises having many small workshops. The sample children of *Akhtar ka Ahata* were working in these informal workshops. A majority of the sample children (90%) families consisted of more than 7 family members.

These children did not belong to the poorest families as 33% and 37% of their families had an average monthly income of Rs. 10,000-16,000 and Rs 6000-10,000 respectively. All had electricity connections in their houses and in a predominant number of cases natural gas connections and running water facilities were also available. In most cases their families owned the small houses and also possessed lifestyle household items like televisions, mobile telephones and motorcycles.

Most of the sample children (89%) belonged to the age cohort of 10 to 14 years, the majority went to school as a first choice, but none could reach 5th grade. These children were working in different occupations at *Akhtar Ka Ahata,* and on an average spending 12 hours daily at their workplaces. Most of the sample children had less than two years of work experience.

For poor parents their out of school children (dropped out or had never been to school) would become a source of concern, especially when they started nearing the stage of puberty. Culturally, idleness among children is abhorred. An idle male child, if left alone to his devices, may start wasting time in streets. Parents fear that such a child will get involved in bad company and start indulging in smoking, street fights, stealing, substance abuse and other petty criminal activities. This is completely unacceptable for parents as they fear that idleness of children and associated vices would destroy their future. Such idle male children in all likelihood would not be left alone, and having exhausted the school option, would soon be made to sit with an *Ustaad* in a workplace. In other words, the cultural abhorrence to idleness and to avoid associated deviancy among idle children,

the poor parents resort to turning to the *Ustaad* to keep children occupied and enable them to learn a skill.

The parents also had extreme confidence in *Ustaads* that their close supervision would ensure that children acquire skills at the workplace. This would, in the near future, lead to the financial independence of their children. This trust on the success of workplace based skills acquisition to make children functional young adults plays a critical role in the parents' decisions to place their idle male children with an *Ustaad.*

In addition, the analysis of parents' recurrent expenditure to keep one child in school or in the workplace provides useful insights. The parents spend a little more than Rs 2400[1] annually to keep one child in primary education. On the other hand, there are no recurrent expenditures for parents to keep the child at the workplace. In fact, *Ustaads* spend close to Rs 13,000[2] annually on each child at his workshop. These costs are in addition to the skills that *Ustaads* transfer to the children during this one-year period.

The *Ustaad* of the informal workshops without any remorse would allow children to work for them. For them, it was a service to both child and his family as this would help the child to learn skills and gradually become self dependent. The *Ustaad* made all the decisions about how to run the workshop, the decisions on who should be hired or fired, how to train children and so on. Skill teaching was part of *Ustaad*'s regular business activity and a full day process. Child would perform the role of a helper. Teaching

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[1] It includes costs of stationary, school uniform, school bag, shoes, and little pocket money.
[2] It includes costs of daily lunch and entry level daily wage.

children skills took place through making them observe, giving verbal instructions, demonstrations and then asking them to emulate the person teaching them. There was no prescribed curriculum and absence of periodical training targets for children. The rule of thumb on training a child was to start from mundane and basic tasks and gradually move towards medium and complex tasks in all these trades. The average age of entry of children in the occupations was 10 years, and on an average they would take 6 to 8 years to develop advanced level expertise. The human resource accumulation and proficiency in skills among the children was directly linked to the number of years they had spent in the respective occupation. However, there were children who despite having spent considerable time in their profession had not increased their proficiency in the occupations.

The parents and *Ustaad* describe the presence of children at workplaces as a trainee to learn a skill and not as an employee to perform certain tasks in lieu of wages. However, even as trainees, children get little money from the *Ustaad* on a daily and weekly basis. In any case, these children as novices in the occupations they are sent into cannot earn adult wages or enough money, which could be considered significant incentives for their families. Thus, parents' initial motivation to place their children with an *Ustaad* is to enable them acquire skills as oppose to earn and add to family income. Moreover, this is also part of parents strategy to ensure that their out of school idle children do not become deviant. In other words, an idle child is sent to workplace to help him avoid deviant behavior and to acquire a skill set for future employment. However, this justification does not gain currency among child right activists and indeed many of the researchers. They

tend to look at the phenomenon of child labour from the point of view of economic determinism that interprets the child labour arrangement to generate income for the family. This approach attempts to universalize the economic determinism that results in much confusion and debate particularly when state and society wish to rectify the situation.

The field data under this research does not support the argument suggesting a link between child labour income and the gratification of the family's income needs. Children earn too little money in the first few years at the workplace. In most cases the novice child receives small amounts in daily wages, part of which is consumed by him. For parents, the child's initial earning was too insignificant to be considered as a useful contribution to the family income.

The field data also indicated that children's remunerations were not dependent on the number of years spent at the workplace. Remunerations of children were directly proportionate to their competency level to perform certain tasks. A child with low skill competency will have insignificant remunerations. The majority of the sample children had low skill competency and were earning a meager amount of rupees six hundred a month. Children having spent a number of years at the workplace, and having attained expert like competencies would earn a significant amount of money. A small percentage of children, with more than five years of work experience and expert like competencies, were earning more than rupees five thousand a month.

These children as novices would start earning Rs 600 and in next four years their remuneration would barely cross Rs 2000 a month. However, the following few years see a quantum jump in their remunerations. It is around the 6th years at the workplace that the child's income would cross Rs. 4000 and in the 8th years soars to Rs. 10,000 a month. In other words, 9 year old child labourers, as novices, would get Rs 600 a month but after spending five years at the workplace their monthly remuneration will cross Rs 5000 and in another few years it would be around Rs. 10,000 – much higher than the official minimum wage of Rs 6000 per month[3].

On the other hand, a primary class child of 9 years of so, if he continues his education till 10th grade, he would not be able to find employment of even rupees 6000 a month. For poor parents 10 years of school education becomes meaningless as it would not prepare their 14 years old child to enter the world of work and earn significantly. Whereas, a 14 years old child who has spent same period of time learning skill at a workplace, would be more suitable to find a reasonable waged employment with the same *Ustaad* or elsewhere. Moreover, although parents were required to spend money on child's school education, but in case of workplace skill learning there are no expenditures. In fact, the child will be initially earning small amount for his pocket money as well.

These children undergo a massive punishment regime at the workplaces consisting of both psychological and physical punishments. This violence pervaded their school lives

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[3] Till 2009 the minimum monthly wage was Rs 6000, and In 2010 the minimum monthly wage was increased to Rs 7000 for un-skilled adult worker

as well, except that at the workplace the quantum and nature of violence increases many fold. The workplaces are enterprises where the real motive is maximization of the *Ustaad*'s profits rather than to train the child *per se*. As described during the course of this research, children at the workplace were targeted with profanities and subjected to a variety of corporal punishments. The power asymmetry between *Ustaad* and children is stark. Children universally reported receiving punishments including slaps and kicks along with being subjected to profanities. *Ustaads* would not hesitate in using tools (fan belt, timing belt, small hammer, etc) to beat the children. Parents mostly supported *Ustaads* resorting to corporal punishment to discipline their children. Even if a child complained to a parent, he would be admonished and told to pay attention to his assigned work and be more attentive to avoid mistakes and consequent punishments.

7.2. Conclusion

The study indicated that the key motivational factors for poor parents to place their idle male children at the workplace were certain cultural norms. These norms include disapproval of both idleness among children and the associated fear of children's deviancy. Moreover, the study has also identified that poor parents make a demand from their children to get engaged in productive activities that eventually lead to economic support for the families.

The research model initially developed in the study attempted to describe the context and processes within which poor families make decisions about their children's future roles.

This model has initially suggested that cultural abhorrence to idleness among children coupled with associated fear of their deviancy and the need for immediate income compel poor parents to send their children into labour.

The data and the research findings have helped to refine this model, by remaining within the interplay of cultural and economic determinism. The new model, titled "split pyramid model: depicting cultural and economic determinants of child labour" is presented in diagram 7.1 below:

Diagram 7.1: Split Pyramid Model: Depicting Cultural and Economic Determinants of Child Labour
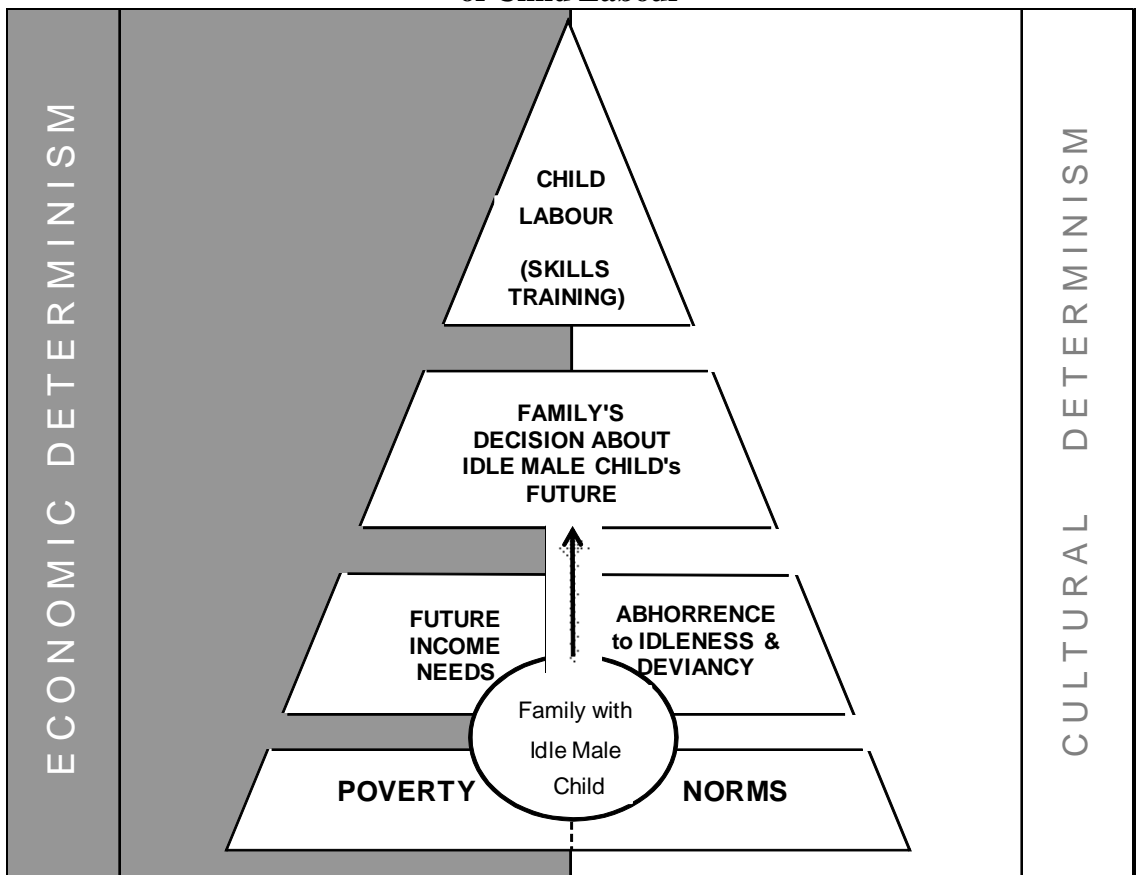
The revised split model provides deeper understanding of the cultural and economic determinants of child labour. On the cultural side, the research proved that idleness of male children is robustly disapproved as it is associated with the children becoming deviant. It is unacceptable for parents to let out of school children continue to remain dormant. The parents would invariably ensure that the child is involved in a productive activity to become a functional member of the family and society.

However, on the economic side, the field data has helped to generate an in-depth analysis to better understand the nature of the link between family's immediate income needs and children's earning through labour. Parents do not place their children at workplaces to generate earning for the gratification of family's immediate income needs. However, it is the future income needs that compel parents to send their children to the workplace to learn a skill and in their youth can generate income.

Poor parents trusted *Ustaads* and workplaces and considered these as legitimate means for imparting skills to their male children. Children accumulated human resources by spending a number of years at these workplaces developing proficiency in their occupations. This accumulation of human resource development through the informal skills training arrangement at workplaces appeared useful. In a relatively short duration of 5 years, these idle children would become skilled enough so that in their early youth they could gain financial independence and were able to support their families.

Thus the model indicates that poor parents find the child labour arrangement useful for their out of school male children to keep them away from possible deviancy and enable them to become financial independent in their early youth.

The research findings have indicated that all three assumptions made in the beginning of the research have been found correct. The first assumption was that a skilled child is culturally accepted and valued. The research findings have indicated that parents and the *Ustaad* value a skilled child. The fact that the increased professional competencies of these children would compel *Ustaads* to increase their monthly wages is direct evidence that *Ustaads* valued their increasingly skilled trainees. Second, the assumption was that poor parents send children to work for a career. At the start of the work career for the first two years the earning of the children was extremely low and that too broken down in small amounts of daily and weekly wage of a few rupees. The child after four years of work experience, when he had built his proficiency in the occupation, would be able to bring home some significant money. This indicates that parents' decision to send the child to the workplace was not prompted by immediate gratification of the family's income needs. In fact, it is the child's career and his human resource development that are the motivational factors for parents to send the child to the workplace.

The third and last assumption was that workplace based skill acquisition enables children to become functional members of the family. The field data has also indicated that with an increased number of years at the work place most children would succeed in accumulating enough human resources and master skills to perform complex tasks at the

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workplace and earn significant money. The graph 5.3 (page 254) depicts that expert skill set of 4% of children, who had spent at least 5 years at work place, enabled them to earn an average income of Rs 5700. This certainly enables them to contribute significantly into the family's monthly earning. This significant monthly wage for a child under the age of 14 years, indicate that the *Ustaad* also value the child's competency and paying him better wage. Thus, children's hard work of many years earned them the respect both at their homes and at the workplaces.

In other words, the centuries old practices of relying on traditional means of human resource development continue to be followed particularly among poor families. The traditional patterns of skills transfer through the *Ustaad-shagirid* arrangement have also been replicated in relatively newer trades like repairing and refurbishing of automobiles to transfer knowledge and information to the younger generation. The present day *Ustaad* in an informal auto-workshop allows a young child to enter his workplace as an apprentice on more or less similar arrangements that his predecessors from centuries ago were practicing in different trades. Such cultural practices to take the responsibility of a young child and teach him a particular trade to transform the novice into an expert is valued, respected and promoted particularly among the poor communities. It shows the continuity of culture despite the advent of new technologies and modern means of knowledge transfer to younger generations.

Based on the field findings and the discussion of the results, this research found the hypotheses has been proved. The research presents the theory that it is the cultural

practices like abhorrence to idleness and associated fear of deviancy compel poor parents to send out of school male children to workplace to make them functional members of the society. This parental decision may not necessarily be due to gratification of family's immediate income need from child's earning.

These findings pose an important question. Much of the criticism of child labour comes predominantly from 'western' or 'economically developed' perspective. This perspective tends to see the phenomenon of child labour detached from local cultural value system. The absence of cultural context and analysis around the issue of child labour, consequently, limits the deeper understanding of the issue.

Appendix A

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