

# CAUSES AND HEALTH EFFECTS ON CHILDREN WORKING IN AUTOMOBILE WORKSHOPS OF PESHAWAR, PAKISTAN

Kashif Ur Rehman Khalil<sup>1</sup>, Baber Awan<sup>2</sup>, Faisal Hassan<sup>2</sup>, Iftikhar Ali<sup>2</sup>

<sup>1</sup>department of Community Medicine, Khyber Medical College, Peshawar - Pakistan

<sup>2</sup>4th year students of Khyber Medical College, Peshawar - Pakistan

## ABSTRACT

**Objective:** To determine the causes and health effects of children working in automobile workshops in Peshawar, Pakistan.

**Materials & Methods:** From February to July 2016, a descriptive cross-sectional study was conducted in different automobile workshops in Peshawar. After obtaining consent, data was collected from 200 randomly selected children via questionnaires. The study included children under 15 who were working in automobile workshops in Peshawar, while the children who could not answer the questions were excluded. The data were analyzed using Excel and SPSS version 15.

**Results:** Most (84%) of the children working in automobile workshops were in the age range of 11-15 years. A major (47%) proportion had below primary level education. According to the study, parental income for most (44%) children was Rs.11-15,000. 58% of children were living in families having more than 10 members. Poverty was the main cause of working in workshops for 63% of children. As a consequence, 46.77% of children were suffering from GIT problems.

**Conclusion:** The main causes of children working in automobile workshops were poverty and large families, as a result of working conditions most of the children suffered from gastrointestinal diseases.

**Key Words:** Child Health; Income; Automobiles; Poverty; Parents; Employment

---

**This article may be cited as:** KUR Khalil, Awan B, Hassan F, Ali I. Causes And Health Effects On Children Working In Automobile Workshops Of Peshawar, Pakistan. PMSRJ 2023 September-December;1(3):101-103

---

## INTRODUCTION

The International Labor Organization Convention defines child labor as a harmful occupation in children below 18 years of age. <sup>1</sup> Child labor is one of the major issues all over the world. About 200 million children are working in different sectors all around the world. <sup>2</sup> Asia and African regions have the highest number of child workers, almost greater than 90 percent in total. Among Asian countries, India has the highest number of child laborers i.e. about 44 million. About 12 million child workers are present in Nigeria. South America also has a large number of child workers. In Brazil, almost 7 million child workers are working in different sectors. Pakistan has passed laws to limit child labor but the laws are completely ignored, and some 11 million children, aged four to fourteen, keep that country's factories operating. <sup>3</sup>

In Pakistan, about 3.3 million children are working according to a nationwide survey conducted in 1996. In 2005 an estimated 10 million child laborers were reported

according to the Human Rights Commission of Pakistan (HRCP). <sup>3</sup> Children work for a variety of reasons, for which poverty is the leading cause. <sup>4</sup> Child labor frequently experiences work-related injuries and health problems. The health-related problems of child labor are very high in developing countries in the absence of proper knowledge and preventive actions. Children also face various occupational injuries and other health-related problems. The health-related issues of such children are more common in developing countries as compared to developed because of strong legislative measures in developed countries. <sup>5</sup>

Child labor creates a significant burden on the development, welfare, and overall health of children. This project would improve upon past and ongoing cross-sectional studies. The objectives of our study were to find the causes and health effects of children who were working in automobile workshops.

## MATERIALS AND METHODS

A descriptive cross-sectional study was carried out to assess various causes and health effects of the working environment on children working in different automobile workshops in Peshawar from February 2016 to July 2016. The study included children less than 15 years of age who were working in automobile workshops in Peshawar, while the children unable to answer the questions were excluded. A sample of 200 children was randomly selected with

---

Correspondence

**Faisal Hassan**

4th year MBBS student, Khyber Medical College, Peshawar, Pakistan

**Cell:** +92-345-9411704

**Email:** dr.kashif.khalil@gmail.com

**Date Received:** 11/09/2024

**Date Revised:** 09/01/2025

**Date Accepted:** 21/01/2025

---

a 95% confidence interval and 5% margin of error. Before collecting actual data, a pilot study was conducted and a questionnaire was modified. Data was collected from 200 randomly selected children via questionnaires, which included closed-ended questions regarding the causes and health-related issues of children. Consent was taken from the head of a workshop as well as the children.

## RESULTS

Most (84%) of the children were between 11 and 15 years old. 47% of the children had education below the primary level or none (35%). 44% of children had their father's income between Rs.11,000 and 15,000. Most (58%) children had more than 10 family members in their homes (Table 1). Figure 1 shows that 63% of children had to work in automobile workshops due to poverty, while 18% and 11% were due to self-interest and no education interest respectively. There was the least (8%) pressure from the parents. Most (46.77%) of the children suffered from Gastrointestinal problems, next to which were urinary tract diseases in 27.42% of children. Automobile workshops caused respiratory diseases in 16.13% of children. (Figure 2)

## DISCUSSION

The age group of our study sample lies between 6 to 15 years which is considered a school-going age but due to poverty children are forced to work. These findings are similar to a study conducted by H Khan in which the children's age group was similar.<sup>6</sup> Large family size is also a cause of poverty that forces children to work. The majority of our study population's family size was greater than 10 which is also a cause for child labour. This is similar to a case study conducted by Rana Ejaz in which about 20.83 percent of the working children come from families having 7 children.<sup>7</sup>

According to research conducted by Shahid et al. on socioeconomic determinants of child labor in automobile workshops stated that about half of the children were working because of financial problems in the family. About 37.5% of children reported that they were not interested in studies and the rest argued large family as a reason for work, same is reflected in our study in which poverty is the main reason for children to work.<sup>8</sup>

According to research conducted by Shandell et al. globally, children are exposed to numerous physical agents, including extreme heat or cold and diseases. Child labor can also manifest in psychological trauma due to psychosocial stressors—an emerging category of exposure agents—like verbal and physical abuse, and prolonged. Absence from school, which is especially detrimental if before finishing primary school. Adverse outcomes were compounded by family poverty affecting the child's physical health. Studies cited in this review consistently

documented how children of poor families are at increased risk of being involved in child labor and therefore, potentially missing out on education at school or home. Family size and number of children in a family have also been shown to increase the likelihood of a child being engaged in the labor of children.<sup>9</sup> Although our findings indicate that child-labor may be affecting the health of children, more data are needed to develop a better understanding of the short- and long-term health problems associated with child labor.<sup>9</sup>

Studies of Roggero et al. with an ecological design have proven valuable in descriptive and etiological epidemiology, as well as in economics, social planning, and policy evaluation. Our study was to analyze the health effects of children showing that some health indicators are affected by child labor. We have identified a set of health indicators affected by child labor, and our data support the hypothesis that child labor affects children's health. Although our findings indicate that child labor affects the health of children. Most importantly, longitudinal studies are required to understand the short- and long-term health effects of child labor on the individual child.<sup>10</sup> Given the limited peer-reviewed work identified, more field research on child labor, with longitudinal quantitative measures on exposures is needed in lower-income countries.

## CONCLUSION

The main causes of children working in automobile workshops were poverty and large families, as a result of working conditions most of the children suffered from gastrointestinal diseases.

## REFERENCES

1. Zaidi N, Javed N, Khan MS. Original Article Child Labour in Pakistan- a Tip of an Iceberg. *J Postgrad Med Inst.* 2013;27(3):285–9.
2. Pervez S, Mukhtar Z. Determinants of Child Labor: A Case Study of Automobiles Workshops, Fan Industry and Ceramics Industry in Gujrat. 2014;3(3):56–63.
3. Nafees AA, Khan KS, Fatmi Z, Aslam M. Situation analysis of child labor in Karachi, Pakistan: a qualitative study. *J Pak Med Assoc.* 2012;62(October):1075–82.
4. PBS. Pakistan Bureau of Statistics - Labour Force Statistics (2014-2015). 2015;55. Available from: <http://goo.gl/ZHsbrX>
5. Mondal S, Dalal K, Sahoo DK, Biswas A. Characteristics of Child Labour and Their Health Problems: Findings from Rural Community of India Characteristics of Child Labour and Their Health Problems: Findings from Rural Community of India. 2016;(August):931–6.
6. Tabassum F, Baig LA. Child labor a reality: results from a study of a squatter settlement of Karachi. *J Pak Med Assoc.* 2002; 52(11): 507–510
7. Ejaz R, Khan A. Socioeconomic Aspects of Child Labour- A Case Study of Children in Auto Workshops. 2000;93–

- 112.
8. MAHMOOD M, AHMAD A, TABASAM N NS. Socio-economic Determinants of Child Labor in Automobile and Engineering Workshops. 2005;64–5.
9. Shendell, D. G., Noomnual, S., Chishti, S., Sorensen Allacci, M., & Madrigano, J. (2016). Exposures Resulting in Safety and Health Concerns for Child Laborers in Less Developed Countries. *Journal of Environmental and Public Health*, 2016, 3985498. <http://doi.org/10.1155/2016/3985498>

**CONFLICT OF INTEREST:** Authors declare no conflict of interest

**GRANT SUPPORT AND FINANCIAL DISCLOSURE:** NIL

#### Authors Contribution:

Following authors have made substantial contributions to the manuscript as under

Authors	Conceived & designed the analysis	Collected the data	Contributed data or analysis tools	Performed the analysis	Wrote the paper	Other contribution
KUR Khalil	✓	×	✓	×	✓	×
Awan B	✓	✓	×	✓	✓	×
Hassan F	×	✓	×	×	✓	×
Ali I	✓	✓	✓	×	✓	✓

Authors agree to be accountable for all aspects of the work in ensuring that questions related to the accuracy or integrity of any part of the work are appropriately investigated and resolved.



This work is Licensed under a Creative Commons Attribution-(CC BY 4.0)