Consequences of Child Labor in India

* Children who spend all their childhood working will lose hope and will to better their lives and will inherit their lifestyle to their children in the future

As a child, people often dream about their future. I wanted to be a videogame programmer because I love playing videogames! Others want to play sports, some people want to become actor and so on. Then they go to school, learn and hone their skills on specialized field of their choices and become close to what they want to become. However, for the many children of India, that is not the case.

Many of industries we mentioned previously plus many more industries employ child labor in India. Forced labour, extreme working hours, lack of sleep/exhaustion, no or little wage, emotional isolation, corporal punishment, arbitrary assault, sexual abuse and extremely high mortality-rate are some of the pain these children face. With such a reality surrounding them, these children don’t have luxury of dreaming what they want to become when they grow up or have any hope for the future. Then they become what their parents are now, adults in poverty who have to send their children to follow their footstep.

* Lack of proper education for the children working will eventually lead them back into poverty

The child labourers often work from 10 hours to 20 hours per day and it is impossible for them to attend school. Let’s take a look at the diamond industry. We told earlier that about 100,000 children work in the diamond industry. In the diamond polishing industry, the learning process takes five to seven years, which pretty much wastes away the childhood and their chance for the proper education. As the children get older and skillful, most likely they will get laid-off to so that the companies won’t pay higher wages to them and just employ more child labourer for cheaper wage. Even they are able to work in the diamond industry, they are like an one-trick pony and only know how to work as polishing diamonds.

Many ***uneducated*** parents themselves fall prey to promises by recruiters that their children will do light work, go to school, be exposed to more opportunities in the city, and send money back home. They are even told that the child might have better marriage possibilities. Living in poor rural villages without many prospects, these families believe that their children will have a better future. These can be avoided if the children have proper education which would enable them to think logically with common sense but alas they don’t with their childhood wasted away in child labor.

* Hazardous work environments pose great risks of injuries to the working children; injured workers will be replaced by other children. ‘Bond’, parents will enslave their children into debt resolving labor

Many children toil for tireless hours, under severely harsh, hazardous, exploitative, often life threatening conditions. In carpet industries, the children suffer from spinal deformities, retarded growth, respiratory illnesses, and poor eyesight working in poorly lit workshops. Studies show that 30 percent of the children working in the diamond industry suffers from tuberculosis(disease on lung), body aches, finger tips grazed by the polishing disc.

Aside from the physical injuries, the big portion of these child labourers are working as slaves or so-called ‘bonded’. Bonded labor or servitude is defined as child labor in which children are indentured in order to pay off a debt. There are few sources of credit or bank loans exist for those living in poverty. The earnings of the bonded children are less than the interest on the loans, ensuring that they will typically never be able to pay off the debt. If those ‘bonded’ children get too old or injured, it will be passed down to their younger siblings or children. This is could be true consequence of the child labor, once it begins, it repeats itself, in endless cycle.

**Closing** – It is in no doubt that in order for the children in India to be happy, the child labor should not exist. But you cannot simply eradicate child labor. Can you get rid of every automobiles because they create pollution? People need to understand that the child labor is too complex of a problem to be solved any time soon. Many factors such as families in poverty, the industries that exploit these children with low wages and harsh environment, lack of government intervention contribute to the child labor. This problem would need to be looked at and tackled from a variety of fronts and would require tremendous time and effort. But with world and people’s involvement, this problem can be fixed and we can bring the smile back to these children and they could just go back to being children again.