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Motives for Minors Working as Farm Workers

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ABSTRACT

This study aims to understand the motives of underage children working as farm laborers in Pencong Village, Biringbulu District, Gowa Regency, and its impact on their education and health. The study used a qualitative approach with a case study type, involving in-depth interviews with children, parents, and community leaders. In this study, the data collection techniques used are in the form of observation, interviews and documentation. The data collected was then analyzed with a quantitative descriptive approach through three main steps, namely data reduction, data presentation, and conclusion drawn., The results of the study indicate that the main motives for children to work are influenced by economic, social, and cultural factors. Family economic limitations are the dominant reason, while social norms and local traditions that support early work also play an important role. Farm labor work has a negative impact on children's education, causing absenteeism and low academic achievement. In addition, heavy physical work affects children's physical and mental health. This study concludes the need for social interventions, economic assistance, and more flexible education programs to reduce child labor in rural areas.

Keywords: Child Labor, Farm Laborers, Economic Motives, Impact Of Education

INTRODUCTION

Children working around the world has become a phenomenon that continues to be a concern. In many developing countries, especially in Asia and Africa, children are involved in various forms of work to help support their families. This phenomenon is influenced by economic, social, and cultural factors. Despite international efforts to reduce child labour, the reality is that millions of children are still trapped in jobs that jeopardize their health and development (Tambunan, 2021).

One of the relevant theories in understanding the phenomenon of child labor is the family economic theory. This theory explains that in situations of poverty, families often take advantage of all their members, including children, to work to support the family's income. In addition, social theory suggests that local cultural norms often view children's work as part of the learning process and responsibility (Dandi, 2022).

The history of child labor dates back to the Industrial Revolution, when children worked in factories and mines in extremely dangerous conditions. Over time, human rights movements began to fight for the elimination of child labor, especially in harmful sectors. However, although various international laws such as the ILO Convention have been ratified, the practice of child labor has persisted today, especially in the informal sector such as agriculture (Aziz, 2023).

Although global awareness of the dangers of child labor continues to grow, the challenges faced in addressing this issue are still enormous. One of them is the family's economic limitations that force children to work, as well as the lack of access to education. In many countries, the lack of social support and legal protection also exacerbates the situation, leaving children trapped in a cycle of poverty that is difficult to end.

In Indonesia, child labor is regulated in Law No. 13 of 2003 concerning Manpower, which expressly prohibits the use of underage labor in hazardous work (Wildan, 2017). This

law is in accordance with the ILO Convention which also prohibits child labor in conditions that are detrimental to the physical, mental, and social development of children. This protection aims to ensure that children get their right to grow and develop properly.

In addition, there is Regulation of the Minister of Manpower and Transmigration Number 18 of 2017 concerning Child Labor, which further regulates the conditions under which children are allowed to work, such as in light work or in the context of training. The regulation also emphasizes the importance of occupational safety and health for children involved in the work (Tantri, 2022).

Normatively, every child should have full access to education and protection from all forms of hazardous work. Based on the theory of child development, childhood is a period that must be filled with education and play, not hard work. In an ideal situation, children do not need to work, and they have the opportunity to develop their potential without having to be burdened by family economic responsibilities.

Society in general hopes that children can live their childhood without economic pressure. In developed countries, for example, governments provide education subsidies and social benefits to low-income families so that their children do not have to work (Setiyono, 2024). Theoretically, all children should be protected from labour exploitation, and the government and society are jointly responsible for ensuring this.

In terms of law, ideally every country is able to implement laws that prohibit child labor effectively. Existing regulations should be equipped with a strict monitoring system to ensure that no child is trapped in dangerous work. In addition, the existence of a social assistance system can help families not to have to rely on children's income.

Free and quality education should be available to all children without exception (Aulia et al., 2024). This policy is important to ensure that children from poor families do not have to choose between work and school. Under ideal circumstances, the school also provides support programs for children experiencing economic difficulties, such as scholarships or free food programs.

In the field, the reality is far from this ideal expectation. In villages like Pencong, many children still work as farm laborers. The economic conditions of the poor families forced the children to help their parents in the fields, even though the work could endanger their health and interfere with their education.

Although there are already regulations prohibiting child labor, its implementation in the field is still weak. Many families in rural areas are unaware of or do not care about these regulations because they focus on the daily necessities of life. The lack of law enforcement also causes violations of children's rights to continue to occur.

This gap between expectations and reality is exacerbated by the lack of access to quality education in rural areas. Schools may be far from where children live, or the educational facilities available are inadequate. As a result, many children choose to work rather than continue their education.

One solution that can be applied is to increase public awareness about the importance of education and the dangers of child labor. In addition, social assistance programs targeted at poor families can help reduce the need for children to work. By providing financial support, families in the village can focus more on their children's education.

The previous research that is relevant to this topic, including research by (Silvia and Andriani 2019) Titled "Motivasi Bekerja Pada Buruh Tani Tebu Perempuan". The results of the study showed that their intrinsic motivation to work was due to economic needs, while extrinsic motivation came from a comfortable work environment. The study concludes that economic factors are the main reason for these women to work, even though the work is quite heavy.

In addition, research conducted by Masita (2023) Titled "Kontribusi Buruh Tani Anak Usia Sekolah Dalam Meningkatkan Kesejahteraan Keluarga di Desa Bolang Kecamatan Alla

Kabupaten Enrekang". The results of this study show that school-age children in Bolang Village work as farm laborers due to economic factors, the need for school fees, and to increase pocket money. These children contribute to helping their families by loosening the soil, planting, harvesting, and packaging agricultural produce. Although they have to divide their time between work and school, it has been proven to help improve their family's well-being.

Lastly, by Munandar (2023) with the title "Persoalan Anak Bekerja di Bawah Umur dalam Membantu Pemenuhan Kebutuhan Keluarga di Gampong Alue Seutui Kecamatan Jeunieb Kabupaten Bireuen". This study discusses the factors that encourage minors to work as well as their impact. Through qualitative methods, it was found that economic conditions, cultural factors, parental influence, and the children's own desires were the main reasons for children to work in Alue Seutui Village. Although the local community tried to protect the children, the economic difficulties in the village made it difficult to stop the practice of child labor. The study emphasizes the need for economic improvements to reduce poverty and improve the quality of education, which could ultimately reduce the number of children involved in underage work in the region.

The three previous studies have made important contributions in understanding the phenomenon of child and female labor in the agricultural sector, but there are some shortcomings that have not been answered and become gaps for new research. Research by (Silvia and Andriani 2019) Focus on the motivation of adult women to work in the sugarcane farming sector. Although the study discusses economic factors as the main motivation, it does not mention the condition of working children, especially in the context of farm labor. There is a need to further explore how children, particularly minors, are involved in the agricultural sector and what motivates them.

Research Masita (2023) providing an overview of the contribution of school-age children in supporting family welfare in the agricultural sector. However, this study does not discuss in depth the social and cultural aspects that encourage children's involvement in farm labor work. The influence of factors such as local norms, parental roles, and social pressures has not been explored more deeply, which makes this a research gap that can be explored further.

Meanwhile, research by Munandar (2023) explains the economic and cultural factors that cause minors to work, but this study focuses more on the specific conditions in Gampong Alue Seutui and does not explain the broader conditions in other areas. This leaves room for research in other regions, such as Pencong Village, Biringbulu District, Gowa Regency, to explore whether the motives of children working as farm laborers in the region have similar or different patterns. This research has the potential to provide new insights into local factors that influence children's decisions to work in the area.

The core problem of this study is the high involvement of minors who work as farm laborers in Pencong Village. Children who are supposed to go to school are actually involved in strenuous physical work to help increase the family's income (Putri & Nurwati, 2021). This not only impacts their health and education, but also shapes social patterns that can influence the next generation.

In the context of this study, work motives refer to the factors that encourage minors to work as farm laborers. These include economic motives (to help the family's finances), social (parental and community influence), and cultural motives (norms that consider working early to be a natural thing) (Cica, 2024). The study focused on children working in the agricultural sector, with ages below the working age standards set by labor laws.

The study also explores the effects of children's work on their daily lives, such as the impact on education and playtime. Children who work as farm laborers often have to sacrifice their education and childhood to help their families. The issue is also related to the attitude of the local community who may accept children's work as a natural thing, even though it violates children's rights.

This research is very important because it provides a deeper understanding of the motives of minors who work as farm laborers in Pencong Village, Biringbulu District, Gowa Regency. In a situation where children's rights are often neglected, this research will uncover the factors that drive children to work and how this work impacts their education as well as their future. This research can also help in formulating more effective policies in addressing child labor in the agricultural sector.

In addition, this research will make a significant contribution to efforts to prevent the exploitation of child labor and strengthen child protection, especially in rural areas that are not widely covered by regulations. With a better understanding of the motives of children working, more targeted social interventions can be designed to reduce child labour rates and improve access to education in rural areas.

METHODS

This research uses a qualitative approach with a case study type (Fadli, 2021) to deeply understand the motives of minors working as farm laborers in Pencong Village, Gowa. The focus of the research includes the economic, social, and cultural motives that drive children to work, as well as their impact on their health, education, and future. Primary data were obtained through in-depth interviews with children, parents, and community leaders, as well as direct observation in the field. In addition, secondary data is collected from policy documents, statistical reports, and relevant local documents (Assyakurrohim et al., 2023).

The research process involves several stages, namely literature study, data collection through interviews and observations, and data analysis using thematic analysis methods (Adlini et al., 2022). The analysis is carried out by reducing the data, presenting the data in a thematic form, and drawing conclusions based on the patterns that emerge. The researcher also uses triangulation techniques to ensure the validity of the data, both from the source and the data collection method, as well as member checks to validate information from informants.

RESULT AND DISCUSSION

The motive of minors in Pencong Village, Biringbulu District, Gowa Regency, who work as farm laborers

From the results of the interviews, many minors in Pencong Village are involved in work as farm laborers because of the family's economic encouragement. Most families in this village depend on the agricultural sector as their main source of income, and children are often considered an important additional workforce. Limited family resources, such as small land and insufficient income, force children to participate in field work to meet their daily needs.

Weak economic conditions are the dominant reason that encourages children to work. Families in poverty have little choice but to involve their children in work to help increase family income. In interviews with several parents, it was revealed that without contributions from children, basic needs such as food and clothing are difficult to meet. This factor is one of the main causes of the high number of child labor in this village.

In addition to economic factors, local culture and traditions also influence children's decision to work as farm laborers. In the community of Pencong Village, working from an early age is considered natural and part of the learning process to prepare children for adult life. Parents often teach that children must learn to work hard and be independent from an early age, so work in the fields is considered a good way to educate them.

Many children feel social pressure from their families and environment to work. In some cases, children feel that they have a responsibility to help their families, especially when they see their parents struggling financially. This pressure often comes from the expectations

of parents or community traditions that consider it normal for children to help in the fields. This social pressure encourages children to get involved in work even though they prefer to go to school or play (Inderasari, 2021).

Children who work in the fields generally have diverse views on their work. Some children feel proud to be able to help their families, but others feel burdened because they have to sacrifice time to play and study. In interviews, some children revealed that they did it voluntarily, while others felt forced because of the family's economic situation that did not allow them to focus solely on education.

Working as a farm worker often has a negative impact on the education of children in Pencong Village. Children who work in the fields have to divide their time between work and study, and this causes them to often burn out at school or even miss classes. Some children admitted that they had difficulty following lessons because of limited study time and drained energy after working in the fields. This has an impact on their academic achievement which tends to decline.

Work in the fields, which requires physical exertion, also has an impact on children's health. Some children complain of excessive fatigue, muscle pain, and minor injuries due to strenuous physical work. In addition, working under the scorching sun for long periods of time also increases health risks, such as dehydration and fatigue. The children interviewed also revealed that they often don't have time to rest properly because they have to work in the fields almost every day.

Parents have an important role in children's decision to work. In interviews with parents, many of them revealed that they felt they had no other choice but to allow their children to work, given the urgent economic conditions. Although some parents are aware that this work has a negative impact on their children's education and health, they feel that this work is necessary for the survival of the family. There are also some parents who actually encourage their children to work in order to learn about responsibility and hard work (Riyadhi, 2023).

The people of Pencong Village tend to consider children's work as a natural and normal thing. Work in the fields is considered part of local traditions and norms, and many parents and community leaders see it as a good way to educate children to be independent and responsible. However, this attitude also ignores the negative impact that such work may have on children's education and health.

From the results of the interviews, it can be concluded that the main motive for children to work as farm laborers in Pencong Village is economic and social factors. Although children work to help families, the work has a significant negative impact on their education and health. Local cultures and norms also play an important role in influencing children's decisions to work. Therefore, better interventions, both in terms of education, social support, and legal protection, are needed to reduce the number of underage working children and ensure they get their basic rights, including proper education and health.

The Impact of Work as Farm Workers on the Lives of Minors in Pencong Village, Biringbulu District, Gowa Regency, Especially in Education and Health Aspects

Working as a farm worker has a direct impact on the time when minors participate in formal education. Many children have to divide their time between working in the fields and studying, thus reducing their time to study or attend school. From the results of the interviews, some children admitted that they often came to school late or even missed because they were tired of working in the fields. This condition hinders their educational process and makes it difficult for them to follow lessons in class.

The health condition of children working in the agricultural sector in Pencong Village is quite worrying. Children spend hours in the hot sun, lifting heavy weights, and doing intense physical work. This causes many of them to experience health complaints, such as

muscle pain, fatigue, dehydration, and even some minor injuries. This excessively strenuous work certainly does not correspond to the physical capacity of children, and has an impact on their long-term health.

Another impact of farm labor work is the difficulty of children in attending lessons at school. Some of the children interviewed revealed that they often had trouble concentrating in class due to fatigue after working in the fields. The physical fatigue they feel also affects their ability to grasp the subject matter. As a result, their academic performance tends to be low, and some children even think about dropping out of school because they feel unable to keep up with the demands of school and work (Ardiansyah et al., 2023).

Parents and teachers in Pencong Village are aware of the negative impact of farm labor work on children's education. In interviews, some parents stated that they didn't actually want their children to work, but economic conditions forced them to allow children to help in the fields. Teachers also expressed their concern for students who are often absent or unfocused in class due to work in the field. However, both parents and teachers feel trapped in a situation where children's work is considered a necessity for the survival of the family.

Support from the government and local institutions in overcoming child labor in Pencong Village is still very minimal. Existing programs have not fully reached children involved in farm labor work. Some of the parents interviewed stated that they did not receive enough social assistance to ease the economic burden, so they were forced to involve their children in work. The lack of intervention from the authorities has caused this problem of child labor to continue without a real solution.

One of the biggest challenges faced by children working as farm laborers is maintaining a balance between work and education. In interviews, some children stated that they had to struggle to manage their time between study and work. Although they want to stay in school, the responsibility of helping the family often takes precedence. This condition causes children to lose the opportunity to get adequate education, which should be their basic right.

The people of Pencong Village generally view children's work as a natural and normal thing. Local social norms and traditions consider that children who help their parents in the fields are part of their responsibilities as family members. However, there are some people who are beginning to realize that farm labor can have a negative impact on the future of children, especially in terms of education and health. However, this awareness is not strong enough to change the practice.

In addition to physical health, farm workers' work also has an impact on children's mental health. Some of the children interviewed admitted to feeling emotionally burdened because they had to work hard to help their families. They feel like they have lost their childhood and have to deal with pressures that they shouldn't have experienced at a young age. This condition can impact their psychological development later in life, and affect their outlook on the future.

Parents play an important role in determining whether children will work or focus on education. Some of the parents interviewed stated that they tried to limit their children's work so as not to interfere with their education too much. However, economic limitations make it difficult to make this effort consistently. There are also parents who pay more attention to their children's education, even though they are in limited conditions (Nur, 2020).

Based on the results of the interviews, concrete steps are needed to reduce the number of children working as farm laborers in Pencong Village. More effective and targeted social assistance programs must be implemented immediately, so that poor families do not have to depend on their children's incomes. In addition, there needs to be educational programs that provide flexibility for working children, such as evening learning programs or distance learning. With a comprehensive approach, the problem of child labor in Pencong Village can be minimized, and children can enjoy their childhood better.

CONCLUSION

Based on the research that has been conducted, it was found that the motive of minors working as farm laborers in Pencong Village, Biringbulu District, Gowa Regency, is greatly influenced by economic, social, and cultural factors. Family economic limitations that force children to help increase family income are a major factor. In addition, social norms that consider children's work as part of their responsibilities and local traditions that support work from an early age also play a role in encouraging children to work. Work as a farm worker has a significant impact on children's lives, especially in terms of education and health. Children who work in the fields often have trouble dividing their time between work and study, which results in low academic achievement and even absenteeism from school. In addition, strenuous physical work negatively impacts their health, both physical and mental. Social pressures and economic limitations make it difficult for parents to stop this practice, even though they are aware of its negative impact on children.

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