Situation of Child Domestic Workers in Bangladesh

By Emadul Islam, Khaled Mahmud & Naziza Rahman

University of Dhaka, Bangladesh

Abstract: This study examines the situation of child domestic workers and attitude of child specialist about child domestic work towards ILO new standards of decent work for domestic workers among 120 child domestic workers in five selected areas of Dhaka city and 15 child specialists from five different groups. The study has been employed both qualitative and quantitative method. Findings of this study revealed that the education level of child domestic workers is very poor and the major portion (79.2 per cent) has no access to non formal education. The promising things were found by the study that (75.83 per cent) child domestic workers wish to go school and continue their study. Almost all (73.3 per cent) did not get any full day off during the week and (21.7 per cent) CDWs get rest breaks 3-4 hours and alarming thing is found that (19.2 per cent) did not get any opportunity to take rest during the day.

Keywords: child domestic workers, education, child protection, ILO standards.

GJMBR-B Classification: FOR Code:150304 JEL Code: O10

© 2013. Emadul Islam, Khaled Mahmud & Naziza Rahman. This is a research/review paper, distributed under the terms of the Creative Commons Attribution-Noncommercial 3.0 Unported License http://creativecommons.org/licenses/by-nc/3.0/, permitting all non-commercial use, distribution, and reproduction in any medium, provided the original work is properly cited.
Situation of Child Domestic Workers in Bangladesh

Emadul Islam *, Khaled Mahmud & Naziza Rahman

Abstract- This study examines the situation of child domestic workers and attitude of child specialist about child domestic work towards ILO new standards of decent work for domestic workers among 120 child domestic workers in five selected areas of Dhaka city and 15 child specialists from five different groups. The study has been employed both qualitative and quantitative method. Findings of this study revealed that the education level of child domestic workers is very poor and the major portion (79.2 per cent) has no access to non formal education. The promising things were found by the study that (75.83 per cent) child domestic workers wish to go school and continue their study. Almost all (73.3 per cent) did not get any full day off during the week and (21.7 per cent) CDWs get rest breaks 3-4 hours and alarming thing is found that (19.2 per cent) did not get any opportunity to take rest during the day. For the nature of invisibility and exploitative situation of child domestic workers almost all child specialist agreed that child domestic work is a modern form of slavery. For ensuring the decent work for child domestic workers and eliminating the worst form of child domestic work study recommend both Government and Nongovernment organizations collaboration in taking actions.

Keywords: child domestic workers, education, child protection, ILO standards.

I. Introduction

Child labour in domestic work is widespread, particularly among girls (ILO, 2012). Child domestic workers were for long an invisible group of working children. Today, they are recognized as among the most numerous of all child workers, and certainly the overwhelming category as far as girls are concerned (Black, 2005). According to estimates for 2008 by ILO Statistical Information and Monitoring Programme on Child Labour (IPEC/SIMPOC) some 15.5 million children aged 5 to 17 are in domestic work; 11.3 million (73 per cent of them) are girls (IPEC, 2011, p.28). In Bangladesh, an estimated by Bangladesh Bureau of Statistics (BBS) and UNICEF in 2006, other than the 7.4 million working in the informal sector, as many as 4 lakh 21 thousand children aged between 6-17 years are working as domestic help, of which around 132,000 are in Dhaka City alone.

Child domestic work it remains highly neglected because of the relatively invisible nature of such work. They are often far from their families, controlled by their employer, invisible to public authorities, frequently deprived of basic rights and related social services, decent lodging and working conditions, deprived of protection from sexual harassment and mental and physical abuse. A Bangladesh Shishu Adhikar Forum (BSAF) (2010) study on the situation of domestic child workers in Dhaka city showed that almost 73 percent of child domestic workers experienced physical abuse and a significant number of children 17 percent are being sexually abuse. Almost 95 percent are abusing by their owners (Islam, 2010).

Children as young as seven years old are routinely pressed into domestic service, and despite hopes to the contrary, most are deprived of the opportunity to attend school. Child domestic workers are isolated from their families and from opportunities to make friends – and are under the total control of employers who do not necessarily have their best interest as a primary concern. Child domestic work is a child labor issue, a children’s rights issue, and gender issue. It is a child labor issue as it involves economic exploitation and hazardous working conditions. It is a children’s rights issue because the nature and condition of the work is unfavorable for child development. Finally, it is also a gender issue as it relates to sexual abuse, risk of sexual assault, and family perceptions about the limited value of girl’s education. According to ILO estimates, domestic service is now estimated to be the single largest employment category of girls under the age of sixteen worldwide (Flores & Oebanda, 2006).

Child Domestic workers (CDW) are particularly vulnerable to violations of fundamental rights at work, given the historic links between domestic work and slavery and other forms of servitude. One of the key issues distinguishing domestic work from other types of child labour is the 24-hour nature of the job (Black, 1997, p. 10). Typically, there are no specified hours or tasks allocated to child domestic workers. They do what their employer asks them to, at any time of day or night. Other important issues children trapped in domestic child labour from a very young age are likely to have had no or insufficient access to education. At the same time, child domestic workers above the legal minimum age have a reduced chance of continuing with education.
Children are the greatest asset of a country and their welfare should be the country’s greatest interest. The children of today are the bearers of our future. They are valuable human assets. If we do not allow to provide them with basic support systems which essential to child development. We are compromising the society of tomorrow this is a simple and powerful fact (Muyeed, 2008, p.55). Considering the servitude situation of domestic workers, International Labour Organization (ILO) in June 2011, arranged the International Labour Conference and adopted the Convention concerning decent work for domestic workers and a Recommendation supplementing it, also referred to as the Domestic Workers Convention (No. 189) and Recommendation (No. 201), 2011 aim to protect and improve working and living conditions of millions of workers worldwide which covers decent work conditions for domestic workers.

II. OBJECTIVES OF THE STUDY

The general objective of this study is to explore the present situation of child domestic workers in terms of ILO new Standards 2011. The specific objectives are as follows:

1. To know the educational level of child domestic workers;
2. To identify the working conditions and employment status of child domestic workers;
3. To know the perception and recommendation of specialist about child domestic work and implementing ILO new standards 2011; and
4. To identify the thought of child domestic workers about their future.

III. METHODOLOGY

Due to the exploratory nature of this study, researchers using both qualitative and quantitative research methods of data collection, namely: in-depth interviews and social survey. The study participants are primarily categorized into two groups: child domestic worker and child specialist/stakeholders. Social survey was conducted among the 120 permanent child domestic workers age between 8 to 18 years who are able to give data from six selected areas in Dhaka metropolitan city. Fifteen in-depth interviews were conducted with five groups of Stakeholders/ Specialist: Bureaucrats, University Teacher, NGO Worker, Policy Maker, and Women leader. The Interviewees were trained before conducting the actual interview with Stakeholders or specialist. Researchers used Statistical Package for Social Sciences (SPSS) software for analyzing the quantitative data and presented statistical analysis result in tables and graphical formats. In qualitative analysis researchers analyzes data by organizing it into categories on the basis of themes, concepts, or similar features, and examined the relationships among concepts. Instead of using real name of the participants, letters were assigned (e.g., A, B, C and so on) to maintain anonymity.

IV. FINDINGS

a) Distribution of Child Domestic Workers (CDWs) Based on Education

According to the constitution of the people republic of Bangladesh primary education is mandatory for all citizens. But this provision does not reach to those children who are joining work before their time. They are far from formal education. Data given by child domestic workers shows (Table1) that a significant number (26.7 per cent) of respondents never been at school and them just getting elementary education and only can read and write and very few (5.8 per cent) are illiterate. The table also shows that (25 per cent) respondents have primary education and the observing thing is that (30 per cent) respondents did not continue their study after primary level.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Education</th>
<th>Frequency</th>
<th>Percent</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Illiterate</td>
<td>7</td>
<td>5.8</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Can sign only</td>
<td>14</td>
<td>11.7</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Can read and write</td>
<td>32</td>
<td>26.7</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Primary</td>
<td>30</td>
<td>25.0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Drop out (after primary)</td>
<td>36</td>
<td>30.0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Others</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>0.8</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Total</strong></td>
<td><strong>120</strong></td>
<td><strong>100.0</strong></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

b) Access to Non Formal Education of Child Domestic Worker

According to International Labor Organization (ILO) (2011) new standards of decent work for domestic worker Article 4(2) mentioned that- “Each Member shall take measures to ensure that work performed by
domestic workers who are under the age of 18 and above the minimum age of employment does not deprive them of compulsory education, or interfere with opportunities to participate in further education or vocational training." The study result shows on (Table 2) that only few (20.8 per cent) respondents are stated they have access to non formal education like several local NGOs provide. The significant number of respondent (79.2 per cent) mentioned that they have no access on non formal education. In terms of ILO new standards it is proved that a major portion of CDWs far from education. The promising thing is found the study shows on (Table 2) that (75.83 per cent) respondent wish to go school and continue their study. In contrast (24.16 per cent) of respondent frustrated and angered with their life and did not show interest to go school again.

Table 2: Child Domestic Aides Access & Wishes go to Non Formal Education

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Variables</th>
<th>Access</th>
<th>Wishes to go School</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Yes</td>
<td>25 (20.8)</td>
<td>91 (75.83)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>No</td>
<td>95 (79.2)</td>
<td>29 (24.16)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Total</td>
<td>120 (100)</td>
<td>120 (100)</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

c) Employment Contract and Salary of Child Domestic Worker

According to International Labor Organization (ILO) (2011) new standards of decent work for domestic worker Article Seven mentioned that the employment contract, types of work, hours, remuneration, paid annual leave, and daily and weekly rest periods, and working place address should be clearly written in accordance with national laws, regulations. The survey study found that (100 per cent) of respondent they did not conduct any written contract before joining the work and their job contract is oral. It is mentioned that child domestic work is considered as an informal sector of job and owner can easily hire them through the motivation of parents some way. In addition to lack of knowledge and ignorance of law worker parents they did not think to do written contract before sending their children in domestic aids.

In terms of job performance of child domestic worker the remuneration is very low. Most of the time owner gave money to guardians not in worker hands. In the field work time several child worker mentioned that they did not know anything about their salary only mother knows. (Figure 1) shows that the highest numbers (38.3 per cent) of respondent monthly salary are between 500-1000 and (25 per cent) worker salary are between1100-1500. Only few respondent (3.3 per cent) get 2500 or above salary per month. The important thing is shows in figure that (12.5 per cent) respondent only get food and cloth did not get any salary and (9.2 per cent) worker did not know anything about their salary.

![Salary (in taka monthly)](image)

Figure 1: Monthly Salary of Child Domestic Worker

d) Time Required to wake up in the Morning, Sleep at Night and Rest Breaks of CDWs

Successful child development is totally depending on sound sleep and familial care. Without the family care and child friendly social environment children physical, mental and cognitive development are not happened successfully. According to World Health Organization (WHO), one adult person should sleep at least 8 hours in a day and for children sleeping hours should be more. The comparative analysis of three figures (Figure 2, 3 & 4) shows that 64.7% CDWs wake up between 6-7am in the morning and 51.7% sleep 12pm or later at night and 46.7% get rest less than 2 hours a day. The charts also show that 17.5% CDWs wake up 5am or before, 18.3% wake up after 7am in the morning. In addition to 35.8% CDWs go to sleep between 10pm-11pm and only12.5% sleep before 10pm at night. 21.7% CDWs get rest breaks 3-4hours and alarming thing is that 19.2% did not get any opportunity to take rest during the day. In terms of wake up, sleep
and rest breaks of CDWs most of the worker did not get chance for sound sleeping in their required age. Child specialist view in this aspect is that lack of sleeping creates long terms negative impact of children body and mind. Those are highly risk for eye problem and schizophrenia and they are always containing bad tamper in their mind.
**e) Day off and Annual Leave of Child Domestic Worker**

According to International Labour Organization (ILO) (2011) new standards of decent work for domestic worker article ten mentioned that- “Each Member shall take measures towards ensuring equal treatment between domestic workers and workers generally in relation to normal hours of work, overtime compensation, periods of daily and weekly rest and paid annual leave in accordance with national laws, regulations or collective agreements, taking into account the special characteristics of domestic work.” The new standards specified also that weekly rest shall be at least 24 consecutive hours. The study found that only few worker are get full day off during the week. Data given by CDWs shows on following table that the highest number of worker (73.3 per cent) did not get any full day off during the week. Only few workers (26.67 per cent) are get day off during the week. The promising thing is found the study shows in (Table 3) that the highest numbers (60.8 per cent) CDWs get annual leave in contrast rest of them did not get annual leave. In terms of ILO new standards children who work in domestic aid they are get day off and annual leave some extent but only few workers get this not all.

**Table 3 : Child Domestic Workers Opinion on Full Day off during the Week & Annual leave**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Variables</th>
<th>Day Off</th>
<th>Annual Leave</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Yes</td>
<td>32 (26.67)</td>
<td>73 (60.8)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>No</td>
<td>88 (73.33)</td>
<td>47 (39.2)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Total</td>
<td>120 (100)</td>
<td>120 (100)</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**f) Living Arrangement and Nature of Bedding of Child Domestic Worker**

The serious discrimination has been found in child domestic worker living place and bedding condition. Although the CDWs are staying with owner family but they did not treated as a member of the family most of the nature. The owner’s family members are staying in their own living room and own bed besides the CDWs are staying empty of house like drawing room, kitchen, veranda etc. Data found through the survey it is observed that the significant number (50.00 per cent) of child domestic workers are sleeping at night in drawing room and only (26.7 percent) has separate room for staying but it is like empty place of house. The (Table 4) also shows that a few respondents they are staying at kitchen (11.7 per cent) and veranda (11.7 per cent).

**Table 4 : Nature of Living Place of Child Domestic Worker**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Sleeping place</th>
<th>Frequency</th>
<th>Percent</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Separate room</td>
<td>32</td>
<td>26.7</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Drawing room</td>
<td>60</td>
<td>50.0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Kitchen</td>
<td>14</td>
<td>11.7</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Veranda</td>
<td>14</td>
<td>11.7</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Total</td>
<td>120</td>
<td>100.0</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

The following (Figure 5) shows that the highest numbers of respondent (42 per cent) are sleep at mat in floor and (34 per cent) flooring with metrics. Only few respondents (8 per cent) are stated that they have separate cot for sleeping. Child specialist views in this aspect that child who had experienced of discrimination and unhygienic living condition from their family or others their emotional development would not occur successfully. As a result they will suffer depression and their socialization will not occur normally like others children.

![Nature of bedding](image)
**g) Child Domestic Workers Future Taught**

The study observed that majority of child domestic workers age more than twelve years. According to Erikson psychosocial theory in this stage the curiosity of knowing about outside world is being developed in children mind and tried to make friendship with others children and wish greater freedom. If this stage is successfully passed children become hopeful for their future and being industries otherwise they feel inferior which negatively effect on children emotional development. In terms of Erikson theory children in domestic aides did not get opportunity to fulfill their demand. So failures of the fulfillment of their demand their emotional development hamper seriously which is also proved by the given data of CDWs. The study observed based on the CDWs given data that shows (Table 5) out of 120 respondent 46 workers stated that they have no dream and most of respondent uses word ‘I don’t know’. The rest of respondent who stated they have dreamed about their future, they did not want to continue their present job wish to good life. The following (Table 5) shows that a major portion (44.59 per cent) worker wishes better life and second highest (40.54 per cent) neglect their present job and wish any kind of job except domestic work.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Variable</th>
<th>Frequency</th>
<th>Percent</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Hope of better life</td>
<td>33</td>
<td>44.59</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>To build a house</td>
<td>02</td>
<td>2.70</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>My child will be educated</td>
<td>07</td>
<td>9.45</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Wish to see family happiness</td>
<td>06</td>
<td>8.10</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Wish to back to the school</td>
<td>11</td>
<td>14.86</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Good husband and happy family</td>
<td>12</td>
<td>16.21</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Better work except domestic work</td>
<td>30</td>
<td>40.54</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**Table 5 : Future Taught of Child Domestic Workers N= 74**

**h) Findings based on Child Specialist Views of Child Domestic worker**

In order to get the views on child domestic workers through survey, researchers also conducted fifteen in-depth interviews with five groups of Stakeholders/ Specialist: (including Bureaucrats, University Teacher, NGO Worker, Policy Maker, and Women leader). In this part researchers are tried to analyze child specialist opinion in qualitatively and presented creating the similar feature and theme.

**i) Child Domestic Work as a form of Modern Slavery**

The subsequent international human rights standards and concepts have, both in their definition and interpretation, recognized child domestic labour situations as a contemporary form of modern slavery. Slavery is a system under which people are treated as property to be bought and sold, and are forced to work (Brace, 2004). Different opinions have been obtained from child specialist about child domestic work as a form of modern slavery. Most of the respondent agreed that child domestic work is contemporary form of modern slavery. According to League of Nations’ 1926 (Blagbrough, 2008, p. 46) Slavery Convention, which considered slavery to encompass “any or all of the powers of ownership” (Article 1(1)) and which called for the “abolition of slavery in all its forms” (Article 2(b)). This international standard thus broadened the definition of slavery beyond that of chattel slavery to encompass practices which are similar in nature and effect - which have been taken to include issues such as forced labour, servitude and trafficking. In terms of forced labour child domestic worker most of nature they are bound to do some work which they did not wish to do. One child specialist views in this aspect in her word that-

“I am not pleased with the number of families who use children as domestic helpers nor am I happy about the number of agencies which place children as domestic helpers. I do consider the use of domestic Child-workers as a form of modern slavery”

The long working hours and types of work child domestic worker did and their abusive situation considered that it is the changing form of ancient slavery. But child specialist views in this matter that all child domestic worker did not face abusive situation. They believe if they are in abusive situation and have not any right to make any choice than it will call slavery. In this regard one bureaucrat (Respondent B) stated that in his word-

“I may agree that child labour in the domestic activities is a form of modern slavery. However, if the child labourers are given reasonable salary, are not tortured them. We should not consider it as slavery.”

A significant number of child specialist views on child domestic work slavery that they did not agree with this opinion. They are considered child domestic worker is one type of restricted work. One of respondent (Respondent O) of the study stated that in his word-

“I think domestic child worker is not as a formed of modern slavery. Because of they have to right to discuss their work whenever they want. I think it is one kind of restricted work where they have no independency”

It is difficult to define child domestic work is a form of slavery. Because of the concept of slavery is covered extreme situation of people where they live not as human being and threat as a personal property. The ancient slavery system is considered as a stigma of civilization. So child specialist view in this aspect did not relate child domestic work with concept of slavery and sometimes they believe that the present situation of child domestic worker in Bangladesh did not match with the universal definition of slavery. For instance one of
child specialist who is secretary of government (Respondent A) stated that in his word-

“I do not agree with this comment that child domestic work as form of slavery. He stated that one of the popular definitions of slavery is that ‘it is a system under which people are treated as a property and forced to work.’ In this sense domestic child workers cannot be treated as slaves in the modern form. Except some extreme cases domestic child workers in our society, are not treated as property or are forced to work.”

j) Reason Behind to Hire Girls for Domestic Work

Child domestic work sector is considered as a female dominated occupation. The observation of the study found that the owner is encouraged to hire girl for domestic aids than boy. All of child specialist mentioned that the common reason, the taboos in society that girls are suitable for household or inside work and boys are perfect for outside work. Another important reason stated a major portion of child specialist that girls are introvert and loyal than boys. One of respondent (D) said that-

“Employer hire girl child because girl children are seemed to be more suitable for household works. Moreover they remain most of the time within the four wall of the house. Parents send their girl child for domestic work because they think their children will be safer and well in terms of foods, security etc in an affluent family.”

In other word Respondent (E) stated -

“Employers are interested to engage female children in their houses as girls seem to be the more loyal and attentive than boys”

Another important reason behind to girls to become domestic works is safety of marriage. Parents are thinking that if their girls are doing work she also able to send money to them and the owner will be help to arrange marriage. But the study observe that girls who are join in domestic work their thinking about present job is stigma for them and wish to keep hide. The socio-economic condition of family is also the main barer for girl join in domestic aids. Most of the owner thinking is like that girl’s workers are satisfied with less payment and easy to maintain and control than boys worker. The parents are CDWs prefer to send their girls children for household work because they are seems that their boys are capable for assisting in agriculture or outside work.

k) Opinion Regards to Impact of Long Working Hours on CDWs Physical and Mental Health

The survey findings showed that there are no specified hours or tasks allocated to child domestic workers in domestic work. They do what their employer asks them to, at any time of day or night. Almost all respondent agreed that long working hours are not good for children and it is not favorable for their mental and physical development. Long working hours will put stress in their mind. They also need time for playing and study. If they do not get time to study and play it will make hindrance to their physical growth. They also need to spend quality time on socializing, if they do not get that they cannot grow as social human being.

One respondent (G) of the study stated that-

“The long working hours impact the children’s physical health in that their body and mind are subjected to increased stress and more prone to disease and dysfunction.”

Overworks in very early age makes negative impact of child domestic workers growth and development. It hampers the natural growth of physical and mental health. It will reduce the potentiality of person and leads to permanent disorder.

l) Perception of Existing Laws of Bangladesh to Ensure the Legal Rights of Child Domestic Workers

The fundamental rights of the citizens including the children are spelled out in the Constitution of the Peoples Republic of Bangladesh. Articles 11, 14, 15, 16, 17, 18, 19 and 20, constituting the fundamental principles of state policy of the Constitution have laid emphasis on ensuring compulsory primary education for the children as well as adopting special measures for the children who are physically and mentally challenged. The Constitution has guaranteed the fundamental rights of citizens in Articles 27, 28, 29, 31, 34, 37, 38, 39, 40 and 41. Particularly, forced labour is completely prohibited and access to legal remedy is assured in case of violation of fundamental rights (MLE, 2010, p. 06). The Government of Bangladesh has ratified 33 Conventions related to labour issues including the United Nations Convention on the Rights of the Child (UNCRC) and ILO Convention No. 182 (Worst forms of Child Labour). The government also adopted a marvelous policy named National Child Labour Elimination Policy 2010. In terms of existing law the child specialist has given different opinion. Some have noticed that government has enough laws to protect children which also cover CDWs from abuse and exploitation. Others respondent mentioned that laws are inadequate and law cannot do anything first need to change people’s mind and making social awareness against child labour. One of respondent stated that-

“Law cannot do anything in this matter. Because of there are laws, but no implementation. Social awareness is the most important point. If the rich people and elite of the society does not come forward this problem never and ever be solved”

So implementation is important. Because of every law is bad if it is not enforced. Child specialists believe that there is proper law, but there are gaps in knowing, obeying and implementing law. One respondent comment stated in this matter-
“The legal protection for any vulnerable group in the country may not be considered as inadequate. What is lacking is that some of the employers are not properly aware of the strictness of the law and worker did not know about their rights and law.”

The respondent also agreed that law is existed but did not able to ensure protection of child domestic worker. Their abusive situation in their working place made them highly vulnerable and their evident are most of the nature ignored by law or not able to reach the benefit of law. So all of child specialist recommended that to revise the existing and ensure proper protection for child domestic workers.

m) Perception about How to Implement ILO (2011) New Standards to Ensure Decent Work for Child Domestic Workers in Bangladesh

Domestic child worker issues have received major concerns in national and international level. The International Labour Organization (ILO) has been given attention to this issue and arranged ILO 100th convention on Decent work for Domestic Workers 1st June 2011 to 17th June 2011 in Geneva. This convention adopted new standard in the light of decent work for Domestic Workers in terms of age, working hour, leisure, remuneration, job contract and security etc. The new ILO standard is considered as landmark treaty for child domestic worker. Like other ILO convention Bangladesh also ratified this convention. So Bangladesh is ethically bound to follow the new ILO standards about decent work issues of child domestic workers. Child specialist perception in this aspect that most of the respondent agreed that Child domestic work is not possible to eliminate in a day but important thing is that to ensure the decent work situation for them. Moreover they also stated that without the creating alternative it does not possible to rehabilitate a big portion of unskilled worker. The society and economy of the state is also important thing in this matter. But if the government have well wish to alleviate child domestic work than it is may possible. The important thing is that the ILO also believes that it does not possible to alleviate child domestic work immediately. So ILO made a standard which ensure the right of CDWs. In the perspective of Bangladesh to implement this standard the respondents of the study are given different suggestions. Those are depicted below-

One policy maker (Respondent H) stated that-

“It will be difficult to eliminate child domestic labour from a developing country like Bangladesh. Nor is it desirable. I believe that extensive awareness programs should be taken to sensitize the employers of CDWs towards their responsibility in terms of law.”

Another respondent of the study also given emphasis on awareness issues that social awareness is most important factor to ensure decent work for CDWs. He stated that if responsibility does not come from the self will nothing can change the system. A major portion of the respondent given emphasize on creating new job facilities for them and NGOs initiative. The important thing also found by the study that almost all respondent stated that the government should be more sincere about the implementation of ILO standards, but citizens also should mentally ready to cooperate with government, GO and NGOs should work partnership way and arranged mass campaign, workshop, seminars for raising awareness among the people. The significant suggestion found the study given one respondent that the government initiative and willingness is important for ensuring decent work and abolishing child domestic work. She mentioned civil society, NGOs, child welfare organization and other countries create pressure to government to take initiative for implementing ILO new standards. In her word-

“The organizations of NGOs and Child Welfare organizations need to unite to publish the numbers and circumstances of these child-workers and solicit the assistance of other nations to bring pressure upon the Bangladesh national leaders. This can also become a real positive source of public and international relations, as Bangladesh become one of the international leaders in this area.”

V. Discussion

Child domestic labour has only recently come to the forefront of the international debate as potentially one of the most widespread forms of child labour (ILO, 2011, p.28). The International Labor Organization (ILO) has been given emphasis domestic work issue and arranged ILO 10th convention on decent work for domestic workers 1st June 2011 to 17th June 2011 in Geneva. This convention adopted new standard in the light of decent work for domestic workers in terms of age, working hour, leisure, remuneration, job contract and security so on. The ILO new standard has been considered as landmark treaty for child domestic worker. Domestic work is an oldest occupation and whilst children played an important part. Since a proportion of these children, mostly girl, are very young, and they are join in work before their time. They have no specific task that they do, but they are bound to do all types of work that their owner ask them to do. As a female dominated occupation this jobs are highly risk for different types of abuse and unspecified time of work it’s considered as worst forms of child labour. Most specifically the common hazards must also be seen in association with the denial of children’s fundamental rights, such as access to education and health care, the right to rest, leisure, play and recreation and the right to be cared for and to have regular contact with their parents and peers.

The ILO new standards has been given emphasize on child domestic workers education and
vocational training. The study findings shows that child domestic labour in Bangladesh serious denial schooling of child domestic worker, a significant number of (26.7 per cent) CDWs never been at school. Other things those who are been at school their education level is very low and they just get primary (up to Fifth grade) education, after that drop out from education. The promising things found by the study that (20.8 per cent) CDWs have access to non formal education which is providing different NGOs in Bangladesh. On the other hand a major portion (79.2 per cent) CDWs has no access in non formal education. Data was given by participants of the study that (75.83) wish to go to school.

In terms of ILO new standards the study found serious discrimination of living, salary, leisure and remuneration of child domestic workers. The respondents of the study stated that they get very low salary, and their job nature is 24 hours, they wake up before anybody of the owner family and going to bad after them. They have no specific leisure time, but they get little time to take rest and always to ready to follow owner order.

The qualitative findings of the study show that, considering the exploitative situation of child domestic workers in their workplace most of the participants agreed child domestic work as modern from of slavery. On the other hand those participants who are disagree with this opinion, they believe that child domestic work is a worst form of child labour and one type of restricted work. Almost all of key informant of the study agreed that owner encourage to hire girls for domestic worker because they are easy to handle and loyal to owner. They also mentioned that long working hours and abusive situation has been negative impact on CDWs physical and emotional development. To protect the right of child domestic workers child specialist mentioned that the implantation of existing law is important than adopting new laws. They also agreed revising the existing laws in a favors of child domestic workers rights. To implementing ILO new standards all of child specialist gave emphasize on Government and NGOs partnership initiative on creating awareness among the people about eliminating child domestic work.

VI. Conclusion

The constitution of Bangladesh has been asserted in Article 32 (1), “States Parties recognize the right of the child to be protected from economic exploitation and from performing any work that is likely to be hazardous or to interfere with the child's education, or to be harmful to the child's health or physical, mental, spiritual, moral or social development”. Children involved in domestic work often become victim of both economic exploitation and maltreatment. Certainly not all child domestic workers experience these risks; and the work itself is not necessarily dangerous and inhumane. But there are household employers who are dangerous or inhumane. The study findings show that the overall situation child domestic workers in their workplace are exploitative and serious violation of the Article 32 (1) constitution of the people republic of Bangladesh. In terms of ILO new standards the present situation of CDWs are worst. The dream of most child domestic workers is better life except from domestic work. For ensuring decent work for child domestic workers and implementing ILO new standards the following recommendation take in consideration:

- Find or establish mechanisms that would allow child domestic workers’ access to basic education that will include mixing work with education for those who, for various reasons, are unable to stop working. This could be done by establishing afternoon and part-time schooling opportunities.
- Establish informal education programmes for girl domestics who dropped out or never attended formal education.
- Establish emergency response for child domestics when they are victims of abuse.
- Reinforce existing family protection mechanisms. Even if their child is away, families have their own child protection mechanisms and develop coping mechanisms.
- Community-based intervention should take into account for raising awareness among the parents for discourages to send their child in domestic work.
- Strengthen secure communication channels between children and parents that can be used to monitor the child’s well-being and work conditions.
- Government and NGOs collaboration approach should take into account for implementing ILO new standards.

References Références Referencias


