

CHILDREN'S LEARNING IN ADULTS' ENVIRONMENT - THE STREET

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ABSTRACT

This paper aims to explore the learning of working children on the streets. This study takes qualitative approach with semi-structured interviews as method. In total, 10 interviews were conducted with key informants aged 12-16 in Rawalpindi city. Social learning theory of Albert Bandura has been used as theoretical frameworks. The main themes are presented through case studies of three children who shared their learning on the streets. It is argued in this paper that children have to work in the streets in an adult environment due to their familial responsibilities especially in COVID-19, and sacrificing studies. And they are working in that environment –the street (an urban space) - which is created by adults and operated by rules and regulations of adults, where children face different exploitation including sexual abuse, discrimination and learning tricks of wrong doings. It is also argued that children can carry all these learning and experiences to rest of their lives and practice wrong doings in their professional lives as well. It is concluded that it is important for adults to give children an environment where moral judgment of right and wrong prevails and children can distinguish them and practice good things in their lives.

Keywords: Learning tricks, street, COVID-19, exploitation, moral judgment

INTRODUCTION

The literature on children's lives and rights explains and analyses experiences of children in adult environment. Across the world, different researchers have found out experiences of children which they face while living and working on the streets. The spatial importance of street plays an important role in the lives of millions of children. The open place - street- gives and teaches a lot of experiences to children who are not even working or living in them. The spatial aspect of street is important to explore that how it is a learning environment for children who live in poverty; and due to poverty, they work and live in the streets.

The most common definition of a street child or youth is "any girl or boy who has not reached adulthood, for whom the street (in the broadest sense of the word, including unoccupied dwellings, wastelands, etc.) has become her or his habitual abode and/or sources of livelihood, and who is inadequately protected, supervised or directed by responsible adults" (Inter-NGO, 1985). However, for this research, this definition is not followed because the children who shared their experiences in this research are those who are working on the streets and were living with their parents. In Pakistan, the number of children who are working and living on the streets is significant. According to an estimate, the number of street children is found to be between 1.2 million to 1.5 million in urban areas of Pakistan (SPARC, 2011).

More recent survey on national Labour Force Survey was conducted in 2010-2011 by ILO, UNICEF and World Bank and came up with a publication titled "Understanding Children's Work (UCW) in South Asia." It has estimated that 5.7 million children aged 10-17-year-olds, representing almost 20% of all children in the age group work as labourers. From this number, more than two-thirds of children are engaged in the agricultural sector in Pakistan. A similar proportion was estimated to be doing unpaid family work. 13.5% (aged 15-17) were engaged in hazardous work. Article 11 (3) of the Constitution of the Islamic Republic of Pakistan prohibits the employment of children below the age of 14 years in any factory or mine or any other hazardous employment.

Despite these commitments of Government of Pakistan and existing laws, children are involved in child labour including working on the street. Presence of children on the street is already an established phenomenon of urban population, and there is much research on street children and their experiences. However, there is a dearth of research on children working on the streets and who live with their families. Because both groups have different dynamics and within these two groups, variation of experiences can be observed as well. It is to mention that learning of children working on the streets is not exclusively studied and importance of learning is also ignored in the existing literature. Taking this gap as an opportunity, this study aims to uncover the learning of children on the streets and how it is important in developing resilience to help their families who are in need of their financial contribution.

REVIEW OF LITERATURE

Poverty and Poor Households

Pakistan's economy has remained weak (Gunaratna & Iqbal 2011, p. 7). Indeed, some have argued that Pakistan has been experiencing 'economic growth without development' compared to those countries which have the same per capita GNP (World Bank 2013; Kabeer et al. 2010, p. 3). Indeed, the World Bank (2013) has reported that despite some reduction in poverty in Pakistan, poor households still face the major problems of sustainable income, health and educational loss. According to an estimate in 2011 almost 49% of the population was living in poverty. Such poverty is revealed in very low social indicators in education, health, life expectancy, adequate housing, safe drinking water, sanitation facilities provision to people and increasing number of children working in the formal and informal economy (see UNDP 2013, p. 150). Pakistan is still included in low human development countries standing at 147th place in the HDI. This tardiness makes it important to explore social protection for children, their rights and development in the country (UNDP 2013, p. 150).

The protection of children who are at risk including street children is pertinent to be questioned and it is raised around the globe. The street children include both categories who are working but living with their families and those who are working and living on the streets. Myburgh, Moolla and Poggenpoel (2015) discussed the issues of children and their experiences of street children in Hillbrow. It is argued that phenomenon of street children is a matter of psychosocial-educational challenge across the globe as street children are increasing due to bad economic policies and poor response of the governance towards the solving this emerging issue. This study found that children are on the streets due to family reasons, neglect, and substance abuse by the care givers among other reasons (Ndlovu, 2015). These children are at risk to face abuse, drugs, physical assaults, sleeplessness, homelessness, police harassment. It is also found that children can have suicidal ideation due to uncertain and nomadic lifestyle and rejection by the society.

Gebretsadik (2017) showed that children appreciate the socialization, earning, learning on the streets. As far as learning is concerned, it has been argued that children believe that street experience is giving them learning to earn. It is also discussed that street is giving them a "professional skill" through which they can earn in the future as well. It is important to note that children are earning to support their families, thus acting as responsible individuals and labializing them as vagrant and delinquent is not appropriate in all cases.

Ndlovu, (2015) discussed about the different experiences of first days of street children which are not positive for almost everyone such as they had to sleep without blankets, no money, no friends, no place to live among other things. Children in this research shared that the memories of the first day on the streets will be remained with them for a long time because they were individuals when they came to the streets but now they are working and living as groups as a survival strategy for street children. It is also found that street children are HIV positive and if not yet, they are at the verge of getting infected. Some of children found street as a better place than their homes but of course living and working on the streets is challenging.

In the wake of COVID-19 across the globe, it is an established fact that peoples' economies have been affected badly and millions of people got unemployed due to closure of stores/offices/organizations, lockdowns among other strategies which were taken by different governments. It is also estimated by IMF that in the viral wake of COVID-19, there is a sharp increase in the population who is living below the poverty line in Pakistan (upto 40% of the population). And in this population the most at-risk people are women, children, people with disabilities, the elderly and

other marginalized groups. These people lack basic necessities of life such as lack of basic food, health and educational services, less economical activities among other things. It is also estimated that nearly 42 million children are now out of school, and in COVID-19 adult population have lost their jobs, daily wages, thus creating a facilitating environment for children to join the informal market because schools are also closed and those who are already out of school will get logical reasons to join the informal market.

Sociology of Childhood and Child Learning

The “new” paradigm of sociology of childhood emerged almost over 25 years with the start to focus on children, rights, issues, learning and children’s living in an adult world around them. So how children can be heard, how they can raise their voices, how they can participate in those decisions which are related to them (children as social agents), how they can be protected from all kinds of abuses, research with children, ethics of research while working and researching with children among many other concerns were/are the focus of sociology of childhood. In these 25 years, there was a continuous debate about the definition and re-definition of many things and then the multi-disciplinary nature of the sociology of childhood has brought new dimensions to understand children in different disciplines along with varied societal contexts (Punch, 2016). It is significant to mention here that children are treated differently in different cultures across the globe and childhood is socially constructed (Smith, 2010).

However, the critiques on this paradigm think that difference between adults and children are not always socially constructed and sometimes one needs to see and explore the child in relation to adults and social engagement types and forms in a particular culture (Hammersley, 2017). It is also critiqued that childhood of children living in the Majority World (global South) is missing in the theory and practices of childhood studies (Tisdall & Punch 2012; Mayall 2012) because the main theoretical contribution is coming from Northern researchers and scholars, thus voices of children of global south is missing (Canosa & Graham, 2020). However, this is not true to a full extent as research can be found which is done in the global south and children’s concerns, voices are raised even where children voiced against the child labour laws and complete abolition of children work (Gebretsadik 2017; Leibel 2004) among other examples.

Taking Hammersley (2017) point of view that one needs to explore the child in relation to adults, and social engagement types in a particular culture, this research aims to explore the children’s learning in adults’ space- the street. It is interesting to explore the learning of children while working on the streets and where children are considered problematic but not the adults’ made space in urban areas (Gebretsadik, 2017). Evans (2006) argued that adults think that working on the streets are the wrong careers chosen by children but living in poverty, pandemic and a wish to contribute to the families’ income leave no option for them.

THEORETICAL FRAMEWORK

Children’s Learning Framework

Learning is a complex process which involves multiple factors. And in this learning process, parents are the ones who can observe what children learn and what kind of environment can be provided where children can learn to their best. To help parents and any other related person to children can learn from social learning theory. Albert Bandura’s social learning framework is taken as theoretical approach for this study. According to this theory, humans learn different things through actions and observation and one’s personality development and behaviour are shaped by the interaction in the working and living environment of human beings (2004). According to Bandura, learning is a cognitive process which takes place in social context and can be learnt through observation and direction of the people around a human. It is argued that by observing other, one can shape and reshape their own behavior by looking at others in their social environment.

Newman and Newman (2007) argued that for humans the learning process is what they observe in their childhood. For example, if a child sees and learns violent behaviour in his/her childhood, he/she will behave in the same manner in their adult life as well. It also means that throughout his/her life, the moral judgment of right or wrong will be part of the learning models of a human being. This theory also tells us that a) people learn from observations; b) these personal observation shapes mental states of adults which is called intrinsic reinforcement and causes motivation to learn to change the behaviour and c) learning does not necessarily means change in the behavior.

This theory will help me to understand how children learn from others in their working environment, and what they reproduce in their working by following others who have played an important role in their working lives. It will also be argued that positive change can be possible if the working environment of working children and the society overall will be changed by showing them the role models to encourage desirable behaviour and to facilitate social change in the society.

METHODS AND MATERIAL

The data gathering for this research was completed in three months (October 2020-December 2020) in the study area of Rawalpindi city. Rawalpindi city is located in the northern most part of the Punjab province and considered twin city of Islamabad, which is the capital of Pakistan and located next to Rawalpindi. Both cities are used by tourists as a stop before travelling to the northern areas of Pakistan.

The boys aged between twelve and sixteen (12-16) were identified for this research. Snowball sampling was used to contact children who were involved in different activities on the street. The process of contacting children started in fruit and vegetable market and then through snowballing, the process continued, and I conducted 10 semi-structured interviews with boys working on the streets and living with their families.

It was important to develop a trust with children and young people to avoid all above mentioned issues in this research process. We managed to develop trust with children by giving them a chance to express their points of view, having shared their life experiences, how their childhood is constituted, they felt that they had contributed something and were the subjects instead of the objects of the research process, which in turn built a more sustainable relationship. As we became more trusting and discussions became more informal, discussions were more open. For example, they told us about their families, employers, friendships, their networking, the way of communication with each other, and about going to internet cafe, among other things.

The young boys, aged 12-16, who were involved in different activities such as corn and flower selling, selling of plastic bags, shoe polishing, working in auto-mobile workshops, vegetable and fruit market. The timing of qualitative interviews with the children and youth ranged from 45 minutes to one hour. The interviews were audio-taped with the consent of children to whom they were listening just to know how they sound and also what to include in the research and what not to. In this research, incentive was paid in the form of sharing food with them including meals and fruits, while others wanted to have some sports items (mainly bats and balls for cricket), and some asked for money as well. They incentive payments has logic while they are giving information or guiding the researcher through different areas, they would not be working so it is also a matter of ethics as a fair exchange of time/expertise and money (See the following for a discussion of such problems, Alderson & Morrow 2004; Punch 2003; Thompson et al., 2007).

To recruit key informants and gain access to them, in absence of Ethical committee at the organizational and national level, Alderson's ethical framework is used in this research. During the whole process of research, we tried to avoid pre-existing biases, and assumptions that we have understanding about children and youth. Similarly, it was important to avoid, powerful and recognised stereotypes and negative images related with working children on the streets (see Morrow 2004; James, Jenks & Prout 1998). The time and other commitments which were required from children and youth in this research were also shared with them in the first face to face session in the process of obtaining consent. While confidentiality and secrecy were assured to them. They were also promised that pseudonyms would be used to hide their identity (Morrow 2008, p. 55).

All of the audiotapes were transcribed verbatim by the researchers. The data also included field notes, written observation and self-reflective memos as suggested by Charmaz & Mitchell (2001, p. 160), Creswell (2014, p. 197) and Strauss (1987, pp. 111-12). The analysis of data was a complete process and was based on immersion in the data. We organized and prepared the data for analysis. Then we read and scrutinized all the data. In this process, we found the patterns of ideas of what were participants saying and what was the tone of the ideas, among other things. We did open coding of all the data, which was the first step of the analysis (Such examination drew on experiences of scholars like Bazeley (2013) and Creswell (2014, p. 197). Open coding followed line by line coding in which each and every line of text is named. This was followed by the axial coding, which put data "back together in new ways by making connections between a category and its subcategories" in which categories emerged and finally selective coding was done (Strauss & Corbin, 1990; Corbin & Strauss

2007). This process includes themes for analysis (Creswell 2014, p. 199; Bazeley 2013). These themes became the major findings of this research, presented in the next section of this research.

FINDINGS

Learn To Live As Rag Pickers

Yasir (a boy, aged 16) migrated with his parents from a far-flung area of Khyber Pakhtunkhwa (a province of north side of Pakistan) when he was eight years old and had four younger brothers. In his village, he was studying in a school and had passed primary school. His two younger brothers were also going to school. The migration decision was purely Yasir's father because he was not able to make his living and instead was indebted to different people in the community. This indebtedness led to migration to Rawalpindi city to find an employment opportunity. When they migrated, his father started work as rag collector. While settling in a new environment, he could not manage to send his boys to schools. According to the living situation, the young boys started to wander and hang around with other kids some of whom were working as rag pickers and earning a good amount per day (Rs.100-170, \$1). Some of them were the same age and some were older. Yasir and his brothers were influenced by fellow children, and started to pick rags from garbage dumps and understood the work from fellows. On the very first day, when they brought the money and gave it to their father, he was astonished as he never thought that his children, whom he considered useless assets at that age, would be able to work and earn money too. Afterwards, it became routine, and they continued the work with their father's encouragement. They started to work with their father and he gave them money according to what they had collected and he became their mentor.

However, the journey for Yasir and his brothers was like running on the hill because they did not know the working environment. The street's environment was new as they never worked before in their lives and they were too young to learn and comprehend quickly. When, out of curiosity, they started work as rag pickers, they did not know that they can face humiliation, physical and verbal abuse in their lives due to the work which they do. As it is noted earlier that the boys with whom they hanged around, some of them were older than them, caused physical and verbal abuse because they considered them as their rivals. Because they all shared the same vicinity and rag and it's the matter of money. There were physical fights where sometimes the other group become dominant and for a very few times Yasir and his brothers were the winners. They also faced verbal abuse where call names were common and different stigmas were attached to their physique and ethnic identification. Yasir and his brothers developed the strategy with the passage of time and based on experiences to change the working environment – to make it friendly to them- and also the vendors who buy the rags from them. But it took a lot of time to settle down in the new and hostile environment.

In addition to this, people's attitude and behaviour towards them was not good. Most of the time, people thought as filthy and dirty and don't want to talk to them. And most of times, people asked about their schooling and scolding them why they are not going to school. As they work on dump places, where they look for the resalable, they spread the collected rag/litter. And most of the times they face scolding remarks from people and janitors too that they are the cause of all this mess, because in search of any saleable item, they don't care about the cleanliness of the place, thus put blame on the dirtiness of the city (because there are many children who work as rag pickers). Shopkeepers consider them thieves, as they visit shops in search of plastic bottles, paper boxes, iron sticks among other things. They face severe backlash from them and face violent behavior from the shopkeepers.

It took eight years to understand the dynamics of street. Yasir become a rag collector instead of rag picker, and run his business successfully. He has hired a place where he put all the collected rag, have 2-3 people who work for him and he earns almost Rs. 60,000 to 70,000 per month. All his brothers are in this work (sometimes work for him too) and paid all the debt off. They were all are very proud of their contribution to the family. Yasir greatly regrets that he could not continue studies. He considers himself a good and successful businessman who lacks education. He wishes that he will educate his children (excerpt 2).

Learning “How To Trick Customers”

Illyas works in an auto-mobile workshop. He is 14 years old, belongs to Punjabi ethnic group and has been living in Rawalpindi city since his birth. He belongs to a poor family and lives in a low status living area of the city. His father works as daily wage labourer and mother work as domestic helper. However, unprecedented pandemic has changed the situation of his household dynamics in no time. As lock-downs

policies of government of Pakistan, his father lost his daily work. And fear of pandemic and its consequences, her mother was laid off by the houses in which she was working. Thus, created a conducive environment for Illyas to join the work place in pandemic where very less opportunities were present and where people were laid off like his parents. The schools were closed and he was sitting at home. His father asked him to look for a work in the informal economy to support his big family (5 siblings and parents) economically (Khan, Mehmood & Haider, 2020). He never had an idea about the working environment, which is exploitative in nature such as: low wages, no break time, verbal abuse among other things.

After less strict policies of lock-downs and implementation of smart lock-downs, Illyas got a chance to work as assistant (chutta – a commonly word used in the cultural context of the city) in an auto-mobile workshop. He never knew how to work in this field but with the passage of time, he got to know about the work, its activities and how to do them. Additionally, there was also learning opportunity to trick customers and forced by his employer to do it.

This is a common practice in the studied city that if some car or any vehicle breaks down, people bring their vehicle for the inspection. The mechanic tells them what happened and in many situations customers leave their vehicles in the workshop for a day or two or sometimes more than a week or month. This all depends on the condition of the vehicle. During the checking and repairing the vehicle, it is the common thing which is practiced in auto-mobile workshops to steal the genuine parts of the vehicle and replace them with the old ones. And then selling of genuine parts to other markets where they can earn a good amount of money. The customer has no idea about this practice as they trust on the mechanic and his suggestions. This trick is also being practiced by almost everyone who works in the market. It is to tell readers that auto-mobile workshops have special place/space at different sections of the city (ies).

According to Illyas it was very difficult for him to understand the work of the workshops, and the above discussed practice specially. As it is mentioned earlier that he had never worked outside of the home, everything was new to him and he came across different attitude and behavior and learnt different things. For example, working continuously in extreme weathers (including hazards as well), receiving cuts and burns, eye infection, no time for breaks (most of the times), very meager amount of money (Rs. 100- 170 \$ 1) and most of the times delayed payments, punishments in the form of physical and verbal bullying, thus ultimately stress due to all these working situations. For Illyas it was too difficult to understand, comprehend and practice this particular activity while working in the auto-mobile workshop. He never knew that this malpractice is being practiced and it is a common thing in his working environment and every other person (of this workshop community) knows that this is the practice. In the beginning, he thought that it is a theft and fraud to the customers, but with the passage of time, he become used to it and have internalized this practice. Now he does not think that this is a wrong thing and he practices in his working environment as he gets the chance. Illyas also wants to open his own auto-mobile workshop because he thinks that it's a good business. Upon asking whether he will practice the same things such as mistreatment with his trainees, delaying their wages, physical hitting and verbal bullying, and taking out genuine parts of the vehicles, he smiled and said "there is possibility that I will do all of them because of the working environment where I will work. I guess it is the need to the profession, and I want to have a big workshop. It seems that all will be practiced, but I will try not to do them." He complaints about people who think that he is dirty, and poor. He requests people to give respect to him and other young people, as most of the times people show disrespect to them, who are working in this environment as their right of dignity (excerpt 1) (Bandura, 1977; 2006).

Learning To Survive With Sexual Abuse

Abdullah is 13 years old. He lives in DhokHassu (a part of Rawalpindi near Islamabad) with his extended family (total 10 family members – two his grandparents, 2 parents and 6 siblings - under one roof altogether). His father works in fruit and vegetable market (*sabzi mundi*) as cart carrying in Islamabad. Since his childhood, aged 5, he was used to visit *sabzi mundi* with his father to help him. However, he has strong observation and have sharp mind, as a result by the age 8, he understood the working of the *sabzi mundi* completely. He knows how to runcarts, to sell shopping bags, help people in carrying their fruits and vegetables to their cars and getting tips, helping shopkeepers in their tasks in return of little money, among other tasks told either by his father or any other male relative. He knows his work in a cleverly manner and tries to earn Rs. 200 – 250 \$ 1.25 per day. He works in the morning hours with his father, from 6 a.m. till 10.a.m and he leaves the place to go back home to have breakfast. After having

breakfast, he is ready to attend the Drop-in-Centre (DIC) - a center run by NGO - where he takes non-formal classes. According to Abdullah, he enjoys attending DIC because its different world from his working place. He learns some new things, such as self-dignity and respect, and some literacy and numeracy. After DIC, he does tasks told by his mother such as, running errands for her, shopping from the nearby shop, taking care of siblings, or fetching water. He tries to revise lessons but most of the time he is too tired to do. His routine is quite tough, have little time to take rest, walk a lot and work more than six or seven hours daily. Abdullah mentioned that he has no other option except to lead his life like this because he has to help his father in earning money; otherwise it is too difficult to live with all family members in this expensive city. He shared that working on the streets is not an easy job. It does not involve only physical drudgery but also emotional and mental labour. Many times, other children and he are physically hurt as there are no safety measures at the work place but it is OK for many other boys (including him) working on the streets. He familiarized himself with the working place completely. If one visits with him (as I did), he knows each and every corner of the place and the shop keepers.

His sharpness, cleverness and protection in the shape of father's presence have taught him those things which are part of the *sabzi mundi*, however could not save him from being the victim of sexual abuse. His father keeps on eye on him, but cannot supervise him all the time as he does his work independently too. During interaction with many customers, he faced sexual abuse in the form of bad touch, male customers' showing off private parts to him, forced him to touch the penis, or ask him to accompany them in their cars. Abdullah shared that bad touch (touching private parts) is so common in the surroundings that almost every child who is working in the market, face this in their daily lives. However, they don't complain to anyone. According to Abdullah, he told his father about it when he was young, but his father simply suggested him not to serve those kinds of customers. However, that was not enough for Abdullah not to experience sexual abuse. He was growing and working in the adults' world; he faced more such incidents, but learned not to respond to such customers. This non-response to customers' demands has cost him in losing his income which is already a meager amount because customers refused to pay them the money in return to his services.

DISCUSSION

The objective of this article is to explore the learning of working children in adults world - the street which is made by the adults and where adults' practices prevail.

The findings of this research show that children's learning come from adults. The presented interviews' analysis reveals the realities of life which they learn on the street while working. They shared that working on the streets is mainly due to support the families financially. From the case studied presented above, it is evident that children are working due to their parents' decisions and have no choice than to work in the given environment. It is also observed that amid COVID -19, Illyas had to leave the school for the family's well-being. It means that children and their families live in poverty which can be seen through their appearance as they look dirty and dressed poorly.

Illyas further shared that when he left his school due to COVID-19, his mother was upset as she wanted him to study and to continue schooling. But now after one and a half year of COVID-19 and his work, her approach has changed. Now she is thinks that at least he is working and earning something which is helpful for the family, who are in bad need to money to get food. He also feels good about it that at least he is productive for his family but sometimes, he feels that he does not want to have this responsibility of earning anymore and wants to take some rest and hang around with friends. But he knows that at this critical time for his family needed him that's why he keeps his work going (see Leibel, 2004).

When the boys started work, they have no idea that how street will behave to them. As it is explained earlier that they never worked in the streets (except Abdullah), as a result had no idea about the environment of the streets, especially in Yasir's case where he was working with this family on their farms in his rural village (see Jirata & Kjørholt 2015; Eriksen & Mulugeta 2021). Even in the case of Abdullah, where he was used to go with his father since his childhood, never expected that what abuses can he faced during work.

It is also to note that working in the streets not only give them bad experiences but many opportunities to learn, make friends, learn new things, take small decisions and sometimes get information that is needed for their betterment (see Gebretsadik 2017, p. 36). Fr example, Yasir explained that due to his work on the streets, he made many new friends and that's how he speaks Urdu

and Punjabi due to interaction with other children who were also working on the street and were collecting rag with him. He shared that during the work, they were enjoying eating, drinking, some time visiting internet café, flying kites and running around (Bourdillon et al., 2010; Gebretsadik 2017). Abdullah shared the same kinds of experiences where they play cricket near the fruits/vegetables market because this place is huge place and it has open grounds in different sides. When Abdulallah and his friends get some time, they gathered and play cricket, as they all liked this game.

However, the disadvantages which they face during working on the streets cannot be ignored, until and unless supportive structures are available and unfortunately the support structures are not present in Pakistan at a broader level. It does not mean that there are no organizations who are working for the betterment of working children, however their scope is quite limited and provided services cannot be provided to every single child who is working.

Connecting these findings with the theoretical background of this research, it can be analyzed that behaviour learning can be done through action and observations and thus model the personality development and it all depends on where a child lives or works (Bandura, 2006). The presented findings also showed that children learned behaviour is due to the working environment where they work either in the supervision of their parents or independently. But this is for sure that street is an adult place, where they can learn new things (bad or good), negotiate with adults, face stress and anxiety and verbal and physical abuse. This learning can be part of their rest of their lives where they will have choice either to continue with the same learning and transfer the learning to the newcomers in the market or try not to practice the learned behaviour. Though it is discussed here that street is an adult place, it also gives a chance to working children to negotiate. However, the negotiations terms and conditions can vary from situation to situation and might harm or threaten the child. It can be argued that children can learn better and useful negotiations' terms and conditions with the passage of times and experiences.

It is clearly known that children are vulnerable in different situations due to imbalance and unequal power relationships with an adult and this is why most of the time children face abuse including sexual abuse as explained in the case of Abdullah. It is also reported by Khan et al., (2018) that most of times; children are working in unsafe environment and face different forms of abuses on daily basis. It is important to note that how these abuses change the lives of children while working on the streets and impacts can stay for the whole life in the form of trauma.

As it is mentioned already that children are in the market due to their parents' decision where they were sent into the adults' world and where they were left to face the music and survive. In this whole scenario, the right of agency – the right which has been discussed in research in recent years (Eriksen & Mulugeta, 2021) - could not be observed in my research. Because these children were under the gaze of adults in the shape of a father or male relative continuously, where they go, what they do and how they have been treating others while working is under strict monitoring of adults. They cannot decide where to go independently, where ever they go, they have to tell their elders – whoever is taking care of them- though the elders cannot follow them but they keep an eye on them. The children have their set routine and targets to be achieved. There is a little time for these children where they can play or relax (see Punch 2003; Bourdillon et al., 2010; Van Gils 2014). In the evening or whenever they are free, there are many tasks to be done at the household level such as running errands, fetching water, do little shopping, taking care of sibling among other things. Thus, the right of agency as a matter of fact remained unclaimed and children have to face experiences which have been discussed at length.

CONCLUSION

We started out to explore the learning of children by keeping social learning theory as theoretical framework and discussed the findings of this research in the light of sociology of childhood where the argument on working children is going on where there are questions of their work and what do they learn in adults' world. In this research, it is observed that what children learn in their environment in their childhood, carry with them throughout their lives and also practice in their lives. Thus, it is important for adults to give children an environment where moral judgment of right and wrong prevails and children can distinguish them. Those things which are right in morality should be practiced, taught and carried to their present, near and distant future. Social learning theory directs us how we can learn the things and how they are carried to the rest of the lives.

It is found that experiences of children are important to listen, understand and to improve the working situation for them because they are surrounded by adults in their working lives. They learn

different things from adults and if children will not be counseled, they can continue to bad learning to the rest of their lives. It is also found that children are under the surveillance of their elders and have a little time to exercise their agency, thus remained controlled by the set rules and regulations of the adults.

Another important thing is that children are resilient in their daily lives, where they learn new things such as tricking customers, dealing with fights, earning money, living with sexual abuse. It is pertinent to mention here that children are without any organizational support to get out of mental and psychological upsets, anger, trauma and still they are surviving. The need of the hour is to provide counseling to every child who is working on the street because a substantial number of children face the challenges every day in their lives to save these children from further complexes in their late life. It is also to take care of children's objective and subjective well-being (Van Gils 2014; Camfield 2010).

DECLARATION OF CONFLICTING INTERESTS

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