



Occupational Health Hazards among Child Labourers of Patna

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Abstract : *To study the possible effects of occupational hazards and health in child labourers working in different sectors such as agriculture , construction , ragpickers , dhabas and household , a survey was conducted in different areas of Patna. Agriculture was the most hazardous sector of the five sectors considered. Health problems included headache, musculoskeletal problems, nausea, loss of appetite, hearing problem, fatigue and skin ailments. 35% of child labourers working at construction sites and 30% of child labourers working at agricultural sites had musculoskeletal problems.*

Key Words : *Agriculture, hazardous, health problems.*

Introduction :

Work can have positive effects on children such as development of discipline, responsibility, self confidence and independence, teaching children how to manage money , and providing valuable models to teach them work-skills. On the other hand, work environment and occupational conditions also have negative impact on health and development of children (Committee on the Health and Safety Implementation on child labour, 1998). Exposure to hazards affects children much more strongly than to adults (Bequele and Myers, 1995; Forastieri, 1997; International Labour Organization, 1998).

The main objectives of our research were to collect data from child labourers of different sectors regarding nature of occupation and its ill effects on their health and also to compare health problems in different sectors based upon age, sex, working hours etc.

Materials and Methods :

The survey was conducted in different areas of Patna like Patna Junction and residential areas, Ashiana Nagar, Boring Road, Patliputra, Gandhi Maidan and Utpurna Kendra. In the present study a total 250 children were interviewed, out of which 200 were child labourers and 50 belonged to the control group i.e. the normal school going children of low income group. 40 child labourers were

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