A CRITICAL STUDY ON THE EFFECTIVENESS OF IMPLEMENTING THE CHILD LABOUR (PROHIBITION AND REGULATION) ACT, 1986 IN THE FIRE CRACKER INDUSTRIES OF SIVAKASI

AUTHOR – SWETHA.R, STUDENT AT SAVEETHA SCHOOL OF LAW, SAVEETHA INSTITUTION OF MEDICAL AND TECHNICAL SCIENCE (SIMATS), SAVEETHA UNIVERSITY, CHENNAI

ABSTRACT

India has a long history of child labour due to socio-economic disparities. The Child Labour (Prohibition and Regulation) Act, 1986, is a crucial piece of legislation that marked a significant turning point in the country's approach to addressing child labor. The majore objective of this study is to find the effectiveness of implementing the child labour (prohibition and regulation) act, 1986 in the fire crackers industry of sivakasi. The research type followed here is empirical research and the data was collected from 216 respondents through a convenient sampling method. And it was collected in and around chennai. It is found that most of the respondents rated 6 out of 10 for the effectiveness of the act. Also, people stated providing alternative livelihhood fir families are the effective way to reduce child labour in the fire cracker industries of sivakasi. In conclusion, the study on the effectiveness of the Child Labour Act in the fireworks industry of Sivakasi raises important concerns. While there have been significant improvements in curbing child labour in recent years, there is still work to be done. Enforcement of the Act remains a challenge, and socio-economic factors continue to contribute to child labour in the industry.

KEYWORDS : Child labour, Prohibition, Firecracker, Industry, Sivakasi.

INTRODUCTION

India has a long history of child labour due to socio-economic disparities. The Child Labour (Prohibition and Regulation) Act, 1986, is a crucial piece of legislation that marked a significant turning point in the country's approach to addressing child labor. Before this act, there were various laws at the state and national levels, but the 1986 act provided a comprehensive and unified framework. It aimed to prohibit the employment of children in hazardous occupations and processes while regulating their working conditions in non-hazardous sectors. This legislation reflected India's commitment to combat child labour through legal means. The Indian government has implemented a range of initiatives to combat child labour, reflecting its dedication to addressing this issue on multiple fronts. The National Child Labour Project (NCLP) is a key program that focuses on the rehabilitation and education of child laborers. The Integrated Child Development Services (ICDS) scheme aims to provide holistic support to children's development, including nutrition and early education. These initiatives illustrate the government's comprehensive approach to tackling child labour and improving the lives of affected children. Child labour persists in Sivakasi's firecracker industry due to a combination of complex factors. Poverty plays a significant role, as families in impoverished conditions may rely on their children's income. Limited awareness of child rights and the importance of education also contributes to the problem. Additionally, the lack of accessible, quality education opportunities in the region

leaves few alternatives for children. Furthermore, the demand for cheap labour within the firecracker industry creates an environment where child labour continues to be prevalent. These factors collectively create a challenging environment for eradicating child labour in this specific industry.The firecracker industry in Sivakasi continues to grapple with child labour-related challenges. The latest trends, including statistical data, case studies, and on-the-ground accounts, provide insight into the ongoing prevalence of child labour in this sector, offering a real-time perspective on the issue. Child labour in the firecracker industry is a concern in India, China, Bangladesh, and Pakistan, with each country having its unique challenges and progress. While all four nations have laws prohibiting child labour, India faces enforcement challenges due to a decentralised labor market, and Bangladesh and Pakistan struggle with limited resources and disparities in access to education. China's centralised governance structure aids in more consistent enforcement, and substantial investments in education have led to a reduction in child labour . Nevertheless, each country's efforts reflect varying degrees of progress and difficulties in eradicating child labour in the firecracker industry.

REVIEW ON LITERATURE

Prasad, R. (1995), Aim: To investigate the prevalence of child labour in the Sivakasi firecracker industry. Objectives: To assess the implementation of the Child Labour Act in Sivakasi. Methodology: Surveys and interviews. Findings: High incidence of child labour, but limited enforcement of the Act. **Roy, S. (2000)** Aim: To analyse the socio-economic factors contributing to child labour in Sivakasi. Objectives: To understand the impact of the Act on child labour. Methodology: Field studies and statistical analysis. Findings: Poverty and lack of awareness continue to drive child labour, despite the Act. **Mishra, P. (2005)** Aim: To evaluate the effectiveness of penalties imposed under the Act. Objectives: To study the enforcement mechanisms. Methodology: Legal

analysis and case studies. Findings: Weak penalties and inadequate enforcement hinder the Act's effectiveness. **Gupta, A. (2010)** Aim: To examine the educational initiatives for children in Sivakasi. Objectives: To assess whether education can reduce child labour. Methodology: Surveys and educational program analysis. Findings: Education programs have limited success in eliminating child labour. **Singh, V. (2013)** Aim: To investigate the health and safety conditions of child labourers in firecracker factories. Objectives: To understand the impact of the Act on workplace safety. Methodology: Health assessments and factory inspections. Findings: Poor working conditions persist despite the Act. **Sharma, R. (2016)** Aim: To analyse the role of NGOs in combating child labour in Sivakasi. Objectives: To assess their effectiveness. Methodology: NGO reports and interviews. Findings: NGOs play a crucial role in raising awareness but face challenges in implementation. **Pandey, M. (2018)** Aim: To examine the psychological impact of child labour in Sivakasi. Objectives: To evaluate the Act's role in protecting children's mental health. Methodology: Psychiatric evaluations and case studies. Findings: Child labour has significant psychological consequences, and the Act needs stronger enforcement. **Raj, S. (2020)** Aim: To assess the role of local government bodies in implementing the Act. Objectives: To analyse the cooperation of local authorities. Methodology: Government records and interviews. Findings: Local authorities' engagement is inconsistent, affecting the Act's impact. **Verma, N. (2021)** Aim: To investigate child labour trends over the past decade. Objectives: To understand whether the Act has reduced child labour. Methodology: Longitudinal data analysis. Findings: Child labour remains a persistent issue, with minimal reduction. **Kumar, A. (2022)** Aim: To analyse the economic implications of the Act on the firecracker industry. Objectives: To assess the industry's response. Methodology: Economic analysis and industry surveys. Findings: The Act has led to increased costs but has not eliminated child

labour. **Shukla, R. (2015)** Aim: To study the role of trade unions in curbing child labour. Objectives: To assess their effectiveness in enforcing the Act. Methodology: Trade union reports and interviews. Findings: Trade unions can be influential, but their impact varies. **Das, S. (2008)** Aim: To explore the legal loopholes in the Act. Objectives: To identify weaknesses in the legislation. Methodology: Legal analysis and case studies. Findings: The Act lacks comprehensive coverage and enforcement mechanisms. **Kaur, R. (2014)** Aim: To assess the awareness of child labour laws among parents and employers in Sivakasi. Objectives: To understand the role of awareness in combating child labour. Methodology: Surveys and interviews. Findings: Low awareness contributes to the persistence of child labour. **Verma, S. (2019)** Aim: To evaluate international conventions and their impact on the Act. Objectives: To assess the Act's alignment with global standards. Methodology: Comparative legal analysis. Findings: The Act aligns with international standards but requires better enforcement. **Gandhi, M. (2017)** Aim: To investigate child labour in the supply chain of firecracker manufacturing. Objectives: To assess corporate responsibility. Methodology: Supply chain analysis and company reports. Findings: Child labour issues extend to the supply chain, requiring corporate responsibility. **Thakur, A. (2011)** Aim: To analyse the role of media in highlighting child labour in Sivakasi. Objectives: To understand the media's impact on public awareness. Methodology: Media content analysis and interviews. Findings: Media coverage raises awareness but does not necessarily lead to policy changes. **Jain, P. (2006)** Aim: To examine the enforcement challenges faced by government agencies. Objectives: To identify obstacles to effective implementation. Methodology: Government reports and interviews. Findings: Lack of resources and corruption hinder enforcement efforts. **Shah, D. (2014)** Aim: To investigate the migration patterns of child labourers in Sivakasi. Objectives: To understand the factors leading to

child labour. Methodology: Surveys and migration studies. Findings: Seasonal migration and poverty are key factors contributing to child labour. **Chopra, K. (2018)** Aim: To explore the role of parents in perpetuating child labour. Objectives: To understand the familial dynamics. Methodology: Interviews and case studies. Findings: Economic pressures and lack of alternatives lead parents to engage their children in labour. **Agarwal, S. (2023)** Aim: To provide an updated assessment of the Act's impact on child labour in Sivakasi. Objectives: To analyse recent data and trends. Methodology: Data analysis and field surveys. Findings: The Act's impact remains limited, and new strategies are needed to combat child labour effective.

OBJECTIVE

- To find whether people are aware about the child labour (prohibition and regulation), act,1986.

- To know whether the act has helped in reducing the child labour in the firecracker industry in Sivakasi.

- To know the level of compliance with the Child Labour (Prohibition and Regulation) Act, 1986, in the firecracker industry in Sivakasi.

- To find out what is the most effective measure to reduce child labour in the firecracker industry of Sivakasi.

METHODOLOGY

The research method followed in this research is empirical research . The data was collected through a questionnaire and the sample size was 209 . Convenience sampling method is adopted in this study to collect data. The samples were collected from the general public with special reference to the Chennai region, family and friends of the author. The independent variables are gender, age, educational qualification, occupation of the respondents and marital status of the respondents. The dependent variables are

ANALYSIS
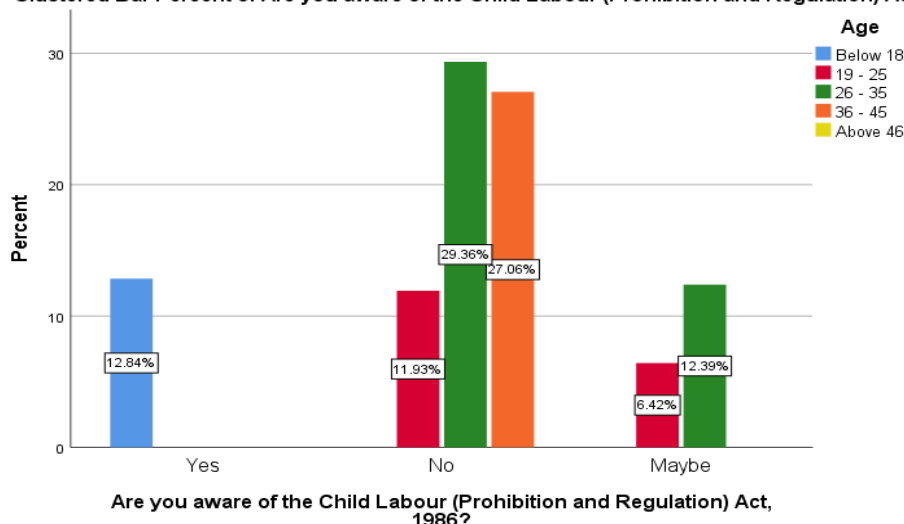
FIGURE 1

Legend : Figure 1 shows the responses of the respondents based on their age for the question are you aware of the child labour (prohibition and regulation) act.
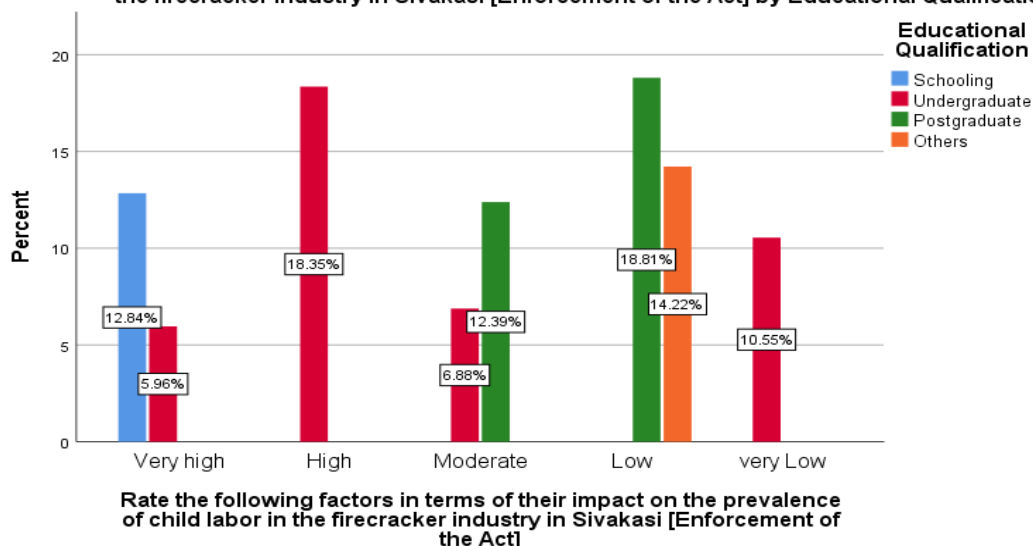
FIGURE 2
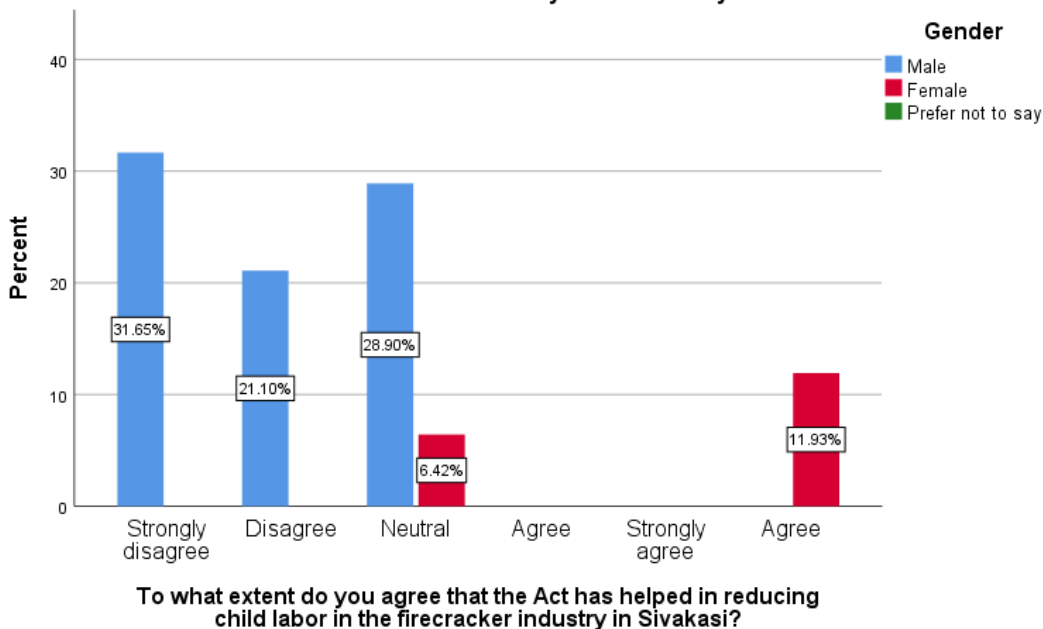
Legend : Figure 2 shows the responses of the respondents based on their gender for the question to what extent do you agree that the act has helped in reducing the child labour in the fire cracker industry of sivakasi.

FIGURE 3

Clustered Bar Percent of Rate the following factors in terms of their impact on the prevalence of child labor in the firecracker industry in Sivakasi [Enforcement of the Act] by Educational Qualification

Legend : Figure 3 shows the responses of the respondents based on their educational qualification for the impact of enforcement of the act on the prevalence of child labour in the firecracker industry in sivakasi.

FIGURE 4

Clustered Bar Percent of Rate the following factors in terms of their impact on the prevalence of child labor in the firecracker industry in Sivakasi [Awareness among industry stakeholders] by Occupation

Legend : Figure 4 shows the responses of the respondents based on their occupation for the impact of awareness among the industry stakeholder on the prevalence of child labour in the firecracker industry in sivakasi.
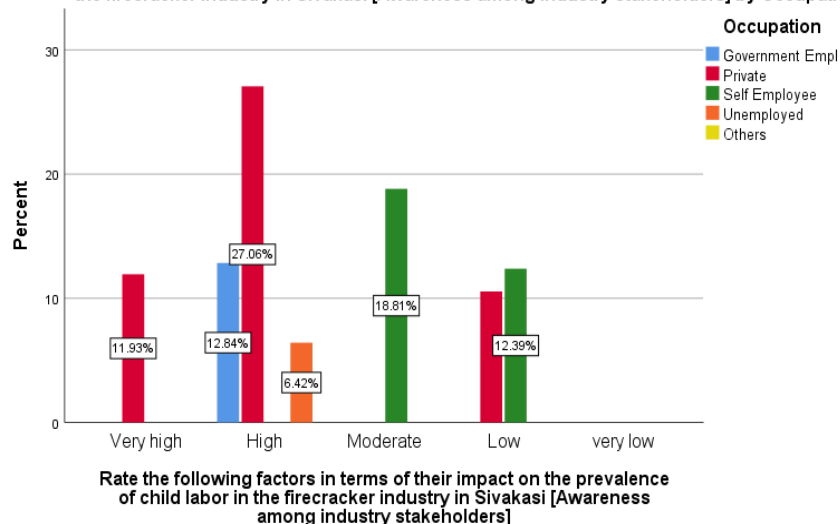
FIGURE 5

Clustered Bar Percent of Rate the following factors in terms of their impact on the prevalence of child labor in the firecracker industry in Sivakasi [Socioeconomic conditions of families] by Residential Status

Legend : Figure 5 shows the responses of the respondents based on their residential status for the impact of the socio economic conditions of the family on the prevalence of child labour in the firecracker industry in sivakasi.
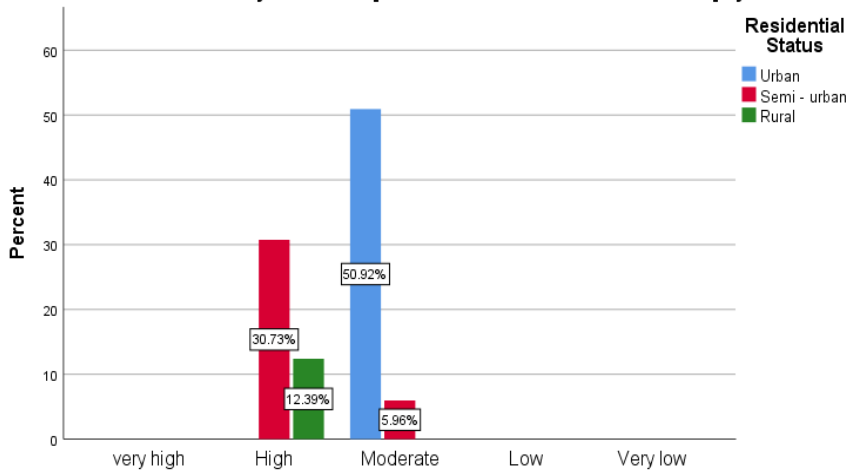
FIGURE 6

Clustered Bar Percent of Rate the following factors in terms of their impact on the prevalence of child labor in the firecracker industry in Sivakasi [Access to education] by Age

Legend : Figure 6 shows the responses of the respondents based on their age for the impact of access to education on the prevalence of child labour in the firecracker industry in sivakasi.
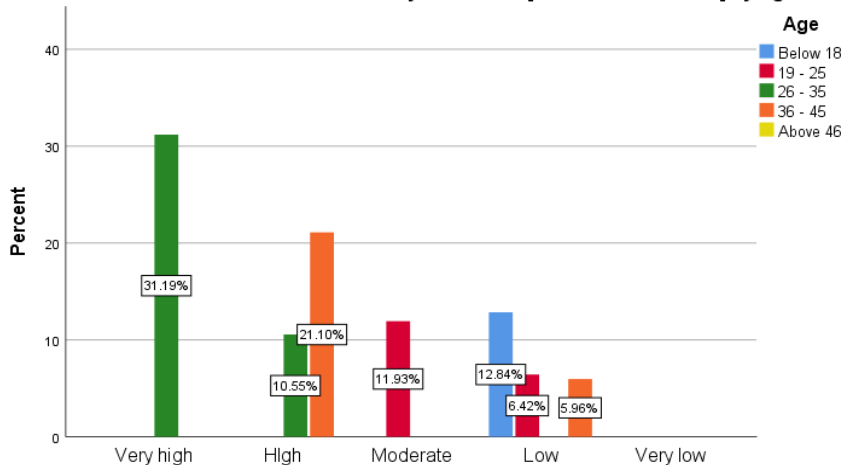
FIGURE 7

Clustered Bar Percent of Rate the following factors in terms of their impact on the prevalence of child labor in the firecracker industry in Sivakasi [Support for alternative livelihoods] by Gender
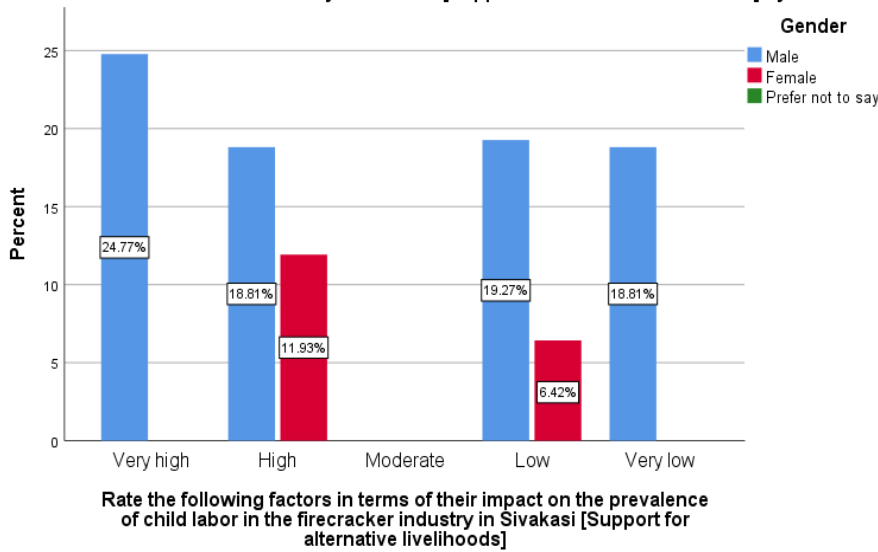
Legend : Figure 7 shows the responses of the respondents based on their residential status for the impact of support for alternative livelihood on the prevalence of child labour in the firecracker industry in sivakasi.

FIGURE 8

Clustered Bar Percent of Which of the following measures do you think would be most effective in further reducing child labor in the firecracker industry in Sivakasi? by Occupation

Legend : Figure 8 shows the responses of the respondents based on their occupation for the most effective way to reduce child labour in the fire cracker industries of sivakasi.

FIGURE 9

Simple Bar Percent of On a scale of 1 to 10 please rate your perception of the level of compliance with the Child Labour (Prohibition and Regulation) Act, 1986, in the firecracker industry in Sivakasi.

On a scale of 1 to 10 please rate your perception of the level of compliance with the Child Labour (Prohibition and Regulation) Act, 1986, in the firecracker industry in Sivakasi.
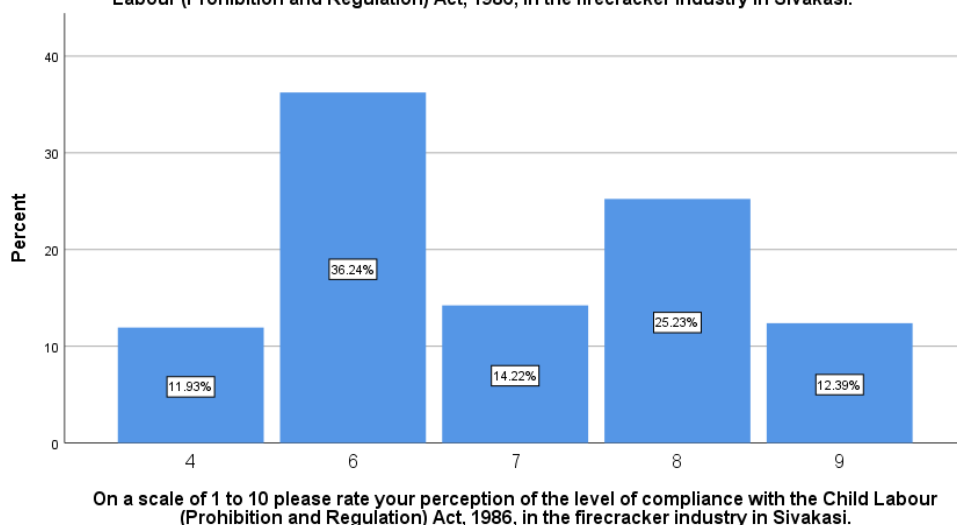
Legend : Figure 9 shows the responses of the respondents for the question rate your perception of the level of compliance with the child labour (prohibition and regulation) act,1986 in the firecracker industries of sivakasi.

FIGURE 10 (chi square)

Null Hypothesis: There is no association between age and awareness of child labour act.

Alternate Hypothesis: There is association between age and awareness of child labour act.

Are you aware of the Child Labour (Prohibition and Regulation) Act, 1986? * Age Crosstabulation

Count

		Age				
		Below 18	19 - 25	26 - 35	36 - 45	Total
Are you aware of the Child Labour (Prohibition and Regulation) Act, 1986?	Yes	28	0	0	0	28
	No	0	26	64	59	149
	Maybe	0	14	27	0	41
Total		28	40	91	59	218

Chi-Square Tests

	Value	df	Asymptotic Significance (2-sided)
Pearson Chi-Square	245.552[a]	6	.000
Likelihood Ratio	202.888	6	.000
Linear-by-Linear Association	30.362	1	.000
N of Valid Cases	218		

a. 1 cells (8.3%) have expected count less than 5. The minimum expected count is 3.60.

Interpretation: The calculated p value is 0.000. Since P value < 0.05, null hypothesis is rejected at 5% Level of Significance . So there is an association between age and awareness of child labour act.

FIGURE 11 (chi square)

Null Hypothesis: There is no association between gender and the impact of the prevelence if child labour in the fire cracker industry in sivakasi(enforcement of the act)

Alternate Hypothesis: There is association between gender and the impact of the prevelence if child labour in the fire cracker industry in sivakasi(enforcement of the act).

Rate the following factors in terms of their impact on the prevalence of child labor in the firecracker industry in Sivakasi [Enforcement of the Act] * Gender Crosstabulation

Count

		Gender		Total
		Male	Female	
Rate the following factors in terms of their impact on the prevalence of child labor in the firecracker industry in Sivakasi [Enforcement of the Act]	Very high	41	0	41
	High	0	40	40
	Moderate	42	0	42
	Low	72	0	72
	very Low	23	0	23
Total		178	40	218

Chi-Square Tests

	Value	df	Asymptotic Significance (2-sided)
Pearson Chi-Square	218.000[a]	4	.000
Likelihood Ratio	207.815	4	.000
Linear-by-Linear Association	27.843	1	.000
N of Valid Cases	218		

a. 1 cells (10.0%) have expected count less than 5. The minimum expected count is 4.22.

Interpretation:The calculated p value is 0.000. Since P value < 0.05, null hypothesis is rejected at 5% Level of Significance.So there is an association between gender and the impact of the prevelence of child labour in the fire cracker industry in sivakasi(enforcement)

FIGURE 12 (chi square)

Null Hypothesis: There is no association between gender and the impact of the prevalence of child labour in the fire cracker industry in sivakasi(awareness among the industry stakeholders)

Alternate Hypothesis: There is association between gender and the impact ob the prevalence of child labour in the fire cracker industry in sivakasi(awareness among the industry stakeholders)

Rate the following factors in terms of their impact on the prevalence of child labor in the firecracker industry in Sivakasi [Awareness among industry stakeholders] * Educational Qualification Crosstabulation

Count

		Educational Qualification				Total
		Schooling	Undergraduate	Postgraduate	Others	
Rate the following factors in terms of their impact on the prevalence of child labor in the firecracker industry in Sivakasi [Awareness among industry stakeholders]	Very high	0	26	0	0	26
	High	28	42	0	31	101
	Moderate	0	0	41	0	41
	Low	0	23	27	0	50
Total		28	91	68	31	218

Chi-Square Tests

	Value	df	Asymptotic Significance (2-sided)
Pearson Chi-Square	217.001[a]	9	.000
Likelihood Ratio	265.526	9	.000
Linear-by-Linear Association	10.359	1	.001
N of Valid Cases	218		

a. 2 cells (12.5%) have expected count less than 5. The minimum expected count is 3.34.

Interpretation: The calculated p value is 0.001. Since P value < 0.05, null hypothesis is rejected at 5% Level of Significance. So there is an association between gender and the impact of the prevelence of child labour in the fire cracker industry in sivakasi (awareness among the industry stakeholders)

FIGURE 13 (chi square)

Null Hypothesis: There is no association between gender and the impact of the prevelence of child labour in the fire cracker industry in sivakasi (socio economic condition of the family)

Alternate Hypothesis: There is association between gender and the impact of the prevelence of child labour in the fire cracker industry in sivakasi (socio economic condition of the family)

Rate the following factors in terms of their impact on the prevalence of child labor in the firecracker industry in Sivakasi [Socioeconomic conditions of families] * Occupation Crosstabulation

Count

		Occupation				
		Government Empl	Private	Self Employee	Unemployed	Total
Rate the following factors in terms of their impact on the prevalence of child labor in the firecracker industry in Sivakasi [Socioeconomic conditions of families]	High	0	26	68	0	94
	Moderate	28	82	0	14	124
Total		28	108	68	14	218

Chi-Square Tests

	Value	df	Asymptotic Significance (2-sided)
Pearson Chi-Square	137.513[a]	3	.000
Likelihood Ratio	178.853	3	.000
Linear-by-Linear Association	46.424	1	.000
N of Valid Cases	218		

a. 0 cells (0.0%) have expected count less than 5. The minimum expected count is 6.04.

Interpretation: The calculated p value is 0.000. Since P value < 0.05, null hypothesis is rejected at 5% Level of Significance . So there is an association between gender and the impact of the prevelence of child labour in the fire cracker industry in sivakasi (socio economic condition of the family).

FIGURE 14 (chi square)

Null Hypothesis: There is no association between gender and the impact of the prevelence of child labour in the fire cracker industry in sivakasi (access to education).

Alternate Hypothesis: There is association between gender and the impact of the prevelence of child labour in the fire cracker industry in sivakasi (access to education).

Rate the following factors in terms of their impact on the prevalence of child labor in the firecracker industry in Sivakasi [Access to education] * Residential Status Crosstabulation

Count

		Residential Status			Total
		Urban	Semi - urban	Rural	
Rate the following factors in terms of their impact on the prevalence of child labor in the firecracker industry in Sivakasi [Access to education]	Very high	0	41	27	68
	High	69	0	0	69
	Moderate	0	26	0	26
	Low	42	13	0	55
Total		111	80	27	218

Chi-Square Tests

	Value	df	Asymptotic Significance (2-sided)
Pearson Chi-Square	213.649[a]	6	.000
Likelihood Ratio	271.506	6	.000
Linear-by-Linear Association	50.452	1	.000
N of Valid Cases	218		

a. 1 cells (8.3%) have expected count less than 5. The minimum expected count is 3.22.

Interpretation: The calculated p value is 0.000. Since P value < 0.05, null hypothesis is rejected at 5% Level of Significance . So there is an association between gender and the impact of the prevelence of child labour in the fire cracker industry in sivakasi (access to education).

FIGURE 15 (chi square)

Null Hypothesis: There is no association between gender and the impact of the prevelence if child labour in the fire cracker industry in sivakasi (support for alternative livelihood).

Alternate Hypothesis: There is association between gender and the impact ob the prevalence of child labour in the fire cracker industry in sivakasi (support for alternative livelihood).

Rate the following factors in terms of their impact on the prevalence of child labor in the firecracker industry in Sivakasi [Support for alternative livelihoods] * Age Crosstabulation

Count

		Age				Total
		Below 18	19 - 25	26 - 35	36 - 45	
Rate the following factors in terms of their impact on the prevalence of child labor in the firecracker industry in Sivakasi [Support for alternative livelihoods]	Very high	0	0	23	31	54
	High	0	26	41	0	67
	Low	0	14	27	15	56
	Very low	28	0	0	13	41
Total		28	40	91	59	218

Chi-Square Tests

	Value	df	Asymptotic Significance (2-sided)
Pearson Chi-Square	215.531[a]	9	.000
Likelihood Ratio	231.685	9	.000
Linear-by-Linear Association	34.571	1	.000
N of Valid Cases	218		

a. 0 cells (0.0%) have expected count less than 5. The minimum expected count is 5.27.

Interpretation: The calculated p value is 0.000. Since P value < 0.05, null hypothesis is rejected at 5% Level of Significance . So there is an association between gender and the impact of the prevalence of child labour in the firecracker industry in sivakasi (support for alternative livelihood).

RESULTS

In **figure 1**, it is seen that most of the respondents in the age of 26 to 35 stated no for the question are you aware of the child labour (prohibition and regulation) act. In **figure 2** , it is seen that most of the male respondents strongly disagree for the the question to what extent do you agree that the act has helped in reducing the child labour in the fire cracker industry of sivakasi. In **figure 3**, it is seen that most of the respondents whose educational qualification is PG stated low for the impact of enforcement of the act on the prevalence of child labour in the firecracker industry in sivakasi. In **figure 4,** it is seen that most of the respondents who works in a private company rated high for the impact of awareness among the industry stakeholder on the prevalence of child labour in the firecracker industry in sivakasi. In **figure 5**, it is seen that most of the respondents in urban area rated moderate for the impact of the socio economic conditions of the family on the prevalence of child labour in the firecracker industry in sivakasi. In **figure 6** , it is seen that most of the respondents in the age of 26 to 35 rated very high for the impact of

access to education on the prevalence of child labour in the firecracker industry in sivakasi. In **figure 7**, it is seen that most of the male respondents rated very high for the impact of support for alternative livelihood on the prevalence of child labour in the firecracker industry in sivakasi. In **figure 8**, it is seen that most of the respondents who works in private job stated that promoting alternative livelihood options for the families is the the most effective way to reduce child labour in the fire cracker industries of sivakasi. In **figure 9**, it is seen that most of the respondents rated 6 out of 10 for the level of compliance with the child labour (prohibition and regulation) act,1986 in the firecracker industries of sivakasi.

DISCUSSION

In **figure 1**, It might be because respondents in the age group of 26 to 35 often have busy lives, focusing on careers and personal responsibilities. They might not have encountered recent awareness campaigns or discussions about child labour laws, leading to a lack of awareness about the Child Labor (Prohibition and Regulation) Act, 1986. In **Figure 2**, It might be because male respondents may hold different perspectives on the effectiveness of the act in reducing child labour . Their scepticism could stem from various factors, such as limited exposure to the industry's conditions or concerns about the enforcement and implementation of the act. In **Figure 3**, It might be because respondents with postgraduate qualifications often possess a deeper understanding of complex issues like child labour. Their assessments of the act's impact may be more critical and nuanced, reflecting a demand for stronger enforcement measures and comprehensive solutions. In **Figure 4**, It might be because employees in private companies may be more attuned to corporate social responsibility and the role of industry stakeholders in addressing child labour. This heightened awareness might lead them to rate the impact of industry stakeholders' awareness as high, emphasising the importance of involving businesses in

awareness and prevention efforts. In **Figure 5**, It might be because urban respondents tend to have greater exposure to socio-economic disparities and educational opportunities. Their perception of the impact of socio-economic conditions on child labour may be moderate, reflecting the belief that while these conditions matter, they are not the sole determinants of child labor prevalence in the firecracker industry. In **Figure 6**, It might be because respondents in the age group of 26 to 35 recognize the pivotal role of education in combating child labour. They may be more aware of the importance of providing access to education for children and perceive it as a key factor in reducing child labour in the firecracker industry. In **Figure 7**, It might be because male respondents in Figure 7 recognize the critical role of support for alternative livelihoods in reducing child labour. They may believe that offering viable income opportunities to families can directly alleviate the economic pressures that lead to child labour . In **Figure 8,** It might be because respondents working in private jobs, as shown in Figure 8, see promoting alternative livelihood options as the most effective strategy. This preference could stem from their understanding of the economic dynamics and the belief that it directly addresses the root causes of child labour. In **Figure 9**, It might be because the majority of respondents rating a 6 out of 10 for compliance in Figure 9 suggests a moderate level of confidence in the enforcement of the Act. This indicates room for improvement and the need for stricter adherence to child labour regulations in Sivakasi's firecracker industry.

CONCLUSION

In conclusion, the study on the effectiveness of the Child Labour Act in the fireworks industry of Sivakasi raises important concerns. While there have been significant improvements in curbing child labour in recent years, there is still work to be done. Enforcement of the Act remains a challenge, and socio-economic factors continue to contribute to child labour in the industry. To enhance the effectiveness of the

Child Labour Act, a multi-faceted approach is needed. This should include stricter enforcement measures, increased awareness and education on child labour issues, and support for families and communities to improve their economic conditions. Only through these combined efforts can Sivakasi and similar industries ensure the protection and welfare of children and eradicate the scourge of child labour.

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