

CHILD LABOR DEVELOPMENT IN INDONESIA: A REVIEW¹

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Abstract. *Although some children work independently, the crux of the issue involves various aspects of life surrounding them, in particular those related to the households where they belong, predominantly the role of their parents in their involvement and the community where the households conform. It is closely associated with the extended family system. Consequently it is essential to approach any child labor policy beyond those issues directly related to what problems the children themselves are confronting in labor market. A huge requirement of resources together with a multi-dimensional nature of the problem transparently make any effort of mainstreaming the issue of child labor into other development programs is perhaps the most efficient and effective way to tackle the problem. They are, among others, programs on poverty alleviation, education and training, as well as health for all, with priority focusing on the six worst forms of child labor, involving community leaders, and educating parents on how valuable their children's lives. Finally, helping the informal network and the areas of origin often implies helping and preventing the child labor.*

Keywords: children, work, education, family, poverty, Indonesia.

1. INTRODUCTION

There is no doubt that there has been an increasing number of public concerns as well as of published knowledge regarding issues of child labor until recently.² Yet, our understanding on the matter is not as comprehensive as it appears on the surface. The crux of the matter may include such issues as to social and economic settings of why should children participate in labor market earlier in their lives as well as on how to best cope with the problem of child labor.

The problem of child labor is not an issue of children themselves. It involves various issues surrounding them. Although some of the children may work independently, one would expect that they be in general related closely to the conditions of households where the children belong. Indeed a large part of Indonesian households is still characterized by an extended family system in nature. It is consequently essential to approach the problem beyond the issues directly related to what problems the children themselves are confronting with in labor market.

It is true the workers are children themselves. But it is not sufficient to approach the problems they are facing and to treat them individualistically. In the real world, they often interact with their households from which they are originating. A large number of them, for instance, have been taking part in the responsibility of providing economic resources in the form of transfer payments to other members of their own households. Often the relationship not only takes place among household members as a kinship relation, but also among members of friendship relation. It is common that we observe an informal social network in daily life among Indonesians. Thus, helping the informal network often implies helping the child labor; and hence, facilitating any effort to find policy and programs that best suit to how to combat against the problems facing child labor.

2. ESTIMATED NUMBER OF CHILD MANPOWER³

There were 22.62 million children aged 10-14 years in 1992. About 83.54% of them were reported attending school; 1.47% doing housekeeping; 10.19% working; and 0.19% were actively seeking for jobs (or 1.85% of labor force aged 10-14 years). Almost half of them were girls. Of 18,968,727 children aged 15-19, it is estimated that 11.38 million were below 18 years old. Approximately 40.52% of the latter were in the school; 7.68% keeping the house; 39.47% working; and 2.82% looking for work (6.67% of labor force aged 15-17 years).

Of those 2.3 million aged 10-14 years who were working, 8.41% were overworked, only 9.19% were working normal hours of 35-44 hours a week, and the rest of 82.40% were underemployed. The latter is equivalent to 80.91% of child labor force aged 10-14 years. Total of partial underutilized, i.e. job seekers plus underemployed, was 84.25% of child labor force aged 10-14 years. Again about 39.27% of them were girls. Similarly, for those under

18 years, approximately 22.45% of them were working normal hours; 28.78% were overworked; and the remaining of 48.77% was under-employed. In terms of child labor force aged 15-17 years, the latter counted for about 46.80%. Thus, total partial underutilized was 53.47% of child labor force aged 15-17 years. The latter is much better than their counterpart of aged 10-14 years

Those child workers at the age of 10-14 years old were largely working in agriculture, forestry, hunting and fishery, i.e. 76.73% of them were agricultural workers, where about one third of them were girls. Of course, the evidence is characterizing the structure of Indonesian labor market as a whole. A much lower figure is found for those workers aged 15-17 years, i.e. 58.14% were agricultural child workers. Interesting enough to note that 16.56% of the latter group were working in manufacturing industry.

In 1996, right before Indonesia experiencing a multi-dimensional crisis, there were 22.59 million children aged 10-14 years. Those attending school increased to 85.80%; those keeping the house decreased slightly to 1.19%; child labor declined rather significantly to 7.98%; and those who were seeking for work rose a little bit to 0.54% (or 6.30% of child labor force aged 10-14 years).

Again, of 20,642,659 children aged 15-19 years, about 12,385,595 children were estimated below 18 years old. Those attending the school increased to about 43.68%; those keeping the house decreased to 6.84%; child workers declined to 33.98%; and job seekers rose substantially to 6.73% (16.53% in terms of child labor force of 15-17 years old), marking the hardships of life one year before the crisis began.⁴ Their lives were even tougher as the children facing a sluggish labor market, which was characterized by a lesser number of children absorbed while simultaneously confronting with a difficulty of obtaining new jobs.

Of those 1.80 million aged 10-14 years who were working in 1996, 10.62% were overworked, only 8.12% were working normal hours of 35-44 hours a week, and the rest of 81.26% were underemployed, which is slightly lower than in 1992. Or in terms of labor force aged 10-14 years, it was about 76.14%. Total of partial underutilized, i.e. job seekers plus under-employed, is 82.44% of child labor force aged 10-14 years. Again about 40.14% of them were girls.

Similarly, for those under 18 years, approximately 19.29% of them were working normal hours; 31.09% were overworked; and the remaining of

49.62% was underemployed. Again, in terms of labor force aged 15-17 years, the underemployed was 41.42%, a much lower than the younger age group. Total partial underutilized was 57.95% of children aged 15-17 years. Although the latter is still considered significant, it appeared to be better off than their counterpart aged 10-14 years.

Again, those child workers at the age of 10-14 years old were mostly working in agriculture, forestry, hunting and fishery. That is 67.71% of them were agricultural workers, where almost one third of them were girls. This is of course characterizing the structure of Indonesian labor market as a whole. A much lower figure is found for those workers aged 15-17 years, i.e. 49.23% were agricultural workers. It is particularly important to note that 18.15% of the latter age group was working in manufacturing industry. It seems that older children have a wider choice available for them than the younger even in a situation in which they faced much more difficulty in being absorbed in Indonesian labor market. Similarly, girls had lower probability of being employed than boys did.

In 2001⁵, of 19,992,790 children aged 15-19 years old reported from national survey, it is estimated that about 11,995,674 of them were at the age of below 18 years. 46.05% of those children were attending school, 6.91% helped keeping their houses, 29.02% were working for money or helped earning money for at least one hour in the last week before the survey, and 11.69% were looking for jobs. Equivalently, the job seekers were approximately 28.72% of those who were in the labor force.

Of those who were working, 43.00% underemployed, 21.83% working normal hours a week, and the rest of 35.17% were over employed. The underemployed children were about 30.65% of child labor force aged 15-17 years. This would imply that total partial underutilized was 59.37% of the child labor force, which was about one and half percentage point higher than that in 1996. That is the percentage of children underemployed had decreased from 41.42% to 30.65%, while the open unemployment had increased from 16.53% to 28.72% during part of the crisis years 1996-2001. Thus, it is obvious that these children had more difficulty in finding even for less than normal hour jobs during the crisis years.

Less than half of those workers, i.e. 47.44% were in agricultural sector of Indonesian economy. Almost one fifth of them, precisely as much as 18.59%, were working in manufacturing industry, and 16.24% were in trade, restaurants and hotels. They are not much different from what we have found

in 1996. Thus, the structure is more or less the same, but the probability of finding jobs becomes harder.

Girls aged 15-17 years faced much harder in getting jobs than boys in 2001. About 33.16% of girl labor forces were openly unemployed, compared to that of the boys of 25.48%. Indeed, 30.47% of the openly unemployed girls, compared to that of boys of slightly more than one fourth, i.e. more precisely 25.40%, felt that they were hopeless in finding jobs in labor market.

In 2002,⁶ of 20,036,828 children aged 15-19 years old reported by the national survey, it is estimated that around 12,022,097 of them were at the age of below 18 years. 46.81% of those children were attending school, 6.37% helped keeping their houses, 26.80% were working for money or helped earning money for at least one hour in the last week before the survey, and 14.16% were seeking for jobs. Proportionately, the job seekers were slightly more than a third, more accurately 34.57%, of those children who were in the labor force.

Of those children who were working, 44.06% were underemployed, 21.58% were working normal hours during the reference week, and the remaining of 34.36% were over employed. The underemployed child workers were about 28.83% of child labor force aged 15-17 years. This would suggest that total partial underutilized was 63.40% of the child labor force, which is about four percentage points higher than that in 2001. That is the percentage of children underemployed had decreased from 30.65% to 28.83%, while the open unemployment had increased from 28.72% to 34.36% during part of the crisis years 2001-2002. It is therefore apparent that these children had more difficulty in finding even for part time jobs during that part of crisis years of 2001-2002.

Nearly one half of those workers, i.e. 48.95%, were in agricultural sector of the economy in 2002. Almost one fifth of the child workers of 15-17 years of age, precisely as much as 19.76%, were working in manufacturing industry, and 14.0% were doing their jobs in trade, restaurants and hotels. They are not much different from what we have found in 1996 and 2001. Thus, the occupational structure of the child labor is approximately the same, but the chance of them to find jobs becomes harder. This evidence is very obvious if ones look at the percentage of those openly unemployed children who stated that they were hopeless.

Although both girls and boys aged 15-17 years confronted with more difficulty in getting jobs in 2002, the girls faced much harder situation in

obtaining jobs than the boys in 2001. Approximately 40.02% of girl labor forces were openly unemployed, compared to that of the boys of 30.65%, around five to seven percentage points higher than in the year 2001. Indeed, 33.14% of the openly unemployed girls, contrasted to that of boys of 29.83%, perceived that they were hopeless in finding jobs in labor market.

3. REASONS FOR NOT PURSUING EDUCATION

There are several reasons of why child workers did not pursue their education further. Other than some reasons that are characterized more personal in nature, such as lazy, friend influence (peer group pressure) or married, the most frequent reasons brought up by the children were that they did not have money for education, location of the school was far away from home, as well as a necessity to work helping their parents. Cultural factor seems not to have influence as much as economic ones on their decision to work. Economic factor and distant school location appear to be the dominant factors that made them dropped out from the school and to do the jobs (see Imelda and Sudrajat, 2002, p. 23). ILO (1996, p.60) also found that the prominent reason provided by approximately half of the children in both survey areas, Bandung municipality and regency, for no longer attending school was economic, i.e. that they could not afford school expenditure. In addition, particularly in the Bandung municipality, the second most common reason granted by thirty percent of the children was that they were poor at studies (see also Priyambada, et al. (2005) regarding similar findings, and in particular, its relation with poverty issue.

The evidence is strongly supported by the fact obtained from other study on child maids to do household works. "The children work as household maids with the objectives of both helping the economy of the family (to pay for the cost of education of younger brothers or sisters or to ease the family living burden requirement) and for personal interest (can satisfy their own needs without asking their parents)." See a result of research reported by Wibawa, Dhevy and Moeliono (2002, p. 6). This is also supported in general by the fact that male child labor works one to three hours per week longer than female does (Priyambada, et al., 2005).

What more interesting is to jot down the latter reason the children stated, i.e. first, that to some extent the child maids attempt to satisfy their own personal needs; and secondly, that they possess a sense of independence of their parents in fulfilling their needs. It is in this sense that it reconfirms

what White (1994) suggested in his inaugural address almost a decade ago. In the address, he frequently hinted at the importance of taking into account the child labor's own welfare objective. In economic sense, such a behavior is of course optimal to the laborers where they pursue their own welfare independently and in accordance with their objectives.

"Other reason mentioned by several child maids is to seek for working experience, rather than unemployed and not attending school." (Wibawa, Dhevy and Moeliono, 2002, p. 6, see also Purvoko and Widodo, 1997, pp. 27-32). Similarly, the existing social perception takes into account working as an educational process to nurture responsibility among the children in Central Java (Saptaningtyas, et al., 2001, p. 39). To some magnitude, this reason is self re-enforcing phenomenon, in which the child maids dropped out from their schools because their family economies were very meager; and on the other hand, they had to work rather than not attending the schools. White and Tjandraningsih (1991) discover that the symptom of dropping out of the school often begins with bringing together schooling and working. Thus, early participation of children in the labor market may become a significant determinant for a drop out of the school; and it develops as a natural phenomenon of complementing for the fact that household living in inadequate subsistence.

Cameron (2001) indicates that those children aged over 13 years old were working longer hours in May 1999 than in May 1997. She suggests that they may be the children who have left school to make ends meet. She continued further that those who were attending and working did not experience systematic change in hours worked; and thus, they took responsibility of earning additional income. Priyambada et al. (2005) show that working children attending schools worked shorter hours (about 17 hours a week) than those who did not attend schools (20 to 30 hours per week). The latter evidence is of course implying that part time work is more plausible for those attending school while being able to support their families' well being partially.

When we seek the real reason further, it turns out that the cause is deeply cultivated in the root of Indonesian culture, in particular it is significantly related to patriarch culture facing our society. "Patriarch culture that dominates the society of different statuses consciously or not has given low valuation to occupational sector of household works and unequal treatment to women and girls who work for the sector. Girls often loss in the opportunity to continue education, and they even must sacrifice for the interest of their families by working as child maids" (Wibawa, Dhevy, and

Moeliono, 2002, p. 15), in spite of the fact that male child labor work longer hours than female (Priyambada et al., 2005). It obviously gives rise to a gender bias against girls even long before they participate in the labor market. The bias begins in their own houses, starting from early part of their childhood and then persisting to their early teen ages. See also Saptaningtyas et al. (2001, p. 37) for similar reason found in six areas in Central Java.

The bias is transparently clear when the child maids were asked to join an open discussion. "A number of child maids in a group of a Focus Group Discussion (FGD) stated that there was differentiation in opportunity to be child maids as girls in the family. In the case of education, the family (parents) tended to put the boys in the first priority and the girls in the second priority." (Wibawa, Dhevry and Moeliono, 2002, p. 5). Again, the children have felt the overt preference directly in the daily life.

Among working children, Indonesia's experimental survey, done by ILO (1996), discovered that slightly more than twenty percent of working children 10-14 years of age were attending school during the one year before the survey. In terms of gender issue, approximately 30 percent of working boys and more than ten percent of working girls were attending school. The results of the survey continue further indicating that virtually none of working children, working boys and girls, during the last week before the survey, had any formal education beyond primary school (see ILO, 1996, p. 60).

It is interesting to note that the same experimental survey encountered that all self-employed children between ages of 5 and 14 years had some schooling. Indeed, more than eighty percent of the children were still attending school. This includes essentially all of the newspaper boys, but only thirty percent of the street hawkers. It turns out that more than eighty percent of those still attending school managed their jobs in the morning only. This implies that the working children were attending schools during the afternoon. And what is more interesting is the fact that the majority of self-employed children mentioned that their self-employment did not interfere with their schooling activities (see ILO, 1996, p. 61). Thus, at least, employment status of self-employed appears to be complementary to schooling instead of substitute for schooling.⁷

Indeed, according to Purwoko and Widodo (1997, pp. 3-16), that there is some indication that children are dreaming of attending their schools again and they want to pursue further improvement and advancement. They continued further that some of children consider themselves as smart children;

and thus capable of pursuing higher education. Nevertheless, the children have to work as child labor (Purwoko and Widodo, 1997, pp. 75-80).

Therefore, programs on development and improvement of educational structure and infrastructure, SPP (school fee) waive and scholarship, social security for poor children and poor households, if effectively implemented, will be able to curtail the number of children working.

4. THE IMPORTANCE OF HOUSEHOLD INCOME

It is true that some factors other than economic factors influence children decision to participate in the labor market. However, economic factors, in particular household income, seem to be more dominant than other factors. Tjandraningsih and Anarita (2000, p. 145) insinuate that "... children who are working and earning wage are sufficiently important sources of household income. It is this same reason that also explains the true meaning of children motivation to work, that helps adding income of the family." Also similar result of qualitative study on child labor in Surakarta (Central Java) compiled by Saptaningtyas et al. (2001, p. 24).

Again, how meaningful is the economic factors for the children families obtain a strong support from other empirical evidence, however small their income is. A methodological experiment done by ILO (1996)⁸ indicates that, despite the children worked longer hours, they earned very low incomes. The report continues further that, on average, child workers were paid less in urban Bandung than those children were in rural Bandung. And in terms of gender issue, it turns out that boy labor enjoyed lower income than girl labor in urban areas. Conversely, boys' incomes were higher than those of girls in rural areas.

It is interesting to note that, in spite of the low income the children made, the experiments discovered that the earnings of working children were very meaningful to the economy of their corresponding households. ILO (1996, p. 45) clearly indicates that "the total income of around one in ten of the working children in urban Bandung and nearly one-third of those in rural Bandung was used toward household needs. Around 15 percent of all working children overall saved a part of their income and another 15 percent in Bandung Municipality (but virtually none in the Regency) saved all of theirs." Since the savings is the amount of income beyond what is needed to

support household consumption, it is this savings that made their households could enjoy better standard of living that may be utilized for other needs, including in the form of investment in education for children.

Indeed there are other sources of information that could supply and explain why children have to carry out the jobs at the time where they have to be in school pursuing their education as well as enjoying plays with their friends. The sources comprise of parents and enterprises, besides the children themselves. Majority of field researches has gathered information solely acquired from children, not from the parents or the enterprises where the children worked at.

Fortunately, one of the surveys, i.e. methodological experiment done by ILO (1996) collects such information from the latter two sources. The experiment in Bandung Municipality and Bandung Regency found that approximately one-third of the parents of child workers mentioned gaining additional income was the reason of why the parents had allowed their children to work. The other one-third of the parents stated that the reason was to help ease the burden of works in the household enterprises. And the last one-third brought up a reason that it was intended for children to gain working experience. In sum, about 60 percent of the parents provided an economic reason for their children to work (see ILO 1996, p. 48). In Central Java, for an instance, the existence of social perception may push children to participate in the labor market early in their lives (Saptaningtyas et al., 2001, p. 39). They argue further that, in general, the local society still consider working at early age as a part of educational process that will cultivate sense of responsibility among the children.

The parents' argument proceeds further and even stronger by saying that the standard of living of their household would decrease should their children stopped participating in the labor market. Three out of ten parents stated this feeling. With regard to how far is the extent of the additional incomes in the household basket of consumption, most parents spoke that the contribution of their children to the household consumption was at least 20 percent. Again, the methodological experiment clearly demonstrates our earlier finding that the children's contribution was very important to the sound economy of the households (see ILO, 1996, p. 48).

Without giving proper mention, ILO (1996, p. 48) states that this evidence is "consistent with the analysis of secondary data showing the relationship between poverty and the likelihood of children working; most working children come from low-income households." Furthermore, Usman

(2002) found similar relationship. He stated that households with higher monthly expenditure per capita tend to face lower risk of having children of the households to work. More precisely, for every increase in the monthly expenditure per capita of 100,000 rupiahs, the risk of the children to work will be 0.907 times lower (Usman, 2002, p. 156). This is also supported by the experimental study where the proportion of the working children in the household decreases as household expenditure increases (ILO, 1996, p. 56). Thus, the pressure to work is highly felt by those children living in a household with lower expenditure. This is most likely one of the main important reasons of why children have to pursue working instead of schooling.

The increase in household expenditure may be closely related to a rise in household income; and thus, since the objective is to earn maximum income for the household, the rise in expenditure explains the decrease in the number of working children. What seems to be in contradiction with our expectation is the evidence that as the number of working adults increases, the proportion of working children also increases both in rural and urban Bandung. This necessarily implies that younger children living in the household of such a "working environment" also tend to work (see ILO, 1996, p. 56). Again, this may indicate how hard the living condition of the household is. Even in a situation in which a larger number of adults were involved in working, additional labor was still required from those children. This of course strongly supports our suspect above.

In line with this finding of the relationship, but with a stress on gender issue, Sanie and Agustian (2000) mention that if a poor family faces economic pressure, then the girls will be the first to help the family. The additional support is accomplished by earning money on the street or other informal sector, with or without consent of their parents. This is perhaps heavily associated with the cultural idea that has been rooted firmly in Indonesian society until today that the boys are preferred to the girls in pursuing higher education.

From the point of view of children themselves, the reason of children participation in the labor market suggests to the same argument. The results of the experiment study (ILO, 1996) indicates that approximately 40 percent of the working boys and 50 percent of the working girls in rural Bandung, during a year before the survey, considered themselves helping the economy of their households. In urban Bandung, the proportions were significantly lower, i.e. less than 10 percent and 20 percent consecutively mentioned the same reason. They worked either they were no longer attending school or to

satisfy their own expenses. Again, the economic reason is the main reason of why they were involved in work at their early ages (see ILO, 1996, p. 49).

From the other side of the labor market is the argument given by enterprises.⁹ ILO (1996, p. 49) indicated that "the reasons for hiring children varied widely between sectors. Overall, however, slightly more than half of the establishments stated that they did so sympathetically, to help the children earn money. Between 3 and 10 percent of the reasons given were that theirs was a job occupation fit for children (the reason given by nearly three out of ten of the shoe manufacturers), they could pay low wages (mainly food and garment manufacturers), it was not against labor regulations, or they had no other source of labor supply. Hal 18" Even if it is true that the establishments were sympathetic, it is the future prospect of the children that the establishments sacrifice in this case. With lower education, the children will be remaining in the groups of future low-income households, identical to what has been experiencing by their parents' households.

Certain values are still mushrooming in Indonesian society. "... other factor that stimulates children involved in working for tobacco plantation is the values of obedience which grows in a natural manner in every family. Children are presumed to have responsibility for satisfying family demand, in this case is to help working in the house and in the plantation. In accordance with such a value, children possess economic value and being a priceless asset that can preserve the sustainability of life of their families. Children are also 'places' where parents can depend upon when parents become old and unproductive anymore." (Tjandraningsih and Anarita, 2000, p. 147) Thus, the present values of the flows of the children's income in their lifetime will reflect human wealth to their parents.

5. PARENTAL INFLUENCES

A large number of children participate in the labor market because of the fact that they are joining and helping their parents. And thus, child workers originate from home where, in an attempt to increase total household income, children must take part in doing their parents' jobs. In a situation in which household income is meager, what matters the most is total income of the household. A methodological experiment done by ILO (1996, p. 48) insinuated that this is true as one-third of the parents stated that acquiring additional income was the reason for permitting their children to work in greater area of Bandung. In this case, the most relevant question is whether the total income is sufficient for the household to satisfy its members'

needs. If the total income is not enough, then the only way out for the corresponding household is to have mother, boys, girls, or any combination of them participate in the labor market. And because of the fact that the household income is so deficient, additional income from other members of the household tends to be significant relative to the previous household income. As already mentioned above, experimental study by ILO (1996, p. 48) indicated that children's contribution to household consumption was at least 20 percent.

The order of importance of the household members is as follows: father, mother, boys, and then girls. If income generated by the father is insufficient in fulfilling household needs or if the working time of the father is too long to do the jobs, the next source of manpower is originated from the mother. If it is still not enough, the next source labor is that of boys. In turn, for those household that are living in a very severe economic condition, the labor of girls will eventually be asked to play partial roles of rice winners in the labor market.

Accompanying the idea that children contribute a quite large proportion of total income of household, there is also an indication that parents agree that their children join the work force merely for the sake of gaining experience. Approximately one-quarter of parents of the children stated that they gave their consent to the children to do the jobs was for their children to acquire experience (see ILO, 1996, p. 48).

Such a parental consent is a very dangerous since it may trigger the involvement of the children in the labor market further and in a sustained manner particularly for the children who are still attending school. In the beginning, school attendance is perhaps a complementary in nature to child labor. However, at a later stage, it may change into a substitute for child labor. As a direct repercussion, work will be considered to be a normal alternative for children not to attend the school or even to drop out of the school. In this case, any policy that reduces poverty or the hardship of daily life is not sufficient to reduce child labor. There must be a policy that also induces awareness of the parents on the negative impact of child labor to the development of the children themselves.

There are some more specific reasons that may be mainly responsible for the involvement of children in the labor market. Among them, some are obvious, while others may require more explanation. They embrace such issues as helping household enterprise where the parents are owners, wage payment system, sub-contract jobs, and common formal labor relation. Of

course, some aspect may be overlapping with others. For instance, family business system may be coupled with jobs sub-contracted from other more formal enterprises (Nachrowi, Muhidin, and Beni, 1997, p. 94), and formal labor relation with payment system. It is seriously important to note that all of the issues may induce children to work primarily due to the fact the wage rate earned by the parents are very low relative to total household income necessary to maintain and sustain their lives.

In greater Bandung area, the evidence is very clear, as about one-third of parents said that it was to help the household enterprise (ILO, 1996, p. 48); and help augmenting to mother's business working capital (Purwoko and Widodo, 1997, pp. 61-64). In general, in the case of family business, the incentive is merely being considered obedient to parents (Tjandraningsih and Anarita, 2000, p. 147) although child labor tends to be unpaid. But once the family enterprise procures a sub-contract job from other companies, the involvement of children begins and induced by the requirement in the sub-contract that the parents are paid according to amount of output produced over a certain period of time. Saptaningtyias (2001, p. 21) also reported the case of sub-contracting to small industries and home industries, where children were employed intensively in Surakarta (Central Java). The inducement becomes greater as the payment per piece is so low such that the additional income may be earned only through a requirement of additional workers. Casual observations indicated that such a sub-contract type is common in footwear industries in Cibaduyut (West Java) and Tangerang (Banten).

Payment system enacted also influences active participation of children in the labor market. For an instance, remuneration for adult workers in tobacco plantation in Jember is based upon the size of plantation area cultivated or harvested in hectare. In order to finish the job on time members of their households must accompany the adult workers; and it is frequently their children who are readily available for the job. Employing members of other family would imply that the adult workers must share their earnings with them; and thus, it necessarily means that the adult workers will take home a lower amount of income. Again, it seems to indicate that, for low-income households, the objective is to maximize the amount of money they could take home for their households. Similar consequence will result if the adult workers are paid by pieces of output produced. Of course the system of payment may not have such an inducement if the rate is sufficiently high for the adult workers to support daily livings of their households.

The next important factor is recruitment system. For the parents, working in manufacturing is more alluring than working as farmers in

agriculture. Besides higher manufacturing income, this is also attributable to the fact that agricultural income is uncertain. Having recruited as workers in manufacturing, then children can be easier involved in manufacturing environment. This is because of the familial nature of the existing recruitment system (see Saptaningtyas et al., 2001, p. 19).

Furthermore, other factors characterize the head of household have proven to have significant strong effect on child labor. In general, the results of methodological experiment in Indonesia seem to indicate that as the educational level attained by the head-of-household arises, the percentage of children in the household caught up in economic activity declines in both rural and urban areas of Bandung. And it remains to be so regardless of the marital status of the head-of-household (ILO 1996, p. 55). The survey continues further by stating that the educational level of the head-of-household proved significant; again, if all other factors remain constant. The higher that level of education, the lower the likelihood those children will be working in the labor market in Bandung regency (see ILO, 1996, p. 56). Eventually, such a relationship will inspire the creation of vicious cycle prompted by Tabatabai (2002) as the lower educated head of the household will produce lower educated children, who will in turn face similar situation as lower educated adults. The same inter-generational "transfer" of education may be responsible for intergenerational poverty (Moore, 2001) or what is known in the most recent revival of research on poverty as chronic poverty.

ILO (1996, p.58) found that the likelihood of children to work tends to be higher also if the head-of-household is either self-employed, a temporary worker, or an employer with unpaid family workers. Taking into account the fact that majority of children working as unpaid family workers (Usman, 2002, p. 88), there are at least two reasons of why the involvement of children is necessary. First, this type of occupational status is usually undertaken by members of household to help alleviate the burden of work of the head of the household. Although children are working under closed supervision of the head of the household or other members of the same household, the very high percentage of children in this status indicates that a significant number of parents doing their jobs with needed help from their children. Secondly, this is also a manifestation of the fact that the parents are not able to pay for hired workers; and thus, the parents are "forced" to utilize their children as additional labor.

In Bandung regency, the sex of the household head is an insignificant factor. The results of the survey show that, all other factors remain the same, the likelihood of children participating in the labor market declines by only

less than one-tenth if the head-of-household is male. Conversely, in Bandung Municipality, the sex of the household head is a significant factor. The survey results indicate that the likelihood of children working reduces by more than two-fifths if a male heads the household (see ILO, 1996, p. 56).

The overall conclusion of the effect of these three characteristics of the household head on the economic activity of children in those households, is that the female-headed and single-headed households, as well as those headed by persons with low levels of education lead to a higher probability that those children will be working children (ILO, 1996, p. 55).

6. COMMUNITY ENVIRONMENT INFLUENCES VERSUS INDIVIDUAL DECISION

Tjandraningsih (1994) states that in those small industrial centers located in the middle of population settlement in rural areas, work places are merged into a whole with houses. Activities in those centers both directly and indirectly induce and attract children to participate in the industrial works as paid workers, unpaid family workers or as apprentice labor. Such an influence of working community is also discovered else where in batik industry in Yogyakarta and in black smith in Tasikmalaya, West Java (Lembaga Demografi FEUI, 2003).

Large tobacco plantations in Jember (East Java) and Deli Serdang (North Sumatera) are operated by different production systems, but they all create child labor who support the production process and the processing of the tobacco leaves. The two cases clearly indicate that different production systems have brought about two kinds of child labor with distinct working relation (Tjandraningsih and Anarita, 2000, p. 143).

A worker is impossible to process a cultivated area of 0.9 hectare by himself or herself. However, to get any help from his or her permanent colleagues or temporary or independent workers, he or she must bear the burden of their wages. This condition is an entry point of the children involvement as family labor to curtail labor cost. Children and wives of the workers are ultimately caught up in helping their families to grow tobacco, with status as unpaid family workers (Tjandraningsih and Anarita, 2000, p. 144-45).

"Life condition of the plantation society in the two locations is also a determining factor in the involvement of children to work. In general, the plantation society depend their lives completely on the activity of the plantations" (Tjandraningsih and Anarita, 2000, p. 145). The involvement of children in the labor market often becomes a natural phenomenon. As they were born and growing up in a community where its members of more or less homogeneous, in their social, cultural and economic characters, are preoccupied with similar job and skill traits in every day life (Lembaga Demografi FEUI, 2003). Together with the fact that "... children who are working and earning wage are sufficiently important sources of household income. It is this same reason that also explain the true meaning of children motivation to work, that is help adding income of the family" (Tjandraningsih and Anarita, 2000, p. 145). Again, children become a part of human wealth of the family.

In tobacco plantation sector of the economy, "... any intervention undertaken must be contextual, taking into consideration every factor that causes the involvement of the children in the tobacco's system of work and any likely problem that appears as a direct consequence of the involvement. With no intention to lower the meaning of other factors' influences, a very unfair production management system and welfare system for the lowest level of the plantation workers appears to be the dominant factor pushing the children to enter the tobacco plantation for works." hal 15 (Tjandraningsih and Anarita, 2000, p. 149). And thus, the involvement of children in the labor market is to some extent not independent of the systems in which both production and welfare are managed.

The involvement of children working in tobacco plantation can not be automatically considered as a violation of ILO Convention Number 138 regarding the minimum age so that it must be enforced further. Social environment that is full/solid with productive activity and tobacco processing, becoming a place where children have been growing, as it is in the environment of fishery community, small industry community, scavengers and others, who has made work place to be inseparable part of their lives. They are all becoming a situation, which attracts children to be involved in work at early ages. In such an environment, exercising ILO Convention Number 138 requires creative idea so that it does not do any harm to the welfare of the children (see Tjandraningsih and Anarita, 2000, p. 151). Other examples are those household around *batik* industries in Yogyakarta and those living surround shoe industries in Cibaduyut, West Java.

The entanglement of child labor is obviously structural in nature. "... structural factors influence children participation in the labor market more than individual factors. Consequently, all efforts to prohibit the participation which are not supported by understanding, structurally oriented and comprehensive study on the contextual aspects of child labor are not wise steps" (Tjandraningsih and Anarita, 2000, p. 155). Again, any policy taken to handle the issue of child labor must thus take into consideration of contextual characteristics of the various aspects of children living environment, and in particular, for those living in and around local industrial estate.

7. INTERGENERATIONAL SKILL TRANSFER

In general, child workers are equipped only with a meager level of formal education; and thus, they are not exposed to further development of skill. As a consequence, they are given a responsibility of doing simple tasks, which in turn do not require higher education. In spite of this fact, a little bit more enhanced skill is often developed naturally for those children who have been growing up in an environment where prevailing community members are in general cultivated with more or less similar skill (Lembaga Demografi FEUI, 2003).

An obvious example is the community surrounding child labor in footwear industry in Cibaduyut, where the children have learned similar skill in natural manner in residential places that function also as working places. Similarly, we have found elsewhere in Tasikmalaya where children have learned skill in blacksmith; and in Yogyakarta where they have acquired skill in batik-making. Then, skill transfer predominantly takes in the form of inter-generational in nature. The skill is transferred from parents to children, and it often goes to grandchildren.

In a sense the children are interwoven in a simple way in a circle of similar skills between the two or more generations. Together with a very meager level of education they are equipped with, the children are most likely trapped at the very low level of equilibrium. The low educated children are paid very low wages in similar fashion as their parents have been experiencing so far. The same process will be passed through in turn to their own children in the next generation.

8. NATURE OF OCCUPATION, PRODUCTION PROCESS AND PRODUCT

The evidence suggests that higher number of girl workers than boys, other than influenced by the appropriateness of girl workers for certain occupational types, was also caused by employers' preference for girls (Usman, 2002). Besides the preference, Asra (1996) indicates further that girls are considered more obedient than boys are. Moreover, he continued that it is due to girls' wages that are cheaper than those of boys are. Haryadi and Tjandraningsih (1995) attribute this conjecture to the fact that girl labor can be easily substituted for women workers in production process.¹⁰ In an objective to which a household attempts to maximize total household income, in particular the household is in the midst of suffering from poverty, work assignment usually goes to wife first and then to their children in turn. Meanwhile, boy labor is not always substitutable for men workers. Therefore, elastic substitution¹¹ between women workers and girl labor is one among many determinants of girl labor; in any case, work seems to be the normal substitute for girls. The higher the elasticity of substitution, the more open is the opportunity to secure the jobs for girls.

Stages of a production process also determine the possibility of involving children in work place. Casual observation in footwear industry in Cibaduyut clearly indicates that there are stages of production process in which children are able to do; and thus, it opens the probability of hiring them. Besides that, knowledge concerning the stages is particularly useful in an effort to determine whether the stages are harmful to children; and simultaneously, the same information could provide policy makers with wisdom of substituting harmful jobs with non-harmful ones.

Saptaningtyas et al. (2001, p. 21) clearly indicates that the nature of manufacturing the corresponding product influences the recruitment system utilized in *Sumedang* tofu industry in the regency of Sragen and in manufacturing of rice noodle in Klaten regency. To produce *Sumedang* tofu requires those persons who really comprehend how to make the tofu; and they are those from Sumedang area. Consequently, the recruitment system is based more on kinship, not friendship. The latter system is only utilized in rice noodle industry where the hiring of child labor is based on friendship and they come from the same village of Sambirobyong, sub-regency of Sumberlawang in Klaten regency.

9. CHARACTERISTICS AND TYPES OF OCCUPATION

Nachrowi, Muhidin, and Beni (1997) notice a structural change in the employment of child labor in Indonesia, that is a shift from a concentration of child labor in agricultural sector towards manufacturing and services. However, child workers still predominantly work in agricultural sector. Other research indicates that the percentage of girls absorbed in agricultural sector is lower than that of boys. The higher percentage of girls working in non-agricultural sector is thought due to the fact that the type of occupation is more suitable for girls than for boys (Usman, 2002). Other research, to some extent, supports such a judgment. Haryadi and Tjandraningsih (1995), for instance, mention that home industries that demand a detailed precision and require colouring, polishing, tailoring, and cutting by using scissors, are all dominated by girls.

Based on occupational status, it turns out that the majority of children were working as unpaid family workers. About 79.3 percent of child labor were working with this status (Usman, 2002, p.88), and only around 6 percent of them were self-employed. In general, this type of status is undertaken by members of household to help alleviate the work burden of the head of the household. Thus, children were working under closed supervision of the head of the household or other members of the same household. Considering the very high percentage of children is classified in this status, we can expect that a large number of parents doing their jobs with needed help from their children. Again, this is perhaps attributable to the fact that the parents are not able to pay for hired workers.

In the more modern enterprises, children are valued lower than adults, their income being only about three-fourths that of their elders, except in the trade sector (ILO, 1996, p. 45). However, the workload of child labor is often not much different from that of adult workers in similar work place. Enterprises in all sectors paid low wages to child workers as compared with those paid to adult workers, the average salary being less than 2,000 rupiahs per day in the small cottage/household establishments and 2,100 in the larger-scale establishments (ILO, 1996, p. 46). In all sectors except the garment, shoe and "other" sub sectors, a wage differential exists based on sex, whereby girl workers are paid slightly less than boys. The most striking difference is in the trade sector where girls' salaries are less than half of those of boys (ILO, 1996, p. 46).

Social facilities are not always provided by enterprises employing children. Only about 16 percent of enterprises provide fringe benefits for their workers, with a relatively higher percentage in the shoe manufacturing and trade sectors. These benefits typically cover health, sport, recreation and other facilities, the latter three facilities being found in only about 3.5 percent of the establishments, and non at all in the informal sector establishments. Fewer than one-tenth of enterprises covered in the survey provide workers with health centres, clinics or physicians, but three-fourths have emergency facilities, including all of the shoe manufacturers (ILO, 1996, p. 45-46).

10. WORKING TIME EXPLOITATION

As we all know, children working in informal sector are susceptible to various forms of exploitation because there is no protection for their safety. Moreover, children generally do not know that there is working regulation that may protect them during the work hours and days. The most common exploitation is in the forms of over working, both in terms of working hours and working days.

Although, according to the existing law, a child is allowed to work less than 4 hours a day and less than five days a week, there are still a large number of them working more than 4 hours daily and more than five days weekly. Some children admit that they work between 6:30 a.m. till 10:00 p.m. (see Imelda and Sudrajat, 2002, p. 30). Hiring children to do the work during the night is obviously against the law. Clearly, it will disturb their health and education. For those children who are working and attending school often feel the fatigue that they suffer from the jobs when they have to study at home after schooling hours.

Similar support is also obtained from the experience of child maids for household works. "Evidence from several FGDs hinted at that working hours of a child maid was almost indifferent from that of an adult maid. Similarly in the case of heavy work load and variety of work showed almost no significant difference" (Wibawa, Dhevy and Moeliono, 2002, p. 14).

In a like manner, a report obtained from a methodological experiment done by ILO (1996) in Indonesia exhibits similar statistical support.¹² The survey found that, on average, the children in urban Bandung did their works longer hours than those children in rural Bandung. More specifically, the former worked for 40 hours versus the latter who worked for 25 hours a week.

Both in rural and urban Bandung, girls worked longer hours than boys did (see ILO, 1996, p. 45).

Again, in Surakarta and surrounding areas, Saptaningtyas, et al. (2001, p. 22) indicates that only one percent of child workers did their jobs for four hours a day; the remaining 99 percent worked for longer hours between 9 to 12 hours per day.¹³ Break time was between half to one hour every day.

Contrary to most of the empirical supports presented above, Cameron (2001) found that not only fewer children, in terms of labor force participation rate, aged 10 to 17 years old were working or looking for work in May 1999 than in May 1997,¹⁴ but working fewer hours for children under 13 years old in May 1999 than in May 1997. However, those over 13 years of age were working longer hours. It is similar to the trend in the labor force participation found by Pradhan and Sparrow (2000).

11. WORKING ENVIRONMENT

Working environment significantly depends on the existing types of occupation or the types of industry in which children are working. In textile and garment industries, plenty of children work in a closed place and full with machinery. As a consequence, whenever working children did carelessly even for a little mistake or did overlooking their jobs, they tend to suffer from harmful accidents. In such a closed working place, besides the surrounding air is too hot to be comfortable to do their jobs, fresh air circulation is insufficient for healthy breathing (see Saptaningtyas et al., 2001, p. 26).

For rice noodle industry, children usually did their jobs as drying workers in an open place under hot sunshine (Saptaningtyas, et al., 2001, p. 26). As we know, too much exposure to the sunshine the children will suffer from radiation and burn; and it may cause skin cancer since their early ages. Of course, such a problem will bring up an additional burden to the household expenditure, and in particular, for those households that live around poverty line.

12. POLICY RECOMMENDATIONS

As it has been turning out during the process of analysis, the phenomenon of child labor is not an issue of children per se. Although some of the children may have taken decisions to work independently, the crux of the issue involves various aspects of life surrounding them, in particular those related to the households where they belong, predominantly the role of their parents in their involvement, and the community where the households conform. It is closely associated with the fact that a large part of Indonesian households is still characterized by an extended family system in a more sociable nature. It is consequently essential to approach any child labor policy beyond those issues directly related to what problems the children themselves are confronting in labor market.

Bear in mind that resource is indeed limited in reality. As Tabatabai (2002) suggests that economic resources needed are so huge that it is impossible take care of the issue of child labor merely through direct intervention *however good the practices have been*.¹⁵ Thus, such a huge requirement of resources together with a multi-dimensional nature of the problem transparently make any effort of mainstreaming the issue of child labor into other development programs is perhaps the most efficient and effective way to tackle the problem.

The mainstreaming is particularly important considering the historical fact that there has been a long list of gaps between legislation and implementation since the Independence Year 1945. Among others, mainstreaming may be undertaken through such local and central government programs of development as poverty alleviation, education and training, as well as health for all. Of course, the mainstreaming does not imply that all active intervention programs must be discarded at all. It necessarily means that the action programs must be directed to those issues that are at the highest ladder of priority, for instances, the six worst forms of child labor, which have been identified and generally accepted as priority in Indonesia.

Although this review study indicates the overwhelmingly significant role of parents, both mainstreaming policy and active intervention are best approached more holistically through the existing structure of Indonesian society. One can think of the structure as social hierarchy in which community takes on a dominant role at the upper end, and followed by households or in particular parents at the middle, and individual at the lower end of the ladder. Intertwined among the members are formal network and in particular informal network through kinship and friendship relations,

organizational and institutional relations. They are all known as social capital. But, social capital will not be beneficial unless it is functional the households involved.

However, participation of children in the labor market does not always involve community where they have evolved. Community may take a form of homogeneous populations in terms of religion, culture, or even ethnicity. An obvious example is the community surrounding child labor in tobacco plantation in Jember. Identical place of residence or the same trait of skill involved characterizes another form of community. Or as in the case of Cibaduyut,¹⁶ where children have grown up in the same environment beginning from their births and thus learning similar skill naturally in residential place that functions also as working place. The point is that the community leader becomes important in the process of tackling the issue of child labor. Including the leader and the community from the beginning of policy and programs at the outset, even at the stage of planning, may significantly secure the success of the policy and programs. In that way, the policy and programs will tend to be in accordance with the needs of the community, households and children themselves, not the needs of policy makers and programs.

It is true the workers are children themselves. But it is not sufficient to approach the problems they are facing and to treat them individualistically. In the real world, they often interact with their households from which they are originating. A large number of them, for instance, have been taking part in the responsibility of providing economic resources in the form of transfer payments to other members of their own households. During the process, girls are customarily "sacrificed" in terms of their own interest for the sake of boys' interest. Thus, helping households, or predominantly parents, is identical to helping not only boy labor but also girl labor. Income generating activity for the household seems to be one of the right ways to empower the households; and thus the members of the households. But it is only one aspect of the issue. One of the most important considerations is to educate parents on how valuable their children's lives are both at the present and in the future.

Often the relationship not only takes place among household members as a kinship relation, but also among members of friendship relation. It proceeds regardless of whether the community, household or parents play an important role or not. It is common that we observe an informal social network in daily life among Indonesians. Thus, helping the informal network often implies helping the child labor; and hence, finding policy and programs that best suit to how to combat against the problems facing child labor. The

network often identifies the area of origin from which a large number of children come from. Again, helping the area of origin may prevent a larger number of children from participating in the labor market early at their ages. Child trafficking and prostitution may take this form, where the area of origin plays an important role; and thus, preventive actions may be undertaken simultaneously with curative actions.

One last point often considered one of the weaknesses of any programs in Indonesia is related to the issue of sustainability. In an environment in which child labor issue requires external force of intervention, exercising the required policies and actions absolutely demands creative idea so that it does not do any harm to the welfare of the children. It is therefore necessary to have capable human resources in the exercise who are not only deeply committed to the problem of child, but also equipped with knowledge of child labor issue in greater details. Second point is strongly related to sustainable financial resources. Although capable human resources may eventually generate the resources, it may take in the form of mainstreaming the programs into income generating programs and projects. An obvious example is mainstreaming it into health clinic, workshop, etc.

In short, child labor and the corresponding household should be considered as the cornerstone of our strategy of designing policy and action programs. Surrounding the basis is what has been widely known in sociology literature, and most recently in economics literature, as neighborhood effect on individual decision, in this case is child worker's and household's decision. It may take the form of community, neighbors, and parents or in the form of informal social network through which friendship relation of the child labor or other members of the household may have an influence on decision to work. Any policy and active intervention programs undertaken must be contextual, taking into consideration every factor that causes the involvement of the children in the labor market. With no intention to lower the meaning of other factors' influences on child labor, poverty surrounding the daily life of the household appears to be the dominant factor pushing the children to enter the market. Structural factors influence children participation in the labor market more than individual factors. Consequently, full understanding, structurally oriented and comprehensive study on the contextual aspects of child labor, must support all policies and efforts to prevent and to reduce children participation in the labor market.

Notes

1. This is a revised form of a paper presented at the seminar on Poverty, Child Labor and Youth Reproductive Health to celebrate four decades of the Demographic Institute, Faculty of Economics, University of Indonesia, held in Depok, Indonesia, June 9, 2004.
2. IPEC was established in Indonesia through the signing of a Memorandum of Understanding in 1992. The Government of Indonesia ratified ILO Convention No. 138 on minimum age for admission to employment in June 1999 by Law No. 20/1999 and Convention No. 182 on the worst forms of child labor in March 2000 by Law No. 1/2000. The implementation of ILO Convention No. 182 on the worst forms of child labor is a high priority in Indonesia. Following the National Plan of Action (RAN), endorsed by Presidential Decree No. 59/2002 on the 13 August 2002, six worst forms of child labor have been identified as the most urgent to be addressed under the Time Bound Program (TBP). They include children involved in sale, production and trafficking of drugs; trafficking of children; children in prostitution, child labor in off-shore fishing; in mining; and in the footwear sector.
3. All the estimated number of child labor provided below is based on published data collected by the Central Board of Statistic (formerly known as Central Bureau of Statistic) through National Labor Force Survey of various years (1992, 1996, 2001, and 2002).
4. We surely need more empirical support on this suspect, before we come up with a more definitive conclusion on the signaling of the labor market.
5. Although, the 2001 National Labor Force Survey was intended to include also those children aged 10-14 years, it is unfortunately not reported in the publication.
6. See footnote 5 above.
7. Similar evidence is also discovered in Vietnam. According to Edmonds and Turk (2002), it is possible to go to school simultaneously with working in agricultural sector for greater number of working children in Vietnam. The same is also true in rural area of India where the rural work is considered 'light' for children (Basu, 1999).
8. For a more detailed report on the survey, the readers may consult ILO (1996). The survey is a methodological survey. It was undertaken in four countries, Ghana, India, Indonesia, and Senegal. The reference period utilized is up to one year earlier such the report on child labor covers the years 1992-1993. In the case of Indonesia, the areas under the investigation were limited to Municipality of Bandung and Bandung Regency.
9. The same methodological experiment not only undertook a household survey, but also enterprise survey in the same areas.
10. Until recently, no research has been undertaken to examine the impact of child labor on output growth, both in the realms of microeconomics and macroeconomics. However, we would expect that there will be master thesis devoted to see this impact on the growth of provincial output having controlled other variables.
11. In the literature of microeconomics, in particular production theory, it has been well known that the curvature of isoquant indicates the relative easiness of substituting one input into another input. More elastic substitution is said easy if the elasticity of substitution is more than one; and conversely, it is difficult to substitute among the inputs if the elasticity is less than one.
12. See also footnote 8 about the period and areas covered in the experiment.
13. This is clearly at odd against *Permenaker* (Labor Minister Regulation) Number 1 year 1987 concerning the protection of working children under 14 years old, especially chapter 4 which states that employer is not allowed to hire children for more than 4 hours a day or 20 hours a week. And in circular letter of Labor Minister number SE-12/M/BW/1997 about executing guideline explaining that of four working hours, it is suggested to manage

it into working for the first two hours, a quarter hour break, and continue to work for the remaining two hours.

14. Her analysis is based on data from 100 Villages Survey which covers 120 households for each of 100 villages across Indonesia. The survey is conducted by the Central Board of Statistics (BPS) and financed by UNICEF. The villages are located in 10 districts over 8 provinces of Indonesia. Keep in mind that the survey is not intended to represent Indonesia as a whole.
15. *Italic* is added to stress the point.
16. Our experience elsewhere also indicates similar influence of community in blacksmith industry in Tasikmalaya and *batik* industry in Yogyakarta.

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