

## Research Paper

## Analyzing the Attitudes of the Experts to Compare the Advantages and Disadvantages of Rural Child Labor in Agricultural Activities

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**ABSTRACT**

With regard to the role of children in agricultural activities, the current study aimed at analyzing the attitudes of experts towards the advantages and disadvantages of rural child labor in agricultural activities. The study was conducted by Q-methodology; The study population included the experts of Sayed Yaqub Health Center of Mahidasht County, Iran, and the staff of Charity Committee of Kermanshah County. Totally, 16 experts were selected by the purposeful sampling method. Results showed that the first group believed that children labor deprives the children from childhood activities. The other group believed that child labor lessens the focus of children in the class; on the other hand, strengthens the culture of the region. The third group believed that agricultural activities are among the factors that cause responsibility in children. The fourth group believed that child labor, due to the independence of children, causes joint diseases. The fifth group had a different viewpoint about child labor; they believed that child labor makes the child more agile from the physical point of view, but causes emotional depression. It can be said that the child labor phenomenon in rural areas is associated with the nature of pastoralism. Child labor contributes to economic affairs, households, and family by cultural truism rural residents. But in Iran can be the valve kind of transfer, age of onset, the quantity and quality of work and children's rights into action.

**Key words:**

Children, Attitudes, Child labor, Q-methodology, Agriculture

**Extended Abstract****1. Introduction**

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he role and status of villages in economy is undeniable. Most people in the villages live on agriculture that can guarantee food security, employment, and livelihoods in rural areas. Child labor in agriculture

is a global issue, found in both developing and developed countries. Child laborers are endangered by a wide variety of machinery, biological, physical, chemical, dust, ergonomic, welfare/hygiene, and psychosocial risk factors. However, not all work that children do in agriculture or elsewhere is dangerous. On the contrary, many work experiences for children can be rewarding, providing them with practical and social skills to work as adults. Improved self-confidence, self-esteem, and work skills are usually spotted in young people

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engaged in some aspects of farm work. Such work can contribute both to children's development and the welfare of their families: it can help prepare children to be resourceful members of society as adults.

## 2. Methodology

The current study used the Q-methodology to classify the perceptions of experts of Sayed Yaqub Health Center in Mahidasht County, Iran, and the staff of Charity Committee of Kermanshah toward the advantages and disadvantages of rural child labor in agricultural activities. The Q-methodology provides a foundation for the systematic study of subjectivity, a person's viewpoint, opinion, beliefs, attitude, etc. Typically, in a Q-methodological study people are presented with a sample of statements about some topics, called the Q-set. Respondents, called the P-set, are asked to rank-order the statements from their individual point of view, according to some preference, judgement, or feeling about them, mostly using a quasi-normal distribution. By Q-sorting, people give their subjective meaning to the statements, and consequently reveal their subjective viewpoint or personal profile. Q participants are the people with clearly different beliefs asked to express beliefs about the Q statements by categorization them; ie, "doing a Q-sort." Naturally, a few dozens of Q-sorts are placid.

They are analyzed using statistical techniques of correlation and factor analysis to disclose outlines in the way people subordinate beliefs. The consequences of the examination are construed and articulated as dissimilar public standpoints. A Q-study also indicated the way the persons who did the Q-sort approve or distress with the standpoints. In this context, using literature review and interviewing 16 experts of Sayed Yaqub Health Center and the staff of Charity Committee of Kermanshah, 122 statements were identified. Then, by removing one word statements and prioritizing them by the experts, 30 final statements or the so called Q-samples remained. Subsequently, SPSS version 18 software was used to analyze the data.

## 3. Results

Results showed that the first group believed that child labor takes the opportunity of enjoying the childhood from the children. The other group believed that the child labor takes the concentration of the children in the class; on the other hand, is strengthened the culture of the region; while the third group believed that children working in the agricultural activities would be responsible for children in the future. The fourth group believed that child labor causes independence in children and on the other hands, causes

the joint diseases. The fifth group had a different view about child labor; they believed that child labor makes children more agile, from the physical point of view, but emotionally, causes depression in them.

## 4. Discussion

The first paradigm: Overall, it can be inferred that as the disadvantages of child labor are greater than its advantages; therefore, its benefits can be overlooked. According to the second group, child labor transfers and strengthens the culture of the village, but the fact that child labor affects children's education is very important and should be considered. Generally, the third group mentality disagreed with the negative effects of mental and physical child labor, despite causing the exhaustion and lack of focus in the classroom. The fourth group, unlike the third group, believed that child labor caused joint diseases, but disagreed with the viewpoint that it caused mental illnesses. It can be said that the fifth group did not have negative feelings about child labor. They considered the agility and independence of children, which can affect their future, as important issues.

## 5. Conclusion

Although the advantages, disadvantages, and the general phenomenon of child labor can be common global and regional challenges in a global perspective, the cultural phenomenon is analyzed at the level of regional and local economy. Culture in general can be derived from past history, ideology, geographical, and climatic conditions, political decisions, and security; therefore, the cultural diversity in the field is also visible. There is a multi-dimensional issue of child labor in particular the decision-making and planning in this regard need to be worked on global, regional, and local joint institutional cooperation. It is recommended that the health centers, and welfare, and the children's rights supporting organizations provide the parents and children the required training and make the parents aware of the disadvantages of child labor. Due to the physical and emotional problems that children faced in agricultural work; it is recommended to promote the culture of child abuse prevention, and train the children properly on how to properly prevent further work-related injuries. Since children also work in the short-term to increase the family income, but in the long-term it has negative effects on the economy of the society, it is recommended that organizations such as the Relief and Welfare Committee, Iran, with the support of the families of the children prevent from putting too much pressure on children.