

Executive Summary

Formulating appropriate intervention for elimination of child labor by implementing various programmes that prohibit, restrict and regulate child labor progressively, with a view of ultimate elimination has been one of the major preoccupations of the Government of Tanzania since early 2000 where a target to reduce child labor to less than 10% by the year 2010 was committed. According to Integrated Labor Force Survey (2006), child in labor force has increased from 40% in 2001 to 41.9% in 2006, of which child engaged in economic activities has decreased from 34.8% in 2001 to 32.3% in 2006. Out of total child engaged in economic activities child labor has decreased from 25% in 2001 to 21.1% in 2006. Although the number of working children has been slightly decreasing, child labor continues to be a daunting challenge and the effort to address the problem to less than 10% by 2010 is not at a desired level.

Recently, Women participation in labor market has been widely acknowledged as a potential component of poverty alleviation strategies that would also accelerate efforts towards reduction of child labor and increasing investment on child education. Although the importance of mother employment in resource allocation within the family has been acknowledged and, in particular investment of child human capital and reduction of child labor, the link between mother employment, child labor and schooling remain unexplored in empirical literatures in Tanzania. Important policy issues like the impact of mother employment on child labor and schooling; and whether there is gender differences between boys and girls in time allocation when mother is employed out of the household, remain unanswered from previous studies.

This study explores the relationships between maternal employment, child labor and schooling using data from Tanzania Integrated Labor Force Survey 2006. Specifically the study has explored the effect of mother participation in labor market on child labor and schooling using standard probit model with the sample comprised 22534 observations of child engaged in economic activities from 5 to 17 years of age. To ensure our analysis provide statistical meaningful inference, we controlled for endogeneity problem of mother employment.

The main finding is that, maternal employment has significant positive relationship with child labor and negative relationship with child schooling. This study also finds that probability of work participation for girls is higher than boys when mother participate in labor market. In the context of Tanzanian environment, these results confirm that source of the matter lies in the

quality of employment opportunity for mothers, household poverty and development of infrastructure. When job quality, wage level and other earnings are very low, mothers work and child relation produce disincentive effect. In the same vein, when social infrastructure such as availability of reliable water for domestic use and affordable source of energy for lighting and cooking are not well improved, mother child relation produces perverse effect on increasing child labor. However, these findings are consistent with other studies from developing countries.

An implication of the finding is that, Government and International Organisations policies that focus on creating enabling environment for women employment opportunities seem to be in the right direction. However, these policies should not only focus on the general problem of creating employment opportunities but also should carefully target improvements of women's condition in the labor market and their effect on child welfare. Specifically, policy interventions should be directed to eliminating constraints that generate disincentive effect of women employment on child welfare. General employment policies particularly on minimum wage should be carefully studied and designed at least to meet minimum level of basic requirements. Government efforts are also needed to improve development of community infrastructure such as availability of water for domestic use and less costly source of energy. Moreover, policies that target the expansion of access to women education would be important and might contribute enormously to improving child welfare. Finally, development policies on income generation program to household with low level of income would be an integral part of reducing child labor in the long run. In addition, policies on mainstreaming the issue of child labor and child protection at regional, district as well as at community levels would be a complementary instrument of ending child labor in Tanzania.