



In its most extreme forms, child labour involves children being enslaved, separated from their families, exposed to serious hazards and illnesses and/or left to fend for themselves on the streets of large cities – often at a very early age. Whether or not particular forms of “work” can be called “child labour” depends on the child’s age, the type and hours of work performed, the conditions under which it is performed and the objectives pursued by individual countries.

Child labour in Pakistan is the employment of children for work in Pakistan, which causes mental, physical, moral and social harm to children. More than 20 million children are working in the country, half of which are under the age of ten.

## **Causes:**

The International Labour Organisation (ILO) suggests that poverty is the greatest single cause behind child labour. Pakistan has a per-capita income of approximately \$1900. A middle class person in Pakistan earns around \$5 a day on average. The average Pakistani has to feed nine or ten people with their daily wage. Further to that there is also the high inflation rate to contend with. As of 2003, 17.2% of the total population lives below the poverty line, which is the lowest figure in the history of Pakistan. Poverty levels in Pakistan appear to necessitate that children work in order to allow families to reach their target take home pay.

**There are many factors which are the cause of child labour in Pakistan. Some are discussed below.**

- Unemployment
- Lack of education
- Overpopulation