WORKING CONDITIONS OF RAGPICKER CHILDREN IN JAMMU CITY

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ABSTRACT

The present study was conducted with an objective to assess the origin, family background and working conditions of ragpicker children in Jammu city. A sample of 100 ragpicker children with an age group ranging from 8 to 14 years with an equal representation to males and females was selected from different areas of Jammu city. It was found that majority of respondents were 8 to 10 years of age. Most of these children belonged to nuclear families living under one roof with an average of 6 to 10 members. The family occupation of the majority (72%) of the respondents was observed to be laboring. They were mostly migrated from states namely Madhya Pradesh and Chhattisgarh to Jammu. Poverty and hunger were found to be the main reasons for their migration. It was found that 45% of the respondents were in ragpicking profession for more than 2 to 4 years. 29% respondents had started working even before 8 years of age. These ragpickers worked throughout the year except during extreme winters and rainy season. In a whole day 3 to 6 kgs of rags were usually picked up by them. They earned below ₹50 to ₹99 in day and below Rs 1000 per month. It was also reported that during working hours they faces various physical hazards such as cuts/bruises on their body.

KEY WORDS: Children, Jammu city, Ragpickers, working conditions.