

# Employers' Perspective of Hiring Child Domestic Workers Rather Than Adult Workers

Sundas Hassaan<sup>1</sup>, Muhammad Arshad<sup>2</sup> and Muhammad Jazib Niaz<sup>3</sup>

<https://doi.org/10.62345/jads.2024.13.3.5>

## Abstract

*Domestic child labor has remained a pervasive and pressing issue in many parts of the world for a long, despite various actions and efforts to have been made to combat it globally. Child domestic labor in Pakistan remains a deeply entrenched and concerning issue, characterized by multifaceted challenges that significantly impact the lives of countless children. Child domestic labor persists due to a complex interplay of factors, including poverty, lack of opportunities and cultural norms, among others. This study aims to clarify the reasons behind child domestic work and address the various dimensions of this problem through a comprehensive investigation. This qualitative study was conducted to precisely identify the complex and multifaceted phenomenon of employers' preference for hiring child domestic workers (CDWs) over adult workers. A sample of 15 respondents was drawn from the specific localities of Lahore. Primary data was collected through an interview guide and analyzed thematically for results and coherent discussion. The study reveals the intricate web of factors that underpin this preference, highlighting the economic, social, and practical considerations that shape the lives of both employers and CDWs. Furthermore, the study explores the need for clear legislation to address child labor misconceptions.*

**Keywords:** Child Labor, Child Domestic Labor, Employers' Perspective, Domestic Workers.

## Introduction

Domestic child labor has remained a pervasive and pressing issue in many parts of the world for a long, despite various actions and efforts to have been made to combat it globally (Zulfiqar, 2023). Child labor, a persistent global concern, refers to the employment of children in work that deprives them of their childhood, interferes with their abilities to attend regular schools, and is often mentally, physically, socially, or mentally harmful. It not only compromises the fundamental rights and well-being of children but also perpetuates cycles of poverty, hindering the development of nations and undermining the principles of social justice and human rights (Bachman, 2020).

Domestic child labor refers to the employment of children within private households, where they are often engaged in various forms of domestic work, such as cleaning, cooking, caregiving, and other household chores (Edmonds, 2019). While child labor is not exclusive in many countries like Pakistan, its manifestation within domestic settings in the country raises unique concerns. Poor

---

<sup>1</sup>Deputy Manager, National Education Consortium Suite # 04, Block G2, Johar Town, Lahore.

Email: [Sundaswaheed61@gmail.com](mailto:Sundaswaheed61@gmail.com)

<sup>2</sup>Assistant Professor, Department of Social Work, University of the Punjab, Lahore, Pakistan.

Email: [arshad.dsw@pu.edu.pk](mailto:arshad.dsw@pu.edu.pk)

<sup>3</sup>Department of Social Work, University of the Punjab, Lahore, Pakistan. Email: [mjazibniaz@gmail.com](mailto:mjazibniaz@gmail.com)



countries have faced numerous socio-economic challenges, including poverty, illiteracy, and a lack of social services, among others. Families living in poverty often struggle to make ends meet, and child labor becomes a means of economic survival. Empirical studies (Ahmad et al., 2019) highlighted that the lack of access to necessities and the absence of opportunities for adults often force children into domestic labor. The children's wages may contribute significantly to the household income, helping to alleviate financial hardships. This economic necessity, combined with the traditional practice of assigning children domestic chores, creates a complex web of causation (Chaudhary, 2020).

Despite numerous international groundbreaking initiatives such as the United Nations Convention on the Rights of the Child and the International Labor Organization's Convention No. 182, which call for the abolition of child labor, developing nations have faced challenges in enforcing and implementing legislation to combat domestic child labor. Limited resources, a lack of awareness, and enforcement difficulties have all contributed to the continued exploitation of children within households (Wong, 2021).

The preference for hiring child domestic workers within Pakistani households is a complex aspect of the issue of domestic child labor. To comprehend this phenomenon, it is crucial to investigate the motivations and factors that drive employers to make such a choice. This aspect of the research aims to uncover the underlying reasons for the persistent demand for child domestic workers, shedding light on the dynamics that contribute to the perpetuation of this practice.

In Pakistan, domestic child labor is also deeply intertwined with cultural and societal norms. Children are often expected to assist with household tasks as part of their upbringing, a practice passed down through generations. This cultural acceptance of child labor within homes perpetuates its prevalence (Ali et al., 2020). Additionally, the gender dimension of child labor is significant, with girls more likely to be engaged in domestic work compared to boys, reflecting traditional gender roles and expectations (Rashid, 2018).

Several factors may influence the preference to hire child domestic workers. Economic considerations are often at the forefront, with employers perceiving child labor as a cost-effective option (Moinipour, 2021). Child labor is often cheaper than hiring adult workers, making it an attractive choice for households grappling with financial constraints. Employers may rationalize their decision to hire children to provide them with economic support, even if it comes at the expense of the child's education and overall well-being. The deeply rooted notion that children, particularly girls, should be actively involved in household chores as part of their upbringing is one of the driving cultural factors. This expectation contributes to accepting child domestic labor within many Pakistani households (Mirza et al., 2022).

Examining these motivations and the factors that contribute to the preference for child domestic workers is essential for understanding the demand side of the issue. By gaining insights into the rationale of employers, it becomes possible to develop targeted strategies and interventions that address these motivations and aim to shift societal attitudes. Moreover, it enables us to challenge and transform the entrenched belief systems that perpetuate the exploitation of children within domestic settings (Ahmad et al., 2020).

### **Child Labor and Its Various Forms in Pakistan**

Article 1 of the United Nations Convention on the Rights of the Child definitively outlines a "child" as an individual below the age of 18, forming the foundation for a comprehensive comprehension of child labour. In this context, child labour refers to work that not only deprives children of their essential rights but also endangers their overall well-being, both mentally and physically, while

infringing upon their dignity (Andrews et al., 2018). Moreover, child labour extends to situations where children endure the most extreme and perilous conditions. This includes instances where children face enslavement, forced separation from their families, exposure to severe health risks and illnesses, or abandonment to fend for themselves on the dangerous streets of bustling cities, frequently at a young and vulnerable age (Cho et al., 2019).

Child labor takes many different forms, such as defined by article 3 of ILO convention no. 182, when children are forced to work in ways that are harmful to them. It can be like slavery, sex work, drug supplies or dangerous work (Human et al., 2018). One of the worst forms of child labour is child domestic work. Child domestic labour, a pervasive and primarily concealed form of child exploitation, has remained a silent crisis in many parts of the world. In Pakistan, as in several other developing nations, children employed within private households to perform domestic chores have persisted as a deeply entrenched yet often unnoticed social issue (Latif, 2020).

Child domestic work refers to children's work in the domestic work sector in the home of a third party or employer (ILO). Domestic work includes various household services, including cooking, cleaning, laundry, ironing, taking care of others, and many more (Menon, 2018). It is difficult to fight against this phenomenon because, in many countries, it is not recognized as a form of child labour. It is not just accepted socially and culturally but also considered as the right job, especially for girls. There are many severe reasons behind child domestic work, such as economic disparities, lack of education, gender discrimination, poverty and many more (Ram et al., 2019).

Exact statistics are challenging to obtain due to the hidden nature of the practice, but various studies and reports suggest that many children, especially girls, are engaged in domestic labour across the country (Ahmad et al., 2020). An estimated 152 million children are involved in child labour worldwide. In developing countries, child labour is increasing day by day with an increase in population. Like many other developing countries, Pakistan also faces the curse of child labour highly. It is not easy to find exact statistics on child labour in Pakistan. According to a survey by the Federal Bureau, ILO, 40 million children (5 to 14 years) are involved in child labour, which is 30 % of the total population. According to ILO, there are 264000 child domestic servants in Pakistan. Another report by UNICEF shows that around 10 million children are involved in child domestic work. Poverty, lack of access to education, and cultural norms that emphasize obedience and servitude all contribute to the prevalence of child domestic labour (International Labor Organization, 2020).

### **Consequences of Domestic Child Labor**

The main reasons for child domestic labour in Pakistan include socioeconomic inequalities, cultural norms, and a lack of knowledge about children's rights. Due to financial difficulties, parents frequently send their kids to work as domestic helpers without realizing the long-term effects on their children's physical and emotional health (Rashid, 2018). This practice also reinforces gender inequality, contributes to the perpetuation of social norms, and tolerates child labour. Child domestic labour has several adverse effects, including physical and mental harm, loss of education opportunities, and continuation of a cycle of poverty. It is critical to understand the significant effects of this practice on society as well as on the particular child (Smith, 2020).

Child domestic labor represents a complex concern, interwoven with numerous factors and perspectives. This study seeks to elucidate the underlying determinants prompting employers to hire child domestic workers, the experiences of these young workers within these households, and the broader societal context in which such labour practices persist (Sheer, 2018). By delving into

the intricate dynamics of domestic child labour, we aim to uncover the motivations of employers, the socioeconomic conditions that perpetuate this practice, and its consequences on child workers (Miles, 2019).

Understanding these multifaceted dimensions is imperative for addressing the prevailing issue of child labour within domestic settings. This comprehension can guide the formulation of comprehensive strategies and policies to combat child labour effectively, uphold the rights and well-being of child domestic workers, and create a more equitable and nurturing environment for all children, irrespective of their socioeconomic backgrounds or living conditions.

### **Objectives of the Study**

- By understanding the complexity of child domestic labour in Pakistan, this study hopes to contribute to the broader discourse of child rights, child labour, and social justice while advocating for meaningful change in the lives of the children affected by this hidden crisis.
- The prime objective of this study is to investigate the various aspects of child domestic labour in Pakistan. The study looks into the underlying causes and preference to hire child domestic workers, documents the living and working conditions of child domestic workers, looks at gender disparities within this problem, and evaluates the current legal and policy frameworks designed to safeguard children from such exploitation.
- Additionally, it will take into account potential solutions and interventions aimed at defending the rights and welfare of these defenceless children.

### **Theoretical Framework**

#### **Theory of Social Engineering**

The theory of social engineering, presented by Roscoe Pound from 1870 to 1964, aims to build a balanced and efficient structure of society. Every human has different interests and desires and wants to lead a happy life, but all their needs do not necessarily need to be fulfilled. Society makes sets of laws and norms to meet the desires and interests of individuals but in the circle of society's benefit. Different laws and societal norms create a balance between the wants of individuals and the boundaries of society.

#### **Role of Law in Social Engineering Theory**

Law plays a vital role in the theory of social engineering and is used as an essential instrument to create an efficient and balanced society, which results in balancing maximum wants with minimum friction. The theory is also called functional theory or experimental jurisprudence. Pounds used two words in theory, such as "social," a group of individuals forming society. The other is "engineering." This means applied science to formulate a balanced society that meets its necessary needs and fulfils them.

### **Need of Theory of Social Engineering**

Pounds described five Jural postulates in 1919 based on which theory of Social Engineering was carried out: These assumptions are related to law and order, care and safety, property and ownership, honesty and trust, and responsibility and liability.

In 1942, Pounds added three new postulates to the list, which are related to job security, old age support, and risk sharing. Children are one of the main sectors of society that suffer a lot and face many problems because of the flaws and gaps in laws and norms worldwide. To set norms, values and laws in any society for any group of individuals, defining and categorizing individuals in any social group is essential. There is no specific definition in Pakistan of the child, and we are unable to categorize them into any social group and set norms and values for them.

### **Research Methodology**

This primary study focuses on understanding the reasons behind child domestic work, particularly from employers' perspective. Researchers applied a qualitative and in-depth approach to delve deeper into this subject. The study covers female employers from the district of Lahore as the research respondents. This choice was based on the premise that the hiring and management of domestic workers and all related domestic work responsibilities predominantly fell under the purview of females within households.

Criterion sampling was used to take samples according to the criteria set for this research. Criterion sampling is a non-random sampling technique that involves selecting research participants based on specific criteria or characteristics relevant to the research objectives. This method is beneficial when researchers want to target a particular population subgroup with specific qualities, experiences, or attributes of interest. Criterion sampling helps ensure that the chosen sample aligns with the research goals and can provide in-depth insights into the phenomenon under investigation.

- Employers should be females.
- Employers will be those who have child domestic workers in their homes.
- Employers should be those females who deal with workers or who hire workers.
- Workers should be full-time workers.
- Workers should work from 6 months to 5 years in those homes.
- Workers should be under the age of 14.

Qualitative data collection for this study was collected, and a primary method employed was one-on-one, semi-structured interviews with female employers who had hired child domestic workers. The study employed a criterion sampling approach to select an initial ten respondents from Iqbal Town and 05 respondents from the Punjab Housing Society, Gazi Road. Subsequently, a snowball strategy was utilized to identify additional respondents by seeking referrals from the workers of the initial respondents. The interview guide was the primary tool of data collection to get more profound knowledge about the issue.

The data analysis process for this research involved a meticulous and manual approach to extract meaningful insights from the qualitative data collected. The qualitative interview responses were subjected to a thematic analysis, a methodical process to identify, analyse, and interpret recurring themes and patterns within the data. First, the raw data was carefully transcribed, and each interview was thoroughly reviewed. Then, an in-depth coding process was carried out, where key ideas, concepts, and recurring topics were identified. These codes were grouped into broader themes, which allowed for a structured and systematic understanding of the qualitative data.

Through this manual thematic analysis, the study could uncover the nuanced and interconnected narratives provided by the respondents. It provided a comprehensive perspective on the reasons for hiring child domestic workers from the employer's viewpoint. The analysis approach ensured that the data's richness and depth were effectively harnessed to answer the research questions and contribute valuable insights to the broader field of child labour research.

## Results and Discussions

### Major Themes

The themes identified related to the reasons for hiring child domestic workers from the employer's perspective are as follows:

*Economic Factors:* This theme encompasses poverty, low salaries, and affordability. Respondents hire child domestic workers due to economic constraints and because child labourers are perceived as cost-effective compared to adult workers. Child workers are considered affordable and adaptable, making them a preferred choice for household tasks.

*Supply and Demand:* The law of supply and demand is an economic principle influencing the demand for child labour. Respondents mention that employers demand child labour because it increases their profit. The availability of child workers who are willing to work long hours for low wages and without complaints contributes to the demand.

*Parental Involvement:* Due to large family sizes, parents of child domestic workers send their children into labour to earn money. This chain of child labour involvement becomes a means of livelihood for these families, highlighting the economic necessity behind child labour.

*Adjustability and Control:* Employers see child domestic workers as more malleable and controllable. Respondents mentioned that they could shape the personality and character of child workers according to their own family rules and traditions. Adult workers, in contrast, are perceived as more demanding, stubborn, and potentially disruptive to the household.

*Insecurity and Gender Issues:* Female employers express feeling more secure with child domestic workers, particularly if their family has a majority of male members. Hiring child workers can help reduce feelings of insecurity related to adult workers and male family members. Child domestic work is often seen as a safe and secure employment option for female child workers.

*Work Timings and Family Dynamics:* Adult workers often have shorter work hours and are less willing to work long hours or stay overnight in employers' homes. They may also need help performing repetitive tasks or interacting with people of the same age. Child domestic workers, on the other hand, are perceived as more adaptable and willing to provide care, especially to ill employers.

*Impact on Employers' Families:* Adult workers are seen as interfering in employers' family and personal matters, causing disturbances. This leads to a preference for child domestic workers, who are considered less intrusive and more comfortable in the household.

*Basic Physiological Needs:* These encompass the fundamental requirements for survival, including food, shelter, clothing, and basic amenities of life. The content highlights how CDWs often work for themselves and to support their families and fulfil these basic needs. The parents of CDWs depend on their children's income to overcome poverty and provide for the family's necessities.

*Safety and Security Needs:* Safety needs include physical, environmental, and emotional safety and protection. Employers offer CDWs a secure environment that involves not only food, shelter, and clothing but also physical and emotional safety. CDWs contribute to the safety of their employers' households by looking after children and providing emotional support.

*Social Needs:* Social needs revolve around the need for love, affection, care, belongingness, and friendship. The content underscores how CDWs are often perceived as more loving, caring, and affectionate toward their employers. CDWs work hard to care for employers and their families, fostering a loving and supportive relationship between the two parties.

*Self-esteem needs:* It include self-esteem, self-worth, and the desire for accomplishment and respect. The content highlights how bad experiences with adult workers can negatively affect employers' self-esteem. CDWs, on the other hand, are more amenable to employers' direction and training, fulfilling the need for self-esteem.

*Self-Actualization Needs:* Self-actualization is the desire to become what one can become, including personal growth, creativity, and gaining knowledge. Employers play a significant role in teaching and influencing CDWs to lead better lives, fostering their growth and self-actualization.

*Perceived Comfort and Security of Child Domestic Work (CDW):* Respondents emphasize that CDW is viewed as a more secure and comfortable form of labour for children. They suggest CDWs have better facilities at their employers' homes, including physical and emotional security. CDWs are described as physically and emotionally more secure when working in employer's homes, in contrast to other work environments like workshops or on the streets. CDWs perform similar household tasks in their employers' homes as they would in their homes, but with the added benefit of earning money for themselves and their families.

*Migration from Villages to Cities:* Many CDWs migrate from villages to cities for work opportunities. Respondents highlight that in rural areas, children may lack the resources to support their families and access education. They suggest that involving children in productive activities like domestic work is seen as a way to prevent them from developing negative habits, such as involvement in theft or drug addiction.

*Parental Responsibility and Economic Necessity:* Respondents acknowledge that the parents of CDWs play a critical role in sending their children to work as CDWs. They argue that parents often do so out of necessity, driven by poverty, large family sizes, and a lack of resources. Parents may use their children to earn income and support their families, turning child labour into a family business.

*Demand for Child Domestic Workers:* Employers' demand for CDWs is influenced by several factors, including their need for full-time help, affordability, and the willingness of CDWs to adjust to employers' requirements. Respondents, primarily homemakers from the upper-middle class, note that adult workers are often expensive and may have family commitments, making CDWs more affordable and convenient.

*Benefits for Both Parties:* Respondents assert that employers and CDWs benefit from the arrangement. Employers provide CDWs with physical and emotional security, Islamic teachings, quality food, comfortable private rooms, primary education, and an improved lifestyle. In return, CDWs work and earn money to support their families. This reciprocal relationship is seen as beneficial, and respondents view CDW as a relatively harmless form of child labour, where CDWs receive their fundamental rights and the opportunity to earn money.

*Misconceptions about Child Labor:* There is a misconception among the general public regarding child labour and child domestic work. Respondents argue that the need for more explicit legislation and its practical implementation contributes to this misconception. They highlight that clear legislation is needed to differentiate between harmful forms of child labour and situations like child domestic work, where they argue that children are provided with fundamental rights and earn income.

*Preference for Child Domestic Workers (CDWs) over Adult Workers:* The primary objective discussed in the content is the preference for hiring CDWs instead of adult workers. Several reasons are provided to justify this preference, reflecting employer perspectives.

*Cost-Efficiency and Salaries:* CDWs are perceived as a more cost-effective option, as they accept lower salaries than adult workers. Employers often find adult workers more expensive due to their demands for higher wages and other materials.

*Bad Experiences with Adult Workers:* Many respondents share negative experiences with adult workers, describing them as demanding, irritating, and challenging to manage in the household. These negative experiences may involve incidents of theft, unethical activities, vulgar language, and abuse, which have led employers to seek alternative options.

*Economic Profit and Cheap Labor:* CDWs are considered a source of profit for employers. They are viewed as cheap labour, as they are often untrained and unable to perform all household tasks properly. This perspective aligns with Karl Marx's idea of replacing skilled adult workers with less-skilled, immature, or child labour for increased economic gain.

*Moulding and Personality Building:* Employers value the ability to mould CDWs' personalities according to their preferences. CDWs, who are at an age where they can be easily influenced, are seen as more flexible and obedient compared to adult workers who may have their conditions and are less adaptable.

*Adjustability and Low Demands:* CDWs are described as highly adjustable within the employer's family. They do not demand separate rooms or additional food for their families. CDWs typically sleep in shared spaces with the employer's children and have minimal demands for clothing and other items.

*Feeling Loved and Secure:* Employers express a sense of security and love when hiring CDWs. They feel insecure with adult workers due to concerns about unethical activities and their impact on young children. CDWs are perceived as providing a more secure and loving environment, often offering better care than the employer's children.

*Parental Involvement in Child Labor:* One reason for hiring CDWs is that their parents involve them in labour. This may be due to economic necessity, poverty, large family sizes, and limited resources. Parents use their children as a means of earning income, and in many cases, employers provide not only salaries but also other materials to the families of CDWs.

*CDWs' Comfort and Security:* CDWs feel comfortable and secure in their employer's home. They enjoy a better lifestyle, access to basic necessities, improved upbringing, and a sense of physical and emotional security.

These themes reflect the multifaceted reasons for employers choosing child domestic workers over adult workers, offering a comprehensive understanding of the employer's perspective on child labour. The themes based on Maslow's hierarchy of needs reveal how employers and CDWs rely on each other to fulfil their respective needs. The relationship between employers and CDWs is complex, with mutual dependency and a significant impact on each other's lives. The hierarchy of needs theory explains how these human needs drive the dynamics of the employer-CDW relationship.

## Major Findings

Child labour prevails not only in developing and low-income countries but also in developed countries. There are many laws about children's age and working conditions, but no law covers child domestic labour. There needs to be more laws and their implementation and policies to fix the age limit and working conditions for child domestic workers.



One of the major reasons for child domestic labour is poverty. Parents of child domestic workers are unable to earn enough money to provide all the basic facilities to their families. On the other hand, child labourers are cheap for employers. All the respondents of this study are housewives from middle-class families. They hire CDWs to help them in their daily household tasks for their comfort. According to the respondents, child domestic workers are affordable as they do not demand high salaries and other facilities like adult workers.

Another primary reason to hire CDWs, according to respondents, is that CDWs are not only adjustable with the employer's family but also weak and easy to control by the employer. Respondents said they could mould CDWs' personalities, characters, and habits according to their family rules and traditions. The employer builds the CDW's personality according to her/his requirements.

Here, another point is highlighted: many of the female CDWs are exploited by the male members of the employer's family. According to this research, the majority of CDWs are females, as domestic work feels more secure and safe for the girl CDWs. Male children mostly work in workshops, shops, or on roads. Many of the respondents claimed that their female CDWs say that they are more secure in the employer's house than in their own homes.

Some respondents say that adult workers have many physical and medical issues. Due to this, they do not work correctly. They have health issues because of their age. Some adult workers live far away from their employer's house, so they make excuses to leave most of the time.

This study shows that many children's domestic workers do not work only for themselves but also earn for their families. According to the respondents of this study (housewives), people involve their children in paid work not only for the sake of the child concerned but also to support their families in fulfilling their needs, too. Parents of CDWs get rid of their children's responsibilities and also make them a source of income for them.

Employers provide CDWs with food, shelter, clothes and many other necessities. On the other hand, CDWs help employers fulfil their duties. They look after their houses, cook food, clean and wash for them. "Housewives hire child domestic workers because they cannot manage all household tasks alone. Moreover, it is also easy to direct child domestic workers rather than adult workers.

The study also shows that many employers prefer to hire CDWs because of lousy experiences with adult workers. Many respondents reported that adult workers were into stealing, which caused significant material losses as well as loss of trust. Respondents of this study also reported that they hire the same gender CDWs as their children for the sake of the safety of their children and of CDWs, too. Employers also provide job security to the parents of CDWs by promising to marry the CDWs when they are grown and give them dowry.

Most respondents have negative experiences with their adult workers, such as stealing from the employers' house or engaging in irregular activities such as affairs with family members or outsiders, misuse of their phones, and use of foul language, which affect the employer's whole family.

The majority of respondents to this study reported that CDWs are more (more than who? their adult workers, their own children?) loving, caring, and affectionate towards them. They always love and care for them more, sometimes even more than their family members.

In this study, respondents' statements show that their bad experiences with their old adult workers hurt their self-esteem. Adult workers were stubborn, misbehaving, and irritating most of the time. They not only affected the self-esteem of employers but also adversely affected their personalities.

Respondents also reported that adult workers are usually of their age. They not only feel hesitation in ordering them to work, but also their adult worker misbehaves with them, talks back, and sometimes uses abusive language, which hurts employers' self-esteem.

According to the majority of respondents of this research, the children who work at the early ages, between 4 to 15 years, at places which require hard work such as workshops, restaurants, car cleaning, selling newspapers, bricking and many others, by skipping their school, education and their childhood, called child labour. They get physically, emotionally and sexually abused at their workplaces by their employers and other people.

Many respondents need to be made aware of the concept of child labour. Some of them even did not understand the question of child labour. According to the respondents, types of work such as changing car tyres, welding iron, working in sun rays on roads, and preparing and serving food in restaurants are more complex than cleaning the house, washing clothes and dishes, using machines for preparing food, ironing clothes, using cutters and knives, and working with fire and gas cylinders.

According to the respondents, CDW is part of labour, but it is more secure and comfortable as it does not require hard work. CDWs have better facilities than other workplaces, even their own homes. They are physically and emotionally more secure at their employer's home by staying or working in workshops and on roads. They do the same tasks in the employer's house as in their homes.

The majority of respondents think that they are not responsible for child domestic work. The only people responsible for this act are the parents of CDWs. Employers do not force the parents of CDWs to involve their children in child labour. Due to a lack of resources, poverty, and large family size, they send their children to work by their own choice. They use their children as an earning source and support their families.

All the respondents to this research are housewives from the upper middle class. It is difficult for them to manage all the household tasks by themselves, and they need help to afford expensive adult maids to get help. According to the respondents, adult workers are very demanding and have high rates of working in the homes. Adult workers also have their family commitments. They are willing to spend only a short time or stay overnight at their employer's home.

In many cases, employers hire domestic workers because they feel loved and secure. One of the respondents complained that they feel insecure with adult workers because of their unethical activities, and they cannot handle young workers with male home members. They cannot leave their adult workers alone with their young children.

According to the respondents, one of the reasons to hire CDWs is that CDWs' parents involve them in the labour. They are poor, have prominent families, and have fewer resources to raise their families. They use their children as an earning source and get many benefits from their employers. Employers not only pay salaries but also give many other materials to the families of CDWs. According to the respondents, CDWs feel more comfortable and secure in the employer's home. They get a better lifestyle, all necessities, a better upbringing and are physically and emotionally secure in the employer's home.

## **Conclusion**

It shows that the reason behind hiring CDWs is two side benefits. Employers and parents of CDWs involve children in domestic work for their own needs. They do not think about their children's future but their own needs. This harms their health, education, and lives. CDWs work for long hours, use dangerous equipment, and work in hazardous conditions.

The study highlighted that the employer's preference for hiring child domestic workers (CDWs) over adult workers is a complex phenomenon as supported by existing studies such as Kabeer (2016), Fernandez (2017), DeCenzo (2018), Grotevant (2019) and Smith (2020). Economic constraints, adaptability, and perceived advantages in moulding CDWs' character play a significant role in this preference. Employers also feel more secure with CDWs, and CDWs, in turn, benefit from better living conditions and opportunities for financial support. This interdependence highlights the complex dynamics between employers and CDWs.

Moreover, misconceptions about child labour persist due to the absence of clear legislation. Understanding these intricacies is essential for addressing the well-being and rights of child domestic workers and for creating a more equitable work environment. The preference for hiring child domestic workers (CDWs) over adult workers, as discussed in the content, reveals a complex interplay of economic, social, and practical factors as highlighted earlier by Pulla (2018) and International Labor Organization (2019). These considerations reflect the employer's perspective and the broader societal context in which child labour is situated. As we delve into the multifaceted reasons for this preference, it is essential to recognize that this phenomenon reflects the various realities employers and CDWs face.

Furthermore, there is a strong emphasis on the demand for CDWs. Employers' demand is influenced by several factors, including their need for full-time help, affordability, and the willingness of CDWs to adjust to employers' requirements. This preference is further enhanced by the perception of CDWs as relatively harmless child labour, where they receive fundamental rights and earn income from various researchers such as Kabeer (2016), Fatima (2017), Birditt (2018), Nieuwenhuys (2019), Moinipour, (2021) and Zulfiqar (2023).

In conclusion, the preference for hiring CDWs over adult workers by employers is a multifaceted phenomenon deeply rooted in economic, social, and practical considerations. This preference reflects the intricate web of factors that shape the lives of both employers and CDWs. It is essential to understand this complexity and the mutual dependencies that exist in the employer-CDW relationship Mansoor (2016), Lund (2018), Grotevant (2019) and Mirza (2022). Acknowledging these dynamics is crucial for addressing the well-being and rights of child domestic workers and creating a more equitable work environment for all.

### Recommendations

- The government prioritizes laws and policies related to specific age groups of people permitted to work and implements the existing laws related to child labour.
- The government should implement policies to hire better staff for educational institutes and hold training programs for teachers.
- A subject on the law in our educational syllabus to inform the population about the facilities provided by the legal system.
- Comprehensive companies should provide needy families with adult, trained, honest, trustworthy, and guaranteed workers. This will help to stop child labour.

### References

- Ahmad, I., & Naeem, R. (2019) Child labor and poverty nexus in Pakistan: A panel data analysis. *Economic and Environmental Studies*, 19(2), 156-174.
- Ahmad, S., Huifang, W., Akhtar, S., Maqsood, S., & Imran, S. (2020) *An analytical study of child labour in the agriculture sector of the rural areas of central Punjab, Pakistan*. *Sri Lanka Journal of Social Sciences*, 43(1), 21-37.

- Ali, S., & Shafique, K. (2020) Child labor in Pakistan: A contemporary dilemma. *Pakistan Economic and Social Review*, 58(2), 173-196.
- Andrees, B. (2018). *Children in Forced Labor: Learning from the Inter-American Court of Human Rights*. Oxford University Press
- Bachman, H. J. (2020). *Child domestic labor: A modern form of child labor*. In M. J. Meyer & L. Wegman (Eds.), *Routledge International Handbook of Child Sexual Exploitation* (pp. 181-192). Routledge.
- Bartel, A. P. (2018). Child Labor and Psychological Well-being *The Journal of Human Resources*, 53(3), 554-570.
- Birditt, K. S., Wan, W. H., Orbuch, T. L., & Antonucci, T. C. (2018) Young Adults' Perceptions of Interference in Their Relationships with Their Parents. *Journal of Marriage and Family*, 80(3), 767-782.
- Chaudhary, M. A. (2020). Economic and social determinants of child labour: A case study of Dera Ismail Khan, Pakistan. *Lahore Journal of Economics*, 7(2), 15-40.
- Cho, S. H., Fang, X., Tayur, S., & Xu, Y. (2019) Combating child labor: Incentives and information disclosure in global supply chains. *Manufacturing & Service Operations Management*, 21(3), 692-711
- DeCenzo, D. A., & Robbins, S. P., & Verhulst, S. L. (2018). *Fundamentals of Human Resource Management*. John Wiley & Sons, 2016.
- Faiq, R. A. (2017). Child labor in Pakistan: A macroeconomic perspective. *The Pakistan Development Review*, 56(4), 577-599.
- Fatima, A. (2017). Child labour in Pakistan: Addressing supply and demand side labour market dynamics. *The Economic and Labour Relations Review*, 28(2), 294-311.
- Fernandez, E. (2017). Employing Domestic Workers: A Gender Perspective. *Journal of Marriage and Family*, 79(2), 399-414
- Grotevant, H. D. (2019). The American family in black & white: A post-racial strategy for improving skills to build child safety. *Race, Inequality & Culture*, 140(2).
- Human Rights Watch (2018). *Pakistan: Child domestic workers abused, exploited*. Retrieved from <https://www.hrw.org/report/2018/11/21/no-rest/pakistan-child-domestic-workers-abused-exploited>
- International Labor Organization (2017). *Ending Child Labor by 2025: A Review of Policies and Programs*. Retrieved from [https://www.ilo.org/ipec/Informationresources/WCMS\\_565080/lang--en/index.htm](https://www.ilo.org/ipec/Informationresources/WCMS_565080/lang--en/index.htm)
- International Labor Organization (2019). *Accelerating action against child labour*. Retrieved from [https://www.ilo.org/ipec/Informationresources/WCMS\\_159490/lang--en/index.htm](https://www.ilo.org/ipec/Informationresources/WCMS_159490/lang--en/index.htm)
- International Labor Organization (2020). *Child Labour Standards*. Retrieved from <https://www.ilo.org/ipec/areas/ChildLabour-standards/lang--en/index.htm>
- Kabeer, N. (2016). Gender Equality, Economic Growth, and Women's Agency: The "Endless Variety" and "Monotonous Similarity" of Patriarchal Constraints. *Feminist Economics*, 22(1), 295-321.
- Latif, A., Ali, S., Awan, A., & Kataria, J. R. (2020). Socio-economic and political determinants of child labor at brick kilns: A case study of district Jhang. *South Asian Studies*, 31(1).
- Lund, F. (2018). Child Domestic Workers: Findings from a Participatory Action Research Study in Durban, South Africa. *Child Abuse & Neglect*, 76, 124-133.

- Mansoor, M. (2016). Child labor in Pakistan: A rights-based approach. *Journal of Sociology and Social Anthropology*, 7(1), 21-34.
- Menon, N., & van der Meulen Rodgers, Y. (2018). Child labor and the minimum wage: Evidence from India. *Journal of Comparative Economics*, 46(2), 480-494.
- Miles, G. (2019). *The Economics of Child Labor*. Routledge
- Mirza, F. I., & Afzal, A. (2022). Socio-economic dimensions of child labor in Punjab, Pakistan. *Pakistan Journal of Social Research*, 4(1), 805-811.
- Moinipour, S. (2021) The Islamic Republic of Iran and children's right to education: availability & accessibility. *Human Rights Education Review*, 4(2), 5-25.
- Nieuwenhuys, O., & Hoang, L. A. (2019). *The Politics of Child Labor in the Global South: Challenges, Responses, and Ambiguities in Regional Child Labor Governance*. Springer.
- Pulla, V., Tarar, M. G., & Ali, A. (2018). *Child protection system and challenges in Pakistan*. CSE edu.
- Ram, M., Tian, B., Nizamani, B., Das, A., Bhutto, N., & Junejo, N. A. (2019). Causes and consequences of child labor in Sindh: a study from Hyderabad Pakistan. *New York Science Journal*, 12(8), 58-64.
- Rashid, S. (2018). Gendered dimensions of child labor in Pakistan. *South Asian Studies*, 33(2), 233-251.
- Sheer, A., Shouping, L., Yaseen, M., & Sidra, F. (2018) Socio-economic effects of children employment law in reducing child labor in Punjab-Pakistan. Pakistan. *Administrative Review*, 2(3), 323-332.
- Smith, P. (2020). *Child Labor in Global Perspective: The Role of Income, the World Economy, and the Child Labor Standards*. Retrieved from [https://www.econstor.eu/bitstream/10419/195269/1/cesifo1\\_wp2537.pdf](https://www.econstor.eu/bitstream/10419/195269/1/cesifo1_wp2537.pdf)
- Wong, K. (2021). *Child Labour in Rural China: A Field Survey*. Palgrave Macmillan.
- Zulfiqar, K., Nawaz, A. R., Shokat, K., & Ahmad, S. (2023). The Plight of Child Labor in Pakistan: An Economic Perspective. *Forman Journal of Economic Studies*, 19(1).