

Factors Responsible for Child Trafficking for Camel Racing in Pakistan¹

¹Safana Shaheen, ¹Masood Sarwar Awan, ¹Muhammad Waqas and ²Muhammad Amir Aslam

¹Department of Economics, University of Sargodha, Pakistan

²District Courts Sargodha, Punjab Home Department, Pakistan

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Abstract: Children are the future of any nation and their protection is the first and foremost concern of any nation. Despite the efforts of international agencies, millions of people are illegally trafficked and vended for immoral purposes. The UNICEF particularly noticed the children involved in camel racing, after the stories of exploitation, misusing, sexually abusing through media men. This study tried to investigate the socio-economic characteristics of ex-camel jockeys of two districts of Punjab, Rahim Yar Khan and Muzafar Garh. The study interviewed 504 ex-camel jockeys from two districts of Punjab, Rahim Yar Khan and Muzafar Garh. Findings of the study explores that in both districts the factors behind the child trafficking for camel racing are same. The lack of education of parents, large family size, low income are found the main factors that curb rights of children and forced them to work as camel jockey. The study suggests that through family empowerment, capacity building, awareness building, provision of basic education, social protection and shelter and poverty alleviation can solve this issue to some extent.

Key words: Child trafficking • Camel racing • Pakistan

INTRODUCTION

The stories and the news regarding the children involved in camel racing are heart-yanking. Visualize a child with 4 or 5 years of age, having tiny hands and legs, perched on the top of a camel. The children's petrified screams make the camel run faster up to 35-40 km/h [1, 2]. Compare those children with the Western children who have same age and still learning to ride a bicycle [3, 4]. Children involved in camel racing claims special attention, after the sound efforts of UNICEF and other international agencies to control and stop child trafficking involved in camel racing. Trafficking is a violation of human rights, which has several drawbacks which a country, society and individual have to face. It is actually some type of exploitation of the weaker members of the society.

In many of the states, the problem of trafficking of the children still exists and according to the UN, it is the primary responsibility of the states to establish policies, formulate laws and extend services for the protection and care of these hapless children, in accordance with the UN Convention. Among all these aggrieved ones, the camel jockey children claim a special attention.

Pakistan is one of the leading countries from which humans are illegally exported along with India, Bangladesh, Sudan, Mauritania, Eritrea and Somalia. Children are trafficked from Pakistan to Gulf States for camel racing and in the beginning these children were mainly taken from the poor families from the southern part of the Punjab, Pakistan.

Pakistan could be an ideal country to provide the jockey children as the labour is cheap and the population is in millions with an average family size of about seven. The aim of this study is to highlight the socio-economic characteristics of ex-camel jockeys belonged from two districts of Punjab, district Rahim Yar Khan (RYK) and Muzafar Garh (MZG).

Rest study is organized as, part two presents information about data and methodology, part three explains the results and findings and last part give conclusion and some policy implications.

Data and Methodology: In order to explore the socio-economic characteristics of ex-camel jockeys the questionnaire was developed. The study interviewed 504 ex-camel jockeys in the districts of Rahim Yar Khan and

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Corresponding Author: Safana Shaheen, Department of Economics,
University of Sargodha, Pakistan.

Muzafar Garh. Most of the jockeys who returned from UAE belonged from these two districts. Collection of data on ex-camel jockeys is a difficult and complex process because it was very difficult to locate ex-camel jockeys as they are living in a scattered form. However, research consulting team had the advantages of being facilitated by the department of social welfare in different districts of the study area. Child protection officers (CPOs) and Supervisors of the project Child involved in camel racing (CICR) assisted the study team in identification of localities and families of ex-camel jockey children during the data collection process, which otherwise would have been a very difficult and time consuming task.

The research is conducted through both qualitative and quantitative tools. The quantitative tools help in collection of statistical data whereas qualitative methods of focus group discussion and in-depth interviews were a source of supplementary information to find out opinions of different stakeholders.

RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

In our study area, most of the families were living in joint family system and due to this reason family size is quite high as compared to average family size in Pakistan. The mean family size in RYK was 8.4 whereas in MZG it was 9.7 9 (Table 1). Several studies highlight that large family size is one the reasons of poverty and child labour [5].

In RYK the mean age of ex-camel jockey was 15.5 years while, in MZG it was 13.5 (Table 2).

In RYK the mean education of the jockey mother was 0.2 and that of father was 0.7 which was 0.0 and 1.4 in MZK respectively. This shows that RYK is deprived in father's education while MZK is deprived in mother's education (Table 3). Parents who are uneducated or having less education converges towards child labour as compared to educated parents [6].

Educational status of ex-camel jockey shows that in RYK 50.6 percent ex-camel jockey children are currently attending schools, while 40.2 percent attended school in the past and 9.2 have never attended school whereas in MZG these were 79.7, 9.2 and 11.1 respectively (Table 4).

The jockeys responded that there are certain factors responsible for their not currently attending any institution. In RYK 60.7 percent responded that they are working while 10.2 showed limitations for not attending the school which was due to poverty, 8.4 percent responded that it was lack of awareness about education

Table 1: Family Size

Family Size	RYK			MZG		
	Min.	Max.	Mean	Min.	Max.	Mean
Total number	2.00	18.0	8.4	5.0	22.0	9.7

Table 2: Jockey's Age and his parent's age

Age	RYK			MZG		
	Min.	Max.	Mean	Min.	Max.	Mean
Jockey	6.0	9.0	15.5	6.00	26.0	13.5
Jockey's mother	26.0	78.0	46.1	25.00	60.0	38.6
Jockey's father	32.0	82.0	54.7	30.00	71.0	45.3

Table 3: Educational level of jockey's Parents

Education level	RYK			MZG		
	Min.	Max.	Mean	Min.	Max.	Mean
jockey's mother	0.0	10.0	0.2	0.0	0.0	0.0
jockey's Father	0.0	12.0	0.7	0.0	10.0	1.4

Table 4: Educational status of ex-camel jockey child

Educational Status	RYK	MZG
	Percent	Percent
Never attended school	9.2	11.1
Attended school in past	40.2	9.2
Currently attending school	50.6	79.7

Table 5: Reasons of not currently attended

Reasons	RYK	MZG
	Percent	Percent
Working	60.7	60.4
Due to poverty	10.2	12.2
Lack of awareness about education	8.4	6.0
Lot of educational expenditures	20.7	21.4

and 20.7 thought that it was educational expenditure which limities their education career whereas, these percentages were 60.4, 12.2, 6.0 and 21.4 in MZG respectively (Table 5).

In RYK 30.1 percent of the respondents have educational facility from one kilometer ahead and 8.4 percent reported that education institutions are two kilometer away from their communities whereas only 31.3 reported distance of education facility is half kilometer

Table 6: Distance of educational institution from community

Distance (miles)	RYK		MZG	
	Percent	Percent	Percent	Percent
.50	31.3		34.0	
1.00	30.1		24.2	
2.00	8.4		9.2	
3.00	10.8		6.9	
4.00	4.4		5.3	
5.00	3.8		7.2	
6.00	2.4		3.3	
8.00	1.8		4.6	
10.00	2.0		2.3	
13	4.9		4.3	
17	0.7		0.7	

Table 7: Educational level of ex-camel jockey children

Class in complete Year	RYK		MZG	
	Percent	Percent	Percent	Percent
Below 1 st	16.1		15.7	
1 st	2.8		13.1	
2 nd	14.9		7.8	
3 rd	14.5		15.0	
4 th	12.4		13.7	
5 th	13.3		16.3	
6 th	14.1		11.1	
7 th	5.6		3.9	
8 th	4.0		3.3	
9 th	2.3		0.1	

Table 8: Total number of persons employed in a family

No. of Earning persons	RYK		MZG	
	Percent	Percent	Percent	Percent
.00	9.8		1.3	
1.00	60.8		57.5	
2.00	17.6		24.8	
3.00	4.0		11.8	
4.00	4.3		2.6	
5.00	3.5		---	
6.00	---		2.0	

Table 9: Average monthly household income

Average Income	RYK			MZG		
	Min.	Max.	Mean	Min.	Max.	Mean
Household Income	1000.0	25000.0	8722.6	15000.0	40000.0	11362.7

and in MZG these percentages are 24.2, 9.2 and 34.0 respectively. Moreover, survey also digs out that there are some communities which have to cover the distance of thirteen to seventeen kilometers from their homes to educational institutions (Table 6 and 7).

Result shows that in RYK 60.8 percent households have only one person working which were 57.5 in MZG. However, in RYK 29.4 percent and in MZG 41.2 percent at least two family members were working due to the above mentioned reasons whereas a few women were actually contributing in the household income (Table 8).

In RYK the minimum wage of household was Rs. 1000/- and maximum was Rs. 25000/-and mean income was Rs.8722.6/- whereas in MZG these were Rs. 15000/-, Rs. 40000.0 and Rs. 11362.7 respectively (Table 9). Poverty is most dominating factor behind the use of children as camel jockeys. The family size of family is high, mean educational status of parents is low, household income is low; family is highly dependent on one or two family members. These are the multidimensional aspects of poverty which force the parents to send their children as camel jockey [7].

In RYK 75 percent of the household heads were working as daily wage workers, 9 percent having their own business, 8 percent working abroad whereas, in MZG 77 percent of household were daily wage worker, 9 percent have own business and 8 percent are in other categories (annexure Figure 1).

In both districts the ex-camel jockey 98 percent jockeys responded that there were no transportation facilities available in their community (annexure Figure 2).

In both district 61 percent jockey responded that they were not satisfied about the educational facility in their community (annexure figure 3). Education is one of the factors which remove the poverty form these areas as different studies in literature highlights the negative relationship between education and poverty [8].

Conclusion and Policy Implications: The aim of the study was to highlight the socio-economic characteristics of ex-camel jockeys. For this purpose the 504 ex-camel jockeys were interviewed from RYK and MZG. Most of the ex-jockeys who returned from UAE belonged from these two districts. Findings of the study explores that in both districts the factors behind the child trafficking for camel racing are same. The lack of education of parents, large family size, low income are found the main factors that curb rights of children and forced them to work as camel jockey. Hence, the problem of the jockey children claims



Fig. 1: Occupation of Household Head

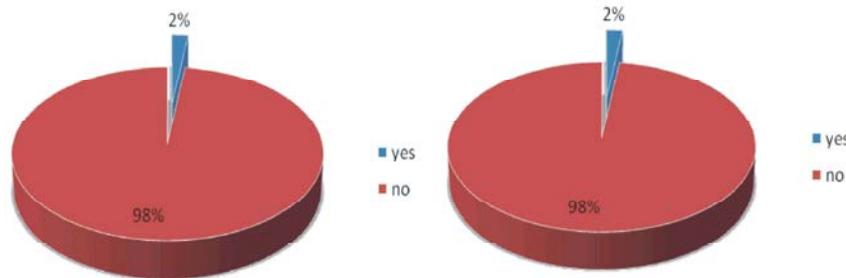


Fig. 2: Availability of transportation facility

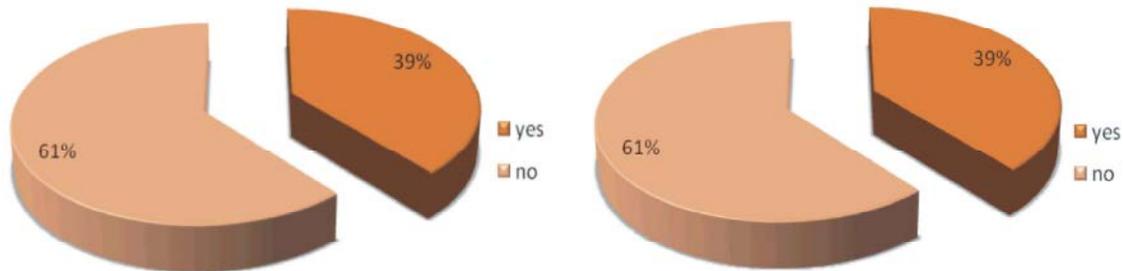


Fig. 3: Satisfaction from educational facility in the community

multidimensional and multi faceted steps which the concerned quarters can take. Through the family empowerment, capacity building, awareness building, provision of basic education, social protection and shelter and poverty alleviation can solve this issue to some extent.

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