



Sonargaon University (SU)

**Research Monograph on “Prevention of Child Labour in
Bangladesh: A Study on the basis of Domestic Law and International
Law”.**

This Research Monograph Submitted for the partial fulfillment of the award of the degree

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Department of Law

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Letter of Transmittal

To

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Subject: Submission of Research Monograph on “Prevention of Child Labour in Bangladesh: A Study on the basis of Domestic Law and International Law”.

Sir,

I am honored to submit my research monograph titled “Prevention of Child Labour in Bangladesh: A Study on the Basis of Domestic Law and International Law,” prepared in partial fulfillment of my undergraduate degree.

This study offers a legal and policy-based analysis of child labour in Bangladesh, exploring domestic laws, international conventions, and the socio-economic factors influencing the issue. It proposes recommendations for reform and enforcement to safeguard children's rights.

I sincerely thank you for your guidance and support throughout this work. I hope this research contributes to meaningful discourse and policy development in this crucial area.

Yours sincerely,

Rokeya Akter

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Declaration

I do hereby declare that the Research Monograph Title “Prevention of Child Labour in Bangladesh: A Study on the basis of Domestic Law and International Law” ” prepared solely by me and which has been submitted to the department of Law, Sonargaon University (SU) for achieving the LL.B. (Honours) Degree. This is an original work of mine. No part of this research, in any way of or in from, has been submitted to any University or Institution for any Degree, Diploma or for other similar purposes.

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Supervisor Certificate

This is to certify that the work presented in this dissertation is based on the work, carried out by the author herself under my supervision in Department of Law, Sonargaon University (SU).

It is also certifying that the work presented here is original and suitable for submission as the style and contents, for fulfillment of LL.B. (Honours) program.

Naimul Razzaque

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Acknowledgement

"In the name of Allah, the Beneficent, the Merciful". Praise by Allah & thanks to Allah for patronizing me to finish this Research Monograph. I am very happy to finish it. It is a great Research of my life. It is a long cherished hope of my life to become a great lawyer. That's why I have admitted in the Department of Law in Sonargaon University (SU) to fulfill my dream. But through my whole study life in this field, I did not get much more opportunities to examine and show my knowledge and skill in this wide field. Lastly I have got a great chance to make my study meaningful when I got the chance to prepare a Research Monograph on "Prevention of Child Labour in Bangladesh: A Study on the basis of Domestic Law and International Law".

I acknowledge my grateful to respected Superior Naimul Razzaque for instructing me how to prepare a Research Monograph and his famous Books lectures on this subject help me to complete my task sincerely.

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Thank you

Rokeya Akter

Abstract

This research paper delves into the multifaceted issue of child labor in Bangladesh, examining the legal frameworks and practical challenges in its prevention. It scrutinizes the existing domestic laws, such as the Bangladesh Labour Act, and international conventions, including those of the International Labour Organization, to assess their efficacy and implementation. The study further investigates the socio-economic factors contributing to child labor and proposes recommendations for a more robust and coordinated approach involving government, NGOs, and international bodies to protect children's rights and ensure their access to education and a safe environment. This paper also highlights the root causes of poor implementation mechanisms and defects in labor law in Bangladesh. It seeks to raise awareness about child labor in both formal and informal sectors, advocating for its gradual reduction through concerted efforts and policy recommendations.

Finally, certain recommendations are suggested for the fruitful and efficient implementation of labor standards to ensure rights and social justice to workers of every corner of the country. The research emphasizes the need to address the nutritional and developmental needs of child laborers, advocating for policies that support their well-being and integrate them into mainstream society.

Keywords include child, labor, protection, poverty, domestic law, forced labor, and industry.

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Prevention of Child Labour in Bangladesh: A Study on the basis of Domestic Law and International Law

Chapter 1:

Introduction

1.1 Background of the Study

Child labor remains a persistent and complex problem in Bangladesh, hindering the nation's progress and violating the rights of its most vulnerable citizens ([Hadi, 2000](#)).¹ Despite significant economic advancements, many children are still engaged in hazardous forms of work, deprived of their childhood and future opportunities. Low income and institutional deficiencies are major causes behind the prevalence of child labor around the world ([Edmonds & Pavcnik, 2005](#)).² This paper aims to explore the underlying causes, assess the current legal and policy landscape, and identify strategies for more effective prevention of child labor in Bangladesh.

This study will analyze the gaps between legal frameworks and actual practices, emphasizing the need to address the structural constraints that perpetuate child labor. It will further investigate the socio-economic factors exacerbating this issue, such as poverty and lack of access to education, while also evaluating the role of international interventions and collaborations in combating child labor ([Hossain, 2009](#)).³ Ultimately,

¹ Child abuse among working children in rural Bangladesh prevalence and determinants. *Public Health*, 114(5), 380. [https://doi.org/10.1016/s0033-3506\(00\)00367-x](https://doi.org/10.1016/s0033-3506(00)00367-x)

² Child Labor in the Global Economy. *The Journal of Economic Perspectives*, 19(1), 199. <https://doi.org/10.1257/0895330053147895>

³ Malnutrition status of children under 5 years in Bangladesh: A sociodemographic assessment. *Children and Youth Services Review*, 117, 105291. <https://doi.org/10.1016/j.childyouth.2020.105291>

this research seeks to contribute to a more comprehensive understanding of child labor in Bangladesh and to inform policy and practice towards its elimination. By identifying the defects in the application of the law, this study will suggest potential ways to protect children from labor. This study will be based on domestic and international laws to find the lacuna of child labor laws and their implementation.

The study will also look into the cultural and social elements that affect child labor, with the goal of developing specific solutions that take into consideration the particular difficulties faced by Bangladeshi communities ([Adonteng-Kissi, 2018](#)).⁴ It will assess how cultural norms and social expectations influence child labor practices, aiming to create targeted solutions that address the specific challenges faced by Bangladeshi communities.

This multifaceted approach aims to foster sustainable change and safeguard the rights of children, aligning with both national and international legal standards.

This includes assessing the effectiveness of current interventions and suggesting new, culturally sensitive strategies for eradicating child labor and ensuring children's well-being.

This research also aims to highlight the importance of education as a tool to eliminate child labor, advocating for policies that ensure access to quality education for all children, regardless of their socio-economic background . By examining these factors, the study seeks to provide a comprehensive understanding of the issue and propose targeted, culturally sensitive strategies for its eradication. The research will also explore how a lack of opportunities in traditional professions leads young people to work in business, further complicating efforts to end child labor.

This study will also help to formulate policies for preventing early childhood disability, better management, and policy formulation ([Saha & Khan, 2021](#)).⁵

Causes of child labour: Perceptions of rural and urban parents in Ghana. *Children and Youth Services Review*, 91, 55. <https://doi.org/10.1016/j.chilyouth.2018.05.034> ⁴

⁵ Risk factors for early childhood disability in Bangladesh: Evidence from Multiple Indicator Cluster Survey 2019. *PLoS ONE*, 16(11). <https://doi.org/10.1371/journal.pone.0259532>

The research will assess the incorporation of early childhood development programs into health and nutrition services, examining their role in mitigating child labor by addressing its root causes. It also aims to assess how the Bangladesh Labor Act 2006 is being implemented, as well as other pertinent rules, with a focus on the functions of governmental organizations, employers, and trade unions. By determining how effectively these organizations carry out their responsibilities, the research will pinpoint any gaps or inefficiencies that impede the successful prevention of child labor.

To ensure adherence to labor regulations, the research will also emphasize the necessity of collaboration between unions and other parties.

This collaboration is critical for creating safe and equitable working conditions for all workers, including children.

1.2 Statement of the Problem

Despite the existence of numerous laws and policies aimed at preventing child labor, its prevalence remains a significant concern in Bangladesh, highlighting the need to identify the factors that impede their effectiveness.

The problem of the statement lies in the persistent gap between legal provisions and their practical implementation, along with socio-economic challenges and cultural norms that perpetuate child labor. These challenges often lead to exploitative working conditions and limited access to education and social protection for children. This requires an investigation into the underlying causes of this discrepancy and an examination of the institutional and social structures that perpetuate child labor. Furthermore, it necessitates the development of specific solutions that address the root causes of child labor, taking into account the unique difficulties faced by Bangladeshi communities. It also requires assessing how cultural norms and social expectations influence child labor practices, aiming to create targeted solutions. By addressing these concerns, this study seeks to promote practical solutions and policies that will efficiently eliminate child labor and protect children's rights in accordance with national and international legal requirements. This study also aims to assess the efficacy of current interventions and suggest new strategies for eradicating child labor and ensuring children's well-being that are both culturally appropriate and sensitive.

The core issue lies in the persistent gap between legal provisions and their practical implementation, compounded by socio-economic challenges and cultural norms that perpetuate child labor. These factors often result in exploitative working conditions and limited access to education and social protection for children. Addressing this problem requires a comprehensive investigation into the underlying causes of this discrepancy and an examination of the institutional and social structures that perpetuate child labor. Furthermore, it necessitates the development of specific, culturally sensitive solutions that address the root causes of child labor, taking into account the unique difficulties faced by Bangladeshi communities. Ultimately, this study seeks to promote practical solutions and policies that will efficiently eliminate child labor and protect children's rights in accordance with national and international legal requirements.

Key improvements compared to your original statement:

Focus on the Core Issue: I've emphasized the "persistent gap between legal provisions and their practical implementation" as the central problem.

Integration of Factors: The statement now integrates the key factors that contribute to the problem (socio-economic challenges, cultural norms, institutional structures).

Emphasis on Culturally Sensitive Solutions: I've retained the emphasis on the need for "culturally sensitive solutions" to address the unique challenges in Bangladesh.

Clear Objective: The statement clearly states that the study aims to "promote practical solutions and policies" for eliminating child labor.

This necessitates a comprehensive policy analysis to determine whether universal minimum-age regulations are beneficial, or if they are detrimental to children ([Bourdillon et al., 2009](#)).⁶ Moreover, this study will explore the barriers preventing access to legal recourse and the challenges in implementing existing labor regulations.

1.3 Objectives of the Study

The study's primary goal is to evaluate the current legal and policy frameworks in Bangladesh for preventing child labor, with a focus on how well they adhere to

⁶ Re-assessing minimum-age standards for children's work. *International Journal of Sociology and Social Policy*, 29, 106. <https://doi.org/10.1108/01443330910947480>

international norms and standards (Yu & Zia-ud-Din, 2018).⁷ It also aims to pinpoint the main obstacles and difficulties preventing the efficient implementation of these laws and policies.

In addition, the research aims to offer specific, practical recommendations for strengthening enforcement procedures, improving coordination among pertinent stakeholders, and resolving socioeconomic factors that perpetuate child labor. The objective is to assess the efficacy of current interventions and suggest new strategies for eradicating child labor and ensuring children's well-being. Furthermore, it seeks to evaluate the knowledge, attitudes, and practices of employers, parents, and community members concerning child labor in order to create targeted and culturally appropriate interventions. Moreover, the research will explore the underlying causes of poor implementation and flaws in Bangladesh's labor legislation. Finally, it will provide some recommendations for the successful and efficient implementation of labor standards to guarantee the rights and social justice of workers in every region of the nation.

Here's a summary:

Evaluate Current Legal and Policy Frameworks: To assess the existing laws and policies in Bangladesh aimed at preventing child labor, determining how well they align with international standards.

Identify Obstacles: To pinpoint the primary obstacles and challenges hindering the effective implementation of these laws and policies.

Provide Practical Recommendations: To offer specific and practical recommendations for strengthening enforcement, improving coordination among relevant stakeholders, and addressing the socio-economic factors that perpetuate child labor.

Assess Efficacy and Suggest New Strategies: To evaluate the effectiveness of current interventions and suggest new strategies for eradicating child labor and ensuring children's well-being.

⁷ International Trade Agreements and Their Relation to Core Labor Standards. *Journal of Politics and Law*, 11(3), 33. <https://doi.org/10.5539/jpl.v11n3p33>

Evaluate Knowledge, Attitudes, and Practices: To assess the knowledge, attitudes, and practices of employers, parents, and community members regarding child labor in order to create targeted and culturally appropriate interventions.

Explore Underlying Causes of Poor Implementation: To explore the underlying causes of poor implementation and flaws in Bangladesh's labor legislation.

Provide Recommendations for Successful Implementation: To provide recommendations for the successful and efficient implementation of labor standards to guarantee the rights and social justice of workers.

In essence, this study aims to provide a comprehensive analysis of the legal and practical aspects of child labor prevention in Bangladesh, ultimately leading to actionable recommendations for improvement.

1.4 Research Questions

Here are some potential research questions of this research would be:

1.4.1 Overarching Question:

To what extent do domestic and international laws effectively prevent child labor in Bangladesh, and what factors influence their implementation?

1.4.2 Specific Research Questions:

Legal Frameworks: How well do Bangladesh's existing domestic laws and policies align with international standards and conventions on child labor?

Implementation Challenges: What are the primary obstacles hindering the effective implementation and enforcement of child labor laws and policies in Bangladesh?

Socio-Economic Factors: What socio-economic factors contribute to the persistence of child labor in Bangladesh, and how do these factors interact with legal frameworks?

Stakeholder Perspectives: What are the knowledge, attitudes, and practices of employers, parents, and community members regarding child labor, and how do these influence the effectiveness of prevention efforts?

Efficacy of Interventions: How effective are current interventions and strategies aimed at preventing and eliminating child labor in Bangladesh?

Role of International Organizations: What role do international organizations play in supporting and monitoring child labor prevention efforts in Bangladesh, and what are the limitations of their involvement?

Gaps and Loopholes: Are there any significant gaps or loopholes in the existing legal and policy framework that undermine child labor prevention efforts?

Recommendations: What specific, practical recommendations can be made to strengthen enforcement, improve coordination among stakeholders, and address the root causes of child labor in Bangladesh?

1.5 Hypothesis

It is hypothesized that stronger enforcement of existing labor laws, coupled with targeted socio-economic interventions, will significantly reduce child labor rates in Bangladesh. This hypothesis assumes that multifaceted strategies addressing both legal and societal elements are essential for impactful change (Saad-Lessler, 2010).⁸

Furthermore, it posits that addressing structural and material constraints can reduce labor exploitation. Moreover, effective engagement of key stakeholders and addressing gaps between law and practice can improve labor rights protection. Additionally, better alignment of national laws with international labor standards can ensure worker rights.

These interconnected assumptions underscore the study's direction and the expected outcomes of improved child labor prevention strategies. The study also expects that initiatives aimed at poverty reduction and educational access will correlate with decreased child labor incidence.

1.6 Scope of the Study

The study will encompass an analysis of relevant domestic and international laws, policies, and conventions pertaining to child labor. It will also examine the socio-economic conditions that contribute to child labor in Bangladesh and assess the roles

⁸ A cross-national study of child labor and its determinants. *The Journal of Developing Areas*, 44(1), 325. <https://doi.org/10.1353/jda.0.0074>

and responsibilities of various stakeholders, including government agencies, NGOs, employers, and international organizations.

The study will also collect data using qualitative and quantitative methods to identify key themes, patterns, and trends and to explore perspectives of policy-makers and other stakeholders.

Analysis of Laws and Policies: Your study will analyze domestic and international laws, policies, and conventions related to child labor. This involves examining the content, effectiveness, and alignment of these legal instruments.

Socio-Economic Conditions: It will examine the socio-economic conditions that contribute to child labor in Bangladesh. This includes exploring poverty levels, access to education, and other factors that push children into the workforce.

Stakeholder Roles: The study will assess the roles and responsibilities of various stakeholders. This encompasses government agencies, NGOs, employers, and international organizations involved in child labor prevention.

Data Collection: You'll collect data using qualitative and quantitative methods to identify key themes, patterns, and trends.

Stakeholder Perspectives: The research will explore perspectives of policy-makers and other stakeholders involved in child labor prevention. This involves understanding their views, challenges, and recommendations for addressing the issue.

This may provide valuable insights into their experiences and perspectives.

1.7 Significance of the Study

This study is significant as it will contribute to the existing body of knowledge on child labor and provide practical recommendations for policymakers, practitioners, and other stakeholders to enhance child labor prevention and protection efforts in Bangladesh. It will identify defects in labor laws. Moreover, this study will play a crucial role in setting national priorities in the formulation, implementation, and evaluation of sustainable development plans for children. The knowledge gap regarding factors that either support or hinder the successful implementation of interventions will be investigated to identify ways of engaging key stakeholders in a better way. This research will further explore barriers preventing access to legal recourse and implementation challenges. By

identifying issues and challenges faced by child laborers, the study can offer valuable insights for developing targeted interventions. Furthermore, this study will evaluate the effectiveness of legal frameworks like the Bangladesh Labor Act 2006. This involves analyzing the implementation of relevant regulations and focusing on the roles of government agencies.

By assessing the practical application of these standards, the research can determine whether current measures are adequate and effective. By identifying the most significant factors correlated with labor unrest, the study can inform strategies to mitigate these issues and ensure better compliance with labor laws. The study aims to offer specific recommendations for strengthening enforcement and improving coordination among stakeholders. This study will contribute to creating a more equitable and sustainable industry by offering recommendations to improve labor practices and enhance compliance with labor standards. The research findings can be disseminated through publications and presentations to inform policymakers and industry stakeholders.

1.8 Limitations of the Study

This study may be limited by the availability and reliability of data on child labor, as well as the potential for bias in the responses of participants. Additionally, logistical and resource constraints may restrict the scope and depth of the investigation. The study might face challenges in gathering comprehensive data, especially regarding sensitive issues like child labor in informal sectors.

Furthermore, time constraints may affect the extent to which various geographic areas and industries can be covered, which may affect how well the results can be generalized. The research will need to rely on the accuracy and honesty of participants' responses, and biases in self-reported data could influence the findings. The study will adopt measures to mitigate these limitations by using rigorous data collection methods and triangulating data from multiple sources. New legislation addressing the informal sectors that are not presently covered by the Act will need to be adopted.

Alternative monitoring mechanisms and community-based surveillance can address resource limitations for enforcement.

Further research is needed to ascertain the long-term effects of interventions and legal reforms on child labor rates and the welfare of former child laborers. The study will offer suggestions for improving the recently formed Child Labor Unit's capabilities and guaranteeing the unit's efficient operation in carrying out its duties. The research will also look into how cultural beliefs and social norms affect how child labor is viewed and handled ([Dillon et al., 2011](#)).⁹

This includes understanding potential cultural and regional variations in attitudes toward children's work.

1.9 Definition of Key Terms

1.9.1 Definition of Child Labour

Child labor refers to the employment of children in any work that deprives them of their childhood, interferes with their ability to attend regular school, and is mentally, physically, socially, or morally dangerous and harmful.

1.9.2 Worst Forms of Child Labour

The worst forms of child labor encompass slavery, trafficking, debt bondage, forced labor, and involvement in illicit activities, directly endangering a child's physical, mental, and moral well-being.

Child: As defined by the United Nations Convention on the Rights of the Child, a child means every human being below the age of 18 years unless, under the law applicable to the child, majority is attained earlier. Child labor includes children being forced to work to generate income for their families.

Hazardous Child Labour: This includes work that, by its nature or the circumstances in which it is carried out, is likely to jeopardize children's health, safety, or morals ([Maggino, 2023](#)). It can involve exposure to dangerous substances, equipment, or environments.

Forced Labour: It includes all work or service which is exacted from any person under the menace of any penalty for its nonperformance and for which the person has not

⁹ Explaining variation in child labor statistics. *Journal of Development Economics*, 98(1), 136. <https://doi.org/10.1016/j.jdeveco.2011.06.002>

offered himself voluntarily. Such labor practices often stem from socioeconomic realities where children work to support their families ([Norpoth et al., 2014](#)).

However, defining "child labor" is complex due to differing cultural perceptions and age limits, making a universal definition challenging. Next to the UNCRC, the ILO conventions more specifically address child labor, with Convention No. 182 targeting the worst forms of child labor and the Minimum Age Convention of 1973 setting age limits for certain types of work. UNICEF defines child labor as work exceeding a minimum number of hours, varying by a child's age and type of work. For children aged 5 to 11, this includes at least one hour of economic work or 28 hours of domestic work per week. For the 12 to 14 age group, this includes at least 14 hours of economic work or 28 hours of domestic work per week, and for children aged 15-17, child labor occurs when a child works under conditions that contravene national laws or international standards. Convention 182 defines children as all persons under age 18.

ILO Definition: Child labor includes children prematurely leading adult lives, working long hours for low wages under conditions damaging to their health and to their physical and mental development, sometimes separated from their families, frequently deprived of meaningful educational and training opportunities that could open up for them a better future ([Dwivedi, 2020](#)). It also includes work that is mentally, physically, socially or morally dangerous and harmful to children and/or interferes with their schooling by depriving them of the opportunity to attend school; obliging them to leave school prematurely; or requiring them to attempt to combine school attendance with excessively long and heavy work ([What Is Child Labour, 2024](#)).

General Definition: Child laborers are children who are either too young to work or are involved in hazardous activities that may compromise their physical, mental, social, or educational development ([Maggino, 2023](#)).

International Legal Documents: Child labor can be defined based on the UN Convention on the Rights of the Child and the ILO Conventions. The ILO Conventions set minimum age limits for employment, with exceptions for "light work" that is not harmful to a child's health or education ([Norpoth et al., 2014](#)).

In summary, child labor involves work that is harmful to a child's well-being, development, and education, and it often violates international standards and national

laws ([What Is Child Labour, 2024](#)). Differing perspectives exist, with some viewing certain work as potentially beneficial for skill development and social integration, yet the core issue remains protecting children from exploitation and harm.

Chapter 2:

Literature Review

2.1 Child Labour: A Global Perspective

Globally, child labor remains a significant concern, especially in developing countries ([Ranjan, 2001](#)).¹⁰ Here's a general overview:

Prevalence: The International Labour Organization estimated that between 100 million and 200 million people under age 15 work in the world. Sub-Saharan Africa has the highest prevalence of child labor.

Global Efforts: The ILO and UNICEF are working together to end child labor ([Child Labour: Global Estimates 2020, Trends and the Road Forward, 2021](#)).

Poverty: Child labor is often a symptom of poverty, with low income and poor institutions being driving forces behind its prevalence.

Hazardous Work: A significant number of children are involved in hazardous work, such as mining, which can lead to injury or death ([Understanding Child Labour: Causes and Impacts, 2025](#)).

International Conventions: The issue of child labor is guided by international conventions, including those from the ILO.

This necessitates a continuous commitment to global initiatives aimed at eradicating child labor and enhancing child welfare.

¹⁰ Credit constraints and the phenomenon of child labor. *Journal of Development Economics*, 64(1), 81. [https://doi.org/10.1016/s0304-3878\(00\)00125-5](https://doi.org/10.1016/s0304-3878(00)00125-5)

As of 2024, an estimated **138 million children** worldwide are engaged in child labour, including **54 million** involved in hazardous work that threatens their health, safety, or development. While this marks a **notable decline** from previous years—down by over 20 million since 2020—the world has **not met** its goal of eliminating child labour by 2025, as outlined in the UN Sustainable Development Goals.

Key Global Trends:

Agriculture remains the largest sector, accounting for **61%** of child labour, followed by **services (27%)** and **industry (13%)**, including mining and manufacturing.

Sub-Saharan Africa bears the heaviest burden, with **87 million children** in child labour—nearly two-thirds of the global total.

Asia and the Pacific have made significant progress, reducing child labour from 49 million to 28 million children between 2020 and 2024.

Gender disparities persist: boys are more likely to be counted in child labour statistics, but this may overlook girls' unpaid domestic work, which is often invisible in formal data.

Structural Causes:

Child labour is driven by **poverty, lack of access to quality education, conflict, and weak social protection systems**. In many cases, families rely on children's income for survival, especially in informal economies or rural areas.

Global Response:

International frameworks like the **ILO Conventions** and the **UN Convention on the Rights of the Child** establish child labour as a violation of fundamental rights. Despite legal commitments, enforcement remains uneven. The 2024 ILO-UNICEF report emphasizes the need for **decent work for adults, universal education, and stronger social safety nets** to sustainably eliminate child labour.

The majority of child laborers are found in the agriculture sector, often working long hours under hazardous conditions. This sector accounts for 60% of all child laborers aged 5-17 years, which equates to over 98 million children. These children often work as unpaid family members and face significant risks due to work-related fatalities, non-fatal accidents, and occupational diseases. Only one in five working children are in paid employment, and most are unpaid family workers. Progress in eliminating child labor

in agriculture has been slow due to several factors, including limited coverage in national labor legislations and the prevalence of children working as unpaid family labor without formal contracts. Poverty, limited access to quality education, inadequate agricultural technology, and traditional attitudes toward children's participation in agricultural activities are major drivers of child labor in agriculture ([Singh & Verma, 1987](#)).¹¹ Gender, age, and cultural norms also play significant roles in determining the type of work children perform, the number of hours they work, and their access to education. In many instances, girls work more hours than boys when domestic chores are considered, which reduces the time available for schooling. Addressing these challenges requires comprehensive strategies that account for sector-specific issues, gender disparities, and the underlying socio-economic factors that perpetuate child labor.

It is crucial to differentiate between light duties that do not harm a child and child labor that interferes with education and damages health, considering the hours and conditions of work, the child's age, and the hazards involved.

It's essential to enforce minimum age standards for employment, with the ILO advocating for a general minimum age of 15 years and stricter limits for hazardous work.

2.2 Child Labour in Bangladesh: An Overview

Bangladesh faces significant challenges regarding child labor, despite having national laws and international commitments aimed at its eradication.

Prevalence: Despite national laws and international commitments, Bangladesh faces significant challenges in eradicating child labor. According to the National Child Labor Survey, about 1.3 million children in Bangladesh are categorized as child laborers ([Facts About Child Labor in Bangladesh, 2023](#)).

Worst Forms: Approximately 1.2 million children in Bangladesh are still trapped in the worst forms of child labor.

Legal Framework: The Constitution of Bangladesh prohibits all forms of forced labor. The Children Act of 2013 also includes provisions against the exploitation of children.

¹¹ Child labour in agriculture. <http://ci.nii.ac.jp/ncid/BA32719139>

Sectoral Distribution: You can easily find small children working in factories, fields, homes, and local businesses ([Facts About Child Labor in Bangladesh, 2023](#)). Agriculture is the largest sector for child labor globally, and this likely holds true in Bangladesh as well.

Government Initiatives: In 2018, the government approved a draft amendment to the Labour Act, allowing children between 14 and 18 to be employed only in light work, with penalties for non-compliant employers ([Facts About Child Labor in Bangladesh, 2023](#)).

Challenges: Despite legal measures, child labor has been on the rise in the past decade ([Facts About Child Labor in Bangladesh, 2023](#)).

These efforts are further complicated by factors such as poverty, inadequate enforcement of labor laws, and a lack of access to education. Continuous advocacy has led the Government of Bangladesh to ratify the ILO Convention on the Worst Forms of Child Labour in 2001. It is estimated that in 2002/2003, 7.4 million children aged 5-17 were working, with 3.2 million in The Bangladesh Labour Act of 2006 and the Children Act of 2013 form the current legal framework, addressing child labor through specific provisions and amendments. Conditions defined as child labor and 1.3 million in hazardous work. ([Norpoth et al., 2014](#))¹² Despite the ratification of the United Nations Convention on the Rights of the Child and Convention 182, child labor remains widespread, affecting approximately 5.1 million children aged 7-14 years. This includes over 1.3 million children aged 5-11 engaged in some form of work.

2.3 Domestic Laws and policies on Child Labour in Bangladesh

2.3.1 Constitutional Provisions:

The Constitution of Bangladesh prohibits all forms of forced labor under Article 34.

The Children Act, 2013: This act repealed the previous Children Act of 1974 and sets the age of 18 as the threshold for childhood. Section 80 addresses the exploitation of children, though it does not specifically prohibit child labor.

¹² Child Labour in Bangladesh - An Analysis of Gaps and Weaknesses of the Existing Legal Framework. RePEc: Research Papers in Economics. <https://econpapers.repec.org/RePEc:bom:ieewps:204>

The Labour Act, 2006: Under this act, child labor is legal for children aged above 14 ([Protection of Children and Adolescents under Labor Act: A Legal Review to Resolve the Child Labor Crisis, 2022](#)). The act defines an "adolescent" as someone between 14 and 18 years old ([Protection of Children and Adolescents under Labor Act: A Legal Review to Resolve the Child Labor Crisis, 2022](#)). It prohibits the employment of children below the age of 14, and 18 for hazardous work ([BIDA, 2021](#)).¹³

National Child Labour Elimination Policy of 2010: This policy provides a framework for eradicating the worst forms of child labor. It also calls for the formation of a National Child Labor Welfare Council to monitor the child labor situation at the national level.

Enforcement Challenges: Despite having these laws and policies, Bangladesh faces significant challenges in eradicating child labor due to poverty, inadequate enforcement, and a lack of access to education. Many people employ children violating the labor laws, but there is no punishment for such violation.

It's worth noting that the government has ratified the ILO Convention on the Worst Forms of Child Labour. Continuous advocacy has led the Government of Bangladesh to ratify the ILO Convention on the Worst Forms of Child Labour in 2001. These policies and legal instruments reflect Bangladesh's commitment to addressing child labor, yet effective implementation and enforcement remain critical challenges. The Bangladeshi state is obliged to implement the relevant provisions enshrined in the conventions by signing and ratifying international conventions and treaties. The National Child Labor Elimination Policy of 2010 aims to eliminate children from every sort of hazardous and worst forms of child labor category task, and to bring meaningful change to the lives of many Bangladeshi children. The constitution includes fundamental rights, ensuring basic necessities like education, medical care, and leisure, which are crucial for children. However, financial exploitation remains a significant concern, as highlighted in various studies ([Ahad et al., 2023](#)). It is important to note that the minimum age for children varies across different laws, which complicates the effort to protect them from exploitation. The specific objectives of the policy are to withdraw children from certain forms of occupation, involve parents of working children in income-generating activities, offer stipends and grants to children and

¹³ BIDA. (2021). <https://bida.gov.bd/details/minimum-maximum-age-labor>

families to bring working children back to school, and extend special attention to children. These measures, in collaboration with employers, workers' organizations, NGOs, and civil society, aim to prevent and eliminate child labor, particularly its worst forms Bangladesh is obligated under both national and international law to protect and promote the rights and interests of children. The state is constitutionally mandated to ensure equal rights for women and prevent discrimination based on sex. Bangladesh must submit state reports to the Committee on the Rights of the Child every five years, as per Article 44 of the UN CRC. In line with ILO Convention No. 138, the minimum age for employment should align with the completion of mandatory schooling ([Khan, 2014](#)). Bangladesh has made notable strides in combating child labor, yet approximately 1.2 million children remain in exploitative conditions. The nation's Education Policy seeks to ensure universal, free, compulsory primary schooling up to Grade VIII, which is a critical step in aligning the minimum age for employment with compulsory education requirements under ILO Convention No. 138. The Committee on the Rights of the Child has voiced concerns regarding the insufficient enforcement mechanisms for protecting child workers and the absence of monitoring systems for their working conditions. Article 34 of the constitution guarantees fundamental rights and prohibits all forms of forced labor. The country must also reinforce social security to protect children and their families from poverty ([Norpoth et al., 2014](#)). Birth registration is crucial for confirming a child's age, which helps prevent child labor by ensuring legal age limits are enforced. The ILO has been working to eliminate child labor in Bangladesh since 1994, benefiting approximately 75,000 child laborers through various projects and activities. The Bangladesh Labour Act of 2006 includes provisions to protect women workers, but there are gaps between the law and practice. These initiatives reflect a comprehensive approach to address and mitigate child labor. These provisions encompass occupational hygiene, safety measures, industrial accident protocols, working conditions, trade union regulations, and welfare facilities, though some aspects may fall below international standards. Birth registration is a critical first step, acknowledging a child's existence and securing their rights to healthcare and education, while also protecting them from exploitation by verifying their age for employment and preventing underage marriage. However, the lack of robust enforcement mechanisms and monitoring systems undermines these efforts. The constitution of Bangladesh ensures the right to work and prohibits all forms of forced labor, reinforcing the state's commitment to protecting its citizens, including children,

from exploitation ([Saha, 2023](#)). The constitution stipulates human rights as a fundamental principle, with Articles 15 and 17 having the strongest relation to child labor policy. This commitment is reflected in the various policies and laws enacted to protect children's rights and eliminate child labor. The Children Act of 2013, while not specifically banning child labor, punishes serious offenses against children, including exploitation. Furthermore, the National Child Labor Welfare Council was formed to protect child labor under domestic laws. It mandates that the state cannot discriminate based on sex and ensures equal rights for women in all spheres of public life ([Saha, 2023](#)). The Bangladesh Labor Act of 2006 prohibits the employment of children under 14 years old, aligning with international standards, yet enforcement remains a significant challenge due to the prevalence of informal sector employment. Apparently, the limited number of labor inspectors are insufficient to monitor the enforcement of all labor laws throughout Bangladesh. The Bangladesh Labour Act was amended in 2013 in response to the Rana Plaza factory collapse, introducing new provisions on child labor ([Norpoth et al., 2014](#)). These amendments aim to provide a stronger enforcement mechanism for child labor provisions and address the gaps in the existing legal framework. As a result of continuous advocacy, Bangladesh ratified the ILO Convention on the Worst Forms of Child Labour in 2001. New approaches, such as community-based workplace surveillance groups, are being implemented to monitor and report child labor violations in both the formal and informal sectors. The Mines Act of 1923 was among the earliest laws establishing age limits for employment in specific economic sectors ([Norpoth et al., 2014](#)). The emergence of international standards for labor protection is a notable development, complemented by the principles of Islam, which significantly promote labor rights. These groups help to ensure that labor laws are followed and that child labor is prevented. These rights collectively work towards preventing child labor and ensuring the wellbeing of children. The Bangladesh Labor Act of 2006 consolidates existing labor laws and sets the minimum age for employment at 14 years. This act also includes provisions for working conditions, health, and safety, aiming to protect all workers, including women, although challenges remain in ensuring these provisions are fully enforced.

The Act mandates employers to issue appointment letters, ensuring workers, especially women, have proof of employment and can pursue legal recourse if necessary. The core provision, Section 34, directly prohibits the employment of children in any occupation

or establishment, further reinforced by Section 35, which prohibits parents or guardians from making agreements for child labor ([Norpoth et al., 2014](#)). However, factory owners need approval to form unions, and factories must allocate 5 percent of their profits to an employee welfare fund ([Rubya, 2015](#)).

2.4 International Laws and Conventions on Child Labour

International laws and conventions play a pivotal role in shaping the global approach to combating child labor by establishing universal standards and obligations for member states. These conventions serve as a framework for national legislation, providing guidelines and benchmarks for protecting children from exploitation ([Maggino, 2023](#)). Bangladesh, as a signatory to several key international agreements, has committed to preventing and eliminating child labor. These international commitments reflect a global consensus on the importance of protecting children and ensuring their rights to education and a safe childhood ([Dwivedi, 2020](#)). The UN Convention on the Rights of the Child and ILO Convention 182 are critical milestones, showcasing Bangladesh's dedication to abolishing the worst forms of child labor ([Shahjahan et al., 2016](#)). By ratifying key conventions such as the UN CRC in 1990 and ILO Convention No. 182 in 2001, Bangladesh has demonstrated a commitment to aligning its national laws with international standards. Bangladesh is obligated to protect children's rights under both national and international law, with the constitution and the Children's Act of 1974 guaranteeing fundamental human rights and affirmative action for children ([Shahjahan et al., 2016](#)). Through these commitments, Bangladesh is expected to report on its progress in fulfilling its obligations to protect children. The UN Convention on the Rights of the Child, adopted in 1989 and enforced in 1990, defines a child as anyone under 18, emphasizing their rights to life, identity, and protection from exploitation ([Pais & Bissell, 2006](#)).¹⁴ These rights include survival, health, education, and protection from abuse, exploitation, and neglect ([Munir, 1993](#)).

¹⁴). Overview and implementation of the UN Convention on the Rights of the Child. *The Lancet*, 367(9511), 689. [https://doi.org/10.1016/s0140-6736\(06\)68267-6](https://doi.org/10.1016/s0140-6736(06)68267-6)

¹⁵Bangladesh must submit state reports to the Committee on the Rights of the Child every five years, detailing the progress made in meeting the Convention and Optional Protocols requirements. The ILO Worst Forms of Child Labour Convention, 1999, is another critical instrument that calls for the immediate elimination of the worst forms of child labor, including slavery, prostitution, and hazardous work. The ILO Convention No. 189 addresses the minimum age for domestic workers, aligning it with ILO Conventions No. 138 and 182, though Bangladesh has not ratified it. With the ratification of the UN CRC in 1990 and the ILO Convention No. 182 in 2001, Bangladesh has shown significant progress in combating child labor. These conventions provide a framework for national legislation, compelling UN member states to sign and ratify them, thereby protecting children's rights ([Mubarak, 2022](#)). These international legal instruments, along with domestic laws, form a multi-layered approach to child labor prevention. Birth registration is a critical initial step by the state in acknowledging a child's existence and ensuring their protection from exploitation by verifying legal age limits for employment and safeguarding access to essential services like healthcare and education. The ILO Convention 182 defines children as all persons under age of 18 and aims to protect them. The UNCRC strives for complete child protection by establishing human rights for children ([Norpoth et al., 2014](#)). After signing and ratifying the UN CRC in 1990 and the ILO Convention No 182 in 2001, the government is preparing for the ratification of the ILO Convention No 138. ILO Convention No. 138 has not been ratified by Bangladesh, which focuses on setting a minimum age for employment, aiming to consolidate various conventions that stipulate minimum ages for child workers across different economic sectors. The ILO Convention No 182 is the most recent ILO convention regarding the elimination of child labor, which requires member states to take immediate and effective action to prohibit and eliminate the worst forms of child labor as a matter of urgency. The convention also emphasizes enhanced international cooperation for poverty alleviation and universal education as forms of international assistance. The term child applies to all persons under the age of eighteen. The ILO estimates that millions of children worldwide are engaged in child labor, with a significant number in developing countries ([Ranjan, 2001](#)). Despite the lack of formal evidence for children under five engaging in

¹⁵ Child protection: Principles and applications. *Child Abuse Review*, 2(2), 119.
<https://doi.org/10.1002/car.2380020208>

labor, national statistics focus on those aged 5-17, with a significant portion being economically active. UNICEF defines child labor as work exceeding a minimum number of hours, varying by a child's age and type of work, which includes economic and domestic activities

These conditions drive children into labor to support their families, perpetuating a cycle of poverty and limited opportunity. Addressing child labor necessitates strategies tailored to specific agricultural sub-sectors, acknowledging the unique challenges within farming, fishing, forestry, and livestock production ([Singh & Verma, 1987](#)). Such strategies should also focus on divisions like Rangpur and Rajshahi, which face severe poverty. These areas require targeted interventions to mitigate the socio-economic factors that drive child labor ([Syeduzzaman et al., 2018](#)). Furthermore, the convergence of people in urban centers like Dhaka often leads to economic hardships and exploitation, disproportionately affecting vulnerable populations such as street children ([Ishmam & Mia, 2020](#)). This necessitates comprehensive interventions that address both economic and social factors. Proper nutritional intervention strategies, improved household financial conditions, and parental literacy can significantly improve children's well-being ([Hossain et al., 2020](#)). The main cause behind child labor is poverty. Factors such as inadequate recreational infrastructure, insufficient schools, and a lack of parental education also contribute to child labor ([Rahman et al., 2023](#)). Furthermore, non-implementation of existing labor laws encourages employers to exploit children. Investment in girls' education is crucial for breaking the cycle of poverty and reducing child labor ([Naher et al., 2019](#)). In Bangladesh, poverty compels parents to send their children to work, viewing it as the only way to survive. Poverty, unemployment, and social insecurity are major factors that push children into the workforce. Truly, for many, forcing their children to work is the only way to survive. Poverty, unemployment, and social insecurity are major factors that push children into the workforce. Therefore, push and pull factors often interact, creating conditions where children are compelled to work due to a combination of poverty and perceived opportunities for skill acquisition. In Bangladesh, a large percentage of children work due to financial hardship, either to contribute to household incomes or to enable adults to work outside the home. Addressing factors like family size, education, and access to resources could significantly impact poverty levels and reduce child labor.

Consequently, addressing poverty and improving economic stability are essential steps in combating child labor.

2.5 Prevention Strategies and Initiatives

It is important to differentiate between light duties that do no harm and child labor that interferes with schooling and damages health. Strategies must address the root causes of child labor, such as rural poverty and lack of social protection ([Singh & Verma, 1987](#)). Gender disparities also play a significant role, with girls often working more hours than boys when domestic chores are considered, further limiting their time for education. Any policy addressing child labor needs a clear definition of what constitutes it. Alternative monitoring mechanisms should be explored, particularly in the scattered informal sectors, to strengthen child labor regulations. Furthermore, education makes a person more conscious, and including knowledge about child labor in the school curriculum can be an effective method of awareness building. Resource limitations hinder enforcement, necessitating alternative monitoring mechanisms, such as community-based surveillance groups. Legislators should draw lessons from reactions to measures that address only formal sector businesses and ensure that schemes provide working children with viable alternatives. At the same time, governments and non-governmental organizations may make people aware through distributing information. Poverty reduction strategies must be central to these efforts, alongside ensuring access to quality education and promoting safe labor practices. Such strategies prevent a shift to the informal sector by offering viable alternatives to children and their families. Clearly, financial, moral, and political support from all levels of society is required to tackle this challenging issue. For instance, creating employment opportunities in rural areas can prevent migration to urban centers, where families often send their children to work due to poverty. To effectively combat child labor, cooperation between agriculture and labor stakeholders should be promoted to ensure coherent policies and programs. New laws should be enacted to cover informal sectors not currently addressed, aligning domestic laws with international standards to meet long-term development needs. Working long hours with dangerous equipment, coupled with a lack of nutritious food, education, and recreation, severely impede a child's physical and psychological growth. Typical areas of hazardous work, like domestic and agricultural work, are still not prohibited under current legislation in Bangladesh. It is

crucial to address the governance deficit, as lawmakers, executives, police, and even judges may lack sensitivity to children's rights and fail to provide adequate protection. Furthermore, measures that address only formal sector businesses are not effective in improving the child labor situation, especially without providing alternative schemes for working children. That's why action at the national level is needed now, and timely steps can bring positive impacts on decreasing or eliminating child labor from all tiers of society. Based on the National Child Labor Elimination Policy 2010, a National Plan of Action has been finalized to implement the policy with support from various stakeholders. Moreover, child sensitivity approaches must be strengthened alongside adopting multiplier measures.

Education, training, and skill development programs are also necessary for disadvantaged groups to improve their lives, ensuring sustainable economic and social development through investment in workers' skills and employability ([Zaman, 2015](#)). It is expected that the Ministry of Labor and Employment will soon officially declare the plan for implementation. Bangladesh needs to address its skills mismatch to equip its youth with the skills demanded in the evolving job market ([Rahman et al., 2020](#)). In addition to governmental programs, various programs introduced by NGOs and companies as part of their corporate social responsibility strategies are crucial. These initiatives, along with the National Child Labor Elimination Policy of 2010, demonstrate Bangladesh's commitment to addressing child labor and child rights. Over the last decades Bangladesh has taken several important steps to address the issue of child labor through legal measures. The Constitution of Bangladesh guarantees fundamental rights and prohibits forced labor. The government has also approved the "National Child Labour Elimination Policy 2010". However, the current governance deficit in Bangladesh has further aggravated the situation because the duty bearers remain insensitive to children's rights and fail to provide protection. The country needs to raise awareness among parents and civil society about the harmful consequences of child labor and implement strategies to eliminate it. To combat human trafficking, including labor trafficking, the government enacted the Prevention and Suppression of Human Trafficking Act in 2012, imposing severe penalties and developing a National Plan of Action. Other progressive steps include establishing a "Child Welfare Board" at the national level and a "Child Desk" at every police station to monitor compliance with child rights. The Children Act of 2013, repealing the 1974 act, further aligns

domestic laws with international standards by defining a child as anyone under 18, and proscribes serious offenses against children, including exploitation. The "Child Welfare Board" monitors compliance with child rights and the child labor situation. The government must formulate further acts and policies to support digital advancements, leveraging technology to connect people and provide services, which can significantly reduce socio-economic vulnerabilities that lead to child labor. Crime, corruption, and the lack of effective policy implementation contribute to the prevalence of child labor ([Hasan & Khatun, 2020](#)). The recent adoption of the National Child Labor Policy 2010 and the third National Plan of Action for Children also stand as testimonies of Bangladesh's commitment to the issues of child labor and child rights. However, decisive gaps remain in the overall legal framework on child labor, also with regard to the effective implementation of the said conventions. This requires strengthening institutional capacity for enforcement.

It also calls for raising awareness about the harmful effects of child labor. The prevalence of child abuse and exploitation remains widespread, with children facing physical abuse, financial exploitation, and hazardous working conditions ([Hadi, 2000](#)). The specific objectives of the policy include withdrawing children from certain occupations, involving parents in income-generating activities, and offering stipends and grants to bring working children back to school. In addition, legislation and interventions aimed at preventing harmful work should incorporate formal legislative rights discourse and informal, traditional rights discourse to successfully navigate the political terrain ([Okyere et al., 2021](#)). Different actions were developed for this purpose, such as stipends and grants to allow working children to return to school, emphasizing special attention to indigenous and physically challenged children to reintegrate them into a congenial environment. Moreover, implementation of these acts remains a major challenge. These measures should ensure rights and social justice to workers.

But in case of taking action in full conformity with reality, all the factors such as economic, social, political, and cultural have to be taken into consideration. Government needs to strictly implement the existing laws, as non-implementation encourages employers to violate labor laws. The Supreme Court of Bangladesh has emphasized the need to regulate child domestic work to close the legal gap, as typical areas of hazardous work like domestic and agriculture work are still not prohibited under the current legislation in Bangladesh.

2.6 Gaps in Existing Literature

Despite progress, significant gaps remain, including the lack of comprehensive data, weak enforcement, and insufficient attention to the informal sector. Further empirical research is needed to assess the impact of existing laws and policies, and to explore innovative approaches to prevent child labor in various sectors ([Kamal et al., 2015](#)). The vast majority of children work in the informal sector, which makes it challenging to enforce the relevant legislation. This is compounded by the fact that the substance of the law has not fully addressed the legal needs of child laborers, and the legal structure suffers from weak monitoring and data collection ([Munawir, 2023](#)). Poverty and inadequate institutional frameworks are the main factors behind child labor ([Edmonds & Pavcnik, 2005](#)). The socio-cultural contexts of child labor also play a critical role in children's involvement in labor ([Adonteng-Kissi, 2018](#)). The lack of awareness among parents and communities about the negative impacts of child labor on children's health, education, and overall development further exacerbates the problem. Therefore, there is a need to design appropriate responses that consider the mix of economic, social, socio-cultural, and political factors contributing to child labor in Bangladesh. There is also a need for more comprehensive and rigorous research to inform evidence-based policies and interventions. Specific gaps and shortcomings are summarized and recommendations on how to address them are proffered in the following paragraphs. Child labor is a complex issue rooted in poverty, lack of education, and social norms. It is important to analyze the defects of labor law to safeguard the national economy from innumerable loss and ensure social justice to workers. The Bangladesh Labour Act 2006 has a limited scope of sectoral application, excluding agriculture, domestic work, and small-scale family businesses where most child laborers are employed. This exclusion leaves a significant portion of child laborers unprotected by the law. Therefore, extending the scope of the Act to cover these sectors would provide greater protection to vulnerable child laborers. Furthermore, economic activities in both urban and rural areas often operate without formal registration, hindering the application of national laws and monitoring. The lack of registration makes it difficult to monitor working conditions and enforce labor laws, which contributes to the perpetuation of child labor. The quality and cost of school education also influence the perceptions and practices of child labor ([Hossain, 2009](#)). Therefore, providing free and quality education can serve as a powerful incentive for families to send their children to school

rather than to work. Moreover, an overall lack of awareness of the problems of child labor in Bangladesh's society appears as a major contributing factor.

Therefore, new laws covering the informal sectors should be enacted, incorporating international standards. This chapter outlines the methodology employed to investigate the prevention of child labor in Bangladesh, focusing on both domestic and international legal frameworks.

Chapter 3:

Research Methodology

3.1 Research Design

The study employs a mixed-methods approach, integrating both qualitative and quantitative research techniques to provide a holistic understanding of child labor prevention in Bangladesh. This approach facilitates a comprehensive analysis of the issue, capturing both the legal and socio-economic dimensions. Quantitative data is gathered through surveys and statistical analysis to measure the prevalence of child labor and assess the impact of interventions, while qualitative data, collected through interviews and case studies, offers insights into the experiences and perspectives of children, families, employers, and policymakers. This mixed-methods design allows for triangulation of findings, enhancing the validity and reliability of the research. The qualitative methods also explore the lived experiences of child laborers, their perceptions of working conditions, and the challenges they face in exercising their rights. These interviews also gather perspectives from stakeholders on wages, working hours, health, safety measures, and legal protections. The study also analyzes existing policies, and reported cases of labor rights violations. This mixed-methods strategy offers a thorough grasp of the variables influencing child labor and the efficacy of preventative initiatives. Quantitative data from surveys will be analyzed using descriptive statistics and other statistical methods to quantify key trends. These statistical analyses will provide a comprehensive overview of the extent of child labor and the factors associated with it. Qualitative data from interviews and case studies will be analyzed using thematic analysis to identify recurring patterns and themes related to the experiences of child laborers and the challenges in preventing child labor ([Dillon et al., 2011](#)).

This involves a detailed examination of legal documents, policy papers, and case laws to understand the legal framework governing child labor. Content analysis will also be employed to analyze the content of relevant legal documents and policy frameworks ([Dash et al., 2018](#)). This study will help determine whether existing laws are enforced

effectively and identify areas where changes are needed. The study will also use desk reviews and qualitative data collection methods. The mixed approach integrates quantitative and qualitative research methods.

Data collected through semi-structured interviews, focus groups, and ethnographic observations will serve as a source of qualitative data. These qualitative techniques will capture contextual data offering insights into participants' perspectives and experiences. These methods will provide a comprehensive understanding of the labor rights situation. This data will be transformed into quantitative values to ensure rigor in the mixed-methods design. This approach adheres to assumptions that govern the collection of qualitative and quantitative data simultaneously. An "ergonomic" evaluation assesses potential risk factors related to the environment, work organization, task nature, and individual characteristics. The insights gleaned from expert interviews can significantly shape the formative stages of research, potentially prompting further detailed investigations into emerging questions. A survey will also be administered to collect quantitative data on working conditions. The survey data will be analyzed to identify patterns and trends, providing statistical evidence to support the qualitative findings.

3.2 Data Collection Methods

The collection of data from children requires specific ethical and methodological considerations ([Mauthner, 1997](#)) ([Aitken & Herman, 2009](#)).

These include ensuring informed consent, protecting their privacy, and minimizing potential harm. It is important to analyze children's experiences to understand the risks and challenges they face in their working environments. Multiple methods, including surveys, interviews, and focus groups, are employed to gather comprehensive data, enhancing the study's validity. To ensure a comprehensive understanding of the issues, interviews are used as a data collection technique. Surveys, structured questionnaires, and pilot studies are used for quantitative data collection. In-depth interviews with narrative elements will be analyzed using qualitative content analysis. Integrating both types of data is a core aspect of the research. The data collected will then be analyzed qualitatively with an inductive approach. Data collection will be overt, and findings recorded meticulously to maintain transparency and rigor. The experiences will be

produced through multifaceted interviews and narratives. This data collection will use primary and secondary data, textual and visual data. These interviews will be conducted with different terminologies depending on every specific actor targeted in the intervention. A systematic protocol should be developed during the design phase. Furthermore, strategies for managing and integrating the collected data will be articulated to ensure a cohesive analysis. The researchers act as mediators between the experiences of the respondents and the community of concerned people. The feelings of informants, interpretations, and comments that occurred during the interview should be noted. The qualitative data will be collected with a focus on multifaceted interviews and narratives to produce a description of the experiences. Data collection needs to be overt. The study uses post-interview comment sheets to note the feelings of informants, as well as interpretations and comments that occurred during the interview ([Sanjari et al., 2014](#)). Researchers must safeguard participants and their data ([Sutton & Austin, 2015](#)).

3.3 Sample and Sampling Technique

The sampling strategy includes purposeful and theoretical methods to identify information-rich cases, ensuring a comprehensive representation of perspectives. Sampling strategies should be consistent with the methodological approach used. The sample size is informed by the principle of theoretical saturation, aiming to gather data until no new insights emerge.

The sampling technique also considers the accessibility of participants and the ethical considerations involved in engaging vulnerable populations.

This approach also entails continuous reflection on data to refine and adjust sampling strategies as needed. The study employs a qualitative interview approach using semi-structured interviews to gather primary data ([Rab, 2023](#)).

These interviews are a primary source of data to gather multiple views. The sample includes stakeholders and the community.

The sampling strategies should yield rich information ([Moser & Korstjens, 2017](#)). The semi-structured questionnaire will consist of open-ended questions, to serve as a guide

for the collection of all the empirical data. Data collection includes observations at the research site in the form of interviews and questionnaires. Data collection will be through in-depth interviews, focus groups, and observations. The collected data will be analyzed using thematic analysis and framework analysis. Qualitative data commonly uses thematic analysis and framework analysis.

The reporting format can be comprehensive, a summary, developmental, or selective, depending on the research question. Data will be collected with a focus on multifaceted interviews and narratives to describe experiences. This data will be analyzed to understand legal frameworks, existing policies, and reported cases of labor rights violations. The post-interview comment sheet can assist the researcher in noting the feelings of informants, as well as interpretations and comments that occurred during the interview. In-depth interviews will be conducted with diverse participants, including women workers, factory managers, labor union representatives, government officials, and NGO members. These interviews will explore the lived experiences of women workers, their perceptions of working conditions, their awareness of labor rights, and the challenges they face in exercising those rights. Secondary data will be collected based on literature and literature study. These interviews will gather perspectives from stakeholders on wages, working hours, health and safety measures, legal protections, and the broader socio-economic context.

3.4 Data Analysis Techniques

Data will be analyzed using qualitative content analysis to identify recurring themes and patterns related to child labor. Quantitative data will be analyzed using descriptive statistics and appropriate statistical methods to quantify the findings. Thematic analysis will also be employed to analyze qualitative data, identifying, analyzing, and reporting patterns within the data. Thematic analysis will ensure key themes and patterns related to women's labor rights are identified in the RMG industry. Data sorting and synthesis will categorize data into text-based tables based on analytical frameworks. This process involves systematically organizing and synthesizing the information to reveal meaningful insights. Thematic analysis will involve a detailed examination of the data to identify common themes, patterns, and relationships. Thematic analysis will further involve coding and categorizing the data, identifying recurring themes, and interpreting

their significance in relation to the research questions. Data from primary sources will be collected through questionnaires and field observations from child laborers engaged in various activities. The qualitative data gathered from focus group discussions will be analyzed thematically, using frameworks to understand the social determinants of health among working populations. Child labor is a decisive impediment to the development efforts of developing countries, harming children's health and general welfare ([Norpoth et al., 2014](#)). This study uses primary data collected through questionnaires to elicit the opinions of respondents and secondary data from published documents. The research will also consider the links between child labor and schooling, recognizing child labor as a constraint to education ([Ucw, 2011](#)). Poverty and poor labor conditions, compounded by low social positions, limit the ability to improve economic situations, thus perpetuating the cycle of child labor. These factors drive children to work, highlighting the need to understand the work sector, working conditions, and psychosocial impacts on children ([Putnick & Bornstein, 2015](#)).¹⁶ To explore the causes of child labor, the research will analyze the socio-demographic characteristics of child laborers and the nature of their employment ([Ahad et al., 2021](#)). This will allow for a comprehensive understanding of the conditions and challenges faced by child laborers. Thematic grouping through colorimetric codification can also aid in identifying theoretical saturation for each grouping. The present study will seek to determine the factors affecting child labor and the characteristics of their working environment. Data interpretation will be done by interpreting the data and presenting the findings in a clear and concise manner. The study will also analyze the existing legal and policy frameworks related to child labor in Bangladesh, examining their effectiveness and gaps. This analysis will provide valuable insights into their lived experiences and perspectives on labor rights issues. The nutritional status and food intake patterns of child laborers will be investigated, giving a view into their overall well-being ([Rahman et al., 2015](#)). This involves a review of relevant laws, regulations, and policies at both the domestic and international levels ([Norpoth et al., 2014](#)).

3.5 Ethical Considerations

¹⁶ Is child labor a barrier to school enrollment in low- and middle-income countries? *International Journal of Educational Development*, 41, 112. <https://doi.org/10.1016/j.ijedudev.2015.02.001>

Prior to commencing data collection, ethical approval will be obtained from the relevant institutional review board or ethics committee to ensure the protection of participants' rights and well-being. Informed consent will be obtained from all participants, ensuring they are fully aware of the study's objectives, procedures, and their right to withdraw at any time. Confidentiality and anonymity of participants will be maintained throughout the study by using pseudonyms or codes to protect their identities. The study will adhere to ethical guidelines, ensuring that the research is conducted in a responsible and respectful manner.

The findings will be disseminated through publications, presentations, and community engagement activities to inform policy and practice related to preventing child labor. The study will be conducted ethically, respecting the rights and dignity of all participants, and adhering to all applicable ethical guidelines and regulations. By addressing these ethical considerations, the study aims to contribute to the development of effective strategies for the prevention of child labor in Bangladesh.

Chapter 4:

Child Labour in Bangladesh: An Analysis of Domestic Laws

4.1 Constitutional Provisions

The Constitution of Bangladesh stipulates human rights as a fundamental principle of state policy, guiding the interpretation of laws related to child labor. Article 34 of the Constitution prohibits all forms of forced labor, prescribing punishment for any contravention of this provision. The state is constitutionally obligated to protect its citizens, which encompasses safeguarding children from exploitation. Furthermore, the Constitution permits favorable regulations for women and children, explicitly allowing the state to make special provisions for their advancement, thus envisioning a socially conscious state. These constitutional safeguards provide a foundational legal framework for addressing child labor. However, the practical implementation and enforcement of these provisions remain a challenge.

Through signing and ratifying international conventions and treaties, Bangladesh is committed to implementing relevant provisions, addressing the problem through national laws and policies. The government is committed to protecting children, but a deeper understanding and consistent planning are needed to effectively decrease or eliminate child labor. Bangladesh's legal framework includes various acts and rules aimed at protecting children from hazardous labor.

However, decisive gaps remain in the overall legal framework on child labor, also with regard to the effective implementation of the said conventions. New laws that encompass informal sectors currently not covered by existing acts need to be enacted. Finally, certain recommendations are suggested for the fruitful and efficient implementation of labor standards to ensure rights and social justice to workers of every corner of the country and safeguard the national economy from innumerable loss. The Children Act of 2013, repealing the 1974 Act, defines a child as any person under 18, aligning with international standards. Though there is no specific ban on child labor, it proscribes and punishes serious offenses against children, including exploitation. This shows that the government may follow the standards set by the international forum in case of changing the domestic laws. Bangladesh has to submit state reports to the Committee on the Rights of the Child every five years, as per Article 44 of the UN CRC. Article 15 guarantees basic necessities, including education, medical care, reasonable rest, recreation, and leisure. The committee reviews these reports, assessing the progress in fulfilling obligations under the Convention and its Optional Protocols. These provisions collectively affirm the state's commitment to protecting children, providing a framework for legislative and policy interventions.

The Bangladesh Labour Act of 2006, amended in 2013, regulates labor conditions and prohibits the employment of children in certain hazardous occupation. It sets the minimum age for employment at 14, and for hazardous work at 18. This act defines "worker" but does not include "employee," potentially excluding certain individuals from its protections. However, monitoring the enforcement of all labor laws is challenging due to the limited number of inspectors. New approaches involve community-based workplace surveillance groups that refer violations against child labor laws to government authorities. Based on constitutional obligations and commitment to international standards, the government must lead in pursuing child labor elimination goals to meet long-term development needs. The Labor Act includes a chapter on child labor, prohibiting the employment of children under 14 years old. The National Child Labor Elimination Policy of 2010 demonstrates Bangladesh's commitment to addressing child labor, aiming to eliminate children from hazardous and worst forms of labor. This policy aims to provide alternative education and rehabilitation for child laborers, aligning with international conventions. The specific objectives include withdrawing children from certain occupations and involving

parents in income-generating activities. The most important recommendations relate to establishing an inter-ministerial National Taskforce on Child Labor and Education, reviewing and effectively implementing the Labor Act, and increasing the capacity of the Child Labor Unit.

4.2 The Children Act, 2013

The Human Trafficking Deterrence and Suppression Act of 2012 prevents and suppresses human trafficking, including labor trafficking, with severe penalties ranging from fines to imprisonment and even the death penalty. This act focuses on both internal and transitional human trafficking. Other progressive steps include establishing a "Child Welfare Board" at the national level and a "Child Desk" at every police station to monitor compliance with child rights. This board focuses on children at risk and in need of protection, while the child desk ensures immediate action on children's issues.

In sum, the adoption of the new Children Act is a significant progress, especially the introduction of mechanisms like the "Child Welfare Board" and the "Child Desk" has the potential to improve the situation of children in Bangladesh and could have a positive impact on the child labor situation in the country. The government also agreed on a National Plan of Action to implement the Act. The Constitution of Bangladesh also prohibits all forms of forced labor under Article 34, ensuring that any violation is punishable by law. However, this impact can only be achieved if the government indeed implements these mechanisms and if the respective institutions can and do carry out their duties. The recent adoption of the National Child Labor Policy 2010 and the third National Plan of Action for Children stand as testimonies of Bangladesh's commitment to the issues of child labor and child rights. More alarmingly, the statistics of these violations are far higher than what is actually being reported ([Shah et al., 2018](#)). However, the existing legal framework still has gaps and weaknesses. The recent finalized National Child Labor Elimination Policy of 2010 aims to eliminate children from every sort of hazardous and worst forms of child labor category task, and to bring meaningful change to the lives of many Bangladeshi children. This policy intends to provide alternative education and rehabilitation for child laborers, harmonizing with international conventions. New laws covering the informal sectors not embraced in the Act at the present time have to be passed, and the government may follow the standards

set by the international forum when changing domestic laws. Based on its constitutional obligation and its commitment to international standards on children, it is obvious that the government will need to take the lead in pursuing child labor elimination goals, in order to meet its long-term development needs. Section 4 of the Children Act 2013 states that anyone under 18 years is considered a child, although there is no specific provision prohibiting child labor, it proscribes and punishes serious offenses against children, including exploitation. It is expected that the Ministry of Labor and Employment will very soon officially declare the plan for implementation, although no such declaration had been made. The state is obligated to apply these principles in making laws, serving as a guide for interpreting the constitution and other laws of Bangladesh. Finally, certain recommendations are suggested for the efficient implementation of labor standards to ensure rights and social justice to workers. The Act provides massive penalties which reach from fines over imprisonment to the death penalty. Moreover, various programs enacted in collaboration with the government, NGOs, and companies as part of their corporate social responsibility strategies aim to eliminate child labor. Over the last decades Bangladesh has taken important steps to address child labour through legal measures, such as the ratification of the UN CRC and ILO Convention No 182, and the enactment of the Labour Act 2006, the Human Trafficking Deterrence and Suppression Act 2012, and the Children Act 2013. The core subject matter of the Bangladesh Labor Act, 2006 is "worker", but the status of an employee does not fall within the definition of "worker" leaving them outside the purview of the Act.

4.3 The Labour Act, 2006

This act focuses on worker's rights and social justice, but has defects. The Labor Act of 2006 includes a chapter on child labor, prohibiting employment of children under 14 years old. The Act aims to prevent and suppress human trafficking, including labor trafficking. This Act specifies penalties for contravention of these provisions. It suggests recommendations for the effective implementation of labor standards, ensuring workers' rights and social justice. The government of Bangladesh has taken several measures to combat the problems concerning child labor. Bangladesh is a member of the ILO and is attempting to comply with labor laws and practices in accordance with ILO labor standard. These policies serve as guidelines for future

actions. To this context, research is being conducted to investigate the compliance of Bangladesh labor laws and practices with the labor standards of the ILO. This investigation highlights the root causes of poor implementation mechanisms and defects in labor law in Bangladesh. The current governance deficit in Bangladesh has further aggravated the situation because the duty bearers such as lawmakers, executives, police, probation officers and even judges remain insensitive to children's rights and fail to provide protection, special care and treatment. The status of an employee is not considered a "worker," potentially excluding them from the protections of the Act. It is necessary to mention here that action at the national level is needed now, as timely taken steps can only bring positive impact on decreasing or elimination of child labor from all tiers of the society. After a long process involving international development partners, the government of Bangladesh approved the "National Child Labour Elimination Policy 2010" in March. The government is committed to protecting children, but lacks depth of understanding and consistent planning. Therefore, if children are exploited at a very early age, they would remain helpless and neglected throughout their lives. The decision to enact this law is another step to implement international guidelines as child trafficking is one of the worst forms of child labor. The Act provides a framework for preventing and suppressing human trafficking, with severe penalties for violations. The Constitution of Bangladesh prohibits all forms of forced labor. The specific objectives of the policy include withdrawing children from certain hazardous occupations, involving parents of working children in income-generating activities, and offering stipends to encourage school enrollment. The government should take the leading role in cooperation with employers' and workers' organizations, as well as NGOs and other civil society actors, in implementing measures to prevent and eliminate child labor. In 2012 the government also agreed on a National Plan of Action which shall implement the Act.

However, a closer look reveals that there remain gaps in the legal framework for child labor. The vast majority of children work in the informal sector, which poses enforcement challenges.

The National Child Labour Elimination Policy 2010 is a crucial guideline for future actions aimed at combating child labor. It aims to eliminate child labor through various strategies and programs. Additionally, the policy seeks to involve parents in income-

generating activities and provide stipends to families, encouraging the return of working children to education.

4.4 National Child Labour Elimination Policy

This policy aims to withdraw children from certain forms of occupation, involve parents in income-generating activities, and offer stipends and grants to bring working children back to school. The government should establish an inter-ministerial National Taskforce on Child Labor and Education, review and effectively implement the Labor Act, and increase the capacity of the recently established Child Labor Unit to ensure it can bear its responsibilities and function effectively. The current governance deficit in Bangladesh has further aggravated the situation because the duty bearers such as lawmakers, executives, police, probation officers and even judges remain insensitive to children's rights and fail to provide protection. Finally certain recommendations are suggested for the efficient implementation of labor standards to ensure rights and social justice to workers of every corner of the country. This policy also focuses on raising awareness among parents and civil society about the harmful consequences of child labor and planning different strategies to eliminate various forms of child labor from Bangladesh. Based on the National Child Labor Elimination Policy 2010, a National Plan of Action has been finalized to implement the policy with support from ILO-IPEC, UNICEF, save the children and other child labor-related stakeholders. It is necessary to mention that the government is committed to protecting children, but it lacks depth of understanding and consistent planning. The vast majority of children work in the informal sector, making it challenging to enforce the relevant legislation. The decision to enact this law is another step to implement international guidelines as child trafficking is one of the worst forms of child labor. The monitoring of child labor in Bangladesh is a crucial task for ensuring the rights and well-being of children. It requires robust mechanisms, including regular inspections, effective enforcement of laws, and rehabilitation programs. Therefore, if they are exploited at a very early age, they would not be able to develop properly. Moreover, the government agreed on a National Plan of Action to implement the Act. Lack of enforcement of existing legal rules and resource limitation are key hindrances for enforcement. Alternative monitoring mechanisms, such as community-based surveillance groups, have been explored in parts of Dhaka. New laws covering the informal sectors not embraced in the Act at the present time have to be passed. Resource limitations and understaffing

within government bodies hinder the effective application of child labor rules. A positive step would be providing viable alternatives to children and their families to prevent a shift to the informal sector. Apart from monitoring mechanisms, cases brought to the attention of public prosecutors have not been sufficiently investigated, leaving victims of child labor without effective remedies.

4.5 Enforcement Mechanisms and Challenges

The gap between existing laws and their enforcement is a major issue, exacerbated by resource limitations. Effective enforcement requires not only legal frameworks but also robust institutional capacity and awareness campaigns. The root causes of poor implementation mechanisms and defects of labor law need to be addressed. Finally, certain recommendations are suggested for the fruitful and efficient implementation of labor standards to ensure rights and social justice to workers of every corner of the country and safeguard the national economy from innumerable loss. Strengthening the enforcement of existing labor laws and increasing the resources available for monitoring and inspections are vital to addressing this issue. Clearly, any policy measure that aims to remedy child labor must take into account that the huge informal sector creates a steady demand for children that depend on earning income. Furthermore, the Labour Act does not include extensive enforcement mechanisms. Apparently, measures that only address formal sector businesses are not an effective means to improve the child labor situation, especially when these measures are not backed up by schemes that provide working children with an alternative. Under the head of the Ministry of Labour and Employment, widening the scope of application of the Labour Act to cover all domestic workers is crucial. The Constitution of Bangladesh prohibits all forms of forced labor, and the Children Act 2013 aims to align with international standards, but specific provisions prohibiting child labor are lacking. This gap needs to be addressed through further regulation, particularly concerning child domestic work, as highlighted by the Supreme Court of Bangladesh. A positive approach involves offering practical options to children and their families to discourage a transition into the unregulated informal sector. Legislators should draw lessons from reactions to measures that solely address formal sector businesses. Policy and legal instruments dealing with issues such as gender-based violence and child labor often have a narrow focus and do not fully address the best interests of children. A key hindrance to enforcement is resource limitation. The government must follow

international standards and address child labor in the informal sector systematically, as the exclusion of small agricultural farms, domestic work, and small-scale family businesses keeps significant portions of informal work outside the legal framework. Creating employment opportunities in rural areas can reduce migration to urban areas, where children are often compelled to work due to poverty and instability. Based on constitutional obligations and commitment to international standards, the government must take the lead in pursuing child labor elimination goals to meet long-term development needs. Such neglect of the rule of law leaves victims of child labor without effective remedies. Some issues regarding child legislation need to be pointed out. The Children Act of 2013, while significant, lacks specific provisions directly prohibiting child labor, necessitating further legislative action to comprehensively protect children from exploitation ([Banu et al., 1998](#)). Laws against child labor are applicable only to the formal economic sectors. The core subject matter of the Bangladesh Labor Act, 2006 is "worker," but the status of an employee does not fall within the definition of "worker," leaving him/her outside the purview of the Act. The Bangladesh Labour Act, 2006 includes positive points for protecting women workers' rights, yet safety issues at the workplace remain a significant concern. The adaption of the list of the Worst Forms of Child Labour did not close this legal gap. Typical areas of hazardous work like domestic and agriculture work are still not prohibited under the current legislation in Bangladesh ([Norpoth et al., 2014](#)). The appointment letter is a proof of appointment and can be used by the worker for any further proceeding regarding employment ([Saha, 2023](#)). Most children who work in the informal sector, such as small factories, workshops, motor garages, shops, agriculture, or domestic work, are not regulated by law, nor are these establishments monitored by any government agency. Thus, new laws covering the informal sectors not embraced in the Act at the present time have to be passed. Resource limitations and understaffing within government bodies hinder the effective application of child labor rules. Alternative monitoring mechanisms, such as community-based surveillance groups comprised of trained volunteers, need to be explored throughout the country.

Chapter 5:

International Legal Framework and its Implementation in Bangladesh

5.1 UN Convention on the Rights of the Child (UNCRC)

The Bangladeshi state is obliged to implement relevant provisions by signing and ratifying international conventions and treaties. Pursuant to Art. 44 UN CRC Bangladesh has to submit a state report to the Committee on the Rights of the Child in intervals of five years. The government committed to achieving universal birth registration by 2010 to ensure children's rights, such as identity and nationality, were protected, but final completion was delayed until December 2011. The current governance deficit in Bangladesh has further aggravated the situation because the duty bearers such as lawmakers, executives, police, probation officers, and even judges remain insensitive to children's rights and fail to provide protection, special care, and treatment. The ratification of the UN CRC sends a clear message to the international community, substantiating efforts to eliminate child labor. Bangladesh should, therefore, take further measures on the political field to effectively address child labor. The Bangladeshi government has demonstrated its commitment to children with disabilities by signing and ratifying both the United Nations Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities and the Convention on the Rights of the Child (Nuri et al., 2021). Bangladesh has made considerable strides in combating child labor over the past decades, as evidenced by the signing and ratification of the UN CRC in 1990 and ILO Convention No. 182 in 2001. These international legal instruments provide a framework for safeguarding children's fundamental human rights, guiding policy and legislation, and monitoring progress through state reporting (Gemmell et al., 2023)¹⁷. The committee examines the progress made by states in fulfilling their obligations under the Convention and its Optional Protocols (Sloth-Nielsen, 2018). The UN Convention on the Rights of the Child and UNESCO's Salamanca Statement have united politicians and schools to create answers by arranging schools and teaching for

¹⁷ "In small places, close to home": Urban environmental impacts on child rights across four global cities. *Health & Place*, 83, 103081. <https://doi.org/10.1016/j.healthplace.2023.103081>

everyone ([Subarna et al., 2022](#)). In 2009, the Committee on the Rights of the Child expressed concerns regarding the lack of enforcement mechanisms for laws protecting child workers, the absence of mechanisms to monitor working conditions, and the high incidence of child workers in hazardous industries. Furthermore, the Committee voiced apprehension about the exploitation of children in domestic service, urging Bangladesh to implement labor laws and ensure access to complaint mechanisms and remedies. All ratifications underline that Bangladesh generally vows to address the problem. However, Bangladesh did not sign the third Optional Protocol, which allows for an individual complaint procedure for an alleged violation. In principle, children shall enjoy the same rights as adults, but in certain contexts, the Convention provides higher standards for children ([Nowak & Krishan, 2021](#)). Birth registration is crucial for protecting children from exploitation, as it enables legal age limits for employment, marriage, and military recruitment. It is necessary to take action at the national level, as timely steps can positively impact decreasing or eliminating child labor from all tiers of society. The UN Convention on the Rights of the Child provides children with rights to participate, to receive important benefits, and to get protection against maltreatment ([Bartholet, 2010](#)). The Convention outlines the rights to be respected and protected for every child under the age of eighteen years, ensuring these rights without discrimination and prioritizing the child's best interests in all actions ([“Convention on the Rights of the Child,” 1989](#)). The UN Convention on Children’s Rights cannot be directly applied in Bangladeshi courts, but Bangladesh is obligated to honor it ([Lansdown, 2002](#)). A key indicator of success is incorporating the CRC's principles into local policies ([Kaime, 2010](#)). States that are signatories to the Convention on the Rights of the Child are responsible for implementing the convention ([Shehab, 2020](#)). Implementation of child protection programs is a crucial step in ensuring a safe environment for children to grow and develop optimally ([Wahyudin et al., 2024](#)). Based on its constitutional obligation and its commitment to international standards on children, the government will need to take the lead in pursuing child labor elimination goals, in order to meet its long-term development needs ([Faruque & Islam, 2023](#)). The first Optional Protocol on children in armed conflict and the second Optional Protocol on the sale of children, child prostitution, and child pornography have been signed and ratified by Bangladesh. The Optional Protocol to the Convention on the Rights of the Child on a communications procedure has also been enshrined in the Convention. Ratification of the third Optional

Protocol of the UN CRC would enhance the legal protection mechanisms available to children.

5.2 ILO Conventions on Child Labour

The ILO has been actively working to eliminate child labor in Bangladesh since 1994 through its International Programme on the Elimination of Child Labour. The ILO estimates that approximately 250 million children work in developing countries, with a significant percentage in Asia. Bangladesh has made significant progress in combating child labor, ratifying the UN CRC in 1990 and ILO Convention No. 182 in 2001. The country has also enacted the Labor Act in 2006, which prohibits the employment of children under 14 years old. This act aligns with ILO Convention No. 138, which sets the minimum age for employment, aiming to harmonize national laws with international labor standards. With this action, Bangladesh would have acceded to all of the key international conventions pertaining to child labor. As a result of continuous advocacy, the Government of Bangladesh ratified the ILO Convention on the Worst Forms of Child Labour in 2001. The ILO's efforts, in cooperation with employers, workers' organizations, NGOs, and other civil society actors, are essential in preventing and eliminating child labor, particularly its worst forms. ILO's agenda included the abatement of child labor from the very beginning. Even so, over the years, the number of child workers has significantly increased because of factors such as increasing population and a persistently impoverishing situation. The ILO defines child labor as economic activity by individuals under the age of 15, which is critical given that primary education in Bangladesh starts at age six and lasts for five years. Statistical surveys indicate that many children in Bangladesh work for pay, profit, or to support their families. The government has taken several measures to combat child labor by signing and ratifying international conventions and addressing the problem through national laws and policies. However, closer examination reveals gaps in the legal framework for child labor. These gaps hinder the effective enforcement of labor standards and the protection of children. These defects, combined with poor implementation, undermine the labor laws in Bangladesh. In 2002/2003, a comprehensive study revealed that 7.4 million children aged 5-17 were working, with 3.2 million in circumstances defined as child labor. ILO Convention No. 138 has not been ratified by Bangladesh, though the government claims efforts are underway to

ensure compliance before formal ratification. The country must implement relevant provisions through national laws and policies to fulfill its obligations. Bangladesh is a member of the ILO and is obligated to adhere to international labor standards. To this end, research is needed to explore the compliance of Bangladesh's labor laws and practices with ILO labor standards. This will ensure rights and social justice for workers and safeguard the national economy. The ratification of ILO Convention No. 182 demonstrates Bangladesh's commitment to eliminating the worst forms of child labor. The country has developed a National Plan of Action to implement the National Child Labor Elimination Policy of 2010, with support from various organizations. The study also found that 1.3 million children were engaged in hazardous work. This initiative reflects a multifaceted approach involving government, NGOs, and international bodies to tackle the complex issue of child labor. The minimum age for employment should align with the completion of compulsory schooling, as per ILO Convention No. 138. The survey was carried out by the Bangladesh Bureau of Statistics ([Salmon, 2005](#)). A more recent study confirmed that child labor remains widespread in Bangladesh. While progress has been made, approximately 1.2 million children in Bangladesh are still engaged in the worst forms of child labor. This necessitates a continuous assessment and refinement of strategies to address the root causes and consequences of child labor in the country. The labor laws in Bangladesh need to be revised to align with the international standards set by the ILO. These laws also need to reflect the actual lived reality in Bangladesh. The Bangladeshi state is obligated to implement relevant provisions through signing and ratifying international conventions and treaties.

5.3 Monitoring and Reporting Mechanisms

The government plays a leading role, cooperating with employers, workers' organizations, NGOs, and other civil society actors, in implementing measures to prevent and eliminate child labor, especially its worst forms, and rescue children from it. The government should take further measures to address child labor effectively, despite the progress made in ratifying international conventions. The implementation of strong enforcement mechanisms for child labor provisions is crucial, especially in the informal sector where most children work. Moreover, long drafting and adoption periods for respective measures question the urgency at all government levels. These mechanisms would also need to address the physical and emotional neglect experienced by a substantial number of child laborers, alongside financial exploitation. The National

Child Labor Elimination Policy of 2010 aims to eliminate children from hazardous work and integrate them into education, reflecting Bangladesh's commitment to child rights. It is crucial to raise awareness among parents, communities, and civil society regarding the negative consequences of child labor. Effective implementation of education policy, specifically ensuring free and compulsory primary schooling until Grade VIII, is also vital to prevent child labor by closing the gap between compulsory schooling age and the minimum employment age. The current governance deficit exacerbates the situation, making duty bearers insensitive to children's rights. Resource limitations significantly hinder enforcement efforts. Addressing these issues requires a multi-pronged approach, including stronger legal frameworks, better enforcement, increased awareness, and poverty reduction programs. The government should conduct a new child labor census to update its data. That's why timely steps are needed at the national level to decrease or eliminate child labor from all tiers of society. The adoption of the National Child Labor Policy 2010 and the third National Plan of Action for Children highlights Bangladesh's commitment to addressing child labor and child rights. These policies should be actively monitored to ensure their effective implementation and impact. These initiatives should also include provisions for the rehabilitation and reintegration of former child laborers. The policy aims to withdraw children from certain occupations, involve parents in income-generating activities, and offer stipends to encourage school enrollment. The Act includes harsh penalties, ranging from fines to imprisonment and even the death penalty, for human trafficking, including labor trafficking. The establishment of a "Child Welfare Board" and "Child Desk" at every police station represents significant progress, but their effectiveness hinges on genuine implementation and adequate resourcing. These measures are essential for translating policy into tangible improvements in the lives of vulnerable children. The government agreed to a National Plan of Action in 2012 to implement the Act. Strengthening these policies with robust enforcement mechanisms is essential to protect children from exploitation. Partnerships with the private sector and NGOs can further bolster these policies, ensuring comprehensive protection for children and their families against poverty. But in case of taking action in full conformity with reality, all the factors such as, economic, social, political, cultural have to be taken into consideration. Financial exploitation, physical abuse, and emotional neglect are challenges experienced by child laborers in Bangladesh. The ILO has been instrumental in supporting Bangladesh's efforts to combat child labor through its International

Programme on the Elimination of Child Labour. These interventions have directly benefited approximately 75,000 child laborers through various projects and activities. These programs include providing access to education, skills training, and healthcare services. Child sensitivity approaches must be strengthened, along with the adoption of multiplier measures. The NCLEP and the Education Policy should coordinate effectively to prevent early school drop-outs. The "Child Welfare Board" should prioritize monitoring compliance with child rights and addressing child labor situations. The government must raise awareness among the public regarding the harmful consequences of child labor, while also planning and implementing strategies to eliminate child labor from Bangladesh. These strategies should align with the National Child Labor Elimination Policy 2010 and involve collaboration with various stakeholders.

5.4 Challenges in Implementation of International Laws

The absence of robust enforcement mechanisms significantly impedes the effective implementation of child labor laws, particularly within the expansive informal sector. Furthermore, a lack of understanding and consistent planning within the government can hinder its commitment to protecting children. Alternative monitoring mechanisms, like community-based surveillance groups, have been explored only in parts of Dhaka. The goal of eliminating child labor by a specific date has been considered unrealistic by some observers. Apart from monitoring mechanisms, the insufficient investigation or follow-up of cases brought to the attention of public prosecutors or other official bodies is alarming. Therefore, it is imperative to identify and rectify the lacunae within Bangladesh's labor laws to ensure alignment with international standards and effective implementation. This includes addressing the root causes of poor implementation and the defects in the labor laws. Bangladesh's commitment to international conventions necessitates a comprehensive approach to address these challenges, involving collaboration with employers' and workers' organizations, NGOs, and other civil society actors. It also requires addressing the governance deficit and promoting child-sensitive approaches at all levels of society. A positive step would be ensuring that cases brought to the attention of public prosecutors are sufficiently investigated. Such neglect leaves victims of child labor without effective remedies. A positive impact on decreasing or eliminating child labor can only be achieved through timely taken steps. The government bodies in charge of enforcing labor regulations are severely

understaffed to ensure that child labor regulations are followed throughout the country. Improving labor standards and ensuring social justice for workers across the nation are crucial for safeguarding the national economy from losses. This necessitates the efficient implementation of labor standards. Resource limitations are a key hindrance for enforcement. Strengthening the enforcement mechanism for child labor provisions is crucial. The government should also conduct a new child labor census to update its data. However, further measures should be taken on the political field to address the issue of child labor effectively. The government must provide viable alternatives to children and their families to prevent a shift to the informal sector. Moreover, long drafting periods for adopting respective measures call into question whether there is a sense of urgency at all government levels. In sum, despite the progress made, there are a number of issues that still need to be taken up. The Bangladeshi government bears the primary responsibility, in collaboration with employers' and workers' organizations, NGOs, and other civil society actors, to implement measures that prevent and eliminate child labor. Specific gaps and shortcomings should be summarized, and recommendations on how to address them should be proffered. The government should enhance gender-responsive education, health, and social protection services, alongside more effective employment and social security measures, to eliminate child labor ([Subrahmanian, 2023](#)). These measures will also prevent children and adolescents by helping them access their rights to education, protection, and development. Effective solutions to child labor must be based on the reduction of chronic poverty through broad-based economic and social development, with a strong emphasis on human resource development. The government should also develop a comprehensive strategy to combat all forms of maltreatment against children, including those in the workforce. This strategy should incorporate measures to address physical and financial exploitation. This requires addressing the root causes of poor implementation and defects of labor law.

5.5 Role of International Organizations

Several international organizations and initiatives play crucial roles in supporting Bangladesh's efforts to combat child labor and protect children's rights. These efforts include programs enacted in collaboration with the government, as well as various programs introduced by NGOs and companies as part of their corporate social

responsibility strategies. ILO has been working to eliminate child labor in Bangladesh since 1994 through its International Programme on the Elimination of Child Labour. As a member of the ILO, Bangladesh strives to align its labor laws and practices with international labor standards. The ILO supports Bangladesh through its awareness programs, capacity building and technical assistance. The ILO also supports the implementation of the National Plan of Action, which aims to eliminate child labor by addressing the root causes and providing support to vulnerable families. The ILO-IPEC, UNICEF, and Save the Children are a few of the organizations supporting this endeavor. These organizations also work with government counterparts, employers, and workers' organizations, research organizations, academics, and civil society actors. The ILO's Child Labor Platform, established in 2012, serves as a business-led initiative to identify obstacles in implementing ILO conventions at the community level and to develop solutions ([Radfar et al., 2018](#)). About 75,000 child laborers have directly benefited from these interventions. These efforts target children in hazardous work and vulnerable situations. These programs aim to build capacity to address child rights violations, improve access to education and healthcare, and address issues such as sexual abuse and violence against children. These interventions involve direct support, educational opportunities, and awareness campaigns. These initiatives also aim to raise awareness among parents and civil society about the harmful consequences of child labor. The government prepares for the ratification of the ILO Convention No. 138, demonstrating a commitment to aligning with international standards. These organizations contribute to the prevention and elimination of child labor by working with governments, civil society, and other stakeholders. They also focus on strengthening institutional capacity for enforcement.

The Resources Integration Center, in collaboration with the Government of Bangladesh, UNICEF, and SIDA, initiated the second phase of its Basic Education for Hard-To-Reach Urban Working Children program. This program provided education to 14,500 working children in Dhaka's urban areas. The long-term objective was to enhance the life options of urban working children and adolescents by helping them access their rights to education, protection, and development. Save the Children has been collaborating with the government and NGOs in several districts to establish special schools that offer educational opportunities and medical advice to working children. It is estimated that 1.2 million children are still trapped in the worst forms of

labor in Bangladesh. These children often work in hazardous industries such as garment factories, tanneries, and construction sites, facing significant risks to their health and safety. With the support of various donors, ILO has been working to eliminate child labor in Bangladesh since 1994. The persistence of child labor underscores the urgent need for robust enforcement of existing laws and the implementation of comprehensive strategies. These strategies should focus on addressing the root causes of child labor and providing sustainable alternatives for children and their families. Bangladesh must also ensure access to health, shelter, education, social, and legal assistance for vulnerable children. The National Child Labor Elimination Policy 2010 and National Plan of Action were created to implement strategies to eliminate child labor, yet observers consider the plan's target of eliminating child labor by 2016 to be unrealistic. The Ministry of Labor and Employment has finalized the list of hazardous work. However, decisive gaps remain in the overall legal framework on child labor, also with regard to the effective implementation of the said conventions. The prevalence of maltreatment of child laborers is higher than the general prevalence of child maltreatment, including physical and financial exploitation. UNICEF is facilitating the development of a national child protection information management system and the design of national social services training. The fundamental rights of children, including survival, education, protection, and development, are frequently violated by child labor.

Chapter 6:

Findings, Conclusion and Recommendations

6.1 Key Findings

Over the last decades, Bangladesh has taken a number of important steps to address the issue of child labor through legal measures. However, defects remain in labor laws and implementation.

Here are some of the key findings from your research paper:

Shortcomings in Labor Law: Despite progress, your research indicates there are still shortcomings and defects in the labor law.

Enforcement Issues: The government must show commitment to enforcing national legislation and meeting international obligations.

Data Gaps: The government should conduct a new child labor census to update its data on child labor.

Maltreatment Prevalence: The prevalence of maltreatment of child laborers is higher than the general prevalence of child maltreatment, including physical and financial exploitation.

Hindrance to Development: Child labor is a hindrance to the country's development and harms children's health and welfare.

Unrealistic Goals: The National Child Labor Elimination Policy 2010 and National Plan of Action were created to implement strategies to eliminate child labor, yet observers consider the plan's target of eliminating child labor by 2016 to be unrealistic.

Gaps in Legal Framework: Decisive gaps remain in the overall legal framework on child labor, also with regard to the effective implementation of the said conventions. Addressing these issues requires a comprehensive approach that includes legal reforms, better enforcement mechanisms, and more realistic goal setting.

Furthermore, long drafting periods for adopting respective measures call into question the sense of urgency at all government levels. The informal sector exacerbates enforcement challenges. These factors collectively contribute to the persistence of child labor and impede effective prevention efforts. It is crucial to recognize that child laborers often face exploitative environments, leading to both health deterioration and financial loss. This necessitates robust interventions to safeguard children's rights and

overall well-being. Such efforts should encompass raising awareness among parents, communities, and employers about the detrimental consequences of child labor. Creating employment opportunities in rural areas can reduce migration to urban areas and subsequent child labor. Promoting youth employment opportunities in agriculture and integrating child labor concerns into agricultural and labor organization activities can further mitigate child labor ([Singh & Verma, 1987](#)). Building on existing knowledge and experience, communities can develop strategies to make work safer for children ([Morrow & Vennam, 2012](#)). The government should focus on understanding and consistently planning to protect children, which is essential for reducing and eliminating child labor from all levels of society. Poverty reduction is critical, as it drives children to work to avoid starvation and supplement family income. Strengthening law enforcement, coupled with alternative monitoring mechanisms, is crucial. ILO has been working to eliminate child labor in Bangladesh since 1994, and the government ratified the ILO Convention on the Worst Forms of Child Labour in 2001.

6.2 Conclusion

Child labor is a hindrance to the country's development and harms children's health and welfare. Over the last decades Bangladesh has taken a number of important steps to address the issue of child labour through legal measures. However, there are still shortcomings and defects in the labor law. The government must show commitment to enforcing national legislation and meeting international obligations. The government should conduct a new child labor census to update its data on child labor. Bangladesh should focus on eliminating child labor by implementing well-designed policies and programs. The recent adoption of the National Child Labor Policy 2010 and the third National Plan of Action for Children stand as testimonies of Bangladesh's commitment to addressing child labor and child rights. Timely action at the national level is needed to positively impact the decrease or elimination of child labor from all tiers of society. The country should raise awareness among parents, people, and civil society about the harmful consequences of child labor. Finally, for the fruitful and efficient implementation of labor standards to ensure rights and social justice to workers, certain recommendations are suggested. Bangladesh needs to withdraw working children from certain forms of occupation and involve their parents in income-generating activities.

It is crucial to address economic, social, political, and cultural factors, alongside adopting a child-sensitive approach and multiplier measures. Continuous advocacy led the Government of Bangladesh to ratify the ILO Convention on the Worst Forms of Child Labour in 2001. Programs initiated by NGOs and companies, often as part of corporate social responsibility, also play a crucial role in addressing child labor. These initiatives, along with government efforts, have directly benefited numerous child laborers. Poverty, lack of awareness, and firmly established traditions significantly contribute to the prevalence of child labor in Bangladesh. Therefore, comprehensive strategies encompassing education, poverty reduction, and law enforcement are essential to tackle this multifaceted issue. Moreover, Bangladesh's labor laws and practices must align with the labor standards of the ILO and Islamic principles of labor rights to ensure comprehensive protection. The government should prioritize collaboration with employers' and workers' organizations, NGOs, and civil society to prevent and eliminate child labor, particularly its worst forms, and rescue children from such situations.

6.3 Recommendations for Prevention of Child Labour

Here are the some recommendations for preventing child labor in Bangladesh:

Stricter Enforcement: Implement stricter enforcement mechanisms for existing labor laws.

Address Root Causes: Tackle the root causes of child labor, such as poverty and lack of education. Education expansion has been associated with declines in child labour ([What Works to Eliminate Child Labour?, 2022](#)).

Comply with International Standards: Ensure that national laws fully comply with international standards and conventions. Bangladesh's labor laws and practices must align with the labor standards of the ILO and Islamic principles of labor rights to ensure comprehensive protection.

Enhance Access to Education and Healthcare: Increase access to education, healthcare, and recreational activities for vulnerable children to help them realize their full potential.

Awareness Campaigns: Conduct awareness campaigns to educate the public about the harmful effects of child labor and the importance of children's rights. The country should raise awareness among parents, people, and civil society about the harmful consequences of child labor.

Strengthen Institutional Capacity: Strengthen institutional capacity for enforcing labor laws.

Collaboration: The government should prioritize collaboration with employers' and workers' organizations, NGOs, and civil society to prevent and eliminate child labor. Promote cooperation between agriculture and labour stakeholders and ensure coherence of policies and programmes on child labour prevention ([Singh & Verma, 1987](#)).

These recommendations emphasize a comprehensive and collaborative approach to tackle child labor in Bangladesh, addressing both the symptoms and the underlying causes. Youth employment opportunities in agriculture should also be promoted. Based on the National Child Labor Elimination Policy 2010, a National Plan of Action should be implemented with support from various stakeholders. The government should also consider conducting a new child labor census to update its data and ensure that measures are effective. Integrating child labor concerns into agricultural and labor organization activities and promoting safer agricultural practices are also crucial steps. ILO has been working to eliminate child labour in Bangladesh since 1994 through its International Programme on the Elimination of Child Labour. Moreover, long periods for drafting and adopting measures call into question the sense of urgency at all government levels. Despite the progress made, some observers consider the plan's target of eliminating child labor by a specific year to be unrealistic. The Resources Integration Center has initiated programs to enhance the life options of urban working children by helping them access their rights to education, protection, and development. Specific gaps and shortcomings should be addressed with effective measures, and the government should promote youth employment opportunities in agriculture, integrate child labor concerns in programming, and improve rural livelihoods. Promote the adoption of safer agricultural practices and prevent children from carrying out hazardous work in agriculture ([Singh & Verma, 1987](#)). Other programs enacted in collaboration with the government include those introduced by NGOs and companies as part of their corporate social responsibility strategies. The most effective prevention strategy may involve building on existing knowledge and working with communities

to develop safer work strategies ([Morrow & Vennam, 2012](#)). Partnerships with the private sector and NGOs may be viable paths to implement such policies. It is crucial to recognize that the distinction between acceptable and unacceptable work for children can be easily blurred, necessitating careful consideration of age-appropriate tasks that do not impede education or leisure ([Hurst, 2007](#)). The National Child Labor Elimination Policy of 2010 aims to eliminate children from hazardous work and improve their lives. The policy aims to withdraw children from certain occupations, involve parents in income-generating activities, and offer stipends to bring working children back to school. Worldwide, a significant percentage of child laborers are engaged in agriculture, emphasizing the need for targeted interventions in this sector. In many instances, girls dedicate more time to domestic chores than boys, which consequently curtails their time for schooling. The recent adoption of the National Child Labor Policy 2010 and the third National Plan of Action for Children stand as testimonies of Bangladesh's commitment to child rights. The implementation of education policy plays a vital role in preventing child labor, ensuring universal, free, compulsory primary schooling until Grade VIII, combined with improvements in the quality of education. It is important to address the worst forms of child labor, as approximately 1.2 million children in Bangladesh are still trapped in these conditions. The Human Trafficking Deterrence and Suppression Act of 2012 also prevents human trafficking, including labor trafficking, implementing international guidelines and providing severe penalties. The government agreed on a National Plan of Action to implement the Act. Child labourers are often neglected physically and emotionally, with financial exploitation being a common concern ([Ahad et al., 2023](#)). To prevent diet-related noncommunicable diseases, the country is putting efforts into nutrition labeling, food standard reforms, restricting unhealthy food advertising to children, and imposing taxes on sugar-sweetened drinks ([Rahman et al., 2019](#)). Effective coordination between the National Child Labor Elimination Policy and the Education Policy is imperative to prevent early school drop-outs. The policy provides a framework for eradicating the worst forms of child labor.

6.4 Policy Implications

The National Education Policy 2010 emphasizes providing uniform, compulsory, and free primary education for all, addressing the needs of street children and those from

deprived backgrounds. Effective multisectoral coordination of nutrition interventions is essential for implementing nutrition-specific and sensitive intervention. The government should expand its social security measures to protect children and their families from poverty.

Since quality education serves as a crucial alternative to premature entry into the workforce, the National Education Policy of 2010 seeks to ensure universal, compulsory, and free primary education of uniform quality. This policy recognizes primary education as a child's right, though some critics argue that it does not fully guarantee free primary education. A stronger emphasis should be placed on secondary schooling and tertiary education to create a robust human capital and knowledge-based society. The National Education Policy of 2010 has been an opportunity to address issues such as terrorism, ethnicity, and intolerance through the education system ([Sumon, 2015](#)). The policy serves as a guiding instrument for the formulation of future laws and policies regarding child labor. Moreover, the National Plan of Action contains specific interventions, including the formation of a National Child Labour Welfare Council comprising representatives from government, NGOs, employers, and experts to analyze the national and international child labor context and situation. Partnerships with the private sector, NGOs, and other actors may be viable paths to implement such policies. The government has implemented different policies and measures to enhance children's conditions, mainly in rural areas ([Wondimu & Dejene, 2022](#)). The "National Education Policy 2010" deals with the issue of school dropouts, and the government aims to ensure that all students have the opportunity to complete Class VIII. The policy also emphasizes women's education and promoting minorities' education, aiming to reduce school dropouts by making students job-oriented through a practical approach ([Sundaram, 2020](#)). Furthermore, the National Education Policy- 2020 aims to improve the quality of the education system in India, addressing challenges related to quality, equity, affordability, accountability, and access ([Nayak & Das, 2022](#)). Effective implementation of the policy is imperative, both from a general development and a specific child labor point of view. The NEP-2020 envisions sustainable societal development by ensuring high-quality education for all, without compromising the nation's heritage ([Beerannavar & Pancrasius, 2024](#)). This entails identifying and nurturing the unique capabilities of each student, fostering holistic development in both academic and non-academic spheres ([Panditrao & Panditrao, 2020](#)). The policy

emphasizes experimental learning through critical thinking, providing students flexibility in subject options ([Shashidharan et al., 2021](#)). The national education policy focuses on inclusive and quality education, aligning the education system with global developments and future job market demands ([Puri, 2019](#)). Therefore, education policies should focus on conveying quality, integrity, inclusiveness, and equity throughout the education system ([Nayak & Das, 2022](#)). The government should also focus on teachers' professional development to improve the quality of education ([Kinley et al., 2022](#)).

The study of the NEP 2020 highlights career opportunities that can be envisaged from the factors emphasized by the new NEP. It is imperative to create employment opportunities in rural areas to prevent migration to urban centers, which often leads to children being sent to work due to poverty. Education can raise awareness about child labor by including relevant knowledge in school curricula, and governments and NGOs can further enhance awareness through distributing learning materials. The National Child Labor Elimination Policy of 2010 and the National Plan of Action were created to eliminate child labor. The policy aims to withdraw children from hazardous occupations, involve their parents in income-generating activities, and offer stipends and grants to bring them back to school. The NPA also contains 65 specific interventions, foreseeing the formation of a National Child Labour Welfare Council comprising representatives from government, NGOs, employers, and experts to analyze the national and international child labor context and situation. Effective implementation of the Education Policy is imperative, both from a general development and a specific child labor point of view. The schooling process needs to be reformed with an updated curriculum that includes basic information about child labor, and vocational training should be integrated to enable students to secure employment quickly after completing their education. Laws against child labor should be applicable to both formal and informal economic sectors, ensuring that all children are protected, and the integration of vocational education into mainstream education equips students with practical skills, aligning with the National Education Policy 2020 ([Ramteke, 2024](#)). This policy aims to provide practical skills and knowledge to students, preparing them for employment and entrepreneurship ([Aithal & Aithal, 2020](#)) ([Bhatta, 2020](#)).

By minimizing the gap between education in urban and rural areas in terms of quality and quantity, education harmony is needed ([Safitri, 2022](#)). Strengthening the

enforcement mechanism for child labor provisions and addressing the informal sector, where the majority of children work, is crucial. Furthermore, addressing gender-based violence and ensuring children's best interests are paramount when dealing with child labor legislation. The adoption of the National Child Labor Policy 2010 and the third National Plan of Action for Children demonstrate Bangladesh's commitment to addressing child labor and child rights. The National Child Labor Elimination Policy of 2010 aims to eliminate children from hazardous and worst forms of labor and to bring meaningful change to their lives. It also aims to raise awareness among parents, the people, and civil society about the harmful consequences of child labor. Based on this policy, a National Plan of Action was finalized to implement the policy with support from various organizations. ILO has been working to eliminate child labor in Bangladesh since 1994, benefiting approximately 75,000 child laborers through various interventions ([Banu et al., 1998](#)).

These interventions include offering education, training, and other assistance to help them transition into adulthood. The government confirms to take measures to make sure that all students have the opportunity to complete Class VIII by 2018 ([Norpoth et al., 2014](#)).

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