
INTERNATIONAL JOURNAL OF ADVANCED LEGAL RESEARCH

CHILD LABOR IN THE ENTERTAINMENT INDUSTRY: ENSURING THE WELL-BEING OF YOUNG PERFORMERS- Aditi Raj¹**Abstract**

Child labor in the entertainment industry refers to the involvement of children in a work context, that is exploitative, hazardous, or deprives them of their rights and well-being it specifically relates to children working in various sectors of entertainment such as film, television, theater, music, and modeling. It includes children being engaged in long working hours, often beyond what is legally allowed, which can negatively impact their physical and mental health. They may also face inadequate education, limited socialization, and disrupted childhood experiences due to their demanding work schedule. This research aims to shed light on the issue of child labor in the entertainment industry and explore measures to safeguard the well-being of young performers. By examining the prevalence and consequence of child labor, as well as the legal and regulatory framework in place, this study seeks to highlight the need for comprehensive protection and support systems. Through a combination of qualitative analysis and case studies, this research identifies key factors that contribute to child labor and proposes strategies to mitigate its impact. The findings emphasize the importance of enacting stronger regulations, providing educational support and opportunities, promoting mental health support, ensuring fair compensation, and safeguarding the privacy and rights of child actors. By addressing these issues, we can create a safer and more nurturing environment for young performers, allowing them to thrive both professionally and personally. It is essential to address these issues and ensure the proper protection and support of child actor/actresses. This includes implementing and enforcing stricter regulations and providing access to quality education and healthcare. This research aims to contribute to the ongoing dialogue surrounding child labor and the suffering that they did not feel

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and advocate for the implementation of effective policies to protect the rights well-being and support of child actors in the entertainment industry.

Introduction:-

Child labor is defined as the work that deprives children of their childhood, their potential, and their dignity, and this is also harmful to their mental and physical development. This work also interferes with children's school time and their childhood activities. According to the census 2011 in India, there are 10.1 million working children between the ages of 5-11. More than 42.7 million children in India are out of school. According to the International Labor Organization, the decline in child labor is more visible in rural areas and there is an increase in urban areas.

The main reason for this in India is poverty, due to it parents cannot afford the studies of their children and make and make them earn wages from a tender age. But it has also been seen that many people in India are not suffering from poverty but still, they allow their children the work, for example, children acting in movies, advertisements, and sports are similarly allowed to work or children² of a TV star or some parents who just make their kids socialize by some funny videos and any kind of act they doing they just post them in social media and they get fame. The question is do these kids want this fame and fortune? some of them do, but in general, most of them are the result of parents forcing their dreams on their kids. It is not like they are doing hazardous jobs but still, it affects their studies and self needs. Child labor refers to work that is mentally, physically, socially, or morally dangerous and harmful to children, and/or interferes with a child's ability to attend school fully or partially by obliging them to leave school prematurely.

Working on television is not considered child labor in Article 24 of the Indian constitution because it is not in factories and is not health hazardous work. But still, it deprives them of being their own what if they don't want to get that much fame on television or an award function show but they have to come with their parents because they are forcing the kids in some manner? Some star kids are not involved in TV films and shows and they are doing whatever they want to, but in some cases some of the kids of the star they maybe don't want to be on screen but they are

²<https://www.history.com/topics/industrial-revolution/child-labor>
<https://sundayguardianlive.com/news/child-artistes-entertainment-industry-work-erratic-hours>

involved because of their parents. And just because of this, some talents are deprived of getting that.

Background:-

Due to poverty and poor employment opportunities for many parents, they send their children to work in farms and factories to help feed and support the family. Child labor has been practiced throughout most of human history but reached its peak during the Industrial Revolution. During this time, children were forced into work in factories in the urban setting. Working conditions were miserable, including crowded and unclean factories, a lack of safety codes, and long hours of work. Jackie Coogan, by the name of John Leslie Coogan, was the first major Hollywood child star, who rose to the idea and fame in the silent film era.

The children participating in reality shows TV serials and films may not be able to handle the work pressure. That is because they do not have that much mental capacity also we cannot deny the truth that parents ignore the basic rights of these young artists as they aspire for fame and money. It does not only deprive them of a normal childhood but also burdens them to work and handle the school work and studies. According to expert opinions psychologists and other experts, reality shows for children are not a healthy concept. These children have to face a lot of stress and pressure like harsh comments from judges times can be difficult for them to handle. There is a case where a complaint was filed against a soap opera in the Kerala State Council for Child Welfare (KSCCW). The rights of a child artist were being violated on the set. The complaint was lodged by the parents on behalf of the kid. This kid is forced to work long hours that are beyond three hours and is not being given remuneration either.

In 2016 amendments are certainly a step in the right direction. The dangers posed to the child by the manager, parents, or guardians. There must be an adequate legal framework in place to protect child actors from this risk.

Present situation

Presently the situation is when any actor/actress performs they have to face much public envy, trolls, hate messages, and comments as a star this is a part of it, but the problem is when a child actor is subjected to face the same situation. For the children, this is very difficult to handle

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mentally. These kids are often exploited for their charm, innocence, and revenue-generating ability.

The UN General Assembly in 1959 adopted the Declaration of the Rights of the Child, in which there is also protection given for child actors' rights.

1. 2nd principle of the Geneva Declaration states that a child is entitled to special protection and care, and can avail of opportunities and facilities, by law and by other means, that allow them to develop mentally, socially, and physically, in a normal and healthy manner, and decent living condition.
2. 9th principle, a child shall not be employed until he/she reaches the appropriate minimum age. Basically under no condition is he to be allowed to engage in any occupation or employment which would adversely affect his health or education.³

According to the Child and Adolescent Labour (Prohibition and Regulation) Act 1986, no child shall be allowed to work more than three hours without rest. However the directors and casting agencies have broken the law, and most children, have continued to work for 9-10 hours or even 12 hours straight. In 2019, India's media and entertainment industry was valued at rupees 1.67 trillion from which children (upto 15 years of age) make up nearly 30% share of "impression", which means that they account for a significant portion of those consuming films and television as per the Federation of Indian Chambers of commerce and industries. The provisions of CALPRA also state, that atleast 20% of the income earned by the child from the production or event is to be directly deposited in a fixed deposit account in a nationalized bank in the name of the child which may be credited to them on attaining majority. However, in a study titled 'Child Artist in India' by Child Rights and You, the money is being utilized completely on the families. In cases where the child artist is the sole breadwinner of the family keeping 20% of the payment in a fixed deposit is highly unlikely.

To protect child artists in the entertainment industry, the NCPCR has come up with draft guidelines stating that no minor should work for more than 27 consecutive days. There is also many rules and regulation being provided by the government but the scenario is who follows

³<https://www.thehindu.com/news/cities/mumbai/on-child-labour-day-study-suggests-child-artists-work-for-more-than-12-hours-a-day/article65518663.ece>

them, the rules in child labor prohibition and regulation amendments rules, 2017 state that there is permission obtained from the district magistrate and an undertaking by the producer, as well as the deployment of one person each for ensuring the safety and security of a maximum of five children. But one producer is doing that and many of them are not taking this seriously. As a result, the children had to face mental pressure and harassment by the directors. They are also pressured by the social media platform by their fans and people who comment on their skills and talent.

Loopholes/problems

Child artists working in the audio-visual entertainment industry, such as filmmaking, advertising, television, or reality shows do not come under the umbrella of child labor rules, as long as they receive continuous education and safety measures and proper care of their mental health.

The children who work long shifts may feel extremely isolated from their family and friends, and also cannot enjoy a normal childhood. That will affect their moral values learning.

Child actor safety and privacy are becoming a great issue day by day as their every moment of lives is publicized they have to face stalkers, sexualization, and many more privacy risks.

As it had been stated in Child Labor Prohibition and Regulation Amendment Rules 2017, children should not be away from schooling for more than 27 days which can make their interest in rest if a child is working 27 days then they are tired and can't attend the school with the same energy as they have to.⁴

There are no strict laws that could prevent the tight long shifts of working of children in the entertainment industries, there is also no spectating committee that can handle the safety and can look over the situation whether they are according to the rules and regulations or not.

The rules say that 20% of their income should be deposited in a fixed deposit in their names, but there are no laws related to the children who have been exploited commercially by those close to them, and the income they earn is primarily invested by their parents into the household works or their use.

As child actor grows older, they may face difficulties transitioning into adult roles. It can be challenging to break away from the child actor image and establish themselves as adult actors in the industry.

⁴ The Gazette of India

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Child actors may face high expectations and pressure to perform well. This can lead to stress and anxiety, as they constantly have to meet the demands of their roles and maintain a certain level of success.

Working in the entertainment industry from a young age can sometimes limit a child's ability to have a normal childhood. They may miss out on typical activities and social interactions that their peers are experiencing.⁵

Suggestions

1. Strengthen child labor laws: governments should implement stricter regulations to protect the rights and well-being of child actors. This could include limitations on working hours, mandatory breaks, and ensuring access to education.
2. Mandatory education support: laws should be enforced that require production companies to provide educational support for child actors. This could include tutors on set, flexible scheduling to accommodate school, and ensuring that their education is not compromised.
3. Mental health support: The government should establish guidelines that require production companies to provide mental health resources for child actors. This could include access to therapists or counselors who specialize in working with young performers.
4. Financial protection: The government should implement laws that ensure child actors receive fair compensation for their work and establish safeguards to protect their earnings. This could include requiring trust accounts or financial advisors to manage their finances.
5. Privacy and safety measures: Strengthening laws should be there to protect the privacy and safety of child actors. This could involve stricter regulations regarding media coverage, paparazzi, and online harassment.

It is also important for child actors to have a strong support system and guidance to navigate these challenges and ensure their well-being.⁶

Conclusion:

In a civilized society, children must be protected in every aspect. Child labor is defined as children who are deprived of their childhood and schooling. This also applies to the children who work in the entertainment industry as well while they are secured by their bodyguards but even though

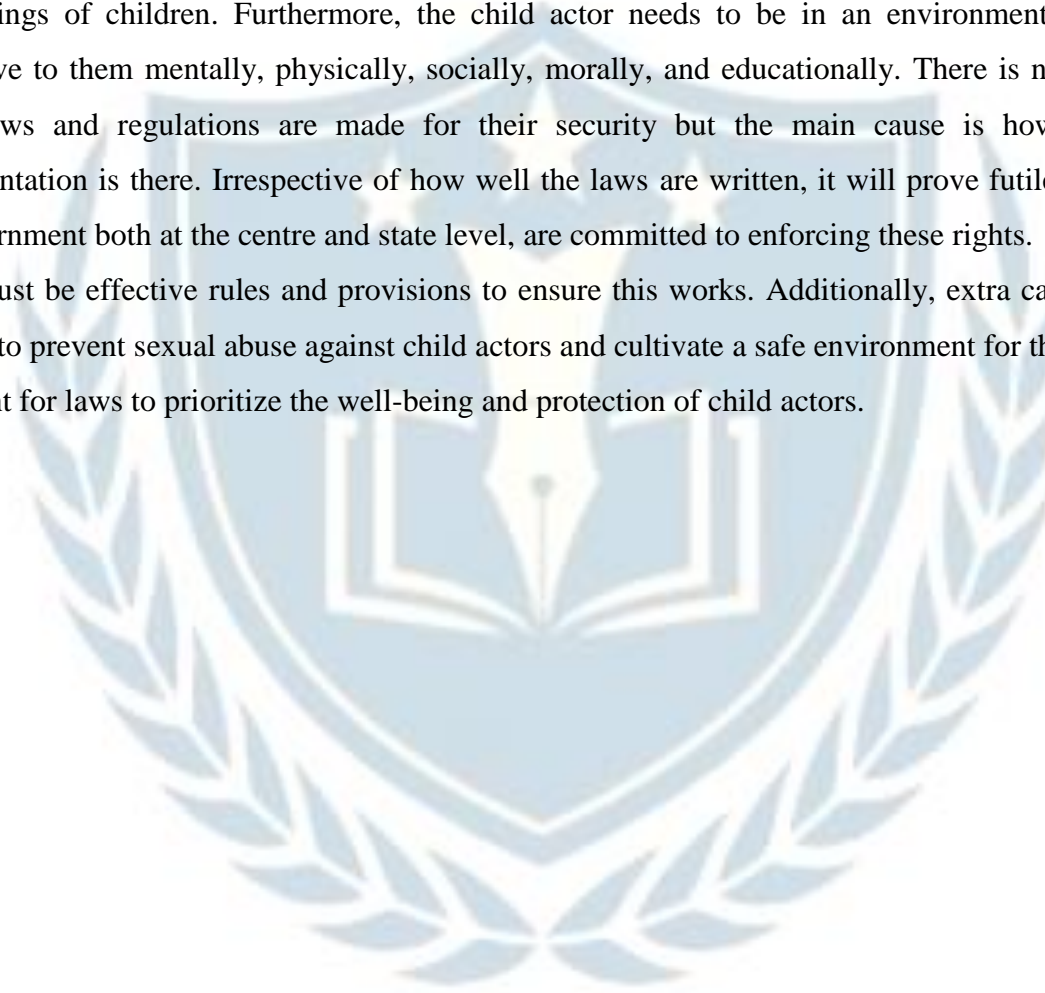
⁵NCBI

⁶ The child and adolescent labor (prohibition and regulations) Act 1986

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they need some more safety related to their health, safety, privacy, and finances. There is an absolute need for special provisions and legal frameworks to provide them with safeguards and prepare them for careers in their respective fields. The flaws in legislation have been an instrument of downfall for many young talents. There is a need for stricter laws and regulations to protect children from those in and around them. This includes their parents and their well-wishers. This is a case of worry for the children in developing countries, where families are dependent on the earnings of children. Furthermore, the child actor needs to be in an environment that is supportive to them mentally, physically, socially, morally, and educationally. There is no doubt many laws and regulations are made for their security but the main cause is how much implementation is there. Irrespective of how well the laws are written, it will prove futile unless the government both at the centre and state level, are committed to enforcing these rights. There must be effective rules and provisions to ensure this works. Additionally, extra care must be there to prevent sexual abuse against child actors and cultivate a safe environment for them. It's important for laws to prioritize the well-being and protection of child actors.



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