Child Labor in the Informal Sector:
A study on the Impact of Child Labor in the Case of
Children who are Engaged in Blacksmithing Activity in
Kolfe/Keranio Sub-City

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Abstract

Child labor is a widespread and growing phenomenon in today’s world, especially in developing countries. Alike other developing countries, child labor is a pervasive problem in Ethiopia. Agriculture is by far the dominant sector of child employment in rural areas where child laborers are mostly engaged in the informal sector in urban areas. Though there are different types of child labor in the informal sector, this study focused on children that are engaged in blacksmithing activity. The objective of the study was to examine causes and impacts of child labor on children who are engaged in blacksmithing activity in Kolfe/Keranio sub city. The study is descriptive in its nature and it employed a child-centred research. The study employed cross-sectional research design by using both quantitative and qualitative methods of data collection. The quantitative data were collected from the entire (45) children who were engaged in the blacksmithing activity in the study site by the use of census survey and via structured interview schedule. The qualitative data were collected using focus group discussion conducted with the working children and observation. The findings of the study revealed that the children were pushed to work by various socio-economic and cultural factors. The core causes of child labor identified in the study were poverty, societal attitude, rural-urban migration and peer influence. The study also revealed that the children were leading adult lives. They were working for long hours under conditions damaging their health and physical well-being. They were also deprived from meaningful educational opportunities that could open up for them better future.
CHAPTER ONE

Introduction

Every child has a right to health and a life free from maltreatment. However, millions of children around the world are victims of physical, sexual, emotional and economic abuse. Child maltreatment is an enormous global problem with a serious impact on the victims’ well being and development throughout their lives. According to the International Labor Office (ILO) child labor is the most common form of child abuse, a fatal type of child maltreatment and a serious violation of child’s right (ILO, 1996).

Child labor remains a widespread and growing phenomenon in today’s world. Despite international labor conventions and local government legislations, child labor continues unabated. Many children worldwide are engaged in all forms of work; in shops, in agriculture, in factories, market places, street corners and in household chores facing extremely dangerous, exploitative and abusive conditions. Some of the children are working for long hours in poor and unhealthy environment. They have neither access for education nor adequate remuneration which constrains their holistic development. Some underlying causes of child labor are poverty, insufficient or unbalanced economic growth, broken homes and unemployment in the formal sector (Bequele & Myers, 1995).

The issue of child labor is not a new phenomenon. To greater or lesser extent, children in every society have always been part and still do take part in the day to day activities of the family and human society. In earlier times, it was assumed that child labor was useful for children well being and development. However, after the industrial revolution child labor became to be considered as a social problem and a phenomenon hindering the harmonious physical and mental development of a child in Europe. The notion that child labor is a social problem and the accompanying idea that a child should
be protected against child labor came to the fore, when the systematic exploitation of children by employers became rampant (ILO, 2002).

In contemporary times, child labor has become a global concern and it is attracting the attentions of various stake holders like United Nations Children’s Fund (UNICEF), International Labor Organization (ILO), Non Governmental Organizations (NGO’s) and private agencies as well as governments. The concern can be explained in terms of humanitarian, developmental and economic dimensions. The humanitarian concern refers to the protection of children from abusive and exploitative type of work. Children have a right to education, health, and to grow by enjoying their childhood. The developmental concern refers to the cognitive development which includes children’s access to education. It is assumed that in many cases child labor either substitute schooling or affects the quality of education negatively. The economic concern refers to the long term impact of child labor on capital formation and its contribution to the increasing number of adult unemployment in developing countries (Anker, 1999).

According to the report of ILO, a wall of silence, indifference and apathy surrounded child labor (ILO, 2002). Child labor remains one of the most violated human right issues of our time. Child labor is almost invisible to most people, but child workers are largely available in every part of the world. Sold or exchanged as cheap merchandise many children suffer from extremely dangerous and unacceptable forms of exploitation like bonded labor and sexual exploitation. Others suffer, and may only barely survive, unhealthy and crowded work environment, short and long term toxic exposures, long hours of work and heavy and dangerous work loads (ILO, 1999).

The exact number of working children in the world is not known. However, some estimates have been made. For instance, according to the estimate of ILO in year 2002, 211 million children between the ages of 5 to 14 were working for a living. The
overwhelming majority of these children were found in developing countries. The Asia Pacific region has the highest number of working children with 127.3 million, followed by Sub-Saharan Africa with 48 million and Caribbean and Latin America with 17.4 million. Together these regions accounted for about 90% of all child workers in the world (ILO, 2002).

Similar to other developing countries, child labor is a widespread problem in Ethiopia. In our country, child labor below the age of 14 is virtually prohibited yet it continues to flourish. The issue of child labor in Ethiopia is a growing phenomenon that is largely fostered and facilitated by the persistent poverty. Children participate in different economic and non economic activities that range from domestic work activities to exploitative and hazardous wage labor.

**Problem Statement**

Child labor is a widespread and growing phenomenon in today’s world. Despite international labor conventions and local government legislations were passed to protect children from child labor, many are engaged in activities that are prohibited. It is widely believed that children should be protected from any kind of exploitation and neglect. But in reality, unacceptable forms of exploitation on children exist in almost all parts of the world.

Child labor is the most common and fatal form of exploitation and abuse. It is a betrayal of child's rights and an offense against civilization. Though child labor exists in all parts of the world, the extent varies based on level of development. Relatively few children work in developed countries but the overwhelming majority is found in developing countries (ILO, 2002).

Ethiopia is one of the countries where child labor exists in an extensive scale. The ILO estimate of child labor indicates that there is high child labor participation rate in
Ethiopia. According to the estimate of ILO, the number of children engaged in economic activities in Ethiopia aged below 14 is estimated at 7.5 million, which represents about 49 percent of the total population of that age group (ILO, 1999).

In Addis Ababa more than a few children earn their living from blacksmithing activity. At a time when they should be in school and prepare for productive adulthood, small boys are leading adult life in their childhood without having access to education that have a promise for better future. Working from dusk to dawn everyday the children are persistently exposed to various types of physical work hazards and various health problems. In compensation to their labor, they earn a very small amount of income. Child laborers in blacksmithing activity are a vulnerable section of society in Addis Ababa.

Even though national child labor survey was conducted in the year 2001, there are still considerable gaps in understanding the variety of forms and conditions under which children work. The 2001 child Labor survey does not show the situation of children in a specific work type and work place, like blacksmiths in the informal sector. Without having deeper understanding about the situation of child laborers in the blacksmithing activity and the rationale behind causes and consequence of the problem, it is difficult to draw meaningful conclusion to address the problem. Since child laborers in the blacksmithing activity are working in hazardous and unpleasant conditions it should be studied carefully in order to fight child labor or at least to improve the working conditions of child blacksmiths.
Research Objective

General Objective

The general objective of the study is to examine causes and impacts of child labor on children who are engaged in blacksmithing activity in Kolfe/Keranio Sub-City.

Specific Objectives

The study aimed to accomplish the following specific objectives:

1. Identify causes of child labor;
2. Assess the living and working conditions of the working children;
3. Study the perceived impacts of child labor on the children’s health, education and physical well being;
4. Draw conclusion and social work implications of the study based on findings.

Significance of the Study

In Ethiopia there is no comprehensive and adequate study which shows the situation of working children at specific type of work and work place. Though a nation wide child labor survey was conducted in 2001, the survey does not consider the situation of working children at a specific work place and type of work. Moreover, the survey was conducted six years ago and there may be some changes in the current situation.

In line with the growing concern about child labor in Ethiopia, various researches have emerged in order to understand and reverse the situation. However, even though the problem of child labor exploitation and abuse is negatively affecting child blacksmiths, researchers in Ethiopia appear to give little attention to the problems of these children. Therefore, this study will contribute deeper understanding about causes and impacts of the problem on children who are engaged in blacksmithing activity in Addis Ababa.

By examining causes of child labor and its impact on children who are engaged in blacksmithing activity on their health, education and physical wellbeing, this study
will contribute to the scant information available on child labor in the country. In addition, the findings of the study will create awareness to the public and policy makers. Moreover, the study will provide information like the nature of work performed by the children, their working environment, causes and consequences of the problem. This can be helpful for government officials, social workers and other concerned bodies to design programs and strategies that would help to tackle the problem of child labor. The study will also provoke ideas concerning child labor and identify pertinent issues that are relevant for further research.

**Concepts and Definitions**

**Child**

The term child does not have universally accepted definition. According to UNICEF and African Charter on Human Right and Welfare of the Child, the term “child” means a person who has not reached the age of 18. On the other hand, the United Nations (UN) defined a child as a person below the age of 15 years in the Minimum Age Convention of 1973. Following the 1989 UN convention on the rights of a child and ILO convention No. 182 a child is defined as an individual below 18 years of age (ILO, 2002). In this study, child refers to a person under the age of 18 years.

**Child Labor**

Child labor as defined by ILO refers to children below the age of 15 years who are economically active excluding those children who are below 5 years of age and those children between 12-14 years old who spend less than 14 hours a week on their jobs, unless their jobs or activities is likely to jeopardize their health, safety or moral (ILO, 2002). ILO often distinguishes between "child work" and "child labor", the latter being used to describe the more pejorative part of child work, whereas “child work” is used to describe doing light household chores that can actually have some learning value (ILO,
2002). However, in this study the terms "child work" and "child labor" are used interchangeably, while referring to what the ILO calls “child labor”.

**Informal Sector**

The International Labor Organization first used the term “informal sector” in the early 1970’s to refer activities that are not recognized, recorded, protected or regulated by the public authorities (ILO, 1972). Despite the popularity of the term, its precise and concise definition continues to elude both policy makers and individuals targeting practical assistance to the sector. There is no universally accepted definition of the term and the concept of informal sector has been defined differently by various scholars and policy makers. According to Mazumdar (1976), classical theories of development view the informal sector as a passing phenomenon destined to phase out with time. However, contrary to the assertions that the informal sector is unstable and short lived, the informal sector operating in the developing countries have found it to be a stepping stone to more lucrative businesses.

Informal activities are often outside the scope and official statistical enumeration and government regulations, and beyond formal systems of labor and social protection. Being dynamic and heterogeneous, informal sector is adaptable to changes and it is characterized by labor intensive technologies, unstable income, small scale operation, unregulated competitive market and poor and unpredictable working conditions (ILO, 2000).

In the case of Ethiopia, on a report of urban informal sector sample survey, CSA defined informal sector as follows.

Home based or individual establishment activity operated by owner with few or no employees… establishments or activities include those engaged in market productions which are not registered as companies or cooperatives which have no written book of account and which have less than 10 persons engaged in the activity (CSA, 1997, p.1).
Even though the term informal sector is defined differently, in this study informal sector refers to activities that function with no or little protection from the legal sector.

**Well-being**

The term well-being in this study refers to a state of being physically or pathologically healthy and getting access for education.

**Limitation of the Study**

One of the objectives of this study was to examine the impact of child labor on children who are engaged in blacksmithing activity. However, the study was limited to examining the impact of child labor only from health, education and physical well-being view points. That is, the study did not examine the impact of child labor from other dimensions like from moral, psychological, emotional and cognitive development. Moreover, the study was limited to assess the perceived impact of child labor because the study did not conduct actual check-ups to find out the effect of work on the children. Thus, the impact of child labor was reported as perceived by the children who are engaged in blacksmithing activity.

**Organization of the Paper**

This paper is organized into five chapters. The first chapter deals with introduction, the second chapter deals with the methods used in the study and the third chapter presents review of related literature. The fourth chapter presents results and discussion which is categorized into four major sections, namely, personal background, family background, living and working conditions and impact of work. In the final chapter of this thesis concluding remarks are presented together with policy, social work practice and social work research implications.
CHAPTER TWO

Research Methods

The major objective of the study was to examine the causes and impact of child labour on children who are engaged in blacksmithing activity in Kolfe/Keranio Sub-City. The study is descriptive in its nature and it employed a child centred research, with a perspective that children must have a stable and nurturing environment in order to become self-sustaining adults by using different approaches. Understanding child labour in the informal sector requires special skills. Explicitly, reaching out child blacksmiths and engaging them in a discussion about their living and working condition and their perception about the impact of work is a challenging task that requires different methods. In the following sections the research methods that are used in the study are described.

Study Design

The study employed cross-sectional research design by taking a cross-section of the phenomena at one point in time. The study used both quantitative and qualitative designs to extrapolate baseline information on the factors that push or pull children to work and the perceived impact of work on the children. The quantitative part used a survey to assess the working children’s personal and family background, living and working conditions and the perceived impact of child labour on their well-being. The qualitative part used focus group discussion and direct observation. Focus group discussion was used to assess the living and working conditions of the target population and to obtain deeper understanding about the perceived impact of child labour on the children by incorporating individual and communal views, beliefs, opinions and experiences. Direct observation was used to enrich the information gathered through the other methods.
Study Site

The study site is a Village located in the western tip of Addis Ababa in Kolfe/Keranio Sub-City, Kebele 13/14. The place is encircled by two villages. On its southern and eastern part it shares periphery with a village called “Lukanda” and from its western and northern part it shares boundary with a village called “Lomi Meda”.

The study area was an empty place and there was no economic activity in the area three years ago. However, the place became a centre of cottage industries after Addis Ababa City Government (AACG) displaced many cottage industries from “Merkato” area and gave “Sora Amba” as a replacement. All of the cottage industries in “Sora Amba” are engaged in blacksmithing activity though the types of their produces differ. Most of the cottage industries in the area manufacture a product called “Mitad”, which is a bowl shaped iron basin which is used for cooking or washing clothes.

In the study area there were many children under the age of 18 who were engaged in blacksmithing activity when the researcher conducted a site visit prior to selecting the area as a study site. Following the site visit, the researcher assumed that the area is a place where different types of child rights breach, especially child labor, is practiced. Thus, the area was selected purposively hoping that germane information can be sufficiently procured to study child labor.

Study Population

The target population of the study are children under the age of 18 years who are engaged in blacksmithing activity in the study area. The unit of analysis for the study are blacksmith children in the study area. After conducting an investigation the researcher found out that there were 45 working children under the age of 18 years who were engaged in blacksmithing activity in the study site. The investigation was conducted in March, 2007 and the data were collected in the same month. Thus, the target population
of the study were children under the age of 18 years, who were engaged in blacksmithing activity in the study area in March, 2007.

Data Collection Techniques

Primary data

Both quantitative and qualitative methods of data collection were used to collect primary data. The quantitative data were collected using census survey while the qualitative data were collected by means of focus group discussion and direct observation to supplement the data obtained using survey.

Survey method. The primary data gathered through survey were the main sources of information. The study employed census survey and utilized data collected from the entire (45) children who were engaged in the blacksmith activity in the study site. Census was chosen as a technique for two major reasons. First, the study population was very small and the researcher presupposed that it can be managed with the available finance and time. Second, it was because census, by its nature, can accurately and precisely describe wide variety characteristics of a study population.

Structured interview schedule was developed to collect quantitative data. It included both open and close ended questions. Questions pertaining to personal background, family background, living and working conditions and perceived impact of work on the children’s well being were included in the interview schedule. It was pre-tested for possible improvement on clarity, comprehensibility and coherence and adjustments were made on the schedule accordingly.

Focus Group Discussion. Focus group discussions were conducted with children who are engaged in blacksmithing activity in “Sora Amba”. It was prepared for the children in order to understand the living and working conditions of the children from individual and communal view points. The focus group participants were organized into
two groups: school attending children in one group and school drop outs in another. Each group was composed of 8 participants. A focus group discussion guide was developed containing a list of questions that are supposed to explore the purpose of the study. Discussions were facilitated and recorded by the researcher.

**Observation.** Observation was used as a method of data collection to enrich the information gathered through the other methods. The above methods of data collection, survey and focus group discussion gave an opportunity for the researcher to get the pictures of the working conditions of the respondents through observation because there was face to face interaction between the researcher and the children. It was possible to systematically observe the working conditions and the associated hazards. Hence, the researcher took notes on such observable phenomena that were stumbling upon conducting interviews, facilitating focus group discussions and visiting the study site.

**Secondary Data**

To supplement the primary data, information from official documents such as National Child Labor Survey, Informal Sector Survey and Labor Survey were used. In addition, academic literatures, articles, publications and other secondary sources were used.

**Methods of Data Processing and Analysis**

The data were analyzed and processed both qualitatively and quantitatively. The quantitative data which was procured from the survey were checked visually for completeness and then coded. The template scheme for data entry was developed and pre-tested for ranges, skipping patterns and legal values by entering the responses of 45 questionnaires. After validation, the data entry were cleaned, completed and analysis was conducted using SPSS version 13.0 statistical package. Descriptive statistical techniques like frequencies, percentages and mean were calculated and results were presented using
univariate and bivariate tables. Association and correlation between variables were computed using Chi-Square ($X^2$) and Pearson’s correlation coefficient. The data obtained through focus group discussion and direct observation was transcribed first and narrated to supplement the data obtained from the survey.

**Ethical Consideration**

The researcher has conducted the study by taking all ethical standard of a research in to consideration. Participants of the study were first briefed about the purpose of the research and were asked for their informed consent to be involved in the study. The issue of confidentiality was also assured to the participants of the study and implemented accordingly. Respondents were also informed that they could disagree to participate in the study, if they chose to stop, at any time.
CHAPTER THREE

Literature Review

The Concept of Child Labor

There is no universally accepted definition of child labor. Varying definitions of the term are used by international organizations, non-governmental organizations and other interest groups. However, child labor can be conceptualized in terms of its broad and narrow meaning. In the former case it encompasses any form of child work, light or simple to the level of hazardous and exploitative activities performed by children. The latter concept excludes simple and light work which doesn’t have detrimental effect to the child’s health, physical development, and/or schooling (ILO, 2002).

The ILO convention article 138 is used as a benchmark for providing working definition for child labor for many writers (Assefa, 2000). In this convention the basic principle is that child work should not interfere with the education and the fullest mental and physical development of a child. ILO in 1986 asserted child labor as:

Not children working for few hours to earn additional pocket money; not children helping on family farms; not youngsters doing household chores; but children prematurely leading adult lives; working long hours for low wages under conditions that are damaging to their health, physical and mental development; deprives from meaningful educational opportunities that would open up for them a better future (Assefa, 2000, p. 9).

Despite there are differences in conceptualizing child labor among scholars and organizations, there is a common understanding that child labor, particularly the hazardous and exploitative one affects child schooling, health and physical development. Thus, it is agreed that children in one way or another should be protected from undertaking hazardous work at their young age.
Theoretical Perspectives of Child Labor

The literature on child labor is enormous but it is scattered across the social sciences lacking a common theoretical foundation. Despite a multitude of studies devoted to the issue of child labor, the basic matters as to what constitute child labor, what causes it, how it affects children and the society and how to best deal with it remain as debatable issues.

Although there are many ways of categorizing approaches of child labor, review of literature on the issue reveals that the most commonly used approaches can be described in terms of four general perspectives. Each of the perspectives has different views regarding children, on the work of children and on how the problem can be addressed. The four general perspectives are, namely, the human capital perspective, the labor market perspective, the social responsibility perspective and the child-centered perspective (Anker & Melkas, 1996; Boyden, Ling & Myers, 1998).

The Human Capital Perspective

The human capital perspective views child labor through the lens of national economic development. According to this perspective, under development is one of the chief causes of child labor. This perspective points out that low income and poverty are driving forces behind the prevalence of child labor worldwide.

The proponents of this perspective argue that the remedy to the problem of child labor is to eradicate poverty and its causes. They suggest that one of the most effective ways to break the self-perpetuating cycle of poverty in developing countries is by providing enhanced income option for the future children by promoting policies and activities that develops their educational skills and other capacities that are needed for their eventual contribution as adults to national economic development and their own economic progress (Psacharopoulos, 1999; Fallon & Tzannatos, 1998).
The human capital perspective strongly argues that the removal of children from work should be accompanied by nuanced adjustment programs for their rehabilitation, education and direct assistance. This perspective sees economic development as the best overall cure for the problem of child labor (Anker and Melkas, 1996; Gootaert & Patrions, 1999).

The human capital perspective is not against child work that can contribute to their development as a responsible adults and helpful to them and their families. However, it is against child labor that denies their right to education and that exposes them to physical and mental abuse (Psacharopoulos, 1999; Anker 1999).

The human capital perspective argues that child labor without schooling perpetuates a vicious cycle of poverty across generations. This perspective suggests that increased income contribute to rising incomes and economic development. Moreover, in addition to emphasizing to the importance of education, the human capital perspective also gives a strong attention on values and attitudes such as entrepreneurship that can promote economic growth (Anker & Melkas, 1996; Gootaert & Patrions, 1999).

The Labor Market Perspective

The labor market perspective in general argues that there is a negative relationship between child labor and adult employment. This perspective is mainly concerned about the potential impact of child labor on adult labor markets. This perspective points out that child labor would supersede adult labor which brings adult unemployment and child servitude which in turn worsen working class poverty. According to this perspective, since child labor increases the supply of work force in the labor market, it will reduce wage rates and/or increase adult unemployment. The labor market perspective advocates recommend policies that discourage economic participation of children in order to protect adult employment and wages from child
workers competition. This perspective argues that the state has the highest responsibility in eradicating child labor by using minimum prohibitions on work and compulsory education (Boyden, Ling & Myers, 1998).

According to labor market perspective, children are not able to recognize their own best interest because they are innocent, ignorant and incompetent to defend themselves. Such a view of childhood makes children free of responsibility to make economic contribution to families and obliges adults to take care of children. This perspective assumes that excluding children from work and forcing them to attend school will benefit both children and adult workers (Lavalette, 1999).

Many scholars (e.g. White, 1996; Boyden, Ling & Myers, 1998), criticize the labor market perspective by contending that this perspective places adult workers interest before children because it is mainly concerned about the labor market of adults and ignores children situational reality.

**The Social Responsibility Perspective**

The social responsibility perspective argues that poverty is not the major explanation of child labor. According to this perspective, the problem of child labor is caused by social differentiation with in society, racial and cultural discrimination, dysfunctional family and community relationships, unfair concentration and use of political and economic power, decline of social values and moral fiber and social irresponsibility (Bachman, 2000). This perspective is mainly concerned about marginalization and exclusion of children from the protection and essential services that should have been given to them by the society. The perspective argues that the most effective way to eliminate child labor is not through reduction of poverty or legal enforcement of child labor laws. The solution to the problem lies in better connecting them to the protective and enabling elements of society and this protective mobilization
of society is achieved through reinforcement of families, public pressure on governments to make them more responsive to children, organization of children to defend their own interest and improved basic services for children (Myers, 2001; Swift, 1997).

**The Child-Centered Perspective**

The child-centered perspective indicates that children must have a stable and nurturing environment in order to become self-sustaining adults capable of caring for their own families. This perspective recognizes children as persons with rights and voices of their own and puts their interests first without filtering them through prior adult agenda. This perspective strongly argues that there is a need to actively participate children in community development to ensure that their interests are met. According to this perspective children are capable of being actors in their development and they have ideas and plans as well as adults and they also have the capacity to change things and get things done (Boyden and Mayers, 1995).

The child-centered perspective views child labor as work which undermines children’s wellbeing and individual and social development. This perspective defines work to comprise much more than economic participation and it gives support for policies that guarantee children’s rights, welfare and development. This perspective strongly emphasizes on the need to make national policy and other labor actions more accountable for children (Mayers & Boyden, 1995).

The child-centered perspective is highly dominated by modern ideas of human right and human development. The perspective argues that no longer should children be seen as not heard and they should be consulted and involved. This perspective indicates that children by taking part in development activities acquire skills and confidence that not only helps them now but in later life (Mayers, 2001).
The History of Child Labor

Child labor is not a new phenomenon. In different parts of the world, at different stages of history, the laboring child has been a part of economic life. Although it is not known whether children’s participation rate in economic activity was higher in the pre-industrial or industrial period, many economic historians agree that during the early industrial period there was an increase in the incidence of child labor. In the early years of industrial period, children accounted for a significant share of the manufacturing labor force (Nardinelli, 1990).

According to Brown, Christiansen & Philips (1992) during the early stages of industrial revolution child labor was preferred than adult labor in many industries because children were cheap to employ, more docile, and easily coerced. According to Basu (1999) today’s advanced industrial countries faced the problem of child labor in large magnitude during the industrial revolution.

During the 19th century, as the number of child workers increased, the opposition against child labor also increased. By the end of the 19th century child labor has started to decline in industrialized countries. Some scholars (e.g. Basu, 1999) argue that the period after the industrial revolution saw decline of child labor due to gradual sophistication of technology. Technological sophistication led to an increase demand for educated workers and also provided an incentive for children to stay in school to meet the new demands of the industry. On the other hand, other scholars (e.g. Weiner, 1991) argue that the principal cause of the decline in child labor in industrialized counties was the passing of legislations that prohibit child labor. Cunningham (2000) also argues that the sharp decline in the supply of child labor was a result of an increase in family income. Families in industrialized countries were able to provide their children with all their basic needs and they no longer needed the economic contribution of their children to survive.
Though consensus in not reached regarding the principal cause of the decline in child labor in industrialized counties, it is agreed that child labor declined sharply in industrial countries. Currently, child labor has become the problem of developing countries. Estimates of child labor by (ILO, 2000) shows that almost 90% of economically active children are found in developing countries.

**The Incidence of Child Labor**

In the year 2002, the International Labor Organization (ILO) estimated that there were 211 million economically active children between the ages of 5 to 14 worldwide. This latest global estimate is remarkably lower when it is compared with the one estimated by ILO in 1995 which was 250 million economically active children with the same age category (ILO, 2002).

Among the total working children worldwide, 171 million were involved in work that by its nature is hazardous to their safety, physical or mental health and moral development. Moreover, some 8.4 million children were engaged in so-called 'unconditional' worst forms of child labor, which include forced and bonded labor, the use of children in armed conflict, trafficking in children and commercial sexual exploitation (ILO, 2000).

In contemporary times, the incidence of child labor is very high in Third World countries, and it has been that way for several decades now. Among the total working children in the world, 61% are found in Asia, 32% in Africa, and 7% in Latin America, and less than 1% in US, Canada, Europe and other wealthy nations (ILO, 2000). In Africa, one child in three is at work and only a tiny proportion of child workers are involved in the formal sector and the vast majority of work is for their families, in homes, in the fields or on the streets (ILO, 1996). This indicates that we live in an age
when child labor is almost extinct in some parts of the world, and an enduring phenomenon in others.

There is no denying fact that child labor exists in Ethiopia in an extensive scale. According to ILO, the number of children engaged in economic activities in Ethiopia aged below 14 is estimated at 7.5 million - which represents about 49 percent of the total population of that age group (ILO, 1999).

A sample survey conducted in 48 major towns in Ethiopia shows the informal sector is providing employment for about 166,405 people in Addis Ababa and this accounts for about 23% of the total urban informal sector employment in the country. Out of the total people employed in the informal sector in Addis Ababa, 3,269 were under the age of 10; 27,065 were between the ages of 10-14 and 52,130 were between the ages of 15-19. These figures show that there is a wide spread incidence of child labor in the city of Addis Ababa (Central Statistical Agency (CSA), 1997).

**Causes of Child Labor**

Child labor is a universal phenomenon; however, the nature of the work performed by children, their working condition and the situations that pull or push them to work varies from society to society. In general, the causes of child labor can be explained in terms of the demand and supply side factors.

From the supply side, some of the underlining causes of child labor are poverty, rapid urbanization and migration, Traditional factors, inadequate regulation and ineffective enforcement of laws and other social, economic, political and contextual factors. From the demand side, many employers are keen to recruit children because they are less aware about their rights, less troublesome and more submissive than adult workers. Moreover, child workers are less likely to complain about their wage and
working conditions and they are also much cheaper than adult workers (Jensen & Nielson, 1997).

**Supply Side Factors**

**Poverty.** Jensen and Nielson (1997) claim that poverty is the main cause of child labor. They argue that the absence of child labor is a luxury that many parents in developing countries cannot yet afford. For destitute parents trapped in poverty children still serve as major contributors to family income. Child labor is often a response to households to the need of satisfying basic requirements that are critical for survival. Poor households in developing countries are forced to put their children to work because they can not afford to feed idle and unproductive children.

There is direct relationship between child labor and poverty. However, it can not be said that poverty necessarily causes child labor. There are regions in developing countries where child labor is extensively practiced while in other equally poor countries it is not. Thus, the idea that poverty and child labor are closely related should not be taken as an excuse for preventing the problem of child labor (ILO, 1996).

**Rapid Urbanization and Migration.** Rural-Urban migration and urbanization are the causes for increasing rate of child labor in urban areas of developing countries. Many families migrate to urban areas due to rural push and urban pull factors. Child migrants looking for economic opportunities that often do not exist contribute to the large increase in number of child laborers in the cities of developing countries (Salazar, 1988).

Due to the rapid urbanization the number of people living in urban areas has shown a drastic increase over the last four decades and the trend is likely to continue. Based on the United Nations (UN) estimate, 17% of the population of developing countries in the 1950’s lived in urban areas. This figure increased to 32% in 1988. By the year 2025, it is estimated to increase to 57%. Such increases, coupled with worsening
economic trends, put children and their families into urban poverty and this force children to work to cope with the chronic poverty (United Nations Children’s fund (UNICEF), 1997).

**Traditional Factors.** In many societies, the attitude that children should work to support their families and themselves is deeply rooted in the local customs and cultural beliefs. The supply of child labor only arises where societal and family stances and attitudes tolerate or even approve child labor. According to Lindert (1976), children in developing countries are seen as economic assets and one of the reasons why parents in developing countries have children is to be profitable. Parents in developing countries depend on the contribution of their children either in cash or in kind for survival.

**Demand Side Factors**

Economic theories underline that production starts with the assumption profit maximization. One of the major reasons for businesses in the informal sector to hire children is because they are cheaper than adults. Firms are motivated to hire child laborers if the marginal product of child labor is greater than that of adult workers (ILO, 1996). Moreover, employers can force children to do any work even risky ones, such as working with chemicals, because they have no power to challenge (Zebenay, 1998).

In the informal sector where firms operate under stiff competition, employing child laborers has advantages than adults. Children are better suited to fluctuating demand of labor because they can be laid off when business is slack as they do not have rights as workers and may not join labor unions (Assefa, 2000).

**The Impact of Child labor**

Children are very sensitive to work hazards than adults. They are not only more susceptible to hazards than adults but also more strongly affected by work hazards. Children differ from adult workers most importantly because they are still in the process
of growing up. Their normal development can be severely endangered by work hazards. For instance carrying heavy load can prematurely distort their growing bodies. Moreover, children suffer more from chemical hazards and they have less resistance to diseases (Assefa, 2000).

Imperative dimensions of child development that can be affected by child labor over a long period of time are: physical development including overall health, coordination, strength, vision, and so forth needed to survive and contribute to adulthood; cognitive development including literacy, basic cultural knowledge, vocational skills and other knowledge required to live a reasonably successful life; and Emotional development including adequate self-esteem, family attachment, feelings of love and acceptance and so forth (Assefa, 2000).

**Physical Hazard of Child Labor and Health Problems.** Researches have shown that because of differences between children and adults child workers are considerably more vulnerable to work place health and physical hazards. Occupational accidents are determined by the physical working environment, tools and equipment used to perform tasks. Child workers are more vulnerable to occupational injuries. The injuries include burns, cuts, electric shocks and even loss of limbs, eyesight and hearing damage. They also suffer from the effects of fatigue due to long hours and monotonous work and malnutrition resulting from food intake. The other factor which contributes to accident is the competition among children to retain job (Basu, 1999).

**Psychological Work Hazards.** One of the most serious and most common non-physical consequences of child labor is psychological work hazards. Working children compare themselves with other children that do not work and they suffer from the feeling of low self-esteem. Some child migrants also suffer from lack of social and economic support as they are separated from their parents and friends. In addition, work separates
child laborers from educational opportunities and thereby flitters away their chance to
develop the essential skills that they need in the future as adults (Assefa, 2000).

Effects of work on Education. Education holds the promise of improving
survival, wellbeing and wealth. Despite the fact that education is highly spreading in the
recent decades, the problem of making it viable for all children still remains. The
national census and labor data suggests that working children have low school
enrollment, attendance and completing rate than non-working children. Even after
enrolled in school, working children tends to lag behind than that of their non-working
peers (Boyden & Myers, 1998).
CHAPTER FOUR

Results and Discussion

In this part, the findings of the study are presented and interpreted. The main data were obtained from the administration of 45 interview schedules in the study area. There are 4 parts of the interview schedule and these include those dealing with background of the respondents, family background of the respondents, living and working condition and impact of work. These will be dealt with respectively here after. This major source of information was supplemented by two focus group discussions and the researcher’s observation. The supplementary information are incorporated and analyzed together with the data obtained from the interview schedule whenever appropriate.

Background of Respondents

The respondents were asked to indicate their age, gender, educational background and ethnicity in order to get an insight about the demographic characteristics of the respondents and to see if the personal background information is related with causes for child labor. In the following paragraphs, the data pertaining to such variables are presented.

The respondents were asked to indicate their age. The following table presents the age distribution of the respondents.

*Table 1: Frequency and percentage distribution of respondents by age*

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>Frequency</th>
<th>Percent</th>
<th>Cumulative Percent</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Valid</td>
<td>8-10</td>
<td>9</td>
<td>20.0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>11-13</td>
<td>23</td>
<td>51.1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>14-17</td>
<td>13</td>
<td>28.9</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Total</td>
<td></td>
<td>45</td>
<td>100.0</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
The majority of the respondents (51.1%) were between the ages of 11 and 13 years, 28.9% of the respondents were between 14 and 17 years of age, and 20% of the respondents were between the ages of 8 and 10 years. Nearly three fourths of the respondents (71.1%) were under the age of 14 years. This indicates that the majority of the respondents were below the legal minimum age to start work. The Minimum Age Convention of ILO prohibits work for children who are under the age of 14 years (Assefa, 2000). Though this convention is ratified by Ethiopia, children under the age of 14 years continue to work. As this age is a primary school age, perhaps the children are working in the expense of their schooling.

The respondents were asked to indicate their educational level. The following table presents educational level of the respondents.

\[\text{Table 2: Frequency and percentage distribution of respondents by years of education (grade) completed}\]

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Frequency</th>
<th>Percent</th>
<th>Valid Percent</th>
<th>Cumulative Percent</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1-3</td>
<td>30</td>
<td>66.7</td>
<td>66.7</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4-6</td>
<td>13</td>
<td>28.9</td>
<td>28.9</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>7-10</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>4.4</td>
<td>4.4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Total</td>
<td>45</td>
<td>100.0</td>
<td>100.0</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

The majority of the respondents did not complete elementary level education. The data collected from the respondents indicated that 66.7% of the respondents had completed between 1-3 grades of education, 28.9% of the respondents had completed between 4-6 grades of education and the rest 4.4% of the respondents had completed between 7-10 grades of education. Fully, 95.6% of the respondents had not yet completed elementary education.

The respondents were also asked to indicate their gender. The data procured from the respondents indicated that all of them were male (boys). Also it was observed by the
researcher that all of the workers, including the adults, who were engaged in the blacksmith activity in the study site, were men. This information was also substantiated by the focus group participants. The participants from the school attending group stated that all the workers in the area were men as blacksmithing activity is labor intensive work. When answering why only men are engaged in blacksmithing activity, one focus group participant from the school attending group said:

The work that we are engaged in is highly labor intensive and it is extremely tiresome, thus, women can not be engaged in the activity as the work demands physical strength.

This indicates that the work that the children were engaged in was highly labor intensive which demands physical strength. From this one can understand that how it may be difficult for children to engage in the activity with their toddler strength.

Respondents were asked was to indicate their ethnic background. The following table presents the ethnic composition of the respondents.

Table 3: Frequency and percentage distribution of respondents by ethnic background

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>Frequency</th>
<th>Percent</th>
<th>Valid Percent</th>
<th>Cumulative Percent</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Sodo Gurage</td>
<td>39</td>
<td>86.7</td>
<td>86.7</td>
<td>86.7</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Silte</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>6.7</td>
<td>6.7</td>
<td>93.3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Oromo</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>6.7</td>
<td>6.7</td>
<td>100.0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Total</td>
<td>45</td>
<td>100.0</td>
<td>100.0</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

The majority of the respondents (86.7%) were from Sodo Guraghe ethnic background, 6.7% of the respondents were from Silte ethnic background while the rest 6.7% of the respondents were from Oromo ethnic background. As indicated by both focus group participants, most of the children who were engaged in blacksmithing activity in the area were from the minority segment of Guraghe (Sodo) ethnic background and they added that the activity is customary among the members of the
Child Labor in …

ethnic group. They added that, it is considered normal by the ethnic group members to send children to work to maximize family income.

Boyden (1998) stated that societal attitude can be a cause of child labor if societies hold the attitude that children should work to support themselves or their families. This assertion is noticed in this study as sending children to work is considered normal by the ethnic group members of majority of the respondents (86.7%). Therefore, it can be deduced that societal attitude is a factor that may explain cause of child labor in this study.

Respondents were asked to indicate their place of origin (place of birth) to see if migration predicts cause of work. The following table presents the responses for this question.

Table 4: Frequency and percentage distribution of respondents by place of origin

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>Frequency</th>
<th>Percent</th>
<th>Valid Percent</th>
<th>Cumulative Percent</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Addis Ababa</td>
<td>28</td>
<td>62.2</td>
<td>62.2</td>
<td>62.2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Guraghe Zone</td>
<td>11</td>
<td>24.4</td>
<td>24.4</td>
<td>86.7</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Sotel (Oromia regional State)</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>4.4</td>
<td>4.4</td>
<td>91.1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Werabe (Silte Zone)</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>8.9</td>
<td>8.9</td>
<td>100.0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Total</td>
<td>45</td>
<td>100.0</td>
<td>100.0</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

The majority (62.2%) of the respondents were born in Addis Ababa. Several (24.4%) respondents said that they were born in Guraghe Zone, 4.4% said that they were born in Sotel (Oromia Regional State) while the remaining 8.9% said that they were born in Werabe (Silte Zone).

Zebenay (1998) stated that rural-urban migration is a cause for the increasing rate of child labor in urban areas of developing countries. This supposition is mildly noticed in this study. Several (37.8%) of the respondents were not born in Addis Ababa rather they migrated from rural or depressed urban areas. Thus, in this particular study,
rural-urban migration is a cause of child labor which mildly predicts respondents’ involvement in economic activity.

**Family Background**

The respondents were asked to indicate whether their parents are alive or not, to indicate the size of their family, to point out their parents’ educational level, parents’ occupation, and the income level of parents’ in order to get an insight regarding the background information of parents and to see if it is related with children’s engagement in work. In the following paragraphs, the data pertaining to such variables are presented.

The respondents were asked to indicate weather their parents are deceased or not to see if death of parents is a factor that pushed children to work. Table 5 presents responses for this question.

*Table 5: Frequency and percentage distribution of the respondents by parents are alive or not*

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>Frequency</th>
<th>Percent</th>
<th>Cumulative Percent</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Valid</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Both alive</td>
<td>30</td>
<td>66.7</td>
<td>66.7</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Only father deceased</td>
<td>9</td>
<td>20.0</td>
<td>86.7</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Only mother deceased</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>6.7</td>
<td>93.3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Both deceased</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>6.7</td>
<td>100.0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Total</td>
<td>45</td>
<td>100.0</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Both parents of two third of the respondents’ (66.7%) were alive while only 6.7% of the respondents reported both parents were deceased. Between these two extreme ends, 20% of the respondents said that only fathers were deceased while the remaining 6.7% of the respondents said that only their mothers were deceased.

The data indicates that nearly all (93.4%) of the respondents have either both or one parent alive yet they are working. This indicates that the death of parents can not be
seen as an imperative push factor in this study as most of the respondents’ parents were alive.

Respondents were asked to indicate the educational level of their parents. Table 6 and Table 7 present fathers’ and mothers’ educational level respectively.

*Table 6: Frequency and percentage distribution of respondents by fathers’ educational level*

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Frequency</th>
<th>Percent</th>
<th>Cumulative Percent</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Valid</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Illiterate</td>
<td>30</td>
<td>66.7</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Literate only</td>
<td>9</td>
<td>20.0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Primary</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>6.7</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Junior high</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>6.7</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Total</td>
<td>45</td>
<td>100.0</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Majority (66.7%) of the respondents said that their fathers were completely illiterate, 20% of the respondents said that their fathers could only read and write, 6.7% of the respondents said that their fathers attended primary school while the remaining 6.7% of the respondents said that their fathers attended junior high.

*Table 7: Frequency and percentage distribution of respondents by mothers’ educational level*

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Frequency</th>
<th>Percent</th>
<th>Cumulative Percent</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Valid</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Illiterate</td>
<td>36</td>
<td>80.0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Primary</td>
<td>6</td>
<td>13.3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Junior high</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>6.7</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Total</td>
<td>45</td>
<td>100.0</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Majority of the respondents (80%) said that their mothers were completely illiterate, 13.3% said their mothers attended primary school while the remaining 6.7% said their mothers attended junior high. Generally, what Table 6 and Table 7 indicate is that the majority of the respondents came from parents that are poorly educated.
Respondents were asked to indicate their parents’ occupation. Table 8 presents the distribution of responses to this question.

*Table 8: Frequency and percentage distribution of respondents by parents’ occupation*

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Occupational status</th>
<th>Father</th>
<th></th>
<th>Mother</th>
<th></th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Frequency</td>
<td>Percentage</td>
<td>Frequency</td>
<td>Percentage</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Blacksmith</td>
<td>36</td>
<td>80</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>-</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Daily laborer</td>
<td>9</td>
<td>20</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>6.7</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Petty trader</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>27</td>
<td>60</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>House Wife</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>15</td>
<td>33.3</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

The majority of the respondents (80%) said that their fathers were blacksmith while the remaining (20%) of the respondents said that their fathers were daily laborers. The majority of the respondents (60%) said that their mothers were engaged in petty trading activities, 33.3% of the respondents said that their mothers are house wives while only 6.7% said that their mothers were daily laborers. Explicitly, all of the respondents’ parents were engaged in non-skilled manual labor.

Basu (1999) stated that individuals may start to work as young laborers in the same occupation of their fathers to help the family reach a subsistence level income. This supposition is noticed in this study as majority of the respondents (80%) were engaged in the same occupation of their fathers. This fact was also substantiated by the focus group participants. The participants of both focus group discussions affirmed that blacksmithing activity is a tradition in their ethnic group and it has been practiced by their parents and grand parents for more than a century.

Respondents were asked to indicate the income level of their parents per month. The following table presents the response to this question.
Table 9: Frequency and percentage distribution of respondents by parents’ combined monthly income

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>Frequency</th>
<th>Percent</th>
<th>Cumulative Percent</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Valid</td>
<td>45</td>
<td>100.0</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>50-150</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>6.7</td>
<td>6.7</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>151-250</td>
<td>12</td>
<td>26.7</td>
<td>33.3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>251-350</td>
<td>9</td>
<td>20.0</td>
<td>53.3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>351-450</td>
<td>15</td>
<td>33.3</td>
<td>86.7</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>451-550</td>
<td>6</td>
<td>13.3</td>
<td>100.0</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

The parents of three (6.7%) of the respondents earned between combined monthly income of 50-150 birr while the parents of 13.3% of the respondents enjoyed the luxury of the highest combined monthly income of birr 451 to 550 as compared to the rest. Sandwiched between these two extremes, 26.7% of the respondents said that the combined monthly income of their parents was between 151-250 birr, 20% of the respondents said that the combined monthly income of their parents was between 251-350 birr and the rest 33.3% of the respondents said that the combined monthly income of their parents was between 351 to 450 birr. The mean combined monthly income of the respondents’ parents was 292 birr. This indicates that the income of the respondents’ parents was very low. At the time when inflation is at its maximum it is very hard to imagine how these families survived on such low incomes.

The other question that the respondents were asked was to indicate the size of their families to see if their family size hoisted the tension of poverty of the respondents’ families. The following table presents the respondents’ family size.
Several (20%) of the respondents had very large families with more than 9 family members while 33.3% had middle sized families with 4-6 family members. Between these two extreme ends considerable number of respondents (46.7%) had large family size with 7-9 family members. The mean family size was 7.4 which is considerably large.

It is indicated earlier that the average monthly income of the respondents’ parents was 292 birr. It would be very difficult for the average family size of 7.4 to make ends meet with a mean income of 292 birr per month. This indicates that the families of the respondents were deprived and leaving under poverty. It also indicates that how the financial problems of the families could be worsened by the fact that their household size is large.

Some researchers claim that poverty is the main cause of child labor. For instance, Basu (1999) indicated that poverty is the main reason for children to engage in work in all parts of the world. He stated that when the family income is inadequate to support members, children go to work either to increase the meager of family income or to be self reliant. What is affirmed by Basu is explicitly observable in the case of the respondents in this study. That is, the families of the respondents were deprived and leaving under poverty. Thus, the poor economic condition of families predicts that it may possibly push the children to work in their childhood as the income of their families was inadequate to support them. However, the research design used in the study does not
allow the researcher to infer causality, thus the respondents were asked to indicate why they started working to further see if their reason is related with poverty. The following table presents the response for this question.

Table 11: Frequency and percentage distribution of respondents by reason for work

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>Frequency</th>
<th>Percent</th>
<th>Cumulative Percent</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Valid</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>To support family</td>
<td>30</td>
<td>66.7</td>
<td>66.7</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>To be self sufficient</td>
<td>7</td>
<td>15.5</td>
<td>82.2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Parents order</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>6.7</td>
<td>88.9</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Peer influence</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>11.1</td>
<td>100</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Total</td>
<td>45</td>
<td>100.0</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

The majority (66.7%) of the respondents said that they started working to support their families, 15.5% of the respondents said that they started working to be self sufficient, 6.7% of the respondents said that they started working because they were ordered by their parents, while the remaining 11.1% of respondents said that they started working because of peer influence. This indicates that poverty is a factor that may imperatively explain cause of child labor in this study as nearly all of the respondents (88.9%) started working to support their families, to be self sufficient or because they are ordered by their parents to work in their childhood. Thus, there is a strong link between poverty and child labor in this study.

Living and Working Conditions

One of the objectives of this study was to assess the living and working conditions of the working children. This part of the paper introduces the living and working condition of the respondents. The respondents were asked to indicate with whom they live, how many rooms their homes had, their income level, number of working days per week and length of working hours to get an insight regarding the living and working conditions of the respondents. Issues were also raised for the focus group participants.
pertaining to the working environment, work flow, types of tools used for manufacturing
and length of working hours in order to get deeper insight about the working condition of
the respondents. The data pertaining to these variables are presented in the following
sub-sections.

**Living conditions**

The respondents were asked to indicate with whom they live. The response for this
question is presented in the following table.

*Table 12: Frequency and percentage distribution of respondents’ by type of people with
whom they live*

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Type</th>
<th>Frequency</th>
<th>Percent</th>
<th>Valid Percent</th>
<th>Cumulative Percent</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Parents</td>
<td>33</td>
<td>73.3</td>
<td>73.3</td>
<td>73.3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Relatives</td>
<td>6</td>
<td>13.3</td>
<td>13.3</td>
<td>86.7</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>By their own</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>8.9</td>
<td>8.9</td>
<td>95.6</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Employers</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>4.4</td>
<td>4.4</td>
<td>100.0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Total</td>
<td>45</td>
<td>100.0</td>
<td>100.0</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

The majority of the respondents (73.3%) said that they live with their parents, 13.3% of the respondents said that they live with their relatives, 8.9% of the respondents said that they live by their own while the remaining 4.4% of the respondents said that they live with their employers.

Respondents were asked to indicate how many rooms their homes had. The response of this question is summarized in the following table.
The majority of the respondents (62.2%) said that they live in a single roomed house, 28.9% of the respondents said that they live in a two roomed house while only 8.9% of the respondents enjoyed the luxury of three roomed house as compared to the rest. It is stated earlier, in the family background part, that the average family size was 7.6. It is hard to imagine how the families of the respondents can manage to survive with in such limited space, especially those living in one-roomed houses. This indicates that the respondents were living under difficult conditions.

The respondents were asked to indicate their weekly income. The response for this question is presented in the following table.

Table 14: Frequency and percentage distribution of respondents by weekly income

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Frequency</th>
<th>Percent</th>
<th>Valid Percent</th>
<th>Cumulative Percent</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>10-30</td>
<td>6</td>
<td>13.3</td>
<td>13.3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>31-50</td>
<td>12</td>
<td>26.7</td>
<td>40.0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>51-70</td>
<td>27</td>
<td>60.0</td>
<td>100.0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Total</td>
<td>45</td>
<td>100.0</td>
<td>100.0</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

The majority of the respondents (60%) said that they earn 51-70 birr per week, 26.7% of the respondents said that they earn 10-30 birr per week while the remaining 13.3% of the respondents said that they earn 51 -70 birr per week. The average weekly income of the respondents was 54.3 birr.
The respondents were asked to indicate whether they give money for their parents or guardians from their income. 46.6% of the respondents said that they give half of their income for their parents, 26.7% of the respondents said that they give three-fourths of their income for their parents, 13.3% of the respondents said that they give one-third of their income for their parents while the remaining 13.3% of the respondents said that they give one-fourth of their income for their parents.

The respondents were asked to indicate for what purpose they use their remaining income. All of the respondents said that they spend the rest of their income on food and transportation.

The data obtained through the survey was substantiated by the focus group participants. The participants of both focus group discussions stated that they give a greater proportion of their income for their parents. One focus group participant said that:

Though we work six days a week without a break, we are left with nothing in our hands at the end of the week after we give the lion’s share of our income for our parents and spend the remaining for food and transportation.

It is stated earlier that the average weekly income of the respondents was 54.3 birr which is equivalent to 7.76 birr per day. Moreover, besides covering their own expenses, all of the respondents support their families using this meager income. This indicates that the children are living under poverty. Hence, it can be inferred that the children are living under difficult conditions by shouldering the burden of their family.

**Working condition**

Working environment was raised as a theme of discussion for the focus group discussion participants to obtain information about the working atmosphere. The focus group participants of both group discussions indicated that the working environment is not conducive at all. The participants from the school attending group stated that there is
high temperature in their working place as the entire manufacturing plant is constructed by corrugated iron. They stated that the high temperature creates exhaustion and annoying feelings on them. The participants added that there is high density of workers per room and working space is not enough to perform their activities. One participant from the school attending group said “Usually we hit each other by hummer unknowingly due to the scarcity of working space”. The participants added that the high density of workers creates suffocation. One participant from the school attending group said:

If any of us bring flu in the working place everybody goes to his home coughing as there is high density of workers per room.

It was observed by the researcher that the manufacturing plant was entirely constructed by corrugated iron sheet without a ventilation system. It was also observed that there was high concentration of child workers in a single room and that the physical facilities were not arranged properly. Furthermore, there was high noise in the workplace while hammering the iron sheet.

In general, the working environment of the respondents was not conducive. That is there was high temperature which creates exhaustion and annoying feelings. There was also high density of workers per room and there was no ventilation system which creates suffocation and may possibly endorse easy transmission of respiratory tract infections. In addition, there was inappropriate work space and unsuitable installation of facilities which may increase the occurrences of injury. Moreover, there was high noise in the workplace. This implies that the working environment is not conducive and it may possibly put respondents under risky conditions that may affect their health and physical wellbeing negatively.

An issue was raised for the focus group participants about the work flow of manufacturing. The participants stated that the work flow of blacksmithing activity in
producing “Mitad” (a circular bowl shaped iron sheet) has seven steps. The steps are burning barrel, stretching, preliminary hammering, cutting, final hammering, shaping and smoothing. The participants also stated that all of the children in the area participate in the entire steps of manufacturing.

The focus group discussion participants indicated that the raw material that they use for manufacturing is petroleum barrel. The first step of manufacturing is burning barrels using rubber and petroleum waste which is carried out in order to make the barrel flexible and ready for hammering. This activity is conducted early in the morning before sunrise as it is difficult to perform the activity in the afternoon due to the high level of heat which emerges from the fire. After the barrel is burned and it becomes loose, it is stretched and preliminary hammering is done to make the barrel ready for cutting. After cutting the barrel in a circular shape, it is hammered for the second time to make the iron sheet flat. Finally, the iron sheet is smoothened after a bowl shape is given to it.

An issue was also raised for the focus group discussion participants about the types of tools that the children use for manufacturing. The participants indicated that there are three tools that are casually used for manufacturing, namely heavy duty hammer (“Meraja”), light duty hammer (“Medosha”) and metal scissor (“Mekurech”). They further indicated that the heavy duty hammer is used for preliminary hammering and final hammering, the light duty hammer is used for shaping and smoothing, and the metal scissor is used for cutting iron sheet. Some participants from school attending focus group stated that it is not uncommon for the working children to loose balance and hit their hands upon using heavy duty hammer as its weight can not be easily managed by the children. The participants added that it is common to observe bleeding children as most of them cut their hands while they cut iron sheets using scissors. They further
added that, the incidence of injury was high because the children do not use personal
protective equipment like gloves. One participant said:

I do not wear gloves while I was working because I do not afford it. As a result, I experienced hand cuts several times. Finally, I started to wear my socks in my hands before I start cutting iron sheets to protect my hand.

In general, the manufacturing tools that the children use for manufacturing were hazardous and make the children prone to various types of injuries. Furthermore, the non existence of personal protective equipments like glove intensified the susceptibility of the children.

The respondents were asked to indicate how many days they work per week. All the respondents replied that they work six days per week except on Sundays which is their day off. The other question that the respondents were asked was to indicate for how many hours they work per day. The answer for this question is presented in the following table.

*Table 15: Frequency and percentage distribution of respondents by length of working hours per day*

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>Frequency</th>
<th>Percent</th>
<th>Valid Percent</th>
<th>Cumulative Percent</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Valid 4-6</td>
<td>6</td>
<td>13.3</td>
<td>13.3</td>
<td>13.3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Valid 7-9</td>
<td>14</td>
<td>31.1</td>
<td>31.1</td>
<td>44.4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Valid 10-12</td>
<td>25</td>
<td>55.6</td>
<td>55.6</td>
<td>100.0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Total</td>
<td>45</td>
<td>100.0</td>
<td>100.0</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

The majority of the respondents (55.6%) said that they work 10-12 hours per day, 31.1% of the respondents said that they work 7-9 hours per day while only 13.3% said that they work 4-6 hours per day.
Length of working hours was also raised as theme of discussion for the focus group participants. The discussants of both groups stated that majority of the children in the area work 8-12 hours per day. One participant said:

We began at 6 o'clock in the morning and work until 5 or 6 o'clock at night; as long as we could stand upon our feet.

Generally, most of the respondents (86.75%) work for six days per week and 7-12 hours per day. This indicates that most of the children work for long hours. However, as indicated earlier, the mean income of the children was only 54.3 birr per week. From this one can see that how the children were exploited by employers.

In order to see if parents’ income is related to respondents’ length of working hours, parents’ income was cross tabulated with respondents’ length of working hours. The results are presented in the following table.

*Table 16: Frequency and percentage distribution of respondents by parents’ income and length of working hours per day*

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Parents Monthly income</th>
<th>4-6</th>
<th>7-9</th>
<th>10-12</th>
<th>Total</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>50-150</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>151-250</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>9</td>
<td>12</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>251-350</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>9</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>351-450</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>7</td>
<td>6</td>
<td>15</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>451-550</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>6</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Total</td>
<td>6</td>
<td>14</td>
<td>25</td>
<td>45</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

All of the respondents that reported their parents’ monthly income were between 50-150 birr (3), all of them said that they work 10-12 hours per day. Among the respondents that reported that their parents’ monthly income was between 151-250 birr (12), 9 of them said that they work 10-12 hours per day and the rest 3 said that they work 7-8 hours per day. Among the respondents that reported their parents’ monthly income was between 251-350 birr (9), 5 of them said that they work 10-12 hours per day, 3 of
them said that they work 7-8 hours per day and only 1 respondent said that he works 4-6 hours per day. Among the respondents that reported that their parents’ monthly income was between 351-450 birr (15), 6 of them said that they work 10-12 hours per day, 7 of them said that they work 7-8 hours per day and 2 of them said that they work 4-6 hours per day. Among the respondents that reported that their parents’ monthly income was between 451-550 birr (6), 2 of them said that they work 10-12 hours per day, 1 of them said that he work 7-8 hours per day and 3 of them said that they work 4-6 hours per day. This indicates that children that came from families that had low income tend to work for longer hours than their peers that came from families that had relatively high income.

**Impact of work**

One of the objectives of this study was to assess the perceived impact of work on children who are engaged in blacksmithing activity. This part of the paper describes and analyzes the impact of work on the respondents’ health, physical well being, and schooling. The data pertaining to such these variables are presented and analyzed in the following sub-sections.

**Physical Hazards**

The respondents were asked to indicate if they experienced injury in relation to their work. All of the respondents stated that they faced different types of injuries while they were working. The respondents were asked to specify the types of injuries they faced and the frequency of occurrence. The following table presents responses for this question.
Table 17: Frequency and percentage distribution of respondents by types of injuries faced and their frequency of occurrence

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Types of Injury</th>
<th>Frequency of Occurrences</th>
<th></th>
<th></th>
<th></th>
<th>Total</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Usually</td>
<td>Sometimes</td>
<td>Rarely</td>
<td>Never</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Body cut</td>
<td>6 (13.3%)</td>
<td>30 (66.7%)</td>
<td>9 (20%)</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>45 (100%)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Body hit</td>
<td>3 (6.7%)</td>
<td>24 (53.3%)</td>
<td>9 (20%)</td>
<td>9 (20%)</td>
<td>45 (100%)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Body burn</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>15 (33.3%)</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>30 (66.7%)</td>
<td>45 (100%)</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Body cut was the most experienced injury by the respondents. All of the respondents said that they faced body cut while they were working with 13.3% of them saying that they experienced body cut usually, 66.7% of them said that they experienced body cut sometimes while 20% of them said they faced the body cut rarely. Body hit was the second most common injury among the children. 80% of the children said that they hit their hand and different parts of their body while working. Among these 6.7% of them said that they experienced the injury usually, 53.3% of them stated that they experience the injury sometimes, while 20% of them said that they faced the injury rarely. Body burn is the least experienced injury by the respondents. 66.7% of the respondents said that they never experienced body burn while 33.3% of the respondents said that they experienced body burn sometimes.

In order to see if there is relationship between the incidence of the reported injuries and age, the reported injuries are cross tabulated with age. The following table presents the result.
Table 18: Frequency distribution of respondents by age and incidence of injuries

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Age</th>
<th>Body Cut</th>
<th></th>
<th>Body Hit</th>
<th></th>
<th>Body Burn</th>
<th></th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Usually</td>
<td></td>
<td>Usually</td>
<td></td>
<td>Usually</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>8-10</td>
<td>6</td>
<td></td>
<td>2</td>
<td></td>
<td>0</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>11-13</td>
<td>0</td>
<td></td>
<td>15</td>
<td></td>
<td>8</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>14-17</td>
<td>0</td>
<td></td>
<td>0</td>
<td></td>
<td>1</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Total</td>
<td>9</td>
<td></td>
<td>23</td>
<td></td>
<td>23</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

The above table shows that there has been a relationship between age and the reported injuries. There has been relationship between age and the incidence of body cut. All of the respondents reported that they experienced body cut usually were between the ages of 8-10 years. In addition, among the respondents reported that they experienced body cut sometimes (30), 26 of them were under the age of 14 years. There has been also a relationship between age and body hit. Among the respondents reported that they experienced body hit usually (3), 2 of them were between the ages of 8-10 years and 1 respondent was between the ages of 11-13 years. Moreover, there has been relationship between age and body burn. Among the respondents reported that they experienced body burn sometimes (15), 14 of them were under the age of 14 years while among the respondents reported that they never experienced body cut (30), only 3 of them were between the ages of 8-10 years, 15 of them were between the ages of 11-13 years and the rest 12 were between the ages of 15-17 years. Generally, the above table indicates that...
there has been strong relationship between age and the incidence of injuries. In other words, the incidence of injuries was most widely among the younger respondents.

The above cross tabulation shows that there is relationship between age and incidence of injuries but it does not show the association between the variables. Hence, in order to examine the association between age and incidence of injuries, Pearson Chi-Square ($X^2$) analysis was used to measure the association between age and the reported injuries. The following table presents the result.

\textit{Table 19: Relationship between age and incidence of injuries}

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>Value</th>
<th>df.</th>
<th>Asymp. Sig. (2-sided)</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Body hit and age</td>
<td>28.504</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>.000</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Body cut and age</td>
<td>28.125</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>.000</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Body burn and age</td>
<td>5.409</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>.020</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Examination of results on the association between age and the incidence of body hit revealed to be strongly significant, $X^2$ (3df) = 28.504, p<0.05, sig. 000. The association between age and incidence of body cut $X^2$ (2df) = 28.125, p<0.05, sig. 000, and the association between age and incidence of body burn, $X^2$ (2df) = 5.409, p<0.05, sig. 020, also revealed to be strongly significant. This shows there was a significant association between age and the incidence of injuries.

The data obtained from the survey was substantiated by the data obtained from the focus group discussions. The participants of both focus group discussions explained that injury is the most widely physical problem among the working children especially among the younger ones as the tools that they use cannot be easily managed by their premature strength. They added that, usually there are incidental injuries among the children as there is high density of working children per room alongside with improper
arrangement of facilities in the working place which increase the chance of injury. Further, it is added by the participants that they were not supplied with any support from their employers up on the occurrence of injuries.

In general, Table 18 and Table 19 indicate that there has been significant relationship and association between age and incidence of injuries. The incidences of injuries have been higher on the younger respondents that were under the age of 14 than those respondents between the ages of 14-17. Incidences of injuries were most widely among the younger ones possibly because the tools they use can not be easily managed by their premature strength.

The focus group participants affirmed that injury is not the only physical problem which is experienced by the children. The participants stated that the children also experienced physical problems like loss of weight and drowsiness as a result of their work. The participants of both focus group discussions affirmed that loss of weight was common among the working children because they do not afford to buy food that has good nutritional value that can substitute the energy that they loose by the labor intensive and tiresome work. The researcher also observed that most of the children in the area were physically stunted. Moreover, as indicated by the school attending focus group participants, most of the working children are physically weak, and thus, sleepiness and drowsiness is common among the children.

In sum, all of the children were facing different types of injuries in relation to their work. The high level of incidence of injuries can be explained by the inappropriate working environment and tools that the children use for work. Moreover, the children do not have any “insurance” for the physical injuries they experience. In addition, most of the working children are physically weak which was related with the children’s lack of affordability to buy food with good nutritional value to substitute the energy that they
lost while working. As discussed earlier the mean weekly income of the respondents was 54.3 birr which is 7.76 birr per day. Out of this low income 73.3% of the respondents give half or more of their income for their parents. From this one can see that how it is challenging for the respondents to survive with the remaining income let alone eating foods with good nutritional value. Hence, it can be said that the children are working under difficult circumstances inflicting various types of physical hazards on themselves.

**Health Problems**

The preliminary investigation that was undertaken by the researcher indicated that the common health problems in the study area that were related with blacksmithing activity were headache, congestion of nose, sore throat, shortness of breath, eye irritation, cough and ear pain. Thus, the respondents were asked if they experienced any of these health problems and to indicate their frequency of occurrences. The following table presents the responses for this question.

**Table 20: Frequency and percentage distribution of respondents by types of health problems faced and their frequency of occurrence**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Health problems</th>
<th>Usually (Frequency and Percentage)</th>
<th>Sometimes (Frequency and Percentage)</th>
<th>Rarely (Frequency and Percentage)</th>
<th>Never (Frequency and Percentage)</th>
<th>Total</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Headache</td>
<td>30 (66.7%)</td>
<td>12 (26.7)</td>
<td>3 (6.7%)</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>45(100%)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Congestion of nose</td>
<td>3 (6.7%)</td>
<td>21 (46.7)</td>
<td>9 (20%)</td>
<td>12 (26.7)</td>
<td>45 (100%)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Sore throat</td>
<td></td>
<td>6 (13.3%)</td>
<td>12 (26.7)</td>
<td>27 (60%)</td>
<td>45 (100%)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Shortness of breath</td>
<td></td>
<td>9 (20%)</td>
<td>12 (26.7)</td>
<td>24 (53.3%)</td>
<td>45 (100%)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Eye Irritation</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>3 (6.7%)</td>
<td>12 (26.7)</td>
<td>30 (66.7%)</td>
<td>45 (100%)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Cough</td>
<td>3 (6.7%)</td>
<td>18 (40%)</td>
<td>15 (33.3%)</td>
<td>9 (20%)</td>
<td>45 (100%)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Ear pain</td>
<td>15 (33.3%)</td>
<td>24 (53.3%)</td>
<td>6 (13.3%)</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>45 (100%)</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Headache and ear pain were the most experienced health problems by the respondents. All of the respondents said that they experienced headache with 66.7% of the respondents saying they experienced headache usually, 26.7% of them saying they experienced headache sometimes while 6.7% of them said that they experienced headache rarely. Ear pain is also experienced by all of the respondents with 33.3% of the respondents saying they experienced ear problems usually, 53.3% of them saying they experienced ear pain sometimes while 13.3% of them saying they experienced ear pain rarely. Next to this, cough was the third most experienced health problem with 80% of the children saying that they experienced cough. Among these, 6.7% of the respondents said that they experienced cough usually, 40% of respondents said that they experienced cough sometimes and 33.3% of them said that they experienced cough rarely. Eye irritation followed with 33.3% of the respondents saying that they experienced eye irritation. Among these 6.7% said that they experienced eye irritation sometimes while 26.7% of the respondents said that they experienced eye irritation rarely. The least experienced health problem by the respondents was sore throat followed by shortness of breath. 60% of the respondents said that they never experienced sore throat and 53.3% said that they never experienced shortness of breath.

The respondents were asked if they think the health problems are related with their work. The responses for this question are presented in the following table.
Table 21: Percentage and frequency distribution of respondents by agreement or disagreement with the view that the health problems are related with their work

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Health problems</th>
<th>Respondents saying</th>
<th></th>
<th></th>
<th>Total</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Yes it is related</td>
<td>No it is not related</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Frequency</td>
<td>Percentage</td>
<td>Frequency</td>
<td>Percentage</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Headache</td>
<td>41</td>
<td>91.1</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>8.9</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Congestion of nose</td>
<td>26</td>
<td>57.8</td>
<td>19</td>
<td>42.2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Sore throat</td>
<td>10</td>
<td>22.2</td>
<td>35</td>
<td>77.8</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Shortness of breath</td>
<td>7</td>
<td>15.6</td>
<td>38</td>
<td>84.4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Eye Irritation</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>11.1</td>
<td>40</td>
<td>88.9</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Cough</td>
<td>36</td>
<td>80</td>
<td>9</td>
<td>20</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Ear pain</td>
<td>43</td>
<td>95.6</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>4.4</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

The symptoms thought to be related with work by the majority of the respondents were ear pain, headache, cough and congestion of nose. Ear pain was the symptom most frequently identified by the respondents as being related to their work with 95.6% of the respondents stating that they believed in such a casual relation. Headache comes next with 91.1% of the respondents saying that headache was related with their work. Cough followed with 80% of the respondents saying it was related. Congestion of nose was also believed to be related with work by 57.8% of the respondents. The health problems that are thought to be unrelated by most of the respondents were eye irritation, shortness of breath and sore throat. 88.9% of the respondents said that eye irritation is not related with their work, 84.4% of the respondents said that shortness of breath is not related with their work and 77.8% of the respondents said that sore throat is not related with their work. This was possibly because most of the respondents did not experience these health problems in the first place as indicated in Table 20.
The data obtained from the focus group participants substantiated the data acquired from the survey. The participants of both focus group discussions indicated that headache and cough were common health problems among the working children because all the children are exposed for dark smoke while they burn barrels using rubber and petroleum waste. The majority of the participants from the school attending group stated that ear pain was common among the working children because there is high level of noise in the work place which primarily originates from the hammering phase of production.

In order to see if the incidences of health problems are related with length of working hours, reported health problems are cross tabulated with length of working hours. The following table presents the result.

*Table 22: Frequency distribution of respondents by length of working hours and reported health problems*

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Health Problems</th>
<th>Length of working hours</th>
<th>Total</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>4-6</td>
<td>7-9</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Headache</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Usually</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>8</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Sometimes</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Rarely</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Never</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Total</td>
<td>6</td>
<td>14</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Congestion of nose</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Usually</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Sometimes</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Rarely</td>
<td>6</td>
<td>3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Never</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>11</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Total</td>
<td>6</td>
<td>14</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Sore Throat</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Usually</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Sometimes</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Rarely</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Never</td>
<td>6</td>
<td>14</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Total</td>
<td>6</td>
<td>14</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Shortness of breath</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Usually</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Sometimes</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Rarely</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>3</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
The above table shows that there is a relationship between length of working hours and the reported health problems. There has been a relationship between length of working hours and the incidence of headache. Among the respondents who experienced headache usually (30), 20 of the respondents work 10-12 hours per day, 8 of the respondents work 7-9 hours per day while only 2 of the respondents work 4-6 hours per day. To the other extreme, among the respondents who experienced headache rarely (3), 2 of them work 4-6 hours per day while only 1 respondent work 7-9 hours per day. There has been also a relationship between length of working hours and the incidence of congestion of nose. Among the respondents reported that they experienced congestion of nose (33), 25 of the respondents work 10-12 hours per day, 14 of the respondents work 7-9 hours per day while only 6 of the respondents work 4-6 hours per day. In the case of the relationship between length of working hours and the incidence of cough, among the respondents that work 10-12 hours per day, 3 of them experience cough usually, 15 of
them experience cough sometimes, 5 of them experience cough rarely while only 2 of the respondents said that they never experienced cough. Moreover there has been a strong relationship between length of working hours and the incidence of ear pain. Among the respondents that experienced ear pain usually (15), 13 of the respondents work 10-12 hours per day, 2 of the respondents work 7-9 hours per day while none of the respondents work 4-6 hours per day. To the other extreme, among the respondents that experienced ear pain rarely (6), 4 of them work 4-6 hours per day, 1 of them work 7-9 hours per day and 1 respondent work 10-12 hours per day. The table also shows that there has been relationship between length of working hours and the incidences of sore throat, shortness of breath and eye irritation. This indicates that there has been a strong relationship between length of working hours and incidence of the health problems. Moreover, it indicates that children that work for longer hours are more prone to the reported health problems.

The above cross tabulation shows that there is a relationship between length of working hours and the incidence of the reported health problems. However, it does not show how significantly length of working hours and the incidence of health problems are correlated. Thus, in order to see if the incidences of health problems are correlated with length of working hours, Pearson’s correlation coefficient was performed. The following table presents the result.

*Table 23: Correlation between lengths of working hour’s and incidence of health problems*

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Length of Working hours</th>
<th>Headache</th>
<th>Congestion of nose</th>
<th>Sore Throat</th>
<th>Shortness of breath</th>
<th>Eye Irritation</th>
<th>Cough</th>
<th>Ear Pain</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>$r$ value</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>.438(**)</td>
<td>.649(**)</td>
<td>.043</td>
<td>.092</td>
<td>-.009</td>
<td>.417(**)</td>
<td>.581(**)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Sig.</td>
<td>.003</td>
<td>.000</td>
<td>.778</td>
<td>.548</td>
<td>.952</td>
<td>.004</td>
<td>.000</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>N</td>
<td>45</td>
<td>45</td>
<td>45</td>
<td>45</td>
<td>45</td>
<td>45</td>
<td>45</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

** Correlation is significant at the 0.01 level (2-tailed).
From Table 23 above it is possible to observe that there has been significant positive correlation between lengths of working hours and most of the reported health problems. The correlation between length of working hours and the incidence of headache ($r= 0.438$, sig. 0.003); the correlation between length of working hours and incidence of congestion of nose cough ($r= 0.649$, sig. 0.000); the correlation between length of working hours and incidence of cough ($r= 0.417$, sig. 0.004); and the correlation between length of working hours and incidence of ear pain ($r= 0.581$, sig. 0.000) were found to be positive and strongly significant. The correlation between length of working hours and the incidence of sore throat ($r= 0.043$, sig. 0.778) and the correlation between length of working hours and the incidence of shortness of breath ($r= 0.092$, sig. 0.548) were found to be positive but non significant. However, the correlation between length of working hours and the incidence of eye irritation ($r= 0.009$, sig. 0.952) were found to be neither positive nor significant. This indicates that there has been a strong positive correlation between lengths of working hours and most of the reported health problems. This further indicates that children that were working for longer hours were more prone to the reported health problems.

In general, length of working hours is found to be significantly correlated with the incidence of headache, cough, ear pain and congestion of nose. This indicates that the children that work for longer hours were more exposed for these health problems. However, sore throat, eye irritation and shortness of breath were not associated with length of working hours.

So far it is discussed that the working children had experienced various types of physical and health problems in relation to their work. Following this, the respondents were asked what measures they took to overcome the health problems. 5 (11.1%) of the respondents said that they took no measures to overcome the health problems. Among
these, 3 (60%) of them said that it is because the health problems that they experienced did not necessitate them to take measures while the remaining 2 (40%) said that they wanted to visit medical institutions but they did not afford it. The rest 40 (88.9%) of the respondents said that they took measures to overcome the health problems that they faced in relation to their work.

The respondents that took measures to overcome the health problems were asked to specify what measures they took in the past three months. The following table presents responses for this question.

*Table 24: Frequency and percentage distribution of respondents that took measures to overcome the health problems by types of measures*

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Measures</th>
<th>Frequency</th>
<th>Percentage</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Visiting health institutions</td>
<td>16</td>
<td>40</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Visiting Spiritual healers</td>
<td>10</td>
<td>25</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Visiting Traditional healers</td>
<td>14</td>
<td>35</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Among the respondents that took measures to overcome the health problems that they faced in relation to their work (40), 40% of them said that they visited medical institutions in the past three months, 25% of the respondents said that they visited spiritual healers in the past three months and the rest 35% of the respondents said that they visited traditional healers in the past three months.

Generally, nearly all (88.9%) of the respondents visited either health institutions or other healers for the treatment of health problems they faced in relation to their work in the past three months. From this one can see how strongly the health condition of the respondents was affected by their work as nearly all of the respondents visited different institutions for the treatment of health problems they experienced in relation to their work with in this shot period of time (3 months).
In sum, what the above discussion indicates is that the children’s health condition is negatively affected by their work. The respondents were experiencing various types of health problems. In addition, the majority of the respondents thought that most of the reported health problems are related with their work. Moreover, as indicated by the focus group participants, the children in the area were experiencing headache, congestion of nose and cough widely because the children burn barrel using rubber and petroleum waste which has very bad smell and dark smoke while working. The focus group discussants also indicated that ear pain was widely among the working children because there is high level of noise in their work place. Furthermore, the incidences of most of the health problems were higher among the children that were working for longer hours (more than 8 hours per day). In general, it can be inferred that the children’s health condition is negatively affected by their work. From this one can see that how the children’s normal development can be severely endangered, especially of those children working for long hours, by the hazardous working conditions as they are still in the process of growing up.

Educational Problems

The other impact of child labor assessed in the study was the effect of work on the education of the respondents. The respondents were asked to indicate if they attend school or not. The response for this question is presented in the following table.

Table 25: Frequency and percentage distribution of respondents by school enrollment

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>Frequency</th>
<th>Percent</th>
<th>Valid Percent</th>
<th>Cumulative Percent</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Attend School</td>
<td>24</td>
<td>53.3</td>
<td>53.3</td>
<td>53.3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Do not attend school</td>
<td>21</td>
<td>46.7</td>
<td>46.7</td>
<td>100.0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Total</td>
<td>45</td>
<td>100.0</td>
<td>100.0</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
The majority of the respondents (53.3%) said that they attend school while the rest (46.7%) of the respondents said that they do not.

In order to see if parents’ income is related with the respondents’ enrollment in school, parents’ monthly income was cross tabulated with respondents’ enrollment in school. The following table present responses for this question.

Table 26: Frequency distribution of respondents by parents’ monthly income and school enrollment

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Parents Monthly income</th>
<th>School enrollment</th>
<th>Total</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Attend School</td>
<td>Do not attend school</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>50-150</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>151-250</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>12</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>251-350</td>
<td>8</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>351-450</td>
<td>10</td>
<td>5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>451-550</td>
<td>6</td>
<td>0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Total</td>
<td>24</td>
<td>21</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Among the respondents that reported parents’ monthly income was between 451-550 birr (6), all of them attend school. Among the respondents that reported parents’ monthly income was between 351-450 birr (15), 10 of them attend school. In addition, among the respondents that reported parents’ monthly income was between 241-350 birr (9), 8 of them attend school and among the respondents that reported parents’ monthly income was 250 and less none of them attend school. This indicates that the level of parents’ income is related with children’s school enrollment. In other words, children that came from parents that had low income tend to be school drop outs as compared with their peers that came from parents that had relatively higher income.

Table 25 above indicates that 46.7% of the respondents were not attending school. All of these respondents that were not attending school said that they school drop outs.
These respondents that dropped out from school (21) were asked to indicate their reason for quitting school. The following table presents responses for this question.

Table 27: Frequency and percentage distribution of respondents by reasons to give up school

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Reason for not attending school</th>
<th>Yes</th>
<th>No</th>
<th>Total</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Frequency</td>
<td>Percentage</td>
<td>Frequency</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Lack of finance to cover schooling expenses</td>
<td>9</td>
<td>42.9</td>
<td>12</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Lack of time for schooling</td>
<td>21</td>
<td>100</td>
<td>0</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Lack of time for schooling was a reason shared by the entire school drop out respondents for quitting their education. Lack of finance to cover schooling expenses comes next as a reason for quitting school with 42.9% of the respondents saying they quit school because of lack of finance to cover their schooling expense.

The data obtained from the survey regarding respondents’ reason for quitting school was substantiated by the focus group discussion participants. The participants affirmed that it is not uncommon for most of the working children to give up school due to lack of time. They stated that there are some children that work six days a week and 12 hours a day. They added, as a result, many children give up school because their school time is occupied by the long working hours. The participants further added that even those children who are attending school had high rate of absenteeism. The participants of both focus group discussions also affirmed that most of the children in the area quit their education because of financial problems. They stated that nearly all parents of the working children are poor so that they could not afford to cover the schooling expenses of their children. Moreover, almost the entire participants of the
school drop-out group stated that even those children that can afford their schooling expenses could not still cover their educational expenses because they give considerable portion of their income for their deprived parents. Some of the discussants from the school attending group stated that most of the working children quit class because their parents discourage their children to attend school. They added that, it is because parents prefer their children to work full-time than spending their time in school as they can get relatively better income from their children work in the former case.

Table 25 indicated that 53.3% of the respondents were attending school. The respondents that were attending school were asked in which educational program they are enrolled. All of the respondents that were attending school said that they are enrolled in the extension program (evening classes). In addition, all of them said that they are enrolled in the extension program because they were occupied by their work in the day time. In answering why he is enrolled in the extension program, one respondent said:

If I do not work in the day time I can not learn at all; and my family and I will be starved. So, if I have to learn and support my family the only choice that I have is to work in the day time and learn in the extension program.

The respondents that were attending school were asked if they believe that their work has negative effect on their schooling. Among the children that attend school (24), 21 (87.5%) of them said that they believe that their work has a negative effect on their education while the remaining 3 (12.5%) said that they do not believe that their work have any effect on their schooling. The respondents that believed their work has a negative effect on their education (21) were asked to specify what are the negative effects their work on their education. The following table presents responses for this question.
Among the respondents that believed their work has a negative effect on their education (21), 71.4% said that they had low school attendance. The same proportion of the respondents (87.5%) said that their work had negative effect on their school performance because they do not have enough time for study and because they had low attentiveness in class.

The focus group participants of the school attending group affirmed that their work had a negative impact on their education. They stated that their school attendance was poor because sometimes they were required to work during their school time if they could not finish what they were ordered to work. The discussants added that, they also miss classes because of the health problems that they experienced in relation to their work. They were poor in their education because they had low attentiveness in class and also because they did not have enough time for studying as they spend the whole day at work except on Sundays. One participant stated the following:

We spend the whole day struggling with iron sheets. At the end of the day we become totally exhausted and we can not listen what out teacher says. It is only our body that is present in class.
In order to see if the education level of the respondents is low when it is compared with their age the education level and age of the respondents were cross tabulated. The following table presents the result.

*Table 29: Frequency distribution of respondents by age and educational level (grade)*

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Educational level</th>
<th>Age</th>
<th></th>
<th></th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>8-10</td>
<td>11-13</td>
<td>14-17</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1-3</td>
<td>9</td>
<td>13</td>
<td>8</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4-6</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>9</td>
<td>4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>7-10</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Total</td>
<td>9</td>
<td>23</td>
<td>13</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Among the respondents that were between the ages of 11-13 years (23), 13 of them had completed between 1-3 grades of education, 9 of them had completed between 4-6 grades of education, while only 1 respondent had completed between 7-10 grades of education. In addition, among the respondents that were between the ages of 14-17 years (13), 8 of them had completed between 1-3 grades of education, 4 of them had completed between 4-6 grades of education, while only 1 respondent had completed 7-10 grades of education. This indicates that the educational level of majority of the respondents was low when it is compared with their age.

The focus group discussion participants indicated the same fact. The participants of both focus group discussions indicated that most of the children in the area had low educational level when it is compared with their age because they don’t have time for schooling as they are occupied by work.

Boyden (1998) stated that educational level of working children lag behind than that of their non-working peers. This fact is observed in this case. Nearly all of the respondents had low educational level when it is compared with their age. From this is
possible to deduce that the educational attainment of most of the respondents was lagged behind and it is perhaps because they were occupied by work in their school ages.

To conclude, the children’s educational achievement is negatively affected by their work. Considerably large number of the respondents dropped out from school. The school drop out respondents gave up school because of lack of time for schooling as their time is occupied by the long working hours and lack of finance to cover educational expenses. In addition, all of the schools attending respondents were enrolled in the extension program. Being enrolled in the extension program possibly may affect their educational performance negatively as they can not get a chance to spend ample time in school to learn and study their lessons. Moreover, the majority of the respondents that were attending school reported that they had low educational performance due to low school attendance and lack of time for study as their time was occupied by the long working hours and due to low attentiveness. As indicated by some scholars (e.g. Boyden, 1998), educational level of working children lag behind than that of their non-working peers. Similarly in this study, nearly all of the respondents had low educational level when it is compared with their age. In general, it is possible to deduce that the children’s educational achievement is negatively affected by their work. Though education holds the promise of improving survival, wellbeing and wealth, the respondents were deprived from meaningful opportunities. From this one can see that how the children’s future achievement may be hampered due to the various educational problems they were facing in relation to their work.
CHAPTER FIVE

Conclusion and Social Work Implication

Conclusion

It is the good care and attention given for children today that produce the future responsible generation. However, millions of children in the world are living and working in the most hazardous and dangerous situations by putting their young lives at risk. Despite international labor conventions and local government legislations, child labor still remains as a widespread and growing phenomenon in today’s world. Children are engaged in child labor in both developed and developing countries. However, the majority of working children are found in developing countries. Alike other developing countries in Asia, Africa and Latin America, child labor is a widespread problem in Ethiopia. In rural areas agriculture is the dominant sector of child employment whereas in urban areas child laborers are mostly engaged in the informal sector. Despite there exists various types of child labor in the informal sector in Ethiopia, the study focus on children who are engaged in blacksmithing activity in a place called “Sora Amba” which is found in the western tip of Addis Ababa, Kolfe/Keranio Sub-City.

The findings of the study revealed that nearly three fourth of the working children participated in the study were under the age of 14 years which is below the legal minimum age to start work. Moreover, nearly all of the participants in the survey had disadvantaged background including coming from poor and illiterate families and having low educational achievement. The children’s participation in blacksmithing activity in their childhood ages is the consequence and manifestation of multifarious vulnerabilities they experience.

Causes that led the children to engage in blacksmith activity were complex and varied. The children were pushed to work by various socio-economic and cultural
factors. The core causes of child labor that are identified in the study are poverty, societal attitude, rural-urban migration and peer influence.

Similar to what is asserted by human capital perspective, in this study poverty is an imperative push factor that forced the children to engage in blacksmithing activity. The families of the respondents were deprived and leaving under poverty. The poor economic condition of families pushed the children to work in their childhood because the income of their families was inadequate to support members. The children participated in the study said that they started working to support their families, to be self sufficient or because they are ordered by their parents to work in their childhood ages. This indicates that there is a strong link between poverty and child labor in this study.

The study revealed that societal attitude also explains cause of child labor imperatively in the study area. The majority of the respondents were from the minority segment of Sodo Guraghe ethnic group. It is considered normal by the ethnic group members to send children to work to maximize family income. Thus, societal attitude is one factor that may explain cause of child labor. The study also revealed rural-urban migration and peer influence are factors that can mildly explain the cause of child labor.

The study revealed that the children where living and working under difficult conditions. Most of the children work for six days per week and 7-12 hours per day. However, they are paid very low salary. It shows that how the children were exploited by employers. Moreover, the working environment of the children was not conducive as they were working in a place that have high temperature, high level of noise, high density of workers per room, inappropriate work space and unsuitable installation of facilities. In addition, the manufacturing tools that the children use for manufacturing were hazardous and make the children prone to various types of injuries. Furthermore,
the non existence of personal protective equipments like glove intensified the
susceptibility of the children to physical hazards.

Child labor not only stole the childhood joys of the blacksmith children
participated in the study but also deprived them from their education, health and physical
wellbeing. The study showed that child labor has negatively affected physical wellbeing,
health and education of the children.

The children were facing different types of injuries like body cut, body burn and
body hit in relation to their work. The study revealed that incidences of injuries were
more widely among the younger ones. The high level of incidence of injuries can be
explained by the inappropriate working environment and tools that the children use for
work. Though the incidence of injuries was high, the children did not have any insurance
for the physical injuries they experience. In general, the children were working under
difficult conditions inflicting various types of physical hazards on themselves which can
affect their normal physical development.

The children’ health condition is also negatively affected by their work. The
children were experiencing various types of health problems in relation to their work.
The study revealed that the working children were experiencing headache, ear pain,
congestion of nose and cough widely as a result of their work. The incidences of these
health problems were found to higher among the children that work for longer hours. In
general, the children’s health is negatively affected by the hazardous working conditions.
Thus, the children’s normal development can be severely endangered by their work as
they are still in the process of growing up.

The children’s’ educational achievement is also negatively affected by their work.
Considerably large number of the children dropped out from school because of lack of
time for schooling as their time is occupied by the long working hours. Moreover, the
majority of the children that were attending school had low educational performance due to low school attendance, lack of time for study and a low attentiveness in class. It is due to the long working hours and the tiresome nature of the work. In addition, all of the respondents had low educational level when it is compared with their age. Generally, they are losing the opportunity of meaningful education which can equip them with knowledge and life skills. Hence, the continuous involvement of the children in blacksmithing activity with little or no opportunity to education can perpetuate the vicious circle of poverty.

The study employed a child centered research with a perspective that children must have a stable and nurturing environment in order to become self-sustaining adults. This perspective strongly argues that there is a need to actively participate children in community development to ensure that their interests are met. Thus, the goal of intervention concerning blacksmith children in the study area should focus on providing increased protection to them rather than immediate elimination of child labor because the immediate elimination of child blacksmith work without putting in place necessary measures to support the children may hinder their livelihood and force them to work behind the scenes which could make their living and working condition even worse.

**Social Work Implications**

Child maltreatment in general and child labor in particular are not new in the field of social work and the issues have been studied intensively. Various interventions were also taken so far by social workers to address the problems at various levels in different parts of the world.

The social work profession rigorously holds the stand that children have a right to life, right to health, right to education, right to protection from abuse and neglect and right to protection from exploitation. The manual for social profession stipulates that
social workers should take actions to promote the well being of children, to ensure that their rights are respected and to make certain that their basic needs are met. Social workers should also take measures to rehabilitate the deprived and disadvantaged children (UN, 1994).

Children that are engaged in child labor are highly vulnerable to physical and emotional abuse. Moreover, they are highly vulnerable to health and educational problems that can negatively affect their cognitive, emotional, physical, social and moral development which in turn creates a major obstacle for human capital formation. Hence, social work intervention in preventing child labor and protecting working children from its consequences should be a priority and considered with utmost urgency.

The problems of child blacksmiths in the study area have a vast and complex nature and thus no single intervention strategy is adequate by itself. Therefore, addressing the problems of child blacksmiths requires a multi prolonged intervention strategies. Thus, based on the findings of the study, the interventions that should be undertaken to address the problem are specified from policy, social work practice and social work research viewpoints.

Policy Implications

In Ethiopia, there is no policy which is designed to address the issue of child labor and to protect children from hazardous work and exploitation. It results in the absence of national guideline that can be used to provide increased protection for working children in the country. Hence, child labor policy should be designed which focuses on providing increased protection for working children rather than a policy directing towards the immediate elimination of child labor. It is because the immediate elimination of child labor without putting in place necessary measures to support the working children may
hinder their livelihood and force them to work behind the scenes which could make their living and working condition even worse.

Despite there is no child labor policy in Ethiopia, the government expressed its concern to child labor by ratifying the UN convention on the rights of child in 1991 and the minimum age convention in 1999 (Assefa, 2001). In addition, the Ethiopian labor law prohibits children who are younger than 14 years of age to be engaged in work. The existing laws in Ethiopia serve the purpose of providing protection to working children if they are accompanied by required services for the children. However, the existing laws lack enforcing mechanism for their implementation. Therefore, strategies should be developed to tap the available local resources so as to utilize them in priority areas that need immediate response, like child labor at a national level.

**Social Work Practice Implications**

The children who are engaged in blacksmithing activity were suffering from various problems in relation to their work. This calls the need for multiple social work preventive and rehabilitative interventions.

The study finding indicated that the prime cause that forces the children to work is the wide spread poverty of families. Thus, there is a need to educate parents on the methods that they need to solve their socio-economic problems. Parents should be consulted and given advice on how to start income generating activities. Schemes like revolving funds and credit facilities should also have to be arranged for them. This will enable them to give up the income contribution of their children and to meet their basic needs.

The study finding indicated that majority of the respondents have large family size and very low income. Thus, educating parents about family planning is another possible
area of intervention. It is crucial for parents to receive education related to the issue of family planning that focuses on the costs and benefits of having large family size.

The study indicated that the children are facing various types of physical hazardous and health problems. In the situation where there is no other alternative for the children other than working in the short run, attempts should be made to improve their working condition. Thus, lobbying with employers is important intervention that may help to influence the employers assign the children in activities that do not expose them for serious physical and health problems. In addition, providing personal protective equipment like gloves is also important as physical hazards and health problems are intensified among the working children by the absence of personal protective equipment.

Last but not least, the finding of the study indicated that there is a need for awareness creation programs. In the study area child labor is accepted as a normal part of life. The society has not recognized it as a social problem which gives the employers a full freedom to exploit the children with little cost. As a result, it leaves the children under the mercy of their employers with no protection. Moreover, it forced them to work in the expense of their health, education and physical well being. Thus, massive awareness programs about child labor, the existing laws and policies, the importance and higher returns of education and the hazardous of child labor should be put in place targeting parents, working children, communities, policy makers and civil societies.

**Social work Research Implication**

The study has also shown possible social work research areas for further investigation. In examining the impact of child labor, the study was limited to assess the impact of work on education, health and physical well being. However, the findings of the study indicated that child labor did not only deprive the blacksmith children from their education, health and physical wellbeing but also stole the joys of their childhood.
Thus, there are possible social work research areas for further investigation because possibly there are other impacts of child labor that were not covered in this study. For further social work researches, the impact of child labor on the blacksmith children can be studied from other view points like the impact of child labor on the children’s moral, psychological, emotional and cognitive developments and so forth.
Reference List


Appendix-A

Addis Ababa University
Graduate School of Social work
Interview schedule for working children

Case Identifier: ______

1. Background Information

a) Age:____
b) Sex:____
c) Ethnic background:________________
d) Educational level: _________________
e) Place of origin (Birth Place): _____________

2. Family Background and Reason for Work

a) Are your parents alive? Yes_______ No_______
   If no, who is deceased: Father _____ Mother_____ Both_______
b) What is the educational level of your parents?
   Father _______ Mother _______
c) What is your parent’s occupation?
   Father ____________________ Mother ___________________
d) What is the income level of your parents (per month)?
   Father ____________________ Mother ___________________
e) What is the size of your family? ____________

What is your reason for work?
________________________________________________________________________
____________________________________________________________________________
____________________________________________________________________________
____________________________________________________________________________
Why did you choose this work?
______________________________________________________________________________
______________________________________________________________________________
______________________________________________________________________________

4. Living and working Condition

a) With whom do you live?
   Parent(s) ______ Grandparent(s) _______ By your own___________
   Other relative (specify relationship) ____________
   Unrelated persons (specify) _________________

b) How many rooms does the house of the home have? ______________

c) How much money do you get from your work per week on average? __________

d) How much money do you spend for yourself weekly on average? _______
   On what do you spend? ___________

e) Do you give money from your earnings to your parents or guardians?
   Yes _______ No______________
   If yes, how much do you give your parents or guardians weekly on average?
   ______________________

f) What kind of work do you do (your responsibility)? ______________________

g) Do you use tools for work? Yes ___________ No________
   If yes, what tools do you use? _______________________

h) Can you tell me the working environment of your work place?
   __________________________________________________________________________
   __________________________________________________________________________

i) Can you tell me about the work flow and the manufacturing process?
   __________________________________________________________________________
   __________________________________________________________________________

j) How many days do you work per week? ______________________

k) How many hours do you work per day? ______________________
5. Impact of work

a) Have you been injured while working? Yes ___________  No __________

If yes, what kind of injury did you suffer?

   Injury 1 _______________________
   Injury 2 _______________________
   Injury 3 _______________________
   Injury 4 _______________________

b) How frequently did you face these injuries?

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Types of Injury</th>
<th>Frequency of Occurrences</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Usually</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Injury 1</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Injury 2</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Injury 3</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Injury 4</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

c) Do you experience other physical problems as a result of your work? Yes ___  No ___

If yes, what physical problems do you experience?

________________________________________________________________________

________________________________________________________________________

d) Have you ever faced any of the following health problems? If yes, how often?

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Health problems</th>
<th>Frequency of Occurrence</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Usually</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Headache</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Congestion of nose</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Sore throat</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Shortness of breath</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Eye Irritation</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Cough</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Ear pain</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Others specify</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Child Labor in … VII

e) Which one of the above symptoms do you think are related with your work?

___________________________________________________________________________
___________________________________________________________________________
___________________________________________________________________________

f) Did you take any measures to overcome the health problems you faced in relation to you work in the past three months?  Yes ______  No ______

g) If no,

Why___________________________________________________________________________
___________________________________________________________________________
___________________________________________________________________________

h) If yes, what measures did you take to overcome the health problems you faced in relation to you work in the past three months?

___________________________________________________________________________
___________________________________________________________________________
___________________________________________________________________________
___________________________________________________________________________

i) Do you attend school? Yes ____ No ____

a. If no, why not?

___________________________________________________________________________
___________________________________________________________________________

b. If yes,

i. Which program do you attend? Extension_____ Regular_____

ii. If in the extension program why?

___________________________________________________________________________
___________________________________________________________________________

iii. In which grade are you enrolled? ____________

j) Does your work have any effect on your schooling? Yes _____  No _____

If yes, what are the effects?

___________________________________________________________________________
___________________________________________________________________________
___________________________________________________________________________
___________________________________________________________________________
Appendix-B

Addis Ababa University
Graduate School of Social work
FGD Check List for Working Children

1. Discussion on the working environment, work flow, types of tools used for manufacturing

2. Discussion on length of working hours

3. Do you get enough income from your work?

4. The prevalent injuries among the children.

5. Is there other physical problems other than injury?

6. What kind of health problems the children in the area experience in relation to their work?

7. Does work have effect on education?

8. What are the common effects of child labor on the education of the working children in the area?
Appendix-C

Declaration

I, the undersigned, declare that this second year research project is my original work and has not been presented for a degree in any other University, and that all the sources of materials used for the research project have been duly acknowledged.

Name: Alegnta Felleke
Signature: _________

Advisor

Name: Donna Petras (PhD)
Signature: _________