



## Child Labour in Rural Context

By Sudip Chakraborty

Mittal Publications, New Delhi, 2006. N.A. Condition: New. xiii+278pp Child labour in India is, in the main, a rural phenomenon by way of sectoral distribution. Confusion pervades the discourse and there is disagreement on the definition, which creates the conflict of estimates. An exaggerated statistics is detrimental for policy purposes. The present study delineates between work and labour where the latter is interpreted in terms of exploitation of children as defined in the UN Convention of the Rights of the Child. An intensive household survey conducted in the district of Jalpaiguri, West Bengal, during 2003 reveals many interesting aspects of child labour and educational deprivation. Poverty and parental illiteracy are dominant causal factors. But individual case studies on labouring children expose many stark realities that are not always captured by income-poverty measure single-handedly. Severe disruptions in the families like death, dowry, disease, and divorce have been found to put many children in the adult world of labour. The study insists on special social safety nets for the vulnerable within the poverty alleviation programme targeting the poor. Renewed adult education programme would fructify in enhancing school participation and thereby reduce child labour substantially.



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