

A STUDY OF REHABILITATIVE FUNCTIONS AND PERFORMANCE OF SPECIAL TRAINING CENTRES (STC) WITH SPECIAL REFERENCE TO STC-NCLP IN TUTICORIN DISTRICT

Mr. A.Prabhakaran* Dr. I.Goswami**

* Ph.D Scholar (SW) at Bharathiar University, Coimbatore.

** Director, Dept. of Mgmt at Info Institute of Engineering, Coimbatore.

Abstract

According to the Ministry of Statistics and Programme Implementation (MSPI), Government of India (GoI) report titled "Children in India 2012 – A Statistical Appraisal", India has a larger size of child labourers in the world. As per the record (Census: 2011) there had been 1108808 main workers and 1066910 marginal workers in the age group of 5-9 years, 3244439 main workers and 2808324 marginal workers in the age group of 10-14 years and 17703310 main workers and 9458107 marginal workers in the group of 15 and 19 years (NCPCR, 2014). The data from 2011 census when compared with 2001, have revealed that there has been 34 percent of reduction in the size of population of main (child) workers. It may be due to effective functioning of STC-NCLP and some other reasons. The present study aims to know about the role of such centres and their achievements so far.



In Tamil Nadu, National Child Labour Projects (NCLP) are functioning in 15 Districts viz., Chennai, Coimbatore, Dindigul, Dharmapuri, Erode, Krishnagiri, Kancheepuram, Namakkal, Thoothukkudi, Tirunelveli, Trichy, Thiruvannamalai, Salem, Vellore and Virudhunagar. As on 31.05.2015, 10,832 erstwhile child labourers and school drop-out children were under the process of rehabilitation through 259 STCs and 98,155 children were brought in to mainstream through enrolment in the regular schools.

The Special Training Centre (STC) under National Child Labour Project (NCLP) is one of the most important projects implemented by the 'Ministry of labour and employment' in India, with a special focus towards the rehabilitation of child labourers. The STC-NCLP has been playing an important role in overall development of children rescued from the labour market in Tamil Nadu. At Present (as on May, 2015) there are 371 children in the age group of 9 and 14 years at the STCs in Tutucorin district and they are under the rehabilitation process. The district is the home for 3.8 percent of the total children in Tamil Nadu under the rehabilitation process.

Keywords: Child Labour, STC, NCLP, Rescue and Rehabilitation.

Introduction

The GOI has initiated the National Child Labour Project (NCLP) scheme in the year 1988 to rehabilitate the children from the labour market. The scheme envisages project based action in the area of high concentration of the child labour. The major objective of the scheme is to withdraw children working in hazardous occupations and processes and bring them back into formal education system and social life. The rescued children are enrolled with the NCLP Special Training Centres, where they are provided with bridge education, vocational training, mid-day meal, stipend, health care etc. The objective and the purpose of the STC are to extend full support so that the children are confident to survive and come out of the influence of exploitative child labour market and its hazardous nature. The STCs expected to transform the lives of rescued child labourers. The current study made an attempt to analyze and explore the happenings in the STCs. The scope of the study is limited to Tutucorin district only. The findings and its implications may or may not reflect the scenario prevailing in other districts in Tamil Nadu.

Methodology

Objectives

1. To understand the role and functions of STC towards rehabilitation of child labourers.
2. To study and understand the performance of STC-NCLP in the district.

Research Design

It has been a descriptive study and it has used the data collected through secondary sources, such as various reports, statistics available with district offices, journals, articles, books etc.



Definition of Key terms

Child Labour: It includes any form of child labour including its worst forms, as defined by international labour organization (ILO, 2011) Conventions (138). It potentially involves risks of damage of children's health, threaten their education and lead them towards further exploitation and abuse. The ILO records the minimum age for different types of employment: Age 15 for ordinary work, 18 for hazardous work and 13 for light work.

Bonded Child Labour: The definition given by Bhargava (2003), has been included in the present study. It means and covers those children who are objects or subjects of pledge of their indebted parents to money lenders and such children work under the money-lenders till the loan amount get cleared.

Rehabilitation: It means and includes the definition of Zutshi and Dutt (2003), where it is referred as a process of providing a comprehensive package of education with components of health, nutrition, recreation and skill training which are expected to help them to get back to their normal life and to enable them to earn a livelihood.

Child Labour Rescue and Rehabilitation: The freed children from labour market and reintegrated into the social mainstream through any government project or scheme.

STC: It is a centre for the rescued children in the age group of 9-14 years to train them before sent to the formal schools. The STC functions under NCLP (GOI).

Review of Literature

Literature Review on Rehabilitative Functions

In 2009, Nanjunda, the author of '*Anthropology and Child Labour*', says about a program that was launched in the year 1994. According to that program, after the rescue operation of the child labourers from labour market, they can be rehabilitated through the special schools (Training centres), where they will be provided with education, vocational training, monthly stipends, nutritious foods and health care. Here it shows the importance of STCs and its function in the process of rehabilitation.

According to Chandra, et al. (1987), rehabilitative education is to be imparted in a free atmosphere, without the rigidity of rules and regulations associated with schools or college education. It is termed as Non-Formal education (NFE). The academic objectives of NFE are clustered around dropouts from formal education, functional illiterates, unemployed and underemployed youths and adults. There are a number of educational activities and programme that can be termed as NFE including literacy, adult education, distance education, open university, extension activities, including those of agriculture, health, population education etc. Thus the process of education provided to the child or adults or any group, which is structured but outside the formal education is normally called Non-Formal Education. As for the objectives of Non-Formal Education, Dr. Shirur says, "the objectives of Non-Formal Education are to provide basic knowledge and skills, practice and attitudes necessary for each group to become conscious of their need and problems and to learn to achieve their individual and social goals." The above descriptions prove that NFE has become a medium for social change as the knowledge and skills needed urgently. Thus the process of education provided to the children or adults or any other group, which is structured but outside the formal education is normally called Non-Formal Education.

After being identified and rescued, the child labours are set forth through a rehabilitative process thereafter by way of repatriation. In case of migrant child labour, a bridge education is provided with the ultimate objective of mainstreaming such children into the formal system of education. The government also provides pre-vocational training to the rescued children. As a part of the convergence action plan, a core group on convergence of various welfare schemes and general development programmes of the government for benefiting children has been constituted under the aegis of the Ministry of Labour & Employment. The Government is aware of the fact that poverty and illiteracy are the root cause of child labour and hence it is necessary that educational rehabilitation of children is to be supplemented with economic rehabilitation of their families, so that they are not compelled by economic circumstances to push back to work again (Ghosh & Nanda. 2015).

Functions and Performances

Functions of NCLP - STC

As an administrative and functional component of STC – NCLP scheme, a regular survey is to be conducted by project societies at district level to identify the children working in hazardous occupations and processes. According to the policy framework of STC, the rescued children in the age group of 5-8 years will be directly mainstreamed in to formal educational system through the Sarva Shiksha Abhiyan (SSA) and the working children in the age group of 9- 14 years will be sent to

STC before being mainstreamed into formal education system. At present in India, about 6000 STCs are in operation under NCLP scheme. As on date more than 10 lakhs children have already been mainstreamed into the formal education system through STC-NCLP scheme.

The functions of STC - NCLP are to make provisions for the following facilities at the centres:

1. Non-formal education
2. Vocational training
3. Mid Day Meal
4. Monthly Stipend to every children
5. Health care facilities through a doctor appointed for a group of 20 schools.

The STC – NCLP scheme is under the control of central government and it was initiated as a scheme in 1988 to rehabilitate working children in 12 child labour endemic districts of the country. Later it was expanded to 100 districts in 88 NCLP-STC during IXth year plan, 250 districts in 150 NCLP – STC during Xth year plan and 271 districts in 21 NCLP-STC during XIth year plan, (INDUS) Indo-US Co-operation on Elimination of Child Labour. The entire funding for NCLP-STC is done by the Central Government (Ministry of Labour & Employment). Funds are released to the concerned Project Societies and the entire project is headed by the District Magistrate / Collector / Dy. Commissioner of the District. Members of the society are drawn from the concerned government departments, representatives of Panchayati Raj Institutions, NGOs etc.

INDUS - The Indus Project is jointly funded by the Ministry of Labour, Government of India and the Department of Labour, United States of America (USDOL) and is implemented in ten hazardous sectors in 21 districts across five states viz. Delhi, Maharashtra, Madhya Pradesh, Tamil Nadu and Uttar Pradesh (Govt. of TN).

NCLP – STC Performance in Tamil Nadu

Result of Initiative taken by the Labour Department, Govt of Tamil Nadu through NCLP – STC are listed below: (*Source: Labour Dept, Govt of TN*)

- Many mainstreamed children of National Child Labour Project Special Training Centers (NCLP STCs) have achieved academic excellence in 10th and 12th board examinations
- Some of the mainstreamed Children have been employed as Software Engineers, School teachers, Police constables in Border Security Force, etc.,
- More than 100 mainstreamed children of National Child Labour Project Special Training Centers (NCLP STCs) are presently studying in Engineering Colleges
- Mr. M. Ramalingam of Namakkal rescued from power loom in 2004, Mr. M. Moorthy of Dharmapuri rescued from construction works in 2005 have joined MBBS course in 2011. Selvi. R. Vidya has joined in B.V.Sc. course in 2011.
- Mr. Mohan and Ms. Vidya who were rescued from silver anklet industry in Salem are presently working as Software Engineers.
- Mr. M. Ramalingam, a Medical Student and Mr. Mohan, a Software Engineer, who were rescued from employment, participated in the Second SAARC Regional Workshop on Child Labour organized by the Ministry of Labour and Employment, in collaboration with the International Labour Organization during 29-31, May 2013 at New Delhi. They shared their experience of rescue and rehabilitation by the Government of Tamil Nadu.
- Mr. Jeyakumar of Chennai rescued from mechanic work is doing 3rd Year B.L., in Dr. Ambedkar Law College and Mrs. Rajeshwari of Virudhunagar rescued from match works is working as Head Mistress in Government School at Ramnad district.
- Selvan. Kavin, aged 12 years, studying in National Child Labour Project Special Training Centre (NCLP STC) was given Young Scientist award by his Excellency Governor of Tamil Nadu Dr. K. Rosaiah on 09.12.2013 for his paper on 'Waste of Human Energy' selected for the National Children Science Congress.
- Ms. Deepa, an erstwhile student of NCLP STC rescued from match industry, is working as teacher in Jayagopal Karodia Higher Secondary School, Nanganallur, Kanchipuram District.
- Mr. C. Shankar, an erstwhile student of NCLP STC rescued from construction work, is working as Assistant Manager, BNB Paribash Investment bank, Alwarpet, Chennai.
- Mr. C. Mayakannan, an erstwhile student of NCLP STC rescued from match industry, is working as Assistant Loco pilot, Southern Railway.
- In 12th Standard public examination held in March, 2015, Selvan. V. Karthick of Dharmapuri rescued from construction work scored 1156 marks out of 1200, Selvi V. Mahalakshmi of Trichy District rescued from domestic work scored 1142 marks out of 1200 and Selvi C. Muthuselvi of Virudhunagar District rescued from fire works scored 1135 marks out of 1200.

- In 10th Standard public examination held in March, 2015 Selvi. V. Indhumathi of Namakkal rescued from power loom scored 490 marks out of 500 , Selvi B. Keerthika of Salem district rescued from brick kiln work scored 485 marks out of 500 and Selvan K. Sakthivel of Krishnagiri district rescued from construction work scored 484 marks out of 500.
- The Commissioner of Labour has written personally letters of appreciation to the 112 former National Child Labour Project, special training centre children who had scored more than 400 marks in the 10th std Public Examination and to the 27 former National Child Labour Project, special training centre children who had scored more than 1000 marks in the 12th Std Public Examination.

Campaign Program

- Campaign against child labour - In June 2015, a signature campaign was launched in various parts of Tuticorin district to ensure the district become free from child labour. STC - NCLP joined with concerned department, organizations such as District labour department, child line to reach out to the public to spread the importance of education to every child (The Hindu, June 11, 2015).
- The National Child Labour Project (NCLP) plans to strengthen enforcement activities in block wise in the district to bring down child, more number of enforcement and awareness programmes will be conducted in the rural areas. A seminar was also organised jointly by the NCLP, Labour Department, World Vision and the District Legal Services Authority. Representatives from brick kilns, textile retail and hotel industries participated apart from self-help group and trade union members. The aim was to create awareness against employment of child workers and on the new child labour laws and to get suggestions from the industry (The Hindu, June 13, 2015).

Former Child Labourers' Performance in Education (The Hindu, May 23, 2015).

- Keerthiga, (Rescued/former child labour) daughter of K. Periasamy and Prabadevi, both power loom workers, initially could not continue beyond Class III due to poverty. She too was employed in a silk rearing unit, when the NCPL – STC identified and rescued her. She was admitted in Special training centre under the NCLP. Later, she was mainstreamed in Matriculation School. She wants to pursue B. Sc (Agriculture) and she wants to innovate a 'modern farm technology' to help the farming community in her area. She secured 485 marks (Tamil 94, English 94, Maths 100, Science 99 and Social Science 98) to finish second in the whole state among the rescued child labourers who appeared for the SSLC examinations in the academic year 2014-15.
- Keerthana was another rescued child labourer. She scored 480 marks – Tamil 92, English 91, Maths 98, Science 99 and Social Science 100 – district second rank holder among the rescued child labourers. Daughter of power loom worker parents, she was identified by NCLP teachers in 2007 and admitted in STC. Later she was admitted in Class VI in Government Girls Higher Secondary School. She has opted for first group in Plus Two and her aim is to clear the Union Public Service Exams.
- Mohana Priya, is yet another success story of NCLP. Daughter of P. Gopalasamy, a power loom worker, she was a school dropout. She was identified during the 2010 survey and admitted to Government HSS in Class VIII. She scored 477 marks to bag the district third rank among the former child labourers.

Performance of STC in Tuticorin

S. No	Place of STC	Name of organization	No. of students		
			Boys	Girls	Total
1.	Loorhammal puram	Tuticorin Municipality Social Service Society, Tuticorin	25	14	39
2.	Inigo Nagar	Tuticorin Municipality Social Service Society, Tuticorin	25	5	30
3.	MGR Nagar	Tuticorin Municipality Social Service Society, Tuticorin	16	16	32
4.	Vilathikulam	Tuticorin Municipality Social Service Society, Tuticorin	17	18	35
5.	Bharathinagar	Sivtham Educational and Charitable Trust, Kovil patti.	14	10	24
6.	Kovil patti.	Sivtham Educational and Charitable Trust, Kovil patti.	16	22	38
7.	Ayyanar ottru	IGM SHG, Ayyanar ottru, Kayathar Union.	2	11	13
8.	Usilangulam	NCLP Society, Collector office	5	5	10
9.	Thalamuthu Nagar	Sangamam Annai Therasa Mahalir SHG	22	23	45

10.	Siluvaipatti	Sangamam Annai Therasa Mahalir SHG	25	20	45
11.	Kalugumalai	CESWARD, Mudugari Nagar	15	15	30
12.	Vembar	CESWARD, Mudugari Nagar	27	3	30
Total			209	162	371

Source: RTI Act 2005 – Roc No.C.LA1/37/201. As on July 2015.

S. no	Age Category	No. of Children
1.	9	107
2.	10	79
3.	11	75
4.	12	58
5.	13	30
6.	14	22
Total		371

S. no	Category	No. of Children
1.	Fishing	131
2.	Brick Work	35
3.	Coolie (seasonal work)	24
4.	Seller	48
5.	Match Works	20
6.	Agriculture	24
7.	Rag pickers	90
Total		371

Occupation	Age					
	9	10	11	12	13	14
Fishing	26(7%)	23(6.1%)	18(4.8%)	22(5.9%)	22(5.9%)	19(5.1%)
Brick Work	5(1.3 %)	15(4.0%)	11(2.9%)	4(1.0%)	1(0.2%)	0
Coolie (seasonal work)	12(3.2%)	6(1.6%)	1(0.2%)	3(0.8%)	0	1(0.2%)
Seller	23(6.1%)	13(3.5%)	11(2.9%)	2(0.5%)	0	0
Match Works	5(1.3 %)	2(0.5%)	6(1.6%)	4(1.0%)	1(0.2%)	2(0.5%)
Agriculture	7(1.8%)	2(0.5%)	4(1.0%)	5(1.3 %)	4(1.0%)	1(0.2%)
Rag pickers	29(7.8%)	18(4.8%)	24(6.4%)	18(4.8%)	1(0.2%)	0

The description of the above Tables and Figures are given below:

- **Table 1.1** – It presents the centre-wise distribution of student enrolment in Tuticorin district (July, 2015). There are 12 STCs which are functional in 12 different places. There are 371 children, including 209 boys and 162 girls, in the STCs in Tuticorin district.
- **Table 1.2** depict that in the age group of 9-14 years, 9 years old are more in number (107, i.e. 28.8%), 10 years old are counted to be 79 (21.2%), 11 years old are 75 (20.2%), 12 years old are 58 (15.6%), 13 years old are 30 (8%) and 14 years are only 22 (5%).
- **Table 1.3** show that 131 (35.3%) children were rescued from fishing work, 35(9.4%) from brick work, 24 (6.4%) from coolie work, 48 (12.9%) from selling things on streets, 20 (5.3%) from match work, 24 (6.4%) from agriculture and 90 (24.2) are rag pickers.

- **Table 1.4** The following are the detail observation from the table and figure. Seven percent (7%) of 9 year old children are engaged in fishing work, 1.3% in brick kiln work, 3.2% were involved in coolie, 6.1% were in selling goods on streets and platforms, 1.3 % in match works, 1.8 % in agricultural work and 7.8 % are rag pickers.

Little more than six percent (6.1%) of 10 year old children are engaged in fishing work, 4 % in brick kiln work, 1.6 % are involved in coolie, 3.5% are selling goods on streets and platforms, 0.5 % in match works, 0.5 % in agricultural work, 4.8 % are rag pickers. About five percent (4.8%) of 11 year old children are engaged in fishing work, 2.9 % in brick kiln work, 0.2 % are involved in coolie, 2.9% are selling goods on streets and platforms, 1.6 % in match works, 1.0 % in agricultural work and 6.4% are rag pickers. About six percent (5.9 %) of 12 year old children are engaged in fishing work, 1.0% in brick kiln work, 0.8 % are involved in coolie, only 0.5% are selling goods on streets and platforms, 1.0 % in match works, 1.3 % in agricultural work and 4.8 % are rag pickers. Around six percent (5.9 %) of 13 year old children are engaged in fishing work, 0.2% in brick kiln work, no one is found as collie and as sellers, 0.2 % in match works, 1.0 % in agricultural work and only 0.2 % are rag pickers.

Little more than five percent (5.1 %) of 14 year old children are engaged in fishing work, no one has been found as brick kiln worker, rag pickers and as sellers, 0.5 % in match works and 0.2 % in agricultural work.

Findings & Suggestion

This study has been helpful to understand and to explore the rehabilitative functions and performance of Special Training Centres in Tamil Nadu and through this study the researcher has recorded the following findings.

- Government, NGOs and civil society believe that the education is the only tool to rehabilitate the rescued child labourers.
- Total 371 children including 209 boys and 162 girls have already been rescued and they are under the rehabilitation process. Soon they will be brought in to the main stream formal education.
- Researcher found that most of the children have been rescued, while they have been on work either on the streets as rag pickers and selling goods on platforms, or involved in agriculture farms with families and relatives.
- Since Tuticorin is coastal area, fishing is one of the main occupations for the local population and so children can get involved in it easily with the families.
- Found that NCLP – STC is the only right place for Rescued Child Labourer (RCL) to rehabilitate and mould them and it creates a positive attitude among the children towards their life by using the given educational opportunity by the STCs.
- Govt. and Non – Organizations need to create more opportunities for vocational training to strengthen NCLP – STC program,
- Creating awareness about child labour problem and consequences is an essential requirement which must be adequately addressed.

Conclusion

The government launched NCLP in 1988, by which children have been withdrawn from prohibited employment and rehabilitate through special training centres. In Tamil Nadu, 3.8 % of rescued children were enrolled in STC-NCLP at Tuticorin District. Around 371 children have been rescued and under the rehabilitation process in a year (as in May, 2015). Among those 371 children, 162 girl children have started their normal life as any other normal child in the society. Since its inception, it plays a pivotal role in the rescue and rehabilitation child labourer. So far 98,155 children have already been mainstreamed into regular schools from the inception of the project. As a result many rescued child labourers are living their life with a new orientation and purpose.

This study indicates that the NCLP - STC plays a significant role in the process of rescue and rehabilitation of child labour. The effort of STC – NCLP in the rehabilitation process is well recognized.

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