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CHILD ABUSE THROUGH FORCED LABOR

(The thesis paper of Master)

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INTRODUCTION

Abandonment of school by kids and their commitment to work, begging for money, although it's on the wane, it's still a disturbing phenomenon in many different countries that are ridden of serious socio- economic conditions. The increase rate of poverty and unemployment significantly affect the forced labor of children.

Many families do not send their children in the kinder garden and preschool education, some of them delay for one or two years the attendance of their children in the primary first grade, and some others forces their children to leave school even the one that is mandatory, for the fact that they cannot finance their education. And this doesn't end here. Some families driven by poverty, forces their children to work different kinds of works that doesn't even match with their age or either with the character of their rights establishment. In many cases these children who come from this category of poor families, get up to go to school and stuck begging for money or selling cigarettes on the streets.

CONCLUSIONS

As it is the case of many countries and regions in transition, in Kosovo there is also a lack of comprehensive statistics, updated and reliable regarding the children that work and the connection between children labor and education and health. Therefore there's an immediate need to improve and expand data collection.

The survey reveals that many children start working at the age of ten. However a relatively high number of children are even younger, with 10% that start working before the age of ten. Especially children under the age of ten are unprotected to negative influences of children labor in terms of their health and development. These children also risk losing school and in this way their education is threatened.

In terms of the types of currently activities performed by children working a change can be observed towards greater trade and services when we compare the results of this survey with data from LSMS. Selling items on the street / markets / shops, are the most common activities of work, followed by housework and agriculture.

Regarding working time and hours, a strong seasonal increase can be seen during the summer months. Some of the children that were interviewed reported that they have intensified their activities during this period and 73.33% of working children stated that they work throughout the year. 50% of surveyed children start work before 8:00 am and 36.66% start work after 8:00 am. Many of these children that are working are under the age of ten.

About 85% do not keep the money, but deliver it to the family to increase the family income and in some cases even family survival.

86.66% of children reported that they go to school and 13.33% do not attend the studies. The main reasons stated for not attending school are discrimination, high costs of education and child labor.

When you think about the reasons of child labor many of the children surveyed mentioned that they work to support their families. Children work mainly for their families because of the economic difficulties facing the post-war Kosovo. It is perceived as a consequence of growing poverty and unemployment, and the lack of government services and assistance.

SUMMARY

Child labor seems to have increased during the past few years. It is seen to be a critical tool for the survival of the family in view of the limited possibilities of sustainable employment in Kosovo, and the disappearance of an appropriate minimum wage and severe cuts in social welfare programs. Poverty in Kosovo is widespread with more than half the population, is said to be in poverty and 12% live in extreme poverty. Child labor does not remain outside or beyond the influence of this context. Child labor is one of the reasons and consequences of the main poverty. This is especially true for children engaged in labor activities working full time. So, reduction of poverty is one of the most important challenges for Kosovo.

This is a continuous cycle of poverty that perpetuates child labor and prevents children from attending school or learning. Starting to work at a young age, children remain illiterate, unskilled and unable to assert their rights for equal wage and better conditions of work. Working long hours can have health exacerbation in children. As adults, they are often heavily in debt. Circumstances and unemployment pushes parents to put their children to work. In other words, child labor, poverty and low educational attainment are matters that are connected fundamentally. Children who work are putting in danger their future and maybe their family in the future, among other reasons, due to significant educational deficit of children who work and the loss of labor income during active adult life. In addition to poverty and exploitation of poverty, another cause of child labor can be attributed to deficiency in the education system itself, which also facilitates the perpetuation of child labor.

Finally, culture and tradition play an equally important role in the interaction between child labor and education. Child labor is not a recent phenomenon because the parents of the children who were interviewed said they worked when they were children too. In other words, child labor is not just an income strategy, but also a tool for the integration of children in a family and kinship connection.