



# News Coverage of Child Labor Issue in Pakistani Press: A Comparative Analysis of Daily Dawn and Daily Jang

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## Abstract

*The aim of this research was to evaluate child labor issue in the news coverage of in mainstream Pakistani press. The study also examined the news about awareness and education of the public towards the child labor issue. Quantitative content analysis was done for collection of data. A comparative study was conducted, where the news of the front and back page of the daily Dawn (English) and daily Jang (Urdu) were analyzed through purposive sampling technique from January 1st, 2016 to June 30th, 2016. The study revealed that the issue had not given more coverage, the newspapers had published more news single column, the government organizations had given more information instead of non-government organizations, and both newspapers had given more news about the violation of the child labor rights. While to educate and aware the public less coverage had been given.*

**Key Words:** Child labor, Daily Dawn, Daily Jung

## Introduction

This study was conducted to analyze the news coverage of child labor issues in mainstream Pakistani press. For this purpose, the researcher evaluated the contents of the mainstream English newspaper of daily Dawn and Urdu mainstream newspaper of daily Jang. This study is being conducted to examine the news about the laws in Pakistan as well as the awareness and education of the public towards the child labor issue.

The researcher also measured the level of coverage regarding the child labor issue in the press, particularly in the daily Dawn and daily Jang in this study. This research also searches out the nature of the reporting and coverage regarding child labor that why it has been covered positively, negatively or neutrally? As well as to find out that for what purpose the coverage has been given such as for awareness, education, information etc.

Jabeen. (2014) reported the issue of child protection was analyzed by two Pakistani newspapers i.e., Daily Dawn and Daily Jang. He examined the data of newspapers of 20 years starting from 1990 till 2010. It was found the issue has been covered by both the newspapers and

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evaluated for the language used regarding the issue. The data was also analyzed for the contents and depiction of the child protection.

It was found that 820 and 414 news were relating the child labor that have been published in Daily Dawn and Daily Jang newspapers, respectively. It was found 524 and 165 news were about the accident ratio of the children in the country reported by Daily Dawn and Daily Jang, respectively. The stories relating the neglect of child labor in different departments were 620 and 180 in the Daily Dawn and Daily Jang newspapers, respectively. It was found both of the papers also published other stories relating the child labor in the country and total 3148 and 1033 stories were published by Daily Dawn and Daily Jang.

White. (2008) described that permanent and official events of such issues related with children is provided by newspapers. It was further described that because of wide readers of the newspaper it might have a broad potential to have social impact.

## **Child Labor**

Nafees, Khan, Fatmi, & Aslam, (2012) cited the International Labor Organization (ILO) Report-2012 explained that conventions 138 and 182 define Child Labor as “The engagement of children below age 14 in work activities that are injurious to their health, or deprive them of their human rights like education, physical and mental, social and moral development, or forcing them to ignominious activities such as begging, or prostitution or human trafficking. In the report, Article 32 of the Convention on the Rights of Children (CRC) says that” Children aged below 14 and are to be protected from engaging in any activities that are hazardous to their health or deprive them of their fundamental human rights.

Edmonds. (2008) explained that public debate on child labor uses the phrase to mention all those activities that are in one way or the other cause harm to children directly or indirectly their health, physical and mental development, or violate any of his basic human rights. If we take the example of United Nations protocols on the rights of the child (UN-CRC) which gives special significance to keep children safe from “Work that is likely to be risky or dangerous or interfere with the child education, or to cause harm to the child’s health or physical, mental, spiritual, moral or social development.”

## **Child labor in Pakistan**

According to the United State Department of Labor Bureau of International labor affairs (2011) the Constitution of Pakistan 18th Amendment was approved in 2010, work for all child issues and developed social welfare departments on nationally to the provincial government.

Every province amended or adopted the replacement laws and federal laws on child protection. The province of the Punjab is the only unit which has passed a law on the employment of children as well as instructed to monitor the existing national laws about child labor. The children under age 14 and 18 are prohibited to work as a child labor according to four provinces legislation.

According to the Dawn report (Jan16,2016), In Pakistan the child labor is increasing day by day and country ranked 3<sup>rd</sup> in the world according to the Dawn report (Jan, 16, 2016). While in the other countries of the world the ratio is decreasing dramatically.

### **Laws of child labor in Pakistan**

Ayub. (July1, 2016) explained Punjab restriction of employment of children act 2015, is soon to be tabled for legislation and become an act from the provincial assembly. Under this act children and adolescents are restricted to be employed in certain occupations.

Fasih. (Nov, 2007) discussed that there has been a considerable reduction in Pakistan with respect to children involved in work, over the 1990's. This can be taken in view of the employment of children act 1991. The EOCA limits the smallest age for work as Fourteen years. When participation of selected control groups was being compared over a time period, its main focus of the law is to control and reduce employment of the children less than fourteen years in the country. The law therefore helped in reducing children employment ratio.

### **Role of Media in Child Labor Issue**

Wasif. (16 Dec, 2010) said that in order to create awareness about the issue of child labor, Pakistani media has been playing a very vital role. Media student's research in a conference on child labor aimed to create awareness about harmful effects of child labor in the states. He further said that; "People need to be aware that child labor is not only detrimental to children and denial of their fundamental rights but also an obstacle to national development".

Media is considered as the fourth pillar of the state so it should raise the issue at national level and to force the government to legislate and then promulgate the law in letter and spirit against child labor.

### **Statement of the Problem**

It is a fact that media covering all type of issues to promote or protect the community. The researcher conducting this study to find out the news coverage of child labor issue in print media particularly by the daily Dawn and Daily Jang.

### **Significance of the Study**

This study provided the factors of the issue in the country and the print media role in highlighting the issue of child labor. This research also highlighted the causes and elimination of the issue on the base of news stories published by the print media in the country. This study gave recommendations to the media practitioners and policy makers to overcome the issue of child labor in the country.

### **Objectives of the Study**

- To know about the status of coverage of child labor issues in the mainstream newspapers.

- To know about the priorities of these two newspapers regarding child labor issues.

## **Hypotheses**

- It is likely that daily Dawn gives more coverage to child labor issue than daily Jang.
- It is likely that daily Jang gives more coverage to child labor issue on front page than daily Dawn.
- Daily dawn positively covers the child labor issue as compare to daily Jang.
- Daily Jang presented more news coverage regarding the awareness of child labor instead of violation.

## **Review of literature**

Mahmood. (2015) expressed in his article that the issue of addressing and protecting child labor has been encouraged and criticized simultaneously. Not only street children and laborers fall easy prey to abuse, exploitation and violence but those in their four walls are not safe as well. It should rather focus on establishing child protection system and not on a single issue which was limited to provincial capital alone.

Mubarak. (2011) recommended to the government that for the information about child abuse and children rights, media particularly TV Channels must launch a countrywide campaign. In this way awareness would be built and people's representatives could be persuaded to ensure protection through legislation.

Darakhshan. (2011) stated that mass media plays important role to mobilize people and give shape to the opinion of public on social issues. He further said that in media gatekeepers also play a vital role to filter the news regarding child labor. He said the gatekeepers also follow the agenda of the media. The media has power to set agenda for the creation of child labor awareness. He further said that radio and television can support to spread awareness campaign about child labor.

Shrestha. and Sanchar. (2002) explored in their research that media's role is creating awareness among the masses and developing nations regarding child labor is substantial. It can also be used for protecting children rights. At the same time, it is essential to display child rights facts and issue's rights by media. It is the best way helpful for media to adopt child right based approach comprehensively.

The Ministry of Foreign Affairs of the Netherlands The Hague (2009) reported that it is necessary that worldwide media working on advocacy be ensured on child labor and should be the agenda of the media. The report further explored that mobilizing a wide range of campaigns is a need of the developing countries. These societal campaigns can get the support of donors for child labor.

Mulugeta. (2014) revealed in her research that it was media that has the supremacy to generate awareness but less attention was paid to child labor. It is also fact that many people have

knowledge of the child labor and child labor violation which they learnt from the presentation of media. She also said that mostly public attitudes shaped and influenced by media.

### **Theme of the theory**

Nayar. (2007) explored that agenda setting is a gradual passage that identifies a transmission of salience from primers of agenda to adopters of agenda. Research reveals that agenda setting is a kind of index of the public mind. It is a kind of reflection of the public mind. Agenda setting is an association between public and the media. Agenda setting leads the details are supplied over the particular issue and the formation of public opinion.

He further stated that this theory shows the deep relationship between among the key political issues of the time. This theory was tested by McCombs and Shaw in 1972. It tried to make the people think about the issues of their concern though the people thought less about it before.

Baran. & Davis. (2010) Voter's judgment relied greatly on the major issues which media highlighted. They stated that there was a strong relationship between various issues of campaign of the voter's judgment and the media among the different topics of campaign, when McCombs and Shaw conducted a survey.

They further explored that in the study of McCombs and Shaw revealed the limitations and strengths of media effects as a theory of agenda setting. The ranking of people's and the report of media of the public issues had close relationship. When it's come on the side of negative, the agenda setting is suited to campaigns and news but in case of the categories of effects and other categories of contents, there is a question mark.

### **Methodology**

Sarma, & Rabi. (2006) defined that the methodology is scientific way to conduct a research by the researcher, whereas, the technique used for the research is called research methodology. This researcher had been conducted through content analysis to examine the contents of newspapers regarding child labor issue in the country. The researcher examined the Daily Dawn and Daily Jang news stories to find out the coverage of child labor. The universe for this study was print media, while the researcher collected data from the two newspapers including daily Dawn which is most circulated English newspaper and national Urdu language newspaper titled daily Jang.

The researcher collected data of 6 months from January 1, 2016 to June 30, 2016. The data was collected from the front and back pages of the selected newspapers in the due time. The researcher used coding sheet for data collection. Codes were developed under the consideration of objective and hypotheses of the study. In the current study the researcher analyzed data through Statistical Package for Social Science (SPSS) version 21 to ensure impartiality in the results of the study. The researcher analyzed the data by descriptive statistics and data was presented in tables, charts and graphs.

For the data analysis the researcher used descriptive and inferential statistics, as well as compared the data to find out coverage and relation regarding the child labor issue. In the first part of the chapter the researcher interprets the data in descriptive process, while in the second part in inferential way.

### **Comparison of Both the Newspapers**

**Table 1.** Month Wise Distribution of the Coverage of Daily Dawn & daily Jang Regarding Child Labor

<b>Variables</b>	<b>F</b>	<b>%</b>	<b>Variables</b>	<b>F</b>	<b>%</b>
Jan	8	8.3	Jan	34	13.7
Feb	16	16.7	Feb	48	19.3
Mar	7	7.3	Mar	15	6.0
Apr	29	30.2	Apr	36	14.5
May	19	19.8	May	72	28.9
June	17	17.7	June	44	17.7
Total	96	100.0	Total	249	100.0

Table 1 shows the distribution of the coverage of daily dawn that in the month of January it has given 8.3%, February 16.7%, March 7.3%, April 30.2%, May 19.8% and June `17.7% to the issue of the child labor. The table also explores the distribution of the coverage of daily Jang that in the month of January it has given 17.0% February 20.9%, March 5.2%, April 4.6%, May 34.6% and June `17.6% to the issue of the child labor. The issue of child labor is highlighted 30.2% news in April, which is the greatest number in Daily Dawn but Daily Jang Covered the news in April 28.9%.

**Table 2.** Page Wise Distribution of the Coverage of Daily Dawn and Daily Jang Regarding Child Labor

	<b>F</b>	<b>%</b>		<b>F</b>	<b>%</b>
Front	43	44.8	Front	103	67.7
Back	53	55.2	Back	50	32.7
Total	96	100.0	Total	153	100.0

The table 2 demonstrates the coverage of Daily Dawn on the basis of page wise coverage. On the Front page it has published 44.8% news stories and 55.2% news stories on back page. It also shows the coverage of Daily Jang page wise. On the Front page it has specified 67.7% and 32.7% on back page.

**Table 3.** Column Wise Distribution of the Coverage of Daily Dawn and Daily Jang Regarding Child Labor

	F	%		F	%
Column 1	29	30.2	Column 1	109	71.2
Column 2	43	44.8	Column 2	35	22.9
Column 3	24	25.0	Column 3	9	5.9
Total	96	100.0	Total	153	100.0

The table 3 exemplifies the coverage of both the newspapers in the column. The newspaper covered 30.2% the issue in single, 44.8% in double and 25.0% stories were published in three columns regarding the Child labor issue in Daily Dawn. While Daily Jang on the bases of Column that 71. % stories were covered in single column, 22.9% in double columns, while 5.9% covered the child labor issue in three columns. Daily Dawn mostly covered 44.8% news with double Column, whereas, Daily Jang covered the issue in single Column news 71.2%.

**Table 4.** Distribution of the Coverage of Daily Dawn and Daily Jang Regarding Stakeholders about Child Labor

	F	%		F	%
Government	73	82.3	Government	131	85.6
Nongovernment	17	17.7	Nongovernment	22	14.4
Total	96	100.0	Total	153	100.0

The table 4 shows the coverage of Daily Dawn regarding the stakeholders, who had given more news. Government had given the news about the Child labor in six months 82.3% and non-government had given 17.7%. While, 85.6% Government news related to child labor had published in Daily Jang during six months and non-government had given 14.4%. In the past six months government had given more news stories about the child labor issue than no-government organizations.

**Table 5.** Distribution of the Coverage of Daily Dawn and Daily Jang According the Nature of News (Awareness, Education, and Violation)

	F	%		F	%
Awareness	42	43.8	Awareness	69	45.1
Education	7	7.3	Education	19	12.4
Violation	47	49.0	Violation	65	42.5
Total	96	100.0	Total	153	100.0

The table 5 reveals the distribution of the coverage of Daily Dawn according the nature of news (Awareness, Education, and Violation) that the newspaper published 43.8% news stories about awareness, 7.3% about education and regarding violation 49.0% stories were published.

The table also indicates the coverage of Daily Jang about the awareness, education and violation concerning the child labor issue. The daily published news stories about awareness 45.1%, towards education 12.4% and violation 42.5% information had given. According to the data, daily Dawn had covered more violation news than others, while daily Jang had given more information about awareness instead of education and violation.

**Table 6.** Distribution of Daily Dawn and Daily Jang According to News Attribution Regarding Child Labor

	F	%		F	%
National	71	74.0	National	148	96.7
International	26	26.0	International	5	3.3
Total	96	100.0	Total	153	100.0

The table 5.6 shows distribution of Daily Dawn and Daily Jang according to news attribution regarding child labor show that 74% news were published with Daily Dawn national attribution while 26% news stories were published with international dateline. Whereas, Daily Jang published more news 96.7% with national dateline and 3.3% by international credit line. The outcomes of the data show that more news was published nationally, while the issue was not highlighted internationally in the media in the Pakistani context.

### **Discussion on Both Newspapers Results**

Both newspapers daily Dawn and daily Jang results showed that more news were published in the month of May and February of 2016, while in other four months less coverage is given to the issue. It shows that newspapers have almost ignored the issue, if it had been highlighted in other months of the year it might overcome the issue in the country.

The results of the study also explored the page wise coverage of child labor issue in the past six months of 2016 that the newspapers had published more news on the front page, while less news were published on back pages of the newspapers. It has been covered more on the front page instead of back page.

In the present study the researcher also measured the issue in the number of columns, where both newspapers covered the issue in single and double columns. The results showed that both newspapers covered the issue during six months in 1 column news, while 3 columns were less than 2 columns. The outcome of the study revealed the newspapers covered the child labor issue only on front page and single column stories were more than in double and above, which shows the less interest of the newspapers regarding the issue.

In both newspapers, daily Dawn and daily Jang it is shown in the study that Government had given more news stories about the child labor issue and the non-government organizations were ignored. The results showed that non-governmental organizations were not interested to spread



information, awareness and education about the issue. The non-government organizations should also publish their output in the newspapers.

The outcomes of the research unveiled that daily Dawn and daily Jang had covered more news about the violation and awareness of child labor, while the education news about issue was somehow unnoticed. The newspaper would have published information regarding education so that the common should understand the importance of the issue.

Both newspapers daily Dawn and daily Jang' data showed that more news were published nationally, while internationally the issue of child labor was exclusively disregarded. The results showed that news with international dateline were in small chunk, it should highlight the issue so that other countries also take some steps for the eradication of the issue in Pakistan.

### **Hypothesis Justification**

The results of the study disapprove the hypothesis “It is likely that daily Dawn gives more coverage to child labor issue than daily Jang” but the study showed that more coverage was given by daily Jang instead of daily dawn.

The results of the study proved “It is likely that daily Jang gives more coverage to child labor issue on front page than daily Dawn”.

The study disapproved that “Daily Jang presented more news coverage regarding the awareness of child labor instead of violation. The violation factor is shown more.

### **Theory Justification**

The results explored that media particularly the print media didn't set the agenda for the eradication or reduction of the child labor issue in the country, while it is the assumption of theory when the media set an agenda for issue and highlighted the issue it bring in the notice of the public as well as the high authorities to eradicate or overcome the problem in the society.

### **Conclusion**

The research of the study concluded that the issue of child labor was not given more coverage. Only in the month of May it have been given more coverage, because Labor Day is being observed, the child labor issue gets importance in media. It is also summarized that the newspapers had published less news on back page but didn't give stories on front page which show less importance regarding the issue. It is concluded that there was imbalance regarding coverage on front and back page. The outcome of the study depicted that newspapers had published more news single column and double columns, while not more coverage had been given to news regarding child labor. It is concluded that government organization had given more information about the child labor issue but non-government organizations didn't explore the importance of the child labor.

It is also summarized that both newspapers had given more news about the violation of the child labor rights and issues. While to educate and aware the public less coverage had been given. It is also concluded that imbalance was found regarding national and international coverage of the issue. Only national issues were highlighted, being an international issue, daily Dawn should have highlighted the issue internationally.

### **Recommendation**

- It is suggested that the issue needs to be highlighted equally in all months of the year to give more information to the public.
- It is also recommended that the issue needs to be published equally on front and back pages of the papers that every reader should read about the child labor issue.
- It is also suggested that the editors should also publish columns, features, editorial and increase than single column.
- It is also recommended that the non-governmental voices should also highlight as well as the governmental news stories regarding the child labor issue.
- It is also suggested to newspaper practitioners to cover more stories about education and awareness instead of violation to solve the problems.
- It is also recommended that the issue needs to be highlighted in the international context because the problem is being faced all over the world, not only in Pakistan.

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