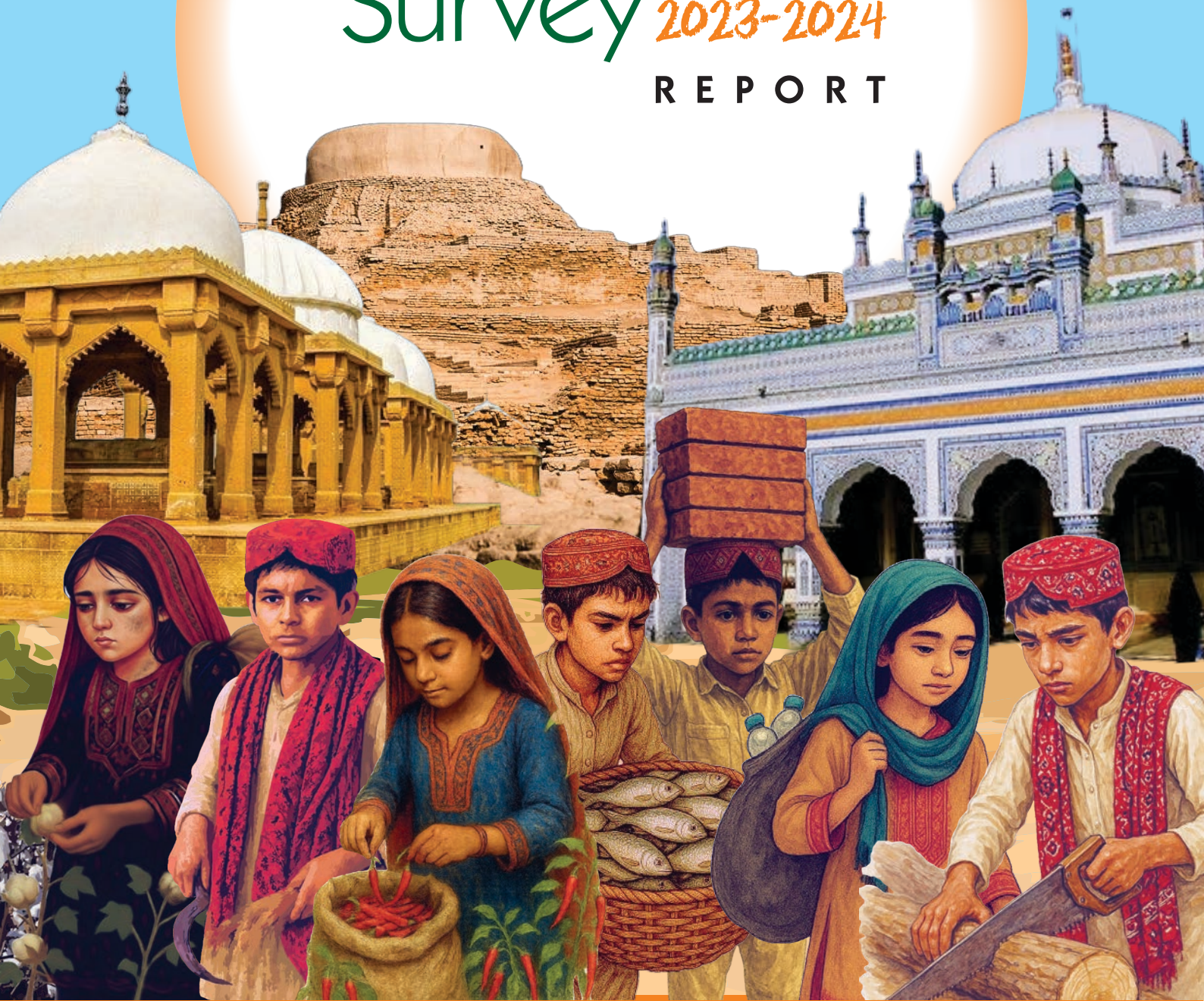


SINDH
Child Labour
Survey 2023-2024
REPORT



Core Team

The successful completion of the Sindh Child Labour Survey (SCLS) is the result of the dedicated and tireless efforts of the team from the Labour & Human Resource Department, the Sindh Bureau of Statistics, UNICEF, the Centre for Evaluation and Development (C4ED), and the IS team:

Labour & Human Resource Department, Government of Sindh

Mr. Syed Muhammad Sajjad Hyder, Ex. Director General Labour, Sindh/ Project Director, SCLS
Mr. Akhtar Ali Qureshi, Ex Director General Labour, Sindh/ Project Director, SCLS
Mr. Zulfiquar Ali Nizamani, Director General of Labour, Sindh/ Project Coordinator, SCLS
Mr. Reejhu Mal S. Sajjani, Law Officer/ Project Coordinator, SCLS
Mr. Tauqeer Ahmed (Finance Officer/Consultant)

Sindh Bureau of Statistics, Planning and Development Department, Government of Sindh

Mr. Ishaque Ahmed Ansari (Director General/Survey Coordinator)
Mr. Izat Ali Chachar, Deputy Survey Coordinator
Mr. Muhammad Nasir Khan, Manager HR
Mr. Muhammad Kashif, Manager Finance
Mr. Muhammad Akram Bhatti, Listing Administrator
Mr. Muhammad Saqib Ansari, Statistician
Ms. Rozeena Sindhu, Monitoring Officer

UNICEF

Ms. Jennifer Melton
Dr. Jabeen Fatima
Ms. Mehwish Maria
Mr. Muhammad Asim Khan
Ms. Farrah Ilyas
Mr. Shakeel Ahmed
Mr. Ali Amir Raza Bukhari
Mr. Ahmad Faruq

Center for Evaluation and Development, Mannheim

Prof. Dr Markus Frölich
Dr. Nicholas Barton
Mr. Sharafat Hussain
Ms. Felicia Holm
Ms. Daniela De La Hoz
Ms. Sharline Mata
Ms. Sandra Borja

Information Systems

Ms. Noureen Ghani
Mr. Ahmad Faruq

Table of contents

Foreword	4
Preface	5
Acknowledgements	6
Acronyms	7
List of Tables	9
List of Figures	14
Summary Table of Survey Population	16
Executive summary	17
1. Introduction	23
2. Background and socio-economic characteristics of Sindh	25
2.1. Geographic location	25
2.2. Demographic situation	25
2.3. Economic and labour market characteristics	26
2.4. Indicators of standard of living	26
3. Methodology and data collection	28
3.1 Scope and coverage of the SCLS	28
3.2 Questionnaire	28
3.3 Sampling design and implementation	30
3.4 Pilot and pre-test	35
3.5 Training of interviewers, supervisors and fieldwork	35
3.6 Data processing	38
3.7 Reliability of estimates (design effects and standard errors)	43
3.8 Differences in reporting between adult and child questionnaire	46
3.9 Lessons learned and future improvements	50

3.10	Limitations	50
4.	Characteristics of the survey population	52
4.1	Population composition	52
4.2	Households' economic characteristics	58
4.3	Households general and education characteristics	69
4.4	Experience of the 2022 floods	81
5.	Definitions related to children's activities and legal framework	83
5.1	Legal framework	83
5.1.1	International labour standards	83
5.1.2	Sindh regulation	85
5.2	Economic activity and economically active population	86
5.3	Non-economic activity	87
5.4	Working children, child labour and hazardous work	87
5.5	Worst forms of Child Labour	89
6.	Children's Activities	92
6.1	Working children	92
6.2	Household chores	95
6.3	School attendance	101
6.4	Characteristics of work	113
7.	Incidence and characteristics of child labour	127
8.	Child labour and children's schooling and health	147
8.1	Consequences of child labour	147
8.2	Schooling	148
8.3	Physical and mental health	162
8.3.1	Hazardous conditions	162
8.3.2	Mental health	179
9.	The context of child labour	183

9.1	Household size and structure	183
9.2	Birth certificate	192
9.3	Socio-economic status	197
9.4	Perceptions on reason child works, what is best for child and expectations around schooling	209
10.	Policy recommendations and conclusions	214
10.1	Education	214
10.2	Work	216
10.3	Child Labour	218
10.4	Occupation safety and health	220
11.	References	224



Saeed Ghani

Provincial Minister of Sindh for Labour Human Resources

FOREWORD

It gives me immense pride to present the findings of the Sindh Child Labour Survey (SCLS) 2022–2023, a milestone in our collective efforts to eliminate child labour and safeguard the rights of children in Sindh. Conducted after nearly three decades, this comprehensive survey provides up-to-date provincial and district-level evidence on the prevalence, nature, and drivers of child labour, forming a strong foundation for policy and action.

The children of Sindh are the heart of our province and the key to its future. Ensuring that every child enjoys the right to education, health, and a safe childhood is not only a moral imperative but also essential to our social and economic progress. The SCLS, covering nearly 57,000 households across all 29 districts, offers valuable insights into the realities faced by children aged 5–17 — including their participation in schooling, household chores, and economic activities.

The findings shed light on the complex interplay of poverty, limited access to quality education, and the impact of shocks such as the 2022 floods, which continue to push children into labour. The Government of Sindh remains firmly committed to addressing these challenges through evidence-based interventions, guided by the Sindh Prohibition of Employment of Children Act, 2017, and aligned with international standards.

Building on this evidence, the Government will continue to strengthen coordination among departments, enhance social protection systems, and expand educational opportunities to create a protective environment where every child can thrive.

I would like to acknowledge the Labour & Human Resource Department, the Sindh Bureau of Statistics, UNICEF, C4ED, and all partners and field teams for their tireless efforts in making this important survey possible.

The insights provided by the SCLS must now translate into concrete, coordinated action. Together, let us build a Sindh where every child is safe, healthy, educated, and free from the burden of labour.



Asadullah Abro

Secretary Labour and Human Resources Department
Government of Sindh

PREFACE

The Government of Sindh is dedicated to addressing child labor by formulating policies and implementing measures to prevent children from engaging in work that hinders their childhood, potential, and dignity. Child labor encompasses activities that are harmful to children mentally, physically, morally, or socially, disrupting their education, preventing school attendance, or leading to school dropout. The definition of child labor is based in ILO Convention 138 on Minimum Age for Employment, ILO Convention 182 on Worst Forms of Child Labor Elimination, and the UN Convention on the Rights of the Child. The primary legislation concerning child labor in Sindh is the Sindh Prohibition of Employment of Children Act, 2017.

This report presents the results of the Sindh Child Labor Survey (SCLS) conducted during the period of 2023–2024 in all 30 districts of the province. The SCLS is part of a nationwide initiative to conduct child labor surveys in all provinces and regions of Pakistan. Given the involvement of multiple stakeholders in conducting a Child Labor Survey, it was crucial to establish a common understanding and commitment to the process at the national level. To achieve this, the surveys were officially launched by the Ministry of Human Rights, Government of Pakistan, Dr. Arif Alvi on March 25, 2019. The Ministry of Human Rights, in collaboration with the Ministry of Overseas Pakistanis and Human Resource Development, and with technical and financial assistance of ILO, organized the event that was attended by parliamentarians, representatives of provincial and territorial governments, and other development partners.

The SCLS offers insights into the prevalence of child labor in line with Pakistan's international obligations. Pakistan is required to report on child labor following its ratification of ILO Conventions 138 and 182, the UN Convention on the Rights of the Child, the International Covenant on Economic, Social and Cultural Rights, and commitments to the European Union under the Generalized Scheme of Preferences (GSP+).

Furthermore, the SCLS 2023–24 provides detailed information on the living conditions of children in the province, their daily activities, and household chores. With a sample of 56,067 households, the survey covers children aged 5–17 years across rural and urban areas of 30 districts in Sindh. Results are analyzed based on gender, age group, Wealth Index Quintiles (WIQ), and education of household head to facilitate effective planning for eradicating child labor. The survey was conducted by the Labour & Human Resource Department Sindh in collaboration with the Bureau of Statistics, Planning and Development Department Sindh, with technical and financial support from UNICEF.

The thorough analysis conducted in the SCLS instills confidence that the findings will be highly useful to the government, policymakers, civil society organizations, development partners, academia, and other data users in formulating evidence-based policy reforms to address the persistent challenges associated with child labor in the province.

ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

The successful completion of the Sindh Child Labour Survey is a landmark achievement, accomplished through the joint efforts of the Sindh Bureau of Statistics (BoS), Planning & Development Department, the Labour & Human Resource Department, and UNICEF. This critical survey comes after a long gap—the last Child Labour Survey in Sindh was conducted in 1996—highlighting the urgent need for updated data to support informed planning and policymaking in the province.

The journey of this survey was marked by numerous challenges, from the development of survey methodologies to field-level hurdles such as security concerns, the COVID-19 pandemic, and the devastating 2022 floods. Despite these difficulties, the survey was carried out with remarkable dedication and resilience by all stakeholders.

A special note of appreciation goes to Mr. Ishaque Ahmed Ansari, Ex-Director General of the Sindh Bureau of Statistics, whose untiring efforts and unwavering commitment were instrumental in ensuring the successful completion of the survey.

We also commend the efforts of the BoS team, especially Mr. Izat Ali Chachar, Deputy Director, who played a central role in the execution of this survey, working tirelessly in the face of multiple logistical and technical challenges.

From the Labour & HR Department, we extend our sincere thanks to Mr. Reejhu Mal S. Sajani, Law Officer/Project Coordinator, SCLS, and his colleagues, whose constant involvement and prompt actions greatly supported the field teams in overcoming operational obstacles.

The contribution of UNICEF deserves heartfelt appreciation. We would like to extend our deep appreciation to the UNICEF team, both the Sindh Field Office and Pakistan Country Office, who provided quality technical support throughout the entire process. The enduring efforts and technical support by Ms. Jennifer Melton, Ms. Farrah Ilyas, Dr. Jabeen Fatima, Ms. Mehwish Maria, Mr. Shakeel Ahmed, Mr. Ali Amir Raza Bukhari, and Mr. Ahmad Faruq are gratefully acknowledged.

We would also like to extend our appreciation to Prof. Dr. Markus Frölich, Dr. Nick Barton, Mr. Sharafat Hussain, Ms. Felicia Holm, Ms. Daniela De La Hoz, Ms. Sharline Mata, and Ms. Sandra Borja from C4ED, whose analytical insights and continued technical engagement ensured the effective execution of the survey.

Last but not least, our gratitude extends to all the field staff, Monitors, Supervisors, Enumerators, Observers, Coders, and support teams at the headquarters. Their hard work, persistence, and dedication brought this challenging yet essential assignment to fruition.

It is our sincere hope that the findings of the Sindh Child Labour Survey will be extensively utilized by policymakers, planners, and researchers to design and implement strategies that will significantly improve the lives and futures of children across Sindh.

Dr. Rafique Ahmed Chandio.

Director General,
Sindh Bureau of Statistics
Planning & Development Department

ACRONYMS

Agric.	Agriculture
BISP	Benazir Income Support Programme
BoS	Bureau of Statistics
C4ED	Center for Evaluation and Development
CAPI	Computer-Assisted Personal Interviewing
CLS	Child Labour Survey
CRC	Child Registration Certificate
C.V.	Coefficient of Variation
Deff	Design Effect
DHS	Demographic and Health Surveys
Edu.	Education
FBS	Federal Bureau of Statistics
HDI	Human Development Index
HH	Household
ICLS	International Conference of Labour Statisticians
ILO	International Labour Organization
IPEC	International Programme on the Elimination of Child Labour
KP	Khyber Pakhtunkhwa
KPCLS	Khyber Pakhtunkhwa Child Labour Survey
LD	Labour Department
MICS	Multiple Indicator Cluster Survey
MPI	Multidimensional Poverty Index
NAR	Net Attendance Rate
ODK	Open Data Kit
OECD	Organization for Economic Cooperation and Development

PBS	Pakistan Bureau of Statistics
PCA	Principal Component Analysis
PCLS	Punjab Child Labour Survey
PHQ-9	Patient Health Questionnaire-9
PKR	Pakistani Rupee
PPS	Probability Proportional to Size
PSCO	Pakistan Standard Classification of Occupation
PSIC	Pakistan Standard Industrial Classification
PSU	Primary Sample Unit
SNA	United Nations System of National Accounts
SCLS	Sindh Child Labour Survey
SIMPOC	Statistical Information and Monitoring Programme on Child Labour
SDGs	Sustainable Development Goals
ToT	Training of Trainers
UN	United Nations
UNCRC	UN Convention on the Rights of the Child
UNDP	United Nations Development Programme
UNICEF	United Nations Children's Fund
WFCL	Worst Forms of Child Labour
WIQ	Wealth Index Quintile

LIST OF TABLES

Table 3.1	Sampling design (Assumptions)	31
Table 3.2	Sample description	33
Table 3.3	Rural-Urban sample distribution	34
Table 3.4	Distribution of listers by district	36
Table 3.5	Composition of field teams by region	38
Table 4.1	Population of children 5-17 years by sex and age group	52
Table 4.2	Population of children 5-17 years by area of residence, sex and sex ratio, by age group	54
Table 4.3	Population of children 9–17 years by marital status and age group, by sex, education of mother, education of father, education of child, wealth index quintile and area of residence	55
Table 4.4	Number and per cent of households by wealth index quintile, by area of residence	59
Table 4.5	Number and per cent of female-headed households by education of household head, wealth index quintile and area of residence	60
Table 4.6	Number and per cent of households currently receiving BISP or financial assistance during the last 3 years, by education of household head, wealth index quintile and area of residence	62
Table 4.7	Per cent of households by main activity from which households derive income, by education of household head, wealth index quintile and area of residence	63
Table 4.8	Number and per cent of households by land and livestock ownership, by education of household head and area of residence	64
Table 4.9	Number and per cent of households by type of housing tenure, by education of household head and area of residence	65
Table 4.10	Average household size and per cent of households by size, by sex of household head, education of household head, wealth index quintile and area of residence	67
Table 4.11	Per cent distribution of households by number of children, by sex of household head, education of household head, wealth index quintile and area of residence	68
Table 4.12	Number and per cent of children 5–17 years currently attending school by sex, by single years of age, education of mother, education of household head, wealth index quintile and area of residence	71
Table 4.13	Population of children 5–17 years by highest grade of school completed, by age group, sex, education of household head, wealth index quintile and area of residence	74

Table 4.14	Average number of years of school completed of population of children 5-17 years, by area of residence and sex, by single years of age	76
Table 4.15	Number and per cent of children 5-17 years who never attended school by sex, by single years of age, education of mother, education of household head, wealth index quintile and area of residence	78
Table 4.16	Per cent of households affected by flooding by education of household head, wealth index quintile, and area of residence	81
Table 4.17	Percentage of households's economic well-being after floods by education of household head, wealth index quintile, and area of residence	82
Table 5.1	Children's work	88
Table 5.2	Statistical definition of child labour Sindh Prohibition of Employment of Children Act 2017	90
Table 6.1	Number and per cent of children 5–17 years that worked in the last 12 months and the last 7 days by sex, age group, education of household head, wealth index quintile and area of residence	93
Table 6.2	Per cent of children 5–17 years involved in household chores by number of hours devoted per week, by sex, age group, marital status, school attendance and area of residence	97
Table 6.3	Number and per cent of children 5-17 years involved in household chores by number of hours devoted per week by sex, age group and area of residence	99
Table 6.4	Number and per cent of working children 5-17 years by school attendance and involvement in household chores, by sex, age group and area of residence	102
Table 6.5	Number and per cent of children 5-17 years not working, by school attendance and involvement in household chores, by sex, age group and area of residence	105
Table 6.6	Median number of hours worked per week for working children 5-17 years attending and not attending school by sex, age group and area of residence	108
Table 6.7	Median number of hours per week devoted to household chores for children 5-17 years attending and not attending school by sex, age group and area of residence	109
Table 6.8	Number and per cent of children 10-17 years by activity status, by age group, sex, area of residence and marital status	112
Table 6.9	Per cent of working children 5-17 years by industry, by sex, age group, wealth index quintile and area of residence	114
Table 6.10	Per cent of working children 5-17 years by occupation, by sex, age group, wealth index quintile and area of residence	116
Table 6.11	Number and per cent of working children 5–17 years by status in employment, by age group, sex, wealth index quintile, area of residence and school attendance	119

Table 6.12	Number and per cent of children 5-17 years seeking work and willing to work by age group	121
Table 6.13	Number and per cent of all working children 5-17 years working at home or away from home by sex, age group, wealth index quintile and area of residence	122
Table 6.14	Median number of hours worked, and per cent of working children 5-17 years by number of hours worked per week, by sex, age group, education of household head, wealth index quintile and area of residence	124
Table 6.15	Median number of hours worked, and per cent of working children 5-17 years by number of hours worked per week, by industry	126
Table 7.1	Number and per cent of all working children 5-17 years old who are in child labour by sex, age group, education of household head, wealth index quintile and area of residence	128
Table 7.2	Per cent of children in child labour by industry, by sex, age group, education of household head, wealth index quintile, marital status and area of residence	133
Table 7.3	Per cent of children in child labour by occupation, by sex, age group, education of household head, wealth index quintile, marital status and area of residence	136
Table 7.4	Per cent of children in child labour by status in employment, by sex, age group, education of household head, wealth index quintile and area of residence	138
Table 7.5	Number and per cent of 5-17-year-olds in child labour working at home or outside of home by sex, age group, education of household head, wealth index quintile and area of residence	140
Table 7.6.	Number and percent of children in child labour by time of day of work, by sex, age group, education of household head, wealth index quintile and area of residence	142
Table 7.7	Median number of hours worked per week for children in child labour by industry, by sex and age group	145
Table 8.1	Per cent of 5-17-year-olds in child labour and not in child labour who are currently attending school, by sex, age group, wealth index quintile, education of household head and area of residence	149
Table 8.2	Per cent of children 5-17 years in child labour attending, currently not attending and never attended school by industry	151
Table 8.3	Median number of hours worked per week for 5-17-year-olds in child labour attending, not attending and never attended school by sex, age group, education of household head, wealth index quintile and area of residence	152
Table 8.4	Per cent of 5-17-year-olds in child labour who are currently attending school and report that work affects their regular attendance or studies by sex, age group, education of household head, wealth index quintile and area of residence	154

Table 8.5	Per cent of 5-17-year-olds in child labour by reported reason for non-attendance in school, by sex, age group, education of household head, wealth index quintile and area of residence	157
Table 8.6	Percentage of grade-age distortions for 5-17-year-olds in child labour and not in child labour attending school by age, education of household head, wealth index quintile and area of residence	161
Table 8.7	Number and per cent of 10-17-year-olds in child labour who reported working in hazardous conditions by sex, age group, industry, education of household head, wealth index quintile and area of residence	164
Table 8.8	Per cent of children 10-17 years in child labour by industry and type of hazardous condition at work	166
Table 8.9	Number and per cent 5-17-year-olds in child labour and not in child labour who got injured or ill due to work, by age group, sex, education of household head, wealth index quintile and area of residence	169
Table 8.10	Per cent of 5-17-year-olds with disabilities, by working status, by sex, age group, education of household head, wealth index quintile and area of residence	175
Table 8.11	Per cent of working 5-17-year-olds in child labour and not in child labour with disabilities, by timing of disability, by age group, sex, education of household head, wealth index quintile and area of residence	178
Table 8.12	Per cent of children 10-17 years in child labour and not in child labour with mental health condition, by sex, age group, education of household head, wealth index quintile, area of residence and hazardous condition	180
Table 9.1	Average household size, number of children, number of adults, and dependency ratio for 5-17-year-olds in child labour and not in child labour, by age group, sex, education of household head, wealth index quintile and area of residence	183
Table 9.2	Per cent of 5-17-year-olds in child labour and not in child labour by household structure, by age group, sex, education of household head, wealth index quintile and area of residence	185
Table 9.3	Per cent of 5-17-year-olds in child labour and not in child labour by parental survival, by sex, age group, education of household head, wealth index quintile and area of residence	187
Table 9.4	Per cent of 5-17-year-olds in child labour and not in child labour by migration status of household head, by age group, sex, education of household head, wealth index quintile and area of residence	189
Table 9.5	Per cent of 5-17-year-olds in child labour and not in child labour with birth certificate, by age group, sex, education of household head, wealth index quintile and area of residence	193
Table 9.6	Per cent of 5-17-year-olds in child labour and not in child labour without a birth registration card for whom the respondent is informed about the birth registration process, by age group, sex, education of household head, wealth index quintile and area of residence	195

Table 9.7	Median household income of 5-17-year-olds in child labour and not in child labour by household structure, parental survival, household size, education of household head, wealth index quintile and area of residence	198
Table 9.8	Per cent of 5-17-year-olds in child labour and not in child labour from households currently receiving BISP or other financial assistance during the last 3 years, by age group, sex, household size, sex of household head, education of household head, wealth index quintile and area of residence	200
Table 9.9	Number and per cent of households having at least one 5-17-year-old in child labour by socio-economic characteristics and area of residence	204
Table 9.10	Number and per cent of households having at least one child 5-17 years in child labour by area of residence, source of income, wealth index quintile and income quintile	206
Table 9.11	Per cent of 5-17-year-olds in child labour by reported reason of parent or guardian for letting child work, by sex, age group, education of household head, wealth index quintile and area of residence	210
Table 9.12	Per cent of 5-17-year-olds in child labour that earn an income by contribution to household income, by age group, sex, education of household head, wealth index quintile and area of residence	212

LIST OF FIGURES

Figure 4.1	Percentage of children aged 5–17 years with a birth certificate by age group and sex	58
Figure 4.2	Marital status of female–headed households (Left) and Living arrangement of spouses of married female–headed households (Right)	61
Figure 4.3	Percentage of households experiencing a natural shock by wealth index quintile	66
Figure 4.4	Per cent of children 5–17 years currently attending school by sex and age	70
Figure 5.1	Structure of child labour in Sindh	91
Figure 6.1	Child work per month (among children who did any work in the last 12 months)	94
Figure 6.2	Engagement in household chores by sex and age group	96
Figure 6.3	Average number of hours per week spent in household chores by age group and sex	96
Figure 6.4	Percentage of children doing household chores by type and sex	101
Figure 6.5	Number of hours engaged in household chores for children 5–17 and school attendance	107
Figure 6.6	Children’s activities by age	110
Figure 6.7	Children’s activities. By sex (age 5–17)	111
Figure 6.8	Children’s activities by disability status 5–17	111
Figure 6.9	Distribution of the agricultural industry	115
Figure 6.10	Sub-major group distribution among children in elementary occupations	118
Figure 6.11	Average hourly earnings for children 5–17 years by industry	121
Figure 7.1	Working children, child labour and hazardous work	130
Figure 7.2	Working children, child labour and hazardous work by sex	130
Figure 7.3	Summary of results for Children 5–17 years old	131
Figure 7.4.	Sindh child labour incidence (5–17)	132
Figure 7.5	Per cent of 5–17-year-olds in child labour working at night by industry	144
Figure 8.1	Negative consequences of Child Labour	148
Figure 8.2	Per cent of children in child labour and not in child labour attending school, currently not attending school, and never attended school by age group	150
Figure 8.3	Reported reason for non–attendance or dropping out of school for children in child labour (top figure) and children not in child labour (bottom figure)	159

Figure 8.4	Most prevalent hazardous conditions among children in child labour	168
Figure 8.5	Percentage of children in child labour that experienced injuries by hazardous work condition	171
Figure 8.6	Per cent of 5–17-year-olds in child labour working in hazardous occupations by sex and age group	172
Figure 8.7	Per cent of 5–17-year-olds in child labour working in hazardous industries by sex and age group	172
Figure 8.8	Per cent of 5–17-year-olds in child labour working with hazardous tools by sex and age group	173
Figure 8.9	Percentage of 5–17-year-olds in child labour that experienced abuse at work by type of violence and sex	174
Figure 8.10	Abuse at work against 5–17-year-olds in child labour and location of work	174
Figure 8.11	Percentage of children attending school, performing household chores, working, and engaged in child labour by disability status	177
Figure 8.12	Mental health condition for 10–14-year-olds in child labour and abuse at work	182
Figure 9.1	Percentage of children in child labour by reported reason for the household head to change the place of residence	191
Figure 9.2	Percentage of children in child labour by sex of household head	191
Figure 9.3	Percentage of children 5–17 years with a birth certificate by child labour status	192
Figure 9.4	Per cent of households with at least one child 5-17 years in child labour by area of residence and wealth index quintile	202
Figure 9.5	Per cent of households with at least one child 5–17 years in child labour by education of household head	203
Figure 9.6	Child labour and shocks faced by household	207
Figure 9.6	Per cent of all households having at least one child 5-17 years in child labour by impact of the flooding from the monsoon rains that began in August 2022 on their economic well-being	208
Figure 9.7	Per cent of flood-affected households having at least one child 5-17 years in child labour by extent to which the households' economic well-being recovered from the flooding from the monsoon rains that began in August 2022	208

SUMMARY TABLE OF SURVEY POPULATION

Sample frame and data collection	
<p>Sample frame Population Census 2017 Sindh MICS 2014 Listing for CLS</p>	<p>Methodology ILO's SIMPOC (Statistical Information and Monitoring Programme on Child Labour) guidelines</p>
<p>Fieldwork: Listing Karachi Division: May 2019 – April 2021 (delayed due to COVID-19) Rest of Districts in Sindh: June 2023 – November 2023</p>	<p>Listing training 25th April to 1st May 2019 20th – 21st June 2023 (Relisting)</p>
<p>Training of Trainers 3rd to 7th October, 2022 10th to 17th October, 2022</p>	<p>Held by At Regent Plaza Hotel by C4ED At BoS office by UNICEF Consultant</p>
<p>Fieldwork: Rollout Karachi: December 2022 – April 2023 Rest of Sindh: January – April 2024</p>	<p>Rollout trainings 18th to 28th November 2022 18th to 28th December 2023</p>
Sample	
<p>Households</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ Sampled: 62,678 ■ Approached: 61,859 ■ Responded: 56,967 ■ Number of clusters: 2,849 <p>Response rate: 92.0%</p>	<p>Children aged 5–17 years</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ In household: 128,232 ■ Interviewed: 119,965 <p>Child response rate: 93.6%</p>

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

The Sindh Child Labour Survey (SCLS) 2022- 2023 offers valuable insights into the living conditions of children in the province, shedding light on their daily routines, including education, work, and household responsibilities. The survey is based on a sample of 56,967 households and represents children aged 5–17 years across 29 districts of Sindh, covering both urban and rural areas.

This executive summary is organised into several sections. It first presents an overview of the child population, followed by an analysis of children’s activities, with a particular emphasis on child work and child labour. Next, it explores the potential causes and contributing factors of child labour, before concluding with an examination of its consequences, including instances of violence against children in the workplace.

Characteristics of the survey population

- Among children aged 5–17 years, 46.7 per cent fall within the 5–9 age group, 29.5 per cent are 10–13 years old, and 23.8 per cent are aged 14–17. Girls make up 47.4 per cent of this population, and 52.6 per cent of children reside in rural areas.
- Girls are slightly more likely than boys to have ever been married in the 10–14 age group (0.1 per cent for girls vs. 0.2 per cent for boys). However, the gap grows wider among 15–17-year-olds, the proportion of ever-married girls (2.3 per cent) exceeds that of boys (0.8 per cent).
- Only 63.3 per cent of all children aged 5–17 years possess a birth certificate. Birth registration increases only slightly with age, from 61.2 per cent among children aged 5–9 to 64.4 per cent for those aged 14–17.
- Wealth disparities exist between urban and rural households. In urban areas, 70.1 per cent of households fall within the richest or second wealthiest quintile, while only 9.0 per cent of rural households belong to these groups. Conversely, 74.9 per cent of rural households are in the lowest or second-lowest quintile, compared to 6.0 per cent in urban areas.
- Sujawal district has the highest concentration of poverty, with 76.7 per cent of households classified in the poorest quintile.
- 25.5 per cent of households with children receive support from the Benazir Income Support Programme (BISP). The likelihood of receiving BISP assistance decreases as the education level of the household head increases. Additionally, BISP coverage is considerably higher in rural areas (39.2 per cent) compared to urban areas (11.4 per cent).

Children activities

Schooling

- School attendance among children aged 5–17 stands at 66.9 per cent, with a notable gender disparity—71.5 per cent of boys are currently enrolled, compared to 61.8 per cent of girls.
- Children in rural areas are less likely to attend school compared to their urban peers, with 58.4 per cent of rural children aged 5-17 attending school, as compared to 76.9 per cent of those in urban areas.
- School attendance rates are highest in the districts of Karachi Central (83.2 per cent), Karachi South (81.4 per cent), and Karachi East (80.8 per cent). In contrast, the lowest attendance rates are observed in Sujawal (35.6 per cent), Kashmor (44.6 per cent), and Thatta (47.0 per cent).
- On average, school enrolment increases with age until 9 years, after which it starts to decline. The attendance rate peaks at age 9 both for boys (82.3 per cent) and for girls (74.5 per cent).
- 27.9 per cent of children 5-17 have never attended school. Across all age groups, the percentage of girls who have never been enrolled is consistently higher than that of boys, averaging 32.6 per cent for girls compared to 23.6 per cent for boys.
- The highest percentage of children who have never attended school is found in Sujawal (60.6 per cent), while Karachi Central reports the lowest rate at 10.7 per cent.

Household chores

- Household chores are performed by 56.6 per cent of girls and 49.9 per cent of boys, with the gender gap widening as children get older.
- The proportion of children engaged in household chores increases with age: 37.5 per cent among those aged 5–9, 61.8 per cent for ages 12–13, and 72.9 for ages 14–17.
- Girls not only participate in household chores more frequently than boys, but they also dedicate more time to these tasks. This time commitment grows with age, and by 14–17 years old, girls involved in chores spend an average of 13.9 hours per week, compared to 7.6 hours for boys.
- The type of household tasks differs by gender. Boys engaged in chores are more likely to handle shopping for the household (45.8 per cent), which often requires leaving the home. In contrast, girls are more commonly responsible for cleaning utensils (44.8) or care for children, sick relatives or elderly (32.6 per cent).

Work

- In Sindh, the overall prevalence of working children is 12 per cent among 5–17-year-olds. Gender disparities are evident, with 15.2 per cent of boys reporting work activity in the past week, compared to 8.4 per cent of girls.
- Work participation rises with age. Over the previous week, 4.3 per cent of 5–9-year-olds report being engaged in work, increasing to 13.2 per cent among 10–13-year-olds, and 25.5 per cent among 14–17-year-olds.
- School attendance among working children declines with age. Overall, 40.6 per cent of working children attend school, but this figure drops as they grow older. Among 5–9-year-olds, 58.6 per cent of those who work are in school, compared to only 31.3 per cent of 14–17-year-olds.
- In contrast, non-working children have significantly higher school attendance rates. 70.5 per cent of non-working children go to school, with attendance peaking at 75.8 per cent for those aged 10–13. However, among 14–17-year-olds, attendance falls to 67.2 per cent.
- Working children work a median of 24 hours per week, with older children dedicating more time to work. Those aged 14–17 working an average of 33 hours per week, compared to 21 hours for those aged 10–13.
- Non-working girls are more likely to be out of school than non-working boys. 58.6 per cent of non-working girls do not attend school, compared to 38.7 per cent of boys.
- Children with disabilities face significant barriers to participation, with 70.6 per cent neither attending school nor working, whereas this figure stands at 25.2 per cent among children without disabilities.
- 58.9 per cent of ever-married children do not participate in either work or education. Among them, ever-married girls are much more likely than ever-married boys to be neither employed nor in school—76.9 per cent compared to 11.2 per cent.

Child labour

- Child labour affects 10.3 per cent of children aged 5–17 years. The prevalence is notably higher among boys (13.7 per cent) compared to girls (6.6 per cent). Note that adolescents working long hours, at night or without a rest day with family are excluded from child labour as per the exclusions in the Sindh Prohibition of Employment of Children Act of 2017.
- The likelihood of child labour increases with age, rising from 4.9 per cent among children aged 5–9 to 27.2 per cent for those aged 14–17.
- Hazardous conditions are a key concern with 50.4 per cent of 10–17-year-olds in child labour, working in hazardous conditions. Among 5–17-year-olds, 75.4 per cent work excessively long hours (more than 42 hours per week, as per the Sindh Prohibition of Employment of Children Act of 2017), 17.5 per cent face abuse at the workplace

(psychological, physical, or sexual), 11.1 per cent are in hazardous occupations or industries, and 0.02 per cent use hazardous tools or machinery.

- Regional disparities exist in child labour prevalence. The highest rates are observed in Sujawal (35.1 per cent) and Tharparkar (25.6 per cent), while Malir (2.7 per cent) and Karachi South (3.0 per cent) have the lowest incidence.
- The agriculture, forestry, and fishing sector employs the highest number of children in child labour (55.1 per cent), followed by manufacturing (12.4 per cent) and wholesale and retail trade (10.8 per cent).
- Children in child labour are commonly engaged in elementary occupations (54.9 per cent), followed by skilled agricultural, forestry, and fishery work (18.7 per cent) and craft and related trades (14.6 per cent).
- Boys are more likely than girls to work in service and sales (12.1 per cent vs. 1.3 per cent), skilled agricultural occupations (20.1 per cent vs. 15.4), while a higher proportion of girls are engaged in elementary occupations (60.7 per cent vs 52.4 per cent of boys) and craft and related trades (21.4 per cent vs. 11.7 per cent).
- Most children in child labour are unpaid family workers (49.6 per cent) or self-employed in non-agricultural jobs (14.3 per cent). Girls are far more likely to be unpaid family workers (63.8 per cent) compared to boys (43.4 per cent), while boys have higher participation in self-employment and agricultural paid labour.
- Older children, especially boys, are more likely to work away from home. The proportion rises from 71.5 per cent among 5–9-year-olds to 86.5 per cent for 14–17-year-olds, driven largely by boys (77.7 per cent to 93.7 per cent). In contrast, girls are consistently less likely to work away from home, with rates decreasing slightly from 62.6 per cent to 59.7
- The median hours worked per week by children in child labour is 25 hours, though this number tends to increase with age from 14 hours for ages 5–9 to 38 hours for ages 14–17

Circumstances and causes of child labour

- Overall, 17.5 per cent of households report having at least one child aged 5–17 engaged in child labour, with a higher prevalence in rural areas (25.8 per cent) compared to urban areas (9.0 per cent). The incidence of child labour also varies by household wealth, showing a downward trend as wealth increases. Among the poorest households, 33.7 per cent have at least one working child, while only 3.8 per cent of the wealthiest households report the same.
- The prevalence of child labour decreases with the education level of the household head. In households where the head has no formal schooling or only preschool education, 14.1 per cent have at least one child in child labour. This figure drops as education levels rise, reaching 3.7 per cent in households where the head has completed higher education.
- Children who have lost their father are more vulnerable to engaging in child labour, with 6.2 per cent of children in child labour having lost their father, compared to 3.2 per cent of those not in child labour.

- The incidence of child labour shows a slight difference based on the gender of the household head, with 10.2 per cent of children in male-headed households and 12.8 per cent in female-headed households being involved in child labour.
- A higher percentage of children in child labour come from households receiving BISP (47.1 per cent) compared to those not in child labour (28.7 per cent), with a similar, though smaller, trend observed for households receiving other financial assistance. Children in child labour are slightly more likely to come from households receiving other forms of financial aid (2.1 per cent) than those not in child labour (1.6 per cent).
- Children in households that have experienced a natural or economic shock are more likely to be engaged in child labour. In households affected by price inflation, child labour rates reach 17.9 per cent, while those facing falling agricultural prices report a rate of 12.1 per cent.
- The most common reason parents or guardians permit their children to work is to supplement family income (44.3 per cent), followed by supporting household needs (22.0 per cent), helping in the household enterprise (18.2 per cent), and learning skills (17.1 per cent). Gender differences are also evident here, with 49.7 per cent of boys working to supplement family income compared to 31.8 per cent of girls.

Consequences of child labour

- 41.2 per cent of children in child labour attend school, compared to 69.9 per cent of children not in child labour. While school attendance among children not in child labour remains steady across age groups, for children in child labour attendance drops from 58.6 per cent in the 5–9 age group to 45.8 per cent among 10–13-year-olds, and only 29.1 per cent of 14–17-year-olds in child labour continue attending school.
- Among children in child labour who attend school, 5.7 per cent report that work negatively affects their attendance or studies, while 94.3 per cent say their school attendance is unaffected. The percentage of children whose school attendance is affected increases with age. Only 1.9 per cent of 5–9-year-olds report that work affects their schooling, while this percentage rises to 4.8 per cent among 10–13-year-olds and 10.3 per cent among 14–17-year-olds.
- The most common reason for children in child labour not attending school is the inability to afford school (24.2 per cent). Other significant barriers include issues with school availability or quality (23.5 per cent), a lack of interest in schooling (18.8 per cent), and parental beliefs that undervalue the importance of education (11.0 per cent).
- The most prevalent hazardous conditions faced by children aged 10–17 in child labour include carrying heavy loads (29.8 per cent) and exposure to extreme cold or heat (28.1 per cent). Other notable risks are working with dangerous tools (12.7 per cent), exposure to wooden splinters (9.7 per cent), and contact with wild or dangerous animals (7.2 per cent).
- The most commonly reported negative consequence for children in child labour is extreme fatigue, which affects 18.0 per cent of children aged 5–9, 20.7 per cent of those aged 10–13 and 20.9 per cent of those aged 14–17. The second most frequent issue is

short-term injury or poor health, ranging from 9.8 per cent in the 5–11 age group to 11.2 per cent in the 14-17 age group

- A higher percentage of children in child labour (43.5 per cent) report work-related injuries or illnesses compared to those working outside of child labour (20.6 per cent). The incidence of injury or illness remains relatively steady across age groups, but gender differences are evident, with 44.6 per cent of boys in child labour reporting work-related injuries or illnesses, compared to 41.0 per cent of girls.
- Children working in hazardous conditions are significantly more likely to experience injuries or illnesses due to their work. Among 10–13-year-olds, 65.4 per cent of those in hazardous work reported injuries, which is 44.2 percentage points higher than those in non-hazardous work. This trend continues in the 14–17 age group, where the injury rate among those in hazardous work exceeds that of their non-hazardous counterparts by 40.9 percentage points.
- A total of 20.1 per cent of children in child labour report experiencing symptoms of depression (ranging from mild to severe), compared to 10.7 per cent of children not in child labour. Additionally, children in hazardous child labour are more likely to report depressive symptoms, with 27.5 per cent in hazardous work compared to 12.9 per cent in non-hazardous conditions.

1. INTRODUCTION

Pakistan is a signatory to the United Nations Convention on the Rights of the Child, ILO Convention 138 (the Minimum Age Convention), ILO Convention 182 (the Worst Forms of Child Labour) and the International Covenant on Economic, Social and Cultural Rights treaty. Even though all these conventions include elimination of child labour, no systematic survey to measure child labour has been carried out since 1996.¹ The previous Child Labour Survey (CLS) was conducted by the Federal Bureau of Statistics (FBS, now the Pakistan Bureau of Statistics, PBS) in close collaboration with the Ministry of Labour, Manpower and Overseas Pakistanis (Labour wing), the International Labour Organization (ILO) and the International Programme on the Elimination of Child Labour (IPEC). The results in FBS et al. (1996) indicated 3.3 million children were economically active in the country, roughly 8 per cent of the 40 million children in the age group 5-14. The survey covered the provinces of Punjab, Sindh, Balochistan and Khyber Pakhtunkhwa (KP, formerly known as NWFP - North-West Frontier Province). The Sindh Child Labour Survey (SCLS) will provide new insights for Sindh about the situation of children in the province, their working conditions, and their vulnerability to child labour. The SCLS was carried out in 2022-2023 by the Labour Department (LD) Sindh with execution support from the Sindh Bureau of Statistics (BoS), and, with the technical and financial support of UNICEF. It was conducted as part of a nationwide effort covering all provinces of Pakistan.

The Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) were adopted by UN member states in 2015 and include target 8.7, "...by 2025 end child labour in all its forms." This is part of the 8 SDG of promoting inclusive and sustainable growth, employment, and decent work for all. Given the complex nature of child labour, there are four other goals that are associated with the dynamics around child labour: SDGs 4, 5, 10 and 16², which are linked to the quality of education, gender equality, reduction of inequality and the promotion of peaceful and inclusive societies, respectively.

The statistics generated by this survey include economic activities and non-economic activities (such as household chores) of children aged 5–17, the number of hours worked, nature of the tasks performed, the circumstances at work with respect to health, protection, and safety issues, as well as information on demographic and socioeconomic characteristics of household members and of the household itself. The SCLS 2022-2023 results provide a sound knowledge base on the magnitude and nature of child labour, the identification of the factors behind it, as well as its possible consequences on health (including mental health), educational and child protection outcomes. Moreover, the survey is a first step towards monitoring child labour at the provincial and district level, informs about children's engagement in different

¹ Pakistan has also ratified the following protocols related to child labour: UN CRC Optional Protocol on Armed Conflict, UN Convention on the Rights of Child, CRC Optional Protocol on the Sale of Children, Child Prostitution and Child Pornography, and Palermo Protocol on Trafficking in Persons.

² Primarily 8.7 relating to child labour, to some extent 16.2 as far as it relates to child abuse, 4.1 relating to school attendance and 5.4 with respect to domestic work.

types of labour, and provides policymakers a breadth of rich and detailed information that can help in formulating evidence-based policies, and can allow them to better design and implement programmes for children to either prevent or address child labour.

This report is divided into the following ten chapters.

- Chapter 1 provides an introduction to the SCLS,
- Chapter 2 presents the background and socioeconomic characteristics of Sindh,
- Chapter 3 presents the methodology used for the CLS, the way data collection was carried out, including training and field preparation, and the general structure of the questionnaire,
- Chapter 4 presents the main characteristics of the surveyed population,
- Chapter 5 introduces the definitions used in relation to children's activities, focusing on the definition of economic activity and child labour,
- Chapter 6 shows the children's activities,
- Chapter 7 presents the incidence and characteristics of child labour,
- Chapter 8 shows the correlations between child labour and schooling, physical and mental health, and well-being,
- Chapter 9 provides information about the context of child labour,
- Chapter 10 summarises the main findings and conclusions, as well as presents some key policy recommendations.

2. BACKGROUND AND SOCIO-ECONOMIC CHARACTERISTICS OF SINDH

This chapter provides the context to the results of the survey covering a brief description of the geographic location, demography, economic and labour market conditions, and general indicators of the standard of living in Sindh.

2.1. Geographic location

The province of Sindh is located in south-eastern Pakistan with an area of 140,914 km², which makes it the third largest of Pakistan's four provinces (Government of Pakistan Pakistan Bureau of Statistics, 2017). Sindh borders with Punjab to the north, Balochistan to the west and north, and the Indian states of Rajasthan and Gujrat to the east.

Sindh Province features four geographic regions: the Kirthar Range with parallel ridges in the west, a fertile central plain along the Indus River, an eastern desert area including the Thar Desert, and the Indus Delta in the south with distributary channels and mangrove swamps (Government of Pakistan, Ministry of Planning, Development and Special Initiatives, Pakistan Bureau of Statistics, 2017).

2.2. Demographic situation

The total population in Sindh according to the 2017 census is 47.9 million, which constitutes around 22 per cent of the country's total population (207.7 million), making it the second most populous province in Pakistan. Of the total population in Sindh, 52.0 per cent are males and 48.0 per cent are females. The sex ratio for Sindh is estimated to be 108.3 males per 100 females, with a slightly higher sex ratio in urban compared to rural areas. Additionally, the census reported 5,954 transgender people.

Sindh is made up of six divisions³ and these divisions are further subdivided into twenty-nine districts⁴, which are further subdivided into 138 tehsils. In comparison to other provinces in Pakistan, Sindh has a high share of the population living in urban areas, at 24.8 million (51.9 per cent), compared to 23 million living in rural areas (Government of Pakistan, Ministry of Planning, Development and Special Initiatives, Pakistan Bureau of Statistics, 2017). Sindh's population is young, with 42.9 per cent of the population being below 16 years of age, and only 3.2 per cent being 65 years of age or older.

³ Hyderabad, Karachi, Sukkur, Larkana, Mirpur Khas and Shaheed Benazirabad.

⁴ Badin, Dadu, Ghotki, Hyderabad, Jacobabad, Jamshoro, Karachi Central, Kashmore, Khairpur, Larkana, Matiari, Mirpur Khas, Naushahro Feroze, Shaheed Benazirabad, Qambar Shahdadkot, Sanghar, Shikarpur, Sukkur, Tando Allahyar, Tando Muhammad Khan, Tharparkar, Thatta, Umerkot, Sujawal, Karachi East, Karachi South, Karachi West, Korangi and Malir.

According to the 2017 census, Sindhi is the predominant language in Sindh, with 61.6 per cent of the population in Sindh reporting Sindhi as their mother tongue. The second most common language is Urdu (18.2 per cent), followed by Pushto (5.5 per cent) and Punjabi (5.3 per cent).

2.3. Economic and labour market characteristics

According to the Labour Force Survey 2020-21 (Government of Pakistan, Ministry of Planning, Development & Special Initiatives, Pakistan Bureau of Statistics, n.d.), Sindh has the lowest unemployment rate out of the four provinces in Pakistan. In total, 3.9 per cent of the population aged 10 years and above are unemployed, compared to the national average of 6.3 per cent. In rural Sindh, the unemployment rate is similar for males (2.0 per cent) and females (2.4 per cent), whereas in urban Sindh, the unemployment rate is considerably higher for females (20.1 per cent) than males (4.6 per cent) (Government of Pakistan, Ministry of Planning, Development & Special Initiatives, Pakistan Bureau of Statistics, n.d.).

2.4. Indicators of standard of living

In Sindh, 17.5 per cent of households experienced moderate or severe food insecurity in 2019-2020, which is slightly higher than the average of 16.4 per cent for the four provinces in the country (Government of Pakistan, Pakistan Bureau of Statistics, Ministry of Planning Development and Special Initiatives, 2021).

According to UNDP calculations, the Human Development Index (HDI)⁵ value for Pakistan was 0.570 in 2018-19, with a slightly higher value (0.574) for Sindh during the same period, representing medium human development. Sindh's leading position ahead of Pakistan's other provinces, with the highest provincial HDI value, is mainly driven by its higher levels of GDP per capita, progress on life expectancy, and better performance in education. However, with an HDI value of 0.654 in urban areas and 0.485 in rural areas, representing low human development, Sindh has the largest urban-rural gap in HDI values out of all provinces in the country (United Nations Development Programme, 2020).

The Sindh MICS report from 2018-19 shows large differences in the literacy rate between women and men. Among women aged 15-49, 40.9 per cent are literate, compared to 59.0 per cent of men in the same age group. For women, the literacy rate varies considerably between rural and urban areas, with a female literacy rate of 60.7 per cent in urban areas, and only 16.9 per cent in rural areas. The male literacy rate varies less between rural and urban areas than the female literacy rate, though the difference is still substantial (70.5 per cent in urban areas and 45.0 per cent in rural areas). Both the female and male literacy rates are the highest in the age group 15-17 (at 50.2 per cent and 63.9 per cent, respectively) and thereafter decreases, with the male literacy rate presenting a slight increase again in the age group 25-34.

⁵ The HDI is a measure of development calculated by the United Nations Development Programme (UNDP) and has a scale from 0 to 1, one being the most developed. An HDI of >0.8 indicates a high standard of development, an HDI between 0.8 and 0.5 is middle ground and anything smaller than 0.5 is considered low.

In Sindh, children enter primary school at age 5, middle at age 10 and secondary school at age 13. The Sindh MICS report 2019 (Bureau of Statistics, Planning & Development Board, Government of Sindh, 2020) shows that the net attendance rate (NAR)⁶ for primary school is 42.6 per cent for boys and 38.1 per cent for girls. The NAR for middle school is 22.0 per cent for boys and 19.7 per cent for girls. For secondary school, the NAR is 17.8 per cent and 16.1 per cent for boys and girls, respectively. The Sindh MICS results 2019 also show that the gender parity index (GPI)⁷ in Sindh is 0.89 for primary school and 0.90 for both middle and secondary school.

⁶ The NAR indicates participation in primary, middle or secondary schooling for the population aged 5-9, participation in middle schooling or higher for the population aged 10-12 and participation in secondary schooling or higher for the population aged 13-14.

⁷ The GPI presents the ratio of girls to boys attending primary, middle and secondary education, using the net attendance ratios.

3. METHODOLOGY AND DATA COLLECTION

3.1 Scope and coverage of the SCLS

The SCLS is a standalone survey that presents a detailed picture of the activities that children perform, the hours they spend on those activities and the conditions under which those activities are performed. Moreover, the economic activities are classified, which allows policymakers to identify the occupations and industries in which children are engaged. To capture these aspects, the survey follows the internationally accredited Statistical Information and Monitoring Programme on Child Labour methodology (SIMPOC) closely. SIMPOC has assisted various countries across the globe in capacity building for implementation of surveys at all stages: definitions, sampling, training, data collection, and documentation of processes and analysis of the resulting child labour data (Blanco Allais & Hagemann, 2008). Since the launch of SIMPOC in 1998, national child labour surveys were conducted in over 50 countries.

The SCLS is a household-based survey, that targeted households with children 5–17 years old. In this sense, this survey is only representative of those households and does not include households in which all members are older than 17 or younger than 5. In order to carry out detailed analysis, large sample sizes of working children were necessary. To this end, the sampling methodology considered the inclusion of the identification of districts with prevalence of child labour according to MICS⁸ to determine the sample size for each district. The sampling was conducted in two stages, first the selection of clusters, which act as the primary sampling unit (PSU) within districts using Probability Proportional to Size (PPS) sampling and second the selection of households, with the aim of targeting households with children aged 5–17, after a household listing in the selected PSUs. Beyond the scope of this survey are children in the most hidden forms of child labour, that tend to live outside of households. Additionally, military restricted areas were excluded from the sample. Further, the survey instrument is geared to measure hazardous labour but no other worst forms of child labour.

3.2 Questionnaire

The questionnaire followed the model SIMPOC questionnaire developed by ILO-IPEC and comprises three large parts: i) Characteristics of all household members, ii) Household characteristics and iii) Child questionnaire. The questionnaire applied in the SCLS can be found in the Appendix⁹.

The first two parts are answered by the household head or, in case of being absent, by a knowledgeable adult who could respond to questions about each household member and

⁸ While MICS provides a measure of child labour likely to be positively correlated with the result from the SCLS, the definition of child labour used in MICS differs from that used under SIMPOC, which includes more questions related to child labour to closely follow the definition of both the Sindh Prohibition of Employment of Children Act and the ICLS definition of child labour.

⁹ The questionnaire was conducted in CAPI, following the structure and flow of SIMPOC questionnaires.

different household characteristics. Part 3 is answered by *each* child aged 5–17 years old identified in the household roster.

Questionnaire structure	
Part I: Household head or knowledgeable adult	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ Household composition and demographic characteristics of each HH member ■ Educational attainment of each HH member ■ Current and usual economic activity of all members aged 5 years old and above ■ Parents' perceptions of working children and why they are permitted to work
Part II: Household head or knowledgeable adult	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ Housing and household characteristics ■ Household socio-economic status ■ Perceptions/future expectations for children in general ■ Shocks to household ■ Impacts of the 2022 floods on the household ■ Saving and debt
Part III: Children 5–17	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ Educational attainment ■ Current economic activities ■ Health and safety issues for working children and adolescents ■ Household tasks ■ Depression and psychological well-being

It is important to note that the decision to include education and work-related questions in both the adult and child questionnaire is deliberate, following SIMPOC procedure, as there is evidence that there could be intentional or unintentional differences in responses between adults and children.

The questionnaire went through several rounds of contextualisation to the Pakistani and Sindh context. The first round took place during the inception workshops (i.e., Punjab, KP, GB), where stakeholders related to governmental agencies with policy interests in tackling child labour came together and discussed each question of the SIMPOC model questionnaire. A pre-test and training of the trainers was conducted in April-May 2017 with two teams working in the field in Malir, Karachi East and Thatta districts. The adjusted questionnaire was piloted in Sindh in the districts Khairpur, Karachi South and Karachi West from December 2017 to January 2018

with two teams conducting both the listing and full survey with child labour questionnaire. The monitoring and coding systems were also tested as part of this process. Finally, the questionnaire was contextualized to incorporate questions related to the 2022 monsoon rains situation.

The questionnaire was translated into Urdu and programmed for use on tablet devices. The survey was carried out through Computer Assisted Personal Interviews (CAPI) using the Open Data Kit application (ODK). This aspect of the survey administration has several advantages, including the reduced time necessary to complete the comprehensive survey, the opportunity for real time monitoring and feedback from the survey coordinators to the field, and speeding up the process of data coding for industries and occupations.

3.3 Sampling design and implementation

Originally, a sampling plan for all of Sindh was designed using a two-stage sampling method.

First stage sampling

The first stage, carried out by PBS, defined the number of PSUs selected within each Tehsil, divided into urban and rural areas. The sample was stratified to be representative at the district urban-rural stratum level.

In a first step, PBS allocated sample size to districts on the basis of child labour prevalence taken from MICS Sindh 2014, districts with lower ex ante estimate of child labour were allocated larger sample sizes to have the same 10 per cent margin of error in each district. A large enough sample of working children is required in each district to assess correlates of work and child labour, as well as to ensure full geographical coverage. This resulted in a sample size of n households for each district according to the following equation.¹⁰

$$n = \frac{3.84 \cdot r(1 - r) \cdot deff}{(RME \cdot r)^2 \cdot pb \cdot AveSize \cdot RR}$$

Originally, it was planned to sample 16 households per EA, so the number of EAs allocated to a district is $n/16$. The sample per cluster was later adjusted to account for having on average fewer children per household under the updated sampling strategy. The first stage continued by dividing the sample population between Tehsils according to their population of children aged 5–17 from the 2017 census, taking the residence, rural or urban, as a substratum. The total allocated sample was divided into urban and rural strata according to the proportion of urban and rural in the frame of the particular tehsil.

¹⁰ r is the district's child labour prevalence rate according to the MICS Sindh 2014; $deff$ corresponds to the design effect which was set to 2; RME is the relative margin of error of 10 per cent; pb the proportion of exposed population, i.e. the share of 5–17-year-olds; $AveSize$ is the average household size in a district according to the 2017 census; RR corresponds to an assumed response rate of 95 per cent.

Table 3.1 shows the assumptions considered in the sampling methodology. The relative margin of error was set dependent on the child labour prevalence in MICS 2018-19. The assumed response rate was set to 95 per cent.

Relative margin of error	10 per cent
Assumed response rate	95 per cent
Sample domains	All districts
Design effect	2
Child Labour incidence	Sindh MICS 2014
Household size	Census 2017

Second stage

16 households were intended to be randomly selected from within each PSU, but this was later increased since household were sampled purely at random within each cluster. This means the average number of children per household is lower than would have been the case under PPS sampling as had originally been planned, where households with more children would have had a higher probability of selection.

Due to multiple delays between the time when the listing was collected and the time when the rollout began, the sampling design changed, and the sampling design differed between Karachi Division and the remaining divisions of Sindh. The following sub-sections explain the changes in the sampling design and its implementation.

Karachi Division

The survey sample for Karachi Division was drawn using a Systematic Random Sampling (SYS) methodology across all households for rollout. This meant that all households in the listing data were approached, regardless of whether they had mentioned having children at the time of listing. This was because the data on the listing was older than three years, which meant that there were changes in household composition over time. Note that the exact age of children is not noted during listing, only the number of children aged 5–17. For instance, households that did not have children in the eligible age group (5-17 years) at the time of listing might have had children at the time of implementation (children who had turned 5 since listing), and vice versa (where the youngest child present at listing had since turned 18). Therefore, to account for such potential changes, all households were included in this approach. This meant the listing was used as a record of all dwelling units where households reside. The following steps were taken:

- From the listing data 22 households were selected using the SYS method (to account for the fact that on average from SYS there will be fewer children per household).

- An additional 10 households were selected as replacements, using a Simple Random Sampling (SRS) approach.
- Replacements were used if any of the original 22 households did not have children aged 5-17 at the time of the survey.
- The SRS method ensured every remaining household in the list (after excluding the original 22) had an equal chance of being chosen as a replacement.

Sindh excluding Karachi division

In the other parts of Sindh, a slightly different approach was used. Instead of using the original listing data a relisting exercise was conducted followed directly by the start in rollout.

The following steps were taken:

- For other parts of Sindh (outside Karachi division) relisting took place which was immediately followed up by survey rollout. This implied that we did not require replacements, since we were able to identify which households were eligible for the survey (only those households that reported having a child in the age group 5-17 during relisting).
- Households with no children were treated as non-responses, as was originally planned at the time of the first listing. These households should not have been selected, since only those reporting children aged 5–17 were included in the selection of households from listing data.

As rollout occurred promptly after the new listing data was collected, we could accurately identify which households were eligible for the survey and so can use this subpopulation as the sample frame for the Sindh CLS in the areas of Sindh which were not covered. To avoid complications due to different weighting schemes and ensure comparability between the areas, SYS (rather than PPS) was used to sample households, with 22 households drawn to account for the smaller average number of children per household. No replacements were needed since the listing information could more accurately identify target households with children aged 5–17.

Table 3.2 shows the number of clusters and households targeted (those clusters covered during listing) and interviewed during rollout, while Table 3.3 shows the rural/urban sample distribution. The listing exercise covered 2862 clusters, meaning 62,964 households should be targeted. Some clusters in Karachi were dropped due to the refusal of local authorities, where these were cantonment areas. Beyond Karachi division, some PSUs were dropped due to security issues resulting from tribal conflicts. This was particularly an issue Kashmore district, though some clusters could be replaced. In each of Sukkur and Ghotki one cluster was dropped due to the population migrating as a result of the 2022 floods. The final total number of clusters was 2849. In these 2849 clusters where rollout took place, 61,859 households were covered. Due to the lower prevalence of child labour according to MICS 2014 in the districts of Karachi division, the required sample size in those districts is significantly larger. Weights adjust to ensure the sample is representative of the population.

Table 3.2 Sample description

District	Sampling methodology		Survey	
	PSUs	Target households	PSUs	Covered households
Badin	41	902	41	896
Dadu	40	880	40	828
Ghotki	40	880	39	841
Hyderabad	99	2178	97	1947
Jacobabad	55	1210	52	1106
Jamshoro	78	1716	78	1643
Kambar Shahdad Kot	45	990	45	964
Karachi Central	377	8294	376	8264
Karachi East	285	6270	284	6215
Karachi South	356	7832	355	7717
Karachi West	250	5500	250	5485
Kashmor	40	880	38	816
Khairpur	40	880	40	808
Korangi	287	6314	287	6482
Larkana	43	946	43	924
Malir	229	5038	229	5038
Matiali	41	902	41	895
Mirpur Khas	40	880	40	862
Naushahro Feroze	40	880	40	866
Sanghar	40	880	40	879
Shaheed Benazirabad	40	880	40	855
Shikarpur	57	1254	56	1219
Sujawal	40	880	40	853
Sukkur	55	1210	54	1040
Tando Allahyar	40	880	40	873
Tando Muhammad Khan	40	880	40	879
Tharparkar	40	880	40	866
Thatta	44	968	44	933
Umer Kot	40	880	40	865
Total	2,862	62,964	2,849	61,859

Table 3.3 Rural-Urban sample distribution

District	Number of clusters		Number of households	
	Rural	Urban	Rural	Urban
Total	799	2050	17,170	44,689
Badin	30	11	655	241
Dadu	30	10	623	205
Ghotki	28	11	606	235
Hyderabad	19	78	381	1,566
Jacobabad	35	17	744	362
Jamshoro	42	36	893	750
Kambar Shahdad Kot	29	16	621	343
Karachi Central		376		8,264
Karachi East		284		6,215
Karachi South		355		7,717
Karachi West	20	230	440	5,045
Kashmor	28	10	603	213
Khairpur	22	18	449	359
Korangi		287		6,482
Larkana	23	20	496	428
Malir	106	123	2,336	2,702
Matiali	31	10	676	219
Mirpur Khas	26	14	563	299
Naushahro Feroze	28	12	607	259
Sanghar	25	15	549	330
Shaheed Benazirabad	28	12	600	255
Shikarpur	42	14	914	305
Sujawal	32	8	683	170
Sukkur	29	25	567	473
Tando Allahyar	27	13	591	282
Tando Muhammad Khan	30	10	659	220
Tharparkar	28	12	610	256
Thatta	34	10	721	212
Umer Kot	27	13	583	282

3.4 Pilot and pre-test

The SCLS questionnaire builds on the experiences and lessons from the Punjab Child Labour Survey (PCLS) pilot exercise and previous pre-testing exercises for the Gilgit Baltistan Child Labour Survey (GBCLS) and the Khyber Pakhtunkhwa Child Labour Survey (KPCLS).

The main objective of the pre-test was to further refine/adjust the questionnaire to the KP context, as well as to detect possible field challenges that can be anticipated and tackled in the planning phase. The first ToT and pre-test took place between April 24th - May 4th, 2017. The ToT and pre-test were designed and led by the C4ED consultants, NRSP (a local partner) and the software development consultant (hereafter referred to as Consultant IS), and fully supported by the Labour Department (LD) and the Bureau of Statistics (BoS) KP. The first step of the pre-test exercise was training of trainers (supervisors / observers / enumerators / monitors / coders). Most of the participants had attended the training conducted prior to the pre-pretesting and participated in the initial pre-pretest exercise, so they had good understanding of the questionnaire. Enumerators also had previous knowledge on key aspects surrounding data collection. For this reason, the training was focused mainly on four areas: (i) objective of the survey, (ii) main definitions surrounding work and child labour, (iii) the questionnaire, and (iv) use of CAPI application and tablets. After the training, two days were allocated for testing the questionnaire and CAPI application in the field. Two teams, each comprising of 4 enumerators, 1 observer and 1 supervisor were sent out to three districts – Thatta district (one rural and one urban block), Malir (rural) and Karachi East (urban).

A further pilot with all systems (desk monitoring, coding and field monitoring was conducted) from December 19th 2017 – 13th January 2018, again with two teams. In this instance, all IS systems were fully implemented and listers visited the clusters prior to surveying households.

Various delays occurred for reasons including COVID-19 and subsequently severe flooding in 2022. While listing originally began in 2018 for all divisions except Karachi, rollout could not take place until much later after the floods had receded. This necessitated a difference sampling strategy due to the age of data. Karachi division was listed in 2019-21 and rollout occurred in 2023, when a refresher Training of the Trainers was held in Karachi from 3rd October – 18th October 2022.

3.5 Training of interviewers, supervisors and fieldwork

Listing

The listing training originally took place between the 17th – 18th December 2018 and covered the following main aspects: i) an explanation of the listing exercise in the clusters identified by PBS (including definitions of the enumeration block, structures, dwelling and non-dwelling units, and households), ii) creating a common understanding of the maps provided by PBS with a focus on understanding symbols, iii) drawing sketches of the sample clusters when in the field (i.e. location, key landmarks and boundaries of the enumeration block), and iv) instruction in the use of the CAPI software ODK, to be able to navigate through the listing form. Listing then

was carried out in all divisions except Karachi and was completed in 2019. This listing data could not be used in the end since it was over five years old by the time rollout could be carried out. A relisting exercise was then carried out in these areas between 24th June 2023 and 22nd November 2023. A new training session was held from 20th – 21st June 2023 for this exercise. Listing in Karachi division occurred between 9th May 2019 and 4th March 2021. In the final listing data, 88 listers, working alongside mappers, covered the 29 districts in Sindh. Some listers worked in more than one district meaning that the sum across districts does not equal the total number of listers in Table 3.4.

Table 3.4 Distribution of listers by district

District	Listers
Total	88
Badin	3
Dadu	4
Ghotki	2
Hyderabad	6
Jacobabad	3
Jamshoro	5
Kambar Shahdad Kot	2
Karachi Central	8
Karachi East	7
Karachi South	8
Karachi West	8
Kashmor	1
Khairpur	2
Korangi	8
Larkana	2
Malir	8
Matiari	2
Mirpur Khas	2
Naushahro Feroze	2
Sanghar	2
Shaheed Benazirbad	2
Shikarpur	2
Sujawal	2

District	Listers
Sukkur	5
Tando Allahyar	2
Tando Muhammad Khan	2
Tharparkar	2
Thatta	2
Umer Kot	2

Rollout

Field staff were trained in two phases: one for Karachi division from 18th to 28th December 2022 and another for rest of Districts except Karachi was held on 18th to 28th December 2023. Training was conducted in-house at hotel resort Plaza Karachi. Coders and desk monitors received training during the ToT prior to the division-based field trainings ensuring a smooth start. The field team included 244 enumerators, 61 supervisors, 61 observers and 11 field monitors. Each team comprised four enumerators, who carried out the interviews, one supervisor who coordinated the work of the team, and one observer dedicated to monitor the performance of enumerators. The field monitors monitored the performance of supervisors, observers, and enumerators on a rotating basis. Training was also delivered to the team working at the Bureau of Statistics Sindh based in Karachi including 4 desk monitors, 2 master coders and 8 coders. Desk monitors and data validators had the responsibility of monitoring the progress of the survey and solving queries that the system automatically identified such as logical inconsistencies or unlikely answers, either accepting the entries or correcting them after seeking feedback from the field teams and respondents. Coders and the master coders had the task of translating the occupation, industry, and tool description into four-digit codes according to the 2017 Pakistan Standard Industrial Classification (PSIC) and the 2015 Pakistan Standard Classification of Occupation (PSCO), through a coding interface designed specifically for the Child Labour Survey. The criteria of selection of the enumeration team included i) a minimum of bachelor's degree for enumerators and master's in social sciences for supervisors, ii) teams comprised of four female enumerators and one male enumerator¹¹, and iii) level of Android management.

The training for enumerators focused on six main areas: i) objectives of the survey, ii) main definitions surrounding work and child labour, iii) the Child Labour Questionnaire, iv) achieving a good level of understanding of the ODK form for data collection and the use of tablets, v) common mistakes made by enumerators (e.g. gender, relation to the household head) and the type of information needed in the industry/occupation description for coding, and vi) child safeguarding measures and security briefs. During the last two days of training of field staff, the teams were sent to the field (in clusters not selected for the main sample) for pre-testing the questionnaire and applications followed by detailed debriefing sessions. Table 3.4 below shows the distribution of the field teams across divisions.

¹¹ Due to cultural reasons female enumerators are more likely to be allowed into households.

Table 3.5 Composition of field teams by region

Region	No. of teams	Monitors (Regional supervisors)	Supervisors	Enumerators	Observers	Total
Total	61	11	61	244	61	438
Division						
Hyderabad	11	1	11	44	11	78
Karachi	36	6	36	144	36	258
Larkana	5	1	5	20	5	36
Mirpur Khas	3	1	3	12	3	22
Shaheed Benazirabad	3	1	3	12	3	22
Sukkur	3	1	3	12	3	22

During the rollout of Karachi division, to compensate for the age of the listing data, a “Quick Count Record” (QCR) was used to adjust for the population level to account for any changes since listing, as per the request of PBS. This entailed the team supervisor recording an estimate for the number of structures, dwelling units and households in the cluster.

3.6 Data processing

This subsection elaborates on the process of data collection, data monitoring and coding, data cleaning and data analysis.

Data entry description and transmission

Data protection was an important aspect for the SCLS, which was taken into account in planning the implementation of data entry and transmission of the data for the survey. The information collected from the field was sent encrypted to the central server, a locally deployed ODK server application, where it was stored in a locally connected database in “MySQL” in encrypted form. The data was mapped onto an SQL server database by using a mapping script as the second step of data processing, which consists of renaming variables and adjusting the format of the data. Once the data was loaded into the SQL server, it could be used for reporting, coding, monitoring and subsequent download options by operational and statistical teams. Data could then be accessed via a web-based system for monitoring.

Data quality monitoring and coding

Two main tools for data processing were constructed for the CLS. First, a comprehensive dashboard to make the data available to the team, track the progress and monitor the data quality. Second, a coding interface for coders and master coders to read parts of the data

relevant for coding industry, occupation and tools, and translate verbal descriptions into codes that can be analysed statistically. This subsection presents a summary of the protocols in place to ensure data quality and accurate coding.

Listing

To monitor the progress of the listing activities and identify problems in the data, weekly monitoring reports were shared with BoS by C4ED. In the monitoring report, checks were made to ensure that listers collected sufficient information about the addresses of households so that they could easily be relocated during rollout. Other checks included the number of households per cluster, to monitor that no households were missing, and checks on the number of households per structure, as structures which appeared too large could imply that the boundaries were not properly identified, while too small could mean that households were missed from the listing. BoS could then take appropriate action based on the recommendations and potential issues highlighted in the report. In addition to the weekly monitoring reports, the dashboard allowed for daily monitoring of the progress and data quality.

Rollout

Several steps were taken to minimise the errors in the SCLS. All field teams had a supervisor whose task was to ensure the quality and accuracy of the data collected by enumerators. The supervisors were responsible for meeting daily with the enumerators and to discuss and find solutions to problems.

Observers accompanied enumerators during the interviews, ensuring that they entered the information from the interview in a proper manner. Observers used a separate CAPI form, where they followed the flow of the questionnaire and evaluated the performance of enumerators on the questions being asked.

Field monitors performed random visits to monitor the performance of an enumerator, supervisor, or observer in a specific team. A separate CAPI form was created for monitors, with different performance questions asked depending on which team member that was being monitored.

Beyond the quality assurance and monitoring carried out by the field teams, desk monitoring was carried out using a customised dashboard created for the SCLS. This could be used by the engaged stakeholders to track the daily progress of the survey, with dedicated monitors from BoS. A further web-based monitoring system was developed as part of the dashboard for the use of BoS desk monitors. This system identified inconsistencies in the data based on a set of logical checks. Desk monitors were responsible for reviewing and correcting the queries identified by the system when a mistake was identified. Sometimes the queries could not be solved directly by the desk monitor without further information. Data validators were assigned such cases and were responsible for making phone calls to supervisors to clarify certain aspects around the queries and revert for possible correction in the system.

An additional important part of the monitoring of the SCLS was the quality assurance of coded occupations and industries. For this, a coding application was developed with separate interfaces for coders and master coders. Coders first assigned codes to the occupation and industry descriptions given by the respondents during the interviews. The master coder was randomly assigned descriptions to recode, which would be compared with the codes of the coders to ensure the quality of the codes and a common understanding among the coders. In case any of the codes coded by the master coder and coder did not match, all codes in a specific batch were then rejected and sent back to the coders for re-coding. In addition, C4ED monitored the entered codes on a weekly basis. A weekly monitoring report was prepared, where the most frequent codes were monitored and compared with the most recent Labour Force Survey.

Data cleaning and analysis using Stata

Once data was downloaded from the web-based system, a process of data cleaning was performed to prepare the data for the statistical analysis. This process implied the creation of a unique dataset including household and individual information to allow for analysis of children’s activities by variables describing the household’s context. The data was anonymised prior to analysis to ensure privacy and confidentiality of respondents, with all personally identifying information removed. Data cleaning was performed by C4ED using the statistical software Stata. Moreover, the results in this report account for the complex sampling strategy by considering clustering, stratification, and weighting. According to the sampling strategy explained before, estimates and standard errors are adjusted using the survey weights discussed in the next section and the “svy” command in Stata.

Calculation of weights

For the SCLS, the population of interest (the survey population) consists of children aged 5–17, which means that the final sample is made up of households which reported to have children in this age range. It is important to note that households are the final sampling unit. The probability with which a child is included in the SCLS depends on the probability that the PSU was selected and the probability that the household was selected. These are explained below.

In a first step, PBS allocated sample size to districts on the basis of child labour prevalence taken from MICS Sindh 2014, requiring a large enough sample size for each district. Districts with a lower prevalence were allocated a larger sample sizes to have the same margin of error in each district. Population according to the census in 2017 was also accounted for in first stage sampling in the allocation of the sample between Tehsils. PBS provided weights for all 2,849 clusters covered in the SCLS. The first stage weights were calculated in the same way across all of Sindh. These are used in the calculation of the final weights for analysis, namely the PSU probability weight (of cluster *j*) times the household probability weight (of household *i* in cluster *j*) times the relevant non-response weight (where level *x* may represent households or children). Finally, a post-stratification adjustment is made on the district level, as explained below.

$$W_{final,i} = W_{first,j} \times W_{second,i} \times W_{nrx,j} \times W_{psAdj,d}$$

The second stage weights were calculated separately for Karachi division and the rest of Sindh as described below after the common elements of the final weights. They are based on the inverse probability of selection, which under SYS is equal for all households i and equals $\frac{1}{p_i} = \frac{N_{EA}}{22}$ where N_{EA} is the number of households in the sample frame for the enumeration area, and 22 households are drawn. Note, if a cluster had fewer than 22 households in the sample frame, the probability of selection equals one.

Non-response weights are calculated at the household level and child level within a cluster. For variables derived from the adult response, the household non-response is included. For variables derived from responses to the child questionnaire, the household non-response weight is multiplied with the child level non-response weight within a cluster.

The final weights are intended to provide percentages for prevalence of working children and child labour that are representative at the district and province level. Furthermore, they should enable the calculation of the number of children in child labour. This requires all components of the weights to be correct and for the listing to cover all households in an enumeration area. Upon investigation, it was found that the estimated population of children aged 5-17 was below the population according to the census, both in 2017 and 2023. In particular, the urban rural balance was not in line, which was found to be due to the underestimation of the population in divisions outside of Karachi. The population of children aged 5-17 for urban and rural areas were calculated according to the district-wise single age data of table 4 from the 2017 census.¹²

To solve for this problem BoS Sindh and LD Sindh agreed with PBS on the following solution. The population of children for each district should be adjusted to align with the 2017 census, since this was part of the sampling strategy used by PBS to allocate sample size for each district. For each district, the population of children aged 5-17 is calculated according to the SCLS data and the census, and a district level (d) adjustment factor is used in the final weights to align the population of 5-17-year-olds with the 2017 census: $w_{psAdj,d} = \frac{Pop5-17-census_d}{Pop5-17-CLS_d}$

Sindh excluding Karachi division

In most of Sindh, except for Karachi division, the household listing was repeated since it was in many cases already 5 years old. This meant that households with children aged 5–17 could be identified for sampling in the second stage selection process. No replacements were made in this area, and the population of interest could be identified through information in the listing. In this case the second stage weight is calculated as follows:

$$w_{second,i} = \frac{1}{p_i} = \frac{N_{EA}}{22}$$

Here, N_{EA} is limited to eligible households and so this weight allows the selected households to represent all households of interest in their PSU.

¹² These were accessed from: https://raw.githubusercontent.com/cerp-analytics/pbs2017/refs/heads/main/data/04/04_district_aggregated_sex.csv

Karachi Division

In Karachi, the SCLS used the SYS methodology across all households identified in listing, regardless of whether they had reported children at the time of the listing. This adjustment was necessary because the listing data was over three years old, leading to potential changes in household composition. For instance, households that did not have children aged 5–17 at the time of listing might have had children by the time of implementation, and vice versa. The sampling frame from the listing thus included all households, from which 22 households were drawn with equal probability.

The original calculations for sample size adjusted for non-response but not for the selection of ineligible households. For this reason, replacement households were used when selected households were identified to be ineligible. Some proportion of the households in the listing, and therefore the sample frame, are thus ineligible for inclusion in the population of interest in the SCLS. We adjust for this proportion with the calculation of an adjustment factor $ReplaceAdjust = \frac{N_{eligible}}{N_{attempted}}$, where $N_{attempted}$ is the number of the original 22 households in a cluster where a survey was attempted.¹³

Furthermore, due to the age of listing it was no longer clear how the population size may have changed since the original listing. A QCR adjustment made use of the supervisor’s estimate of the number of households currently in the cluster. The following adjustment factor was used: $QCRadjust = \frac{NQCR_{EA}}{N_{EA}}$, where N_{EA} is the number of households from the original listing (from which the sample was drawn) and $NQCR_{EA}$ is the number of households according to the QCR.

Together the probability of selection from the sample frame, the QCR adjustment and the adjustment for eligibility allow us to calculate second stage weights for Karachi division:

$$w_{second,i} = \frac{1}{p_i} \times QCRadjust \times ReplaceAdjust = \frac{N_{EA}}{22} \times \frac{NQCR_{EA}}{N_{EA}} \times \frac{N_{eligible}}{N_{attempted}}$$

All estimates in this report consider the adjustment explained in the following formula.

$$\hat{y} = \frac{\sum_{i \in O} w_{final,i} Y_i}{\sum_{i \in O} w_{final,i}}$$

Let y be any variable such as engagement in child labour or working activities, w_i denotes the probability weight of observation i (child i) and w_i the population weight that in this survey takes the values $w_i \in [3.271, 1190.130]$. Each observation is multiplied with its respective survey weight, aggregated for all children, and divided by the sum of the population weights corresponding to the observations for which the data is available. The result is an unbiased estimate for the variable of interest \hat{y} , e.g. child labour.

¹³ Non-response, which includes households where we cannot ascertain eligibility, are dealt with in a separate weight $w_{nrx,j}$ for cluster j .

3.7 Reliability of estimates (design effects and standard errors)

This section discusses the reliability of estimates presented in this report. On the one hand, the sampling errors are approached by presenting an analysis of the coefficient of variation for key indicators. On the other hand, non-sampling errors and prevalence of missing data are discussed.

Sampling errors

Table 3.6 below shows the point estimates, standard errors, and confidence intervals for nine key indicators of the survey. The first panel (Population) shows the population size for children across age groups, sex and area of residence. The second panel (Percentage) shows the same categories but in terms of percentages, including school attendance, working children and child labour. The survey collected information for 128,232 children, that represent an estimated number of 15,636,417 children, 47 per cent of them being 5–11 years old, 29 per cent 12–13 years old, and 24 per cent 14–17 years old. The sampling error is evaluated through the coefficient of variation (CV). A rule of thumb suggests that an estimate with a coefficient of variation up to 7 per cent is precise, and between 8 per cent and 14 per cent an acceptable precision. All estimates presented in Table 3.6 fall below a 3 per cent CV, indicating the high accuracy of estimates.

The standard errors and therefore the confidence intervals are defined in the context of the design effect. The design effect is defined as the ratio of the variance in the sample under the given sampling strategy divided by the variance under simple random sampling. Due to the non-random sampling of households, the variance of the variables we are interested in is likely to be higher across the whole sample, but the sampling strategy ensures that we have enough observations to reliably report statistics for the population of interest. The design effect (Deff) is shown in Table 3.6 and is 2.79 for children in child labour and thus slightly higher than the level assumed in estimating the required sample size ex ante.

Table 3.6 Variance calculations									
95% confidence interval									
	Coefficient	Standard error	C.V. (%)	Deff	Deft	Weighted count	Unweighted count	Lower	Upper
Population									
Age									
5-11	7,304,921	110,410	1.51	3.63	1.90	7,304,921	56,767	7,088,420	7,521,422
12-13	4,616,949	70,243	1.52	2.02	1.41	4,616,949	38,948	4,479,212	4,754,686
14-17	3,714,547	60,463	1.63	3.45	1.85	3,714,547	32,517	3,595,988	3,833,107
Gender									
Boys	8,225,054	116,247	1.41	2.21	1.48	8,225,054	67,053	7,997,108	8,452,999
Girls	7,410,765	109,685	1.48	2.21	1.48	7,410,765	61,173	7,195,687	7,625,843
Residence									
Rural	8,439,694	166,804	1.98	24.42	4.92	8,439,694	40,528	8,112,613	8,766,775
Urban	7,196,724	138,120	1.92	24.42	4.92	7,196,724	87,704	6,925,888	7,467,559
Percentage									
Age group									
5-11	46.72	0.26	0.57	3.63	1.90	7,304,921	56,767	46.20	47.24
12-13	29.53	0.18	0.61	2.02	1.41	4,616,949	38,948	29.17	29.88
14-17	23.76	0.22	0.92	3.45	1.85	3,714,547	32,517	23.33	24.19

	Coefficient	Standard error	C.V. (%)	Deff	Deft	Weighted count	Unweighted count	Lower	Upper
Percentage									
Gender									
Boys	52.60	0.21	0.39	2.21	1.48	8,225,054	67,053	52.20	53.01
Girls	47.40	0.21	0.44	2.21	1.48	7,410,765	61,173	46.99	47.80
Residence									
Rural	53.97	0.68	1.27	24.42	4.92	8,439,694	40,528	52.63	55.32
Urban	46.03	0.68	1.49	24.42	4.92	7,196,724	87,704	44.68	47.37
School attendance									
Does not attend	33.09	0.48	1.44	13.33	3.64	5,173,579	37,826	32.15	34.02
Attend	66.91	0.48	0.71	13.33	3.64	10,462,839	90,406	65.98	67.85
Working children and adolescents									
Does not work	88.02	0.25	0.29	7.88	2.80	13,763,905	116,958	87.53	88.52
Work	11.98	0.25	2.11	7.88	2.80	1,872,512	11,274	11.48	12.47
In Child Labour									
Not in Child Labour	89.70	0.24	0.26	7.85	2.79	14,026,380	118,585	89.24	90.17
In Child Labour	10.30	0.24	2.30	7.85	2.79	1,610,037	9,647	9.83	10.76

Non-sampling errors

In surveys with a large sample size as the one for the BCLS, non-sampling errors need to be considered when assessing the reliability of the estimates. These include non-observation errors, when some units are not included in the survey or a variable is missed, or measurement errors. Typically, two of the most important sources of non-observation are non-coverage and non-response (United Nations Statistics Division, 2005). The issue of non-coverage is most pertinent in the SCLS for children not living in traditional households, i.e., children without a permanent place of residence in a household unit. As previously mentioned, 13 clusters were not covered across two districts, which also leads to some non-coverage. Issues surrounding the age of listing in Karachi may also lead to some coverage issues where new households have been established in dwelling units which were not included at listing. Such households would not be covered by the SCLS in Karachi division. Measurement error in the SCLS should be minimised through appropriate training of enumerators and the use of a well-designed and thoroughly tested questionnaire with built-in quality checks through the CAPI software.

An important aspect to consider is whether the non-response of children is correlated with the engagement of children in work. If there is a positive correlation, we should be concerned about using the child questionnaire as a source of information, as the sample will suffer from a selection bias with working children more likely to be missing and thereby precluding the analysis of all working children using their own responses. To explore this possibility, we conduct a correlation test between the economic activity of children reported by parents and children responding to the child questionnaire. The result suggests a negative but small correlation of answering the child questionnaire and working during the last week as well as during the last year (correlation coefficient of -0.01 for both in the raw responses), corresponding to a difference in response rate of less than one percentage point. This result, along with the high response rate for the child questionnaire, provides indicative evidence that the SCLS data does not suffer from systematically missing data among working children.

3.8 Differences in reporting between adult and child questionnaire

The survey comprised some questions asked both to parents and children, including aspects such as age, schooling, household chores, and participation in economic activities. There are several reasons why the responses might differ. First, parents might have incentives to under- or overreport activities performed by the child, and children might misreport because of fear of what adults might say to their responses or because of a lack of concentration or understanding. Table 3.7 shows the differences in responses between parents and children regarding school attendance and household chores. Children report lower school attendance than adults. Furthermore, we see from the fact that both simultaneously reporting school attendance is a similar level to the child reporting attendance, that there are few children reporting attending school where the adult respondent does not. A similar result can be seen for household chores, where the number of adults reporting that a child carries household chores is higher for adults than for children. However, the share where both the adult and the child report household chores is smaller. This means that there is no exact overlap of the two groups with some adults stating their children carry out household chores without the child reporting it and vice versa.

In relation to the participation in economic activities shown in Table 3.8, the responses referring to the past 12 months are similar in magnitude for parents and children. However, the responses do not overlap perfectly, meaning that when considering whether either the child or the parent reports that the child is engaged in work a higher number is estimated. When considering the past 7 days —the normal reference period used in the report— bigger differences become apparent, with parents reporting less work than children. Children are more likely to report that they worked in the last week by almost 1 percentage point. This provides an upper limit on the difference in child labour if work were defined according to the child response. Nonetheless, overall, there is a large degree of agreement between children and adult responses: children confirmed the adult response in 84 per cent (economic activity last 12 months), 85 per cent (economic activity last 7 days), 93 per cent (school attendance), 83 per cent (household chores) of cases.

Throughout this report, we follow the standard practice of using the adult's responses about economic activities, school attendance and household chores. The reader should, nonetheless, be aware that these figures may reflect the adult's desire to report these activities as they perceive may be advantageous for their household.

Table 3.7: Comparison of reported schooling and participation in chores rates between adult and child questionnaires (weighted percentages)

Activity	School attendance				Household chores			
	Adult response	Child response	Any	Both	Adult response	Child response	Any	Both
	Number							
Total	10,462,839	9,976,762	10,659,387	9,780,214	8,302,602	7,732,404	9,107,343	6,927,664
5-9	4,991,305	4,729,259	5,067,996	4,652,568	2,740,204	2,383,030	3,073,000	2,050,234
10-13	3,315,478	3,182,737	3,366,261	3,131,954	2,855,302	2,780,539	3,137,172	2,498,669
14-17	2,156,055	2,064,766	2,225,130	1,995,692	2,707,096	2,568,835	2,897,170	2,378,761
	Percentage							
Total	66.9	63.8	68.2	62.5	53.1	49.5	58.2	44.3
5-9	68.3	64.7	69.4	63.7	37.5	32.6	42.1	28.1
10-13	71.8	68.9	72.9	67.8	61.8	60.2	68.0	54.1
14-17	58.0	55.6	59.9	53.7	72.9	69.2	78.0	64.0

Table 3.8: Comparison of reported employment rates between adult and child questionnaires (weighted percentages)

		<i>Treatment of responses</i>											
Reported employment		Last 12 months				Last 7 days							
		Adult response	Child response	Any	Both	Adult response	Child response	Any	Both	Adult response	Child response	Any	Both
		Number											
Total		2,079,746	2,105,943	2,447,518	1,738,171	1,872,512	2,016,690	2,296,966	1,592,236				
5-9		376,921	398,891	481,402	294,409	316,524	382,982	444,177	255,330				
10-13		672,756	706,016	804,311	574,461	607,776	677,492	757,863	527,406				
14-17		1,030,070	1,001,036	1,161,805	869,301	948,212	956,215	1,094,926	809,501				
		Percentage											
Total		13.3	13.47	15.65	11.12	11.98	12.9	14.69	10.18				
5-9		5.16	5.46	6.59	4.03	4.33	5.24	6.08	3.5				
10-13		14.57	15.29	17.42	12.44	13.16	14.67	16.41	11.42				
14-17		27.73	26.95	31.28	23.4	25.53	25.74	29.48	21.79				

3.9 Lessons learned and future improvements

As the fifth province in Pakistan to complete the CLS, the SCLS made use of the lessons learned from the previously completed CLS in Punjab, Gilgit-Baltistan and Khyber Pakhtunkhwa, while at the same time generating additional lessons learned and improvements to be considered in the remaining provinces.

Timely coordination: Listing and the main survey should be conducted close to one another to minimise delays and ensure accuracy. If delays are expected, the listing tool should be extended to collect additional information, including dates of birth for children.

Province-wide rollout: Budget and logistical coordination should be secured to roll out the survey simultaneously across all regions.

Enhanced monitoring: Large-scale surveys require intensive monitoring, with sufficient budget allocated for this purpose.

Population representation: Clear communication with all stakeholders is critical to ensure population figures align with SIMPOC survey requirements, including the use of post-stratification weights if necessary.

More regular use of the dashboard by government stakeholders for data monitoring could help address data quality issues in a timely manner. The delays between training staff in its use and rollout may have contributed to its underuse in Sindh.

3.10 Limitations

Phase data collection: The survey was conducted in two phases due to implementation and budget constraints. The first phase of listing covered interior Sindh (excluding Karachi division), while the second phase focused on Karachi division.

Data quality issues: During listing in Karachi, data quality issues arose, with instances of fake data being entered. Relisting was required in affected areas to ensure accuracy.

External challenges: COVID-19 delayed data collection and disrupted timelines. In addition, Severe flooding in 2022 compounded delays and impacted the survey's implementation in many areas.

Delays in listing and rollout

- Due to long delays between listing and rollout, eligibility of households could not be determined accurately since the ages of all children were not recorded during listing. This created challenges in focusing on children aged 5–17.

- It was decided to relist households in interior Sindh and to sample randomly using SYS in Karachi division, with replacements for confirmed ineligible households.

Possible seasonal bias: Data collection occurred at different times in Karachi division and the rest of Sindh, which could introduce seasonal differences in the results.

Errors in programming survey: A minor error in the programming of the data collection tool resulted in missing information on shocks and debt for some households.

Implemented coping mechanism

- Changes in the population over time, particularly in Karachi, required the use of the Quick Count Record (QCR) technique to update the number of households per cluster.
- Populations in interior Sindh were underestimated compared to the census, leading to poor representation of the population. District-level post-stratification weights were applied to ensure accurate representation in the final results.

A more general limitation of the survey that relates to its household-based design is that it only captures information about children that are living in a household and thus excludes children who are homeless or in orphanages. This could have implications on the results as these populations might be more vulnerable to other types of child labour. To fully understand the situation of children in Sindh, it may therefore be insightful to complement the findings from the SCLS with additional studies covering the groups of children that are not part of this survey. Third, as stressed throughout the report (and is true for all observational surveys), the findings represent correlates of child labour without laying claim to causal inference. This means that the survey builds on the characterisation of the conditions of labour, and aspects of children's context that play a role either as potential causes or consequences of the problem. For instance, the survey finds that the poorer the households, the more likely a household will have at least one child in child labour. In particular, the share of households with at least one child in child labour is nearly ten times larger for the poorest households compared to the wealthiest. While it seems apparent that there is a link between poverty and child labour, the results do not allow to find the impact of poverty on child labour. This aspect recognises the complexity and multidimensionality of the issue of child labour.

Finally, while the survey captures household chores performed by children, as well as the time spent in these activities, children working as domestic workers might not be fully captured. The reason is twofold. On the one hand, respondents might fail to report children working as servants or domestic workers as part of the household, who therefore might be missed out from the roster of household members. On the other hand, even if they are not missed out from the roster, the nature of their activities can be mistakenly confused with household chores and not reported as economic activities. The confusion may arise due to the subtle difference between both activities, which is only in the location those activities occur – be that in their household or someone else's household. In the SCLS, servants were listed in the roster, and domestic work was listed as economic activity.

4. CHARACTERISTICS OF THE SURVEY POPULATION

This chapter presents demographic and socio-economic information for the target population (i.e., children aged 5–17 years). It starts with a description of the population composition, followed by the households' economic, education and general characteristics.

The SCLS is only representative for children aged 5–17 years and therefore, this section presents information for this age group. For further details about unweighted numbers for the whole sample, refer to the Appendix.

4.1 Population composition

Table 4.1 presents the population distribution of children aged 5–17 in Sindh, revealing slightly more boys (52.6 per cent) compared to girls (47.4 per cent). Additionally, an estimated 598 transgender children¹⁴ are included in this population. The gender gap between boys and girls remains relatively constant with age, rising slightly from 52.1 per cent boys among 5–9-year-olds to 53.4 per cent among those aged 14–17.

Table 4.1 Population of children 5-17 years by sex and age group

Age group	Total		Boys			Girls		
	Number	Per cent of population of children	Number	Per cent of total boys	Per cent of total population in age group	Number	Per cent of total girls	Per cent of total population in age group
Total 5-17	15,636,417	100.0	8,225,054	100.0	52.6	7,410,765	100.0	47.4
5-9	7,304,921	46.7	3,808,272	46.3	52.1	3,496,303	47.2	47.9
10-13	4,616,949	29.5	2,434,323	29.6	52.7	2,182,593	29.4	47.3
14-17	3,714,547	23.8	1,982,459	24.1	53.4	1,731,869	23.4	46.6

The sum of boys and girls in the table does not equal the total number of children since the table does not include transgender children. These records account for 6 individuals from the unweighted survey responses, which when weighted represent 598 children.

¹⁴ Due to the low percentage of children recorded as transgender or other, this group is excluded from the tables of this report. These records account for 6 unweighted survey responses.

Additional details on the age distribution of households with children aged 5–17 can be found in Table A4.1 in the Appendix. Since the survey specifically targets households with children, it is to be expected that the majority of household members in the sample fall into the brackets aged 19 or younger. A more detailed breakdown of Table 4.1 into single-year age groups is available in Appendix Table A4.2. Further disaggregation by area of residence is presented in Table A4.3, which highlights that a larger number of children live in rural areas compared to urban areas. For more detailed age distribution data by area of residence, refer to Table A4.5.

Table 4.2 reaffirms that more boys than girls are reported, with an overall ratio of 111 boys for every 100 girls. This gender imbalance increases with age, particularly in rural areas, where the sex ratio rises from 109 boys per 100 girls among 5–9-year-olds to 120 among adolescents aged 14–17. A more granular breakdown of this information by Division and District is available in Table A4.6.

Table 4.2 Population of children 5-17 years by area of residence, sex and sex ratio, by age group												
Characteristic	Total				Rural				Urban			
	Total	Boys	Girls	Sex ratio	Total	Boys	Girls	Sex ratio	Total	Boys	Girls	Sex ratio
Total 5-17	15,636,417	8,225,054	7,410,765	111.0	8,439,694	4,459,528	3,980,112	112.0	7,196,724	3,765,525	3,430,653	109.8
Age group												
5-9	7,304,921	3,808,272	3,496,303	108.9	4,184,812	2,181,972	2,002,787	109.0	3,120,109	1,626,300	1,493,515	108.9
10-13	4,616,949	2,434,323	2,182,593	111.5	2,413,803	1,274,569	1,139,234	111.9	2,203,146	1,159,754	1,043,360	111.2
14-17	3,714,547	1,982,459	1,731,869	114.5	1,841,078	1,002,988	838,091	119.7	1,873,469	979,472	893,778	109.6

The sum of boys and girls in the table does not equal the total number of children since the table does not include transgender children. These records account for 6 individuals from the unweighted survey responses, which when weighted represent 598 children.

Table 4.3 presents data on the proportion of ever-married children aged 10–17¹⁵. Among children aged 10–14, girls are slightly more likely to have ever been married than boys, though the difference is minimal (0.1 percentage points). However, the likelihood of marriage increases with age, rising from 0.1 per cent among 10–14-year-olds to 1.5 per cent among adolescents aged 15–17. In this older age group, girls are 1.5 percentage points more likely to have ever been married than boys.

The highest proportion of ever-married children aged 15–17 is found among those for whom parental education information is missing—14.6 per cent when the mother’s education level is unknown and 9.4 per cent when the father’s education level is unknown. This suggests that in many cases, one or both parents may be absent from the household or deceased. Additionally, adolescents with no formal education or only pre-school education are more likely to have ever been married.

Economic status also plays a role. Children from the richest wealth quintile are the least likely to have ever been married, while those from the poorest wealth quintiles have the highest rates. Among 10–14-year-olds, child marriage is most prevalent in the poorest quintile (0.3 per cent). For 15–17-year-olds, the highest proportion is observed in the poorest wealth quintile (3.1 per cent), followed by the second (2.2 per cent) and middle (1.5 per cent) quintiles. Additionally, a higher proportion of ever-married children live in rural areas compared to urban areas.

Table 4.3 Population of children 9–17 years by marital status and age group, by sex, education of mother, education of father, education of child, wealth index quintile and area of residence

Characteristic	Never married		Ever married		Number of children 9-14 years	Number of children 9-17 years
	9-14	15-17	9-14	15-17		
Total 9-17	99.8	98.5	0.1	1.5	5,594,529	2,735,203
Sex						
Boys	99.9	99.2	0.1	0.8	2,944,847	1,471,297
Girls	99.8	97.7	0.2	2.3	2,649,682	1,263,905
Edu. mother						
None/Pre-school	99.9	99.4	0.1	0.6	3,701,977	1,773,797
Primary	100.0	99.9	0.1	0.1	438,870	186,875

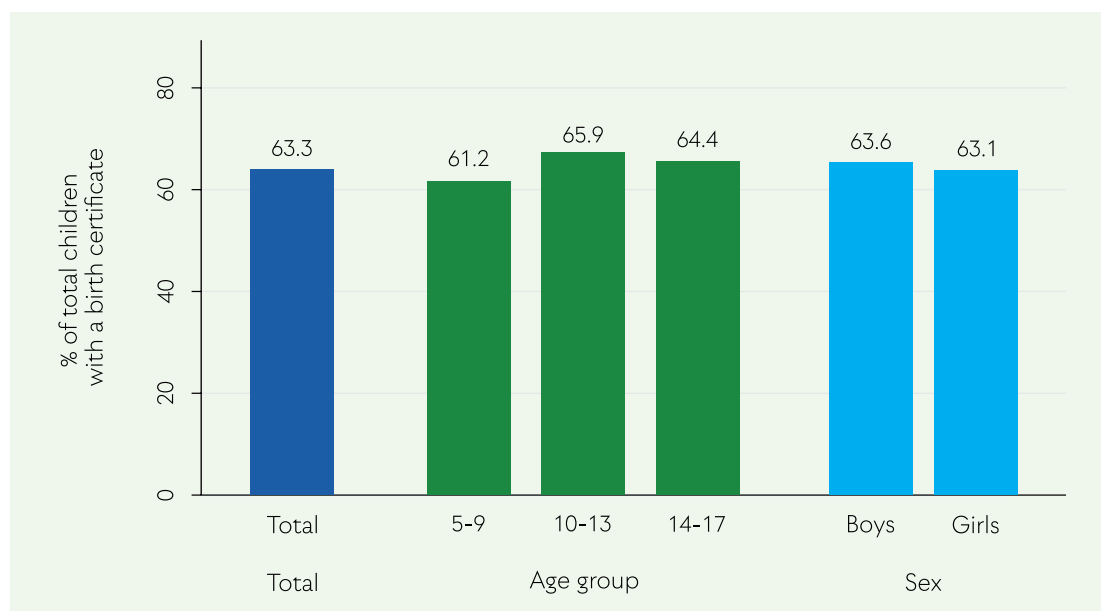
¹⁵ The marital status was only asked to individuals 10 years old and above.

Characteristic	Never married		Ever married		Number of children 9-14 years	Number of children 9-17 years
	9-14	15-17	9-14	15-17		
Edu. mother						
Middle	99.8	99.7	0.1	0.3	264,849	127,566
Secondary	100.0	99.7	0.0	0.3	457,745	216,017
Higher	100.0	100.0	0.0	0.0	496,286	240,125
Non-formal	100.0	100.0	0.0	0.0	3,508	1,393
Other	100.0	100.0	0.0	0.0	758	149
Don't know/Missing	98.3	85.4	1.7	14.6	230,536	189,281
Edu. father						
None/Pre-school	99.8	99.2	0.1	0.8	2,219,147	1,053,455
Primary	99.9	99.6	0.1	0.4	728,442	326,064
Middle	100.0	99.9	0.0	0.1	434,713	175,561
Secondary	100.0	99.8	0.1	0.2	793,675	357,362
Higher	100.0	99.9	0.0	0.1	1,002,054	511,331
Non-formal	100.0	100.0	0.0	0.0	2,053	671
Other	100.0	100.0	0.0	0.0	2,266	691
Don't know/Missing	99.0	90.6	1.0	9.4	412,179	310,067
Edu. child						
None/Pre-school	99.7	97.0	0.3	3.0	1,550,792	797,736
Primary grades 1-4	100.0	99.6	0.1	0.4	2,164,463	175,988
Primary completed	99.9	98.1	0.1	1.9	685,858	211,179
Middle	99.9	99.2	0.1	0.8	1,050,102	686,592
Secondary	99.2	99.4	0.8	0.6	64,467	656,226
Non-formal	100.0	99.2	0.0	0.8	12,627	192,605

Characteristic	Never married		Ever married		Number of children 9-14 years	Number of children 9-17 years
	9-14	15-17	9-14	15-17		
Edu. child						
Other	100.0	100.0	0.0	0.0	18,828	5,639
Don't know/Missing	99.3	100.0	0.7	0.0	47,393	9,238
WIQ						
Poorest	99.7	96.8	0.3	3.1	1,142,952	450,642
Second	99.8	97.8	0.2	2.2	1,134,778	524,536
Middle	99.9	98.5	0.1	1.5	1,172,056	614,315
Fourth	99.9	99.3	0.1	0.7	1,139,503	574,967
Richest	100.0	99.8	0.0	0.2	1,005,239	570,742
Residence						
Rural	99.8	97.8	0.2	2.2	2,910,047	1,344,629
Urban	99.9	99.3	0.1	0.7	2,684,482	1,390,574

Birth registration is a critical tool for verifying a child's age and plays a key role in preventing child labour and child marriage. Figure 4.1 shows that 63.3 per cent of children aged 5–17 possess a birth certificate. Birth registration rates increase slightly with age, from 61.2 per cent among 5–9-year-olds to 64.4 per cent among 14–17-year-olds, with the highest rate among 10–13-year-olds (65.9 per cent). While this may initially suggest a negative trend between age and birth registration, it is important to note that in Pakistan, a Child Registration Certificate (CRC) or B-form can be obtained up to the age of 18. This means some parents may have applied for birth certificates when their children were older. The percentage of girls with a birth certificate (63.1 per cent) is nearly identical to that of boys (63.6 per cent), with a slightly higher registration rate among girls.

Figure 4.1 Percentage of children aged 5–17 years with a birth certificate by age group and sex



4.2 Households' economic characteristics

Table 4.4 provides an overview of the distribution of households by wealth index quintile¹⁶ and area of residence. In urban areas, a significant proportion of households fall within the higher wealth categories, with 38.7 per cent in the richest quintile and 36.2 per cent in the fourth quintile. In contrast, the largest shares of rural households are found in the poorest (35.2 per cent) and second (34.9 per cent) quintiles.

Further details on the distribution of households by wealth index, broken down by division and district, are available in Table A4.7 in the Appendix. The data highlights regional disparities, with 52.2 per cent of households in Mirpur Khas division belonging to the poorest quintile, while only 0.6 per cent are in the richest. Conversely, Karachi division has the highest proportion of households in the richest quintile, at 50.7 per cent. At the district level, Tharparkar has the highest concentration of poverty, with 70.3 per cent of households classified as belonging to the poorest wealth quintile. In contrast, Karachi South has a much larger share of wealthier households, with 97.7 per cent falling within the fourth and richest quintiles. Karachi Central stands out as the most affluent district, where over 98 per cent of households belong to the top two wealth quintiles.

¹⁶ The wealth index quintile was constructed following the DHS guidelines and Multidimensional Poverty Index (MPI) definition of variables. The Principal Component Analysis (PCA) included wall categories, number of persons per sleeping room, toilet with flush system, adequate cooking fuel (inadequate include wood, dung cakes, crop residue, coal, or charcoal), secure water (piped water, hand pump, motorized pumping, closed well, or filtration plant), access to electricity, gas and phone, ownership of assets and livestock, ownership of agricultural land and dwelling, and size of agricultural land.

Table 4.5 indicates that only 4.9 per cent of households with children aged 5–17 are headed by women. Female-headed households are more prevalent among those where the household head has no education (7.7 per cent) or a middle-level education (3.1 per cent). At the division level, Karachi has the highest proportion of female-headed households (7.2 per cent), while Sukkur reports the lowest (2.6 per cent each). Detailed breakdowns by division and district are available in Table A4.8 in the Appendix. The prevalence of female-headed households tends to increase with wealth, at 6.9 per cent among the richest households, compared to 3.5 per cent among the poorest. Lastly, they are more commonly found in urban areas.

Table 4.5 Number and per cent of female-headed households by education of household head, wealth index quintile and area of residence

Characteristic	Female-headed households		Total number of households
	Number	Per cent of total households	
Total	329,109	4.9	6,688,496
Edu. HH head			
None/Pre-school	234,182	7.7	3,034,177
Primary	24,134	2.6	921,659
Middle	15,407	3.1	492,655
Secondary	27,905	3.0	932,474
Higher	26,977	2.1	1,298,122
Other	19	0.5	4,127
Don't know/Missing	183	6.6	2,793
WIQ			
Poorest	47,238	3.5	1,337,860
Second	52,525	3.9	1,337,571
Middle	61,319	4.6	1,337,859
Fourth	76,327	5.7	1,337,585
Richest	91,700	6.9	1,337,621
Residence			
Rural	126,959	3.7	3,392,292
Urban	202,150	6.1	3,296,204

The education of the household head omits the category of "Non-formal". These records account for 29 individuals from the unweighted survey responses, which when weighted represent 2488 households.

Figure 4.2 further reveals that 75.2 per cent of female household heads are widowed, while 18.5 per cent are married. Among the married female heads, only 35.8 per cent have their spouses residing in the household, while 64.2 per cent have spouses living elsewhere.

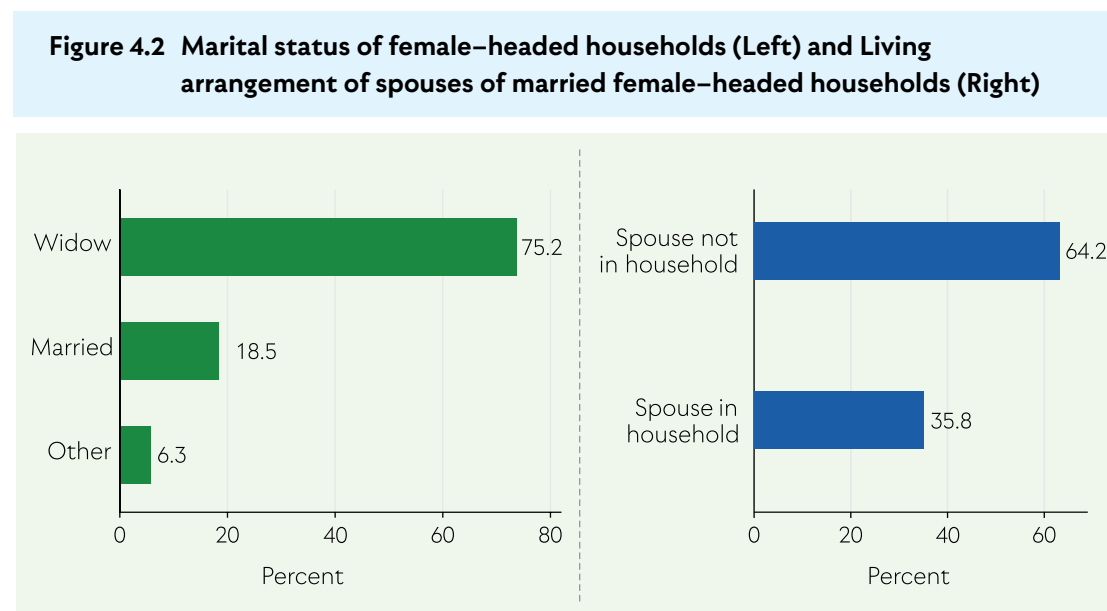


Table 4.6 provides an overview of the number and percentage of households currently receiving BISP assistance or any other form of government financial aid within the past three years. Overall, 25.5 per cent of households are beneficiaries of BISP, while 1.6 per cent have received other government financial assistance in the last three years. Households headed by individuals with lower levels of education are more likely to receive BISP assistance, with 33.2 per cent of those led by individuals with none or only pre-school education benefiting, compared to 11.1 per cent for those with higher education.

As expected, the probability of receiving BISP assistance declines as wealth index quintiles increase. Among divisions, Sukkur reports the highest proportion of BISP recipient households (50.8 per cent), while at the district level, Korangi has the largest share (66.2 per cent) (refer to Table A4.9 in the Appendix). In contrast, Karachi Central district has the lowest percentage of BISP recipients (1.4 per cent), which aligns with the findings in Table A4.7 in the Appendix indicating the extremely low prevalence of households belonging to the poorest and second wealth quintiles.

BISP assistance is more prevalent in rural areas (39.2 per cent) than in urban areas (11.4 per cent). However, there is no clear pattern linking other government financial aid (excluding BISP) to household head education levels or wealth. Among districts, Mirpur Khas has the highest proportion of households receiving other government financial aid, while several districts report close to no recipients of such assistance.

Table 4.6 Number and per cent of households currently receiving BISP or financial assistance during the last 3 years, by education of household head, wealth index quintile and area of residence

Characteristic	Currently receiving BISP assistance		Receiving any financial assistance from government in last three years		Total number of households
	Number	Per cent of total households	Number	Per cent of total households	
Total	1,705,730	25.5	110,245	1.6	6,688,496
Edu. HH head					
None/Pre-school	1,007,048	33.2	51,689	1.7	3,034,177
Primary	291,998	31.7	12,536	1.4	921,659
Middle	97,803	19.9	14,300	2.9	492,655
Secondary	161,355	17.3	18,381	2.0	932,474
Higher	144,568	11.1	13,249	1.0	1,298,122
Other	1,347	32.6	0	0.0	4,127
Don't know/Missing	730	26.1	0	0.0	2,793
WIQ					
Poorest	609,207	45.5	15,992	1.2	1,337,860
Second	539,652	40.4	13,605	1.0	1,337,571
Middle	399,608	29.9	19,527	1.5	1,337,859
Fourth	118,419	8.8	36,274	2.7	1,337,585
Richest	38,844	2.9	24,849	1.9	1,337,621
Residence					
Rural	1,330,626	39.2	41,398	1.2	3,392,292
Urban	375,104	11.4	68,847	2.1	3,296,204

The education of the household head omits the category of "Non-formal". These records account for 29 individuals from the unweighted survey responses, which when weighted represent 2488 households.

Table 4.7 presents the households' main income-generating activity, with 33.4 per cent of households relying on regular wage employment, followed by 21.9 per cent engaged in other casual labour and 16.9 in non-agricultural self-employment. Around 16 per cent of households depend on seasonal, paid agricultural work as their primary source of income, while 7.9 per cent primarily relies on agricultural self-employment. The proportion of households engaged in regular wage employment increases with the household head's education level and wealth index quintiles, and these households are predominantly located in urban areas. Similarly, the dependence on non-agricultural self-employment also increases with wealth level and is overly represented in urban areas. In contrast, households involved in agricultural self-employment, seasonal paid employment in agriculture, and other casual labour are mainly found in rural areas.

Table A4.10 in the Appendix shows that, by division, Karachi has the highest share of households generating income mainly from regular wage employment (50.3 per cent), while 25.2 per cent of households in Larkana primarily rely on non-agricultural self-employment. In Shaheed Benazirabad, 29.3 per cent of households depend on other casual labour and 22.7 per cent of rely on seasonal paid employment in agriculture as their main income source.

Table 4.7 Per cent of households by main activity from which households derive income, by education of household head, wealth index quintile and area of residence

Characteristic	Regular wage employment - Per cent	Self-employment (agriculture) - Per cent	Self-employment (non-agriculture) - Per cent	Seasonal paid employee in agriculture - Per cent	Other casual labour - Per cent	Other sources - Per cent	Not specified - Per cent	Total number of households
Total	33.4	7.9	16.9	15.9	21.9	3.9	0.1	5,913,042
Edu. HH head								
None/Pre-school	23.2	10.6	14.7	22.1	25.6	3.6	0.1	2,730,941
Primary	27.2	8.8	18.7	16.7	25.1	3.4	0.0	837,749
Middle	35.3	4.3	20.1	10.3	25.6	4.4	0.0	437,214
Secondary	40.5	5.0	21.3	10.3	18.9	3.9	0.1	810,580
Higher	57.5	4.1	16.6	6.1	11.0	4.7	0.1	1,088,258
Other	64.1	6.6	17.1	3.3	8.9	0.0	0.0	3,344
WIQ								
Poorest	19.5	14.2	10.5	28.1	23.0	4.7	0.1	1,229,399
Second	19.7	11.9	14.4	25.4	25.1	3.3	0.1	1,227,418
Middle	32.5	8.7	17.7	13.3	24.2	3.5	0.0	1,224,328
Fourth	44.3	2.2	19.9	7.3	23.4	2.9	0.1	1,177,377
Richest	54.4	1.5	23.1	3.2	12.7	5.1	0.1	1,054,520
Residence								
Rural	23.9	13.1	12.7	24.1	22.0	4.0	0.1	3,095,724
Urban	43.8	2.2	21.5	6.8	21.8	3.7	0.1	2,817,317

The education of the household head omits the categories of "Non-formal" and "Don't know/Missing". These records account for 26 and 25 individuals from the unweighted survey responses respectively, which when weighted represent 2339 and 2618 households.

The total number of households in this table does not include households with missing information about the main activity from which the household derives income. These records account for 13544 households from the unweighted survey responses, which when weighted represent 775454 households.

The wealth index comprises various assets, with ownership details provided in Table A4.11. The most commonly owned assets include cell phones (79.6 per cent), fans (77.1 per cent), washing machines/dryers (42.6 per cent), and televisions (38.6 per cent). In contrast, the least commonly owned assets among households are radios/tape recorders (0.9 per cent), tractors (1.1 per cent), VCRs/VCPs/receivers/decoders/DVDs (1.9 per cent) and air coolers (4.3 per cent). For most assets, ownership is higher in urban areas than in rural areas, reflecting greater wealth levels in urban regions. Further details on asset ownership by division are available in Table A4.12 in the Appendix.

Table 4.8 presents data on land and livestock ownership based on the household head's education level and area of residence. The data indicate that there is no clear trend linking land ownership and household head's education level, whereas livestock ownership declines with higher education levels. Both land and livestock ownership are more prevalent in rural areas (16.8 per cent and 49.4 per cent, respectively) compared to urban areas (2.3 per cent and 5.5 per cent, respectively). Additionally, as shown in Table A4.13 in the Appendix, the highest percentages of total households owning land and livestock are found in the Mirpur Khas and Sukkur divisions.

Table 4.8 Number and per cent of households by land and livestock ownership, by education of household head and area of residence

Characteristic	Land ownership		Livestock ownership	
	Number	Per cent of total households	Number	Per cent of total households
Total	645,153	9.7	1,857,538	27.8
Edu. HH head				
None/Pre-school	281,203	9.3	1,095,962	36.1
Primary	112,079	12.2	297,913	32.3
Middle	38,205	7.8	102,373	20.8
Secondary	72,443	7.8	154,798	16.6
Higher	139,950	10.8	204,394	15.8
Other	709	17.2	1,039	25.2
Don't know/Missing	136	4.9	610	21.9
Residence				
Rural	569,594	16.8	1,675,534	49.4
Urban	75,560	2.3	182,005	5.5
The education of the household head omits the category of "Non-formal". These records account for 29 individuals from the unweighted survey responses, which when weighted represent 2488 households.				

Table 4.9 reveals that about 77.7 per cent of households live in owner-occupied dwellings, 13.1 per cent rent their homes, 0.6 per cent reside in subsidised housing, and 8.4 per cent occupy rent-free dwellings. Households with more educated heads are more likely to own their homes, while the probability of living in rent-free housing decreases as the education level of the household head rises. Furthermore, the ownership of dwellings is distributed slightly lower in urban (71.0 per cent) than rural areas (84.2 per cent). However, most rent-free households are situated in rural areas (12.9 per cent vs. 3.7 per cent). In most districts, homeownership is common, with Tharparkar having the highest percentage of owner-occupied households at 97.9 per cent. The share of renting households is highest in Karachi West at 38.6 per cent, whereas it is the lowest (0.1 per cent) in Tharparkar, Sujawal, Tando Muhammad Khan, and Matiari districts (refer to Table A4.14 in the Appendix).

Table 4.9 Number and per cent of households by type of housing tenure, by education of household head and area of residence

Characteristic	Owned		Not owned								Total number of households
	Owner occupied		On rent		Subsidised rent		Rent free		Other		
	Number	Per cent	Number	Per cent	Number	Per cent	Number	Per cent	Number	Per cent	
Total	5,196,571	77.7	875,114	13.1	41,278	0.6	560,081	8.4	15,452	0.2	6,688,496
Edu. HH head											
None/Pre-school	2,350,232	77.5	314,994	10.4	17,428	0.6	345,071	11.4	6,452	0.2	3,034,177
Primary	710,508	77.1	112,384	12.2	5,051	0.6	92,101	10.0	1,616	0.2	921,659
Middle	359,366	72.9	95,789	19.4	2,418	0.5	34,212	6.9	870	0.2	492,655
Secondary	705,900	75.7	173,992	18.7	8,167	0.9	41,363	4.4	3,052	0.3	932,474
Higher	1,062,497	81.8	176,899	13.6	8,213	0.6	47,067	3.6	3,446	0.3	1,298,122
Other	3,763	91.2	365	8.8	0	0.0	0	0.0	0	0.0	4,127
Don't know/Missing	2,315	82.9	288	10.3	0	0.0	174	6.2	16	0.6	2,793
Residence											
Rural	2,857,924	84.2	77,469	2.3	13,215	0.4	437,080	12.9	6,605	0.2	3,392,292
Urban	2,338,647	71.0	797,645	24.2	28,063	0.8	123,001	3.7	8,847	0.3	3,296,204

The education of the household head omits the category of "Non-formal". These records account for 29 individuals from the unweighted survey responses, which when weighted represent 2488 households.

Table A4.15 in the Appendix outlines the percentage of households affected by natural and economic shocks across various divisions and districts. Natural shocks include events such as natural disasters and pest infestations, while economic shocks encompass declining agricultural prices, business closures, and inflation. Overall, 6.3 per cent of households have encountered natural shocks, whereas 38.0 per cent have faced economic shocks. At the district level, Jacobabad has the highest proportion of households affected by natural shocks (36.5 per cent), while Dadu records the highest share of households experiencing economic shocks (71.9 per cent), compared to the lowest in Thatta (8.9 per cent).

Figure 4.3 illustrates the correlation between household wealth—measured by the wealth index quintile—and exposure to natural shocks. The data clearly indicates that households in the lowest three quintiles are much more likely to experience natural shocks, with both the poorest quintile reporting 9.9 per cent exposure, along with the second quintile reporting exposure at 7.3 per cent. In contrast, households in the fourth and richest quintiles experience significantly lower exposure levels at 3.1 and 2.5 per cent, respectively. The elevated exposure in the poorest and second quintiles likely reflects higher vulnerability levels among these groups and residence in rural areas.

Figure 4.3 Percentage of households experiencing a natural shock by wealth index quintile

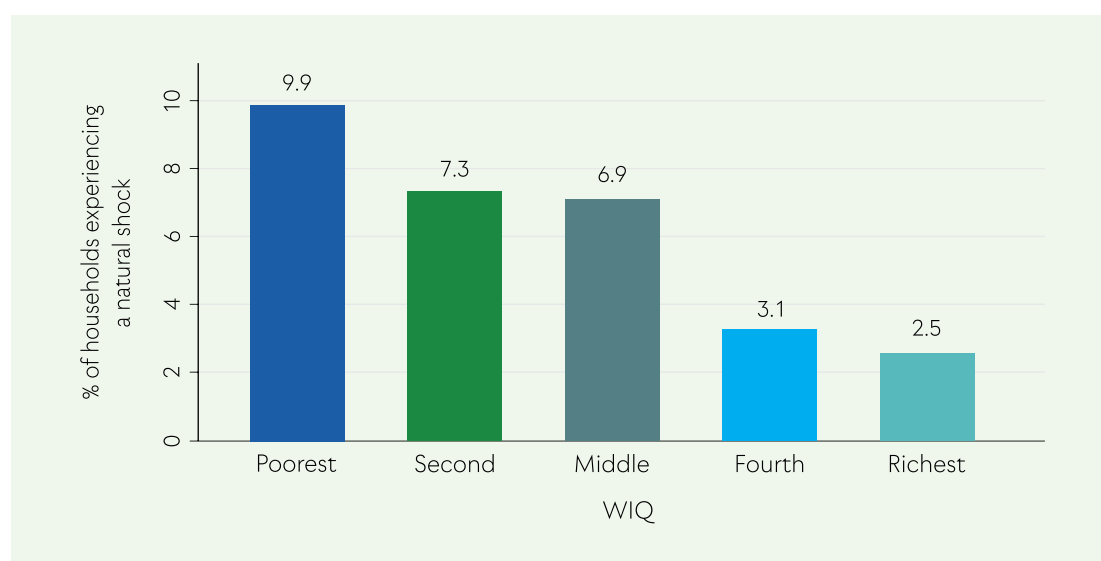


Table 4.10 indicates that the average household consists of six members. Around 38.9 per cent of households have 4 to 5 members, while 33.1 per cent have 6 to 7 members. Smaller households, with only 2 to 3 members, are less common, making up just 7.2 per cent. Meanwhile, 13.7 per cent of households have 8 to 9 members, and 7.1 per cent consist of at least 10 members.

Male-headed households tend to be larger, averaging 6 members, compared to 5 members in female-headed households. Household size tends to decrease with total household wealth, and the same is generally true for education level. Additionally, average household size is higher in rural settings (6.4 per cent) compared to urban ones (5.7 per cent).

The number of people per room generally decreases as household wealth and household head's education level increases. At the district level (see Table A4.16 in the Appendix), Karachi South has the smallest average household size at 5.3 members, while Jacobabad and Khairpur have the largest at 7.3 members. Similarly, Karachi Central records the lowest average number of persons per room (2.3), whereas Sujawal has the highest (5.8 members per room).

Table 4.10 Average household size and per cent of households by size, by sex of household head, education of household head, wealth index quintile and area of residence

Characteristic	Number of household members					Average household size	Average number of persons per room	Total number of households
	2-3	4-5	6-7	8-9	10+			
Total	7.2	38.9	33.1	13.7	7.1	6.1	4.0	6,688,496
Sex HH head								
Male	6.5	39.0	33.4	13.9	7.1	6.1	4.0	6,359,034
Female	19.8	38.7	27.4	8.6	5.6	5.4	3.3	329,109
Edu. HH head								
None/Pre-school	6.9	35.8	33.9	15.7	7.7	6.2	4.5	3,034,177
Primary	6.0	35.0	34.1	15.8	9.2	6.4	4.4	921,659
Middle	7.1	39.7	34.3	12.2	6.8	6.0	3.9	492,655
Secondary	7.4	42.3	33.9	10.9	5.4	5.9	3.5	932,474
Higher	8.6	46.3	29.8	10.0	5.3	5.7	2.9	1,298,122
Other	0.5	26.2	35.8	4.1	33.4	7.9	4.1	4,127
Don't know/Missing	14.5	29.2	4.8	41.8	9.7	6.8	4.3	2,793
WIQ								
Poorest	5.2	30.6	35.7	19.1	9.4	6.5	5.6	1,337,860
Second	6.4	35.0	34.0	16.1	8.6	6.3	4.7	1,337,571
Middle	6.6	34.5	34.8	15.6	8.5	6.3	4.1	1,337,859

Characteristic	Number of household members					Average household size	Average number of persons per room	Total number of households
	2-3	4-5	6-7	8-9	10+			
WIQ								
Fourth	8.3	44.0	32.7	10.1	5.0	5.8	3.3	1,337,585
Richest	9.6	50.6	28.5	7.5	3.8	5.5	2.3	1,337,621
Residence								
Rural	6.0	32.6	35.3	17.1	9.1	6.4	4.7	3,392,292
Urban	8.4	45.5	30.9	10.2	5.0	5.7	3.3	3,296,204
<p>The sum of male and female household heads in the table does not equal the total number of household heads since the table does not include transgender. These records account for 2 individuals from the unweighted survey responses, which when weighted represent 353 household heads.</p> <p>The education of the household head omits the category of "Non-formal". These records account for 29 individuals from the unweighted survey responses, which when weighted represent 2488 households.</p>								

Table 4.11 presents the distribution of households based on the number of children aged 0 to 17 years. Approximately 41.6 per cent of households have 3 to 4 children, while 39.7 per cent have 1 to 2 children. Close to 15 per cent of households have 5 to 6 children, whereas having 7 to 8 children (3.5 per cent) or over 9 children (0.6 per cent) is uncommon.

On average, male-headed households have slightly more children (3.2) compared to female-headed households (2.6). The average number of children does not vary significantly with the education level of the household head (decreasing to 2.8 for higher education); however, it slightly decreases with wealth, from 3.7 children in the poorest and second quintiles to 2.5 children among the richest. Rural households tend to have a marginally higher average number of children compared to urban households. At the district level, Jacobabad has the highest average number of children per household (4.1), while Karachi Central and Karachi South record the lowest average (2.5) (see Table A4.17 in the Appendix).

Table 4.11 Per cent distribution of households by number of children, by sex of household head, education of household head, wealth index quintile and area of residence

Characteristic	Number of children (0-17 years)					Average number of children	Total number of households
	1-2	3-4	5-6	7-8	9+		
Total	39.7	41.6	14.6	3.5	0.6	3.2	6,688,496
Sex HH head							
Male	39.0	41.9	14.9	3.5	0.7	3.2	6,359,034
Female	53.4	35.8	8.6	1.9	0.3	2.6	329,109

Characteristic	Number of children (0-17 years)					Average number of children	Total number of households
	1-2	3-4	5-6	7-8	9+		
Edu. HH head							
None/Pre-school	37.2	41.6	16.2	4.3	0.7	3.3	3,034,177
Primary	34.2	43.6	17.6	3.7	0.9	3.3	921,659
Middle	39.3	41.7	15.4	2.9	0.7	3.2	492,655
Secondary	42.5	42.4	12.1	2.5	0.5	3.0	932,474
Higher	47.5	39.8	10.1	2.2	0.4	2.8	1,298,122
Other	45.4	34.0	11.8	0.0	8.8	3.5	4,127
Don't know/Missing	28.8	40.5	27.8	3.0	0.0	3.5	2,793
WIQ							
Poorest	26.9	43.9	21.7	6.4	1.1	3.7	1,337,860
Second	33.8	41.9	18.7	4.7	0.9	3.4	1,337,571
Middle	35.8	42.9	16.8	3.8	0.7	3.3	1,337,859
Fourth	46.0	42.0	10.2	1.5	0.4	2.8	1,337,585
Richest	55.9	37.6	5.5	0.8	0.2	2.5	1,337,621
Residence							
Rural	32.2	42.4	19.4	5.1	0.9	3.5	3,392,292
Urban	47.3	40.8	9.7	1.8	0.3	2.8	3,296,204
<p>The sum of male and female household heads in the table does not equal the total number of household heads since the table does not include transgender. These records account for 2 individuals from the unweighted survey responses, which when weighted represent 353 household heads.</p> <p>The education of the household head omits the category of "Non-formal". These records account for 29 individuals from the unweighted survey responses, which when weighted represent 2488 households.</p>							

4.3 Households general and education characteristics

Figure 4.4 illustrates the percentage of children aged 5–17 years who are currently attending school, categorised by age and sex. School attendance among girls rises until age nine, reaching a peak at around 75 per cent, while for boys, attendance remains high from age 9 until about age 11, reaching a peak of over 80 per cent. After these peaks, attendance declines, dropping to below 50 per cent for girls and just below 60 per cent for boys by age 17. The decrease in school attendance among boys is likely due to their growing participation in work, as indicated in Table 6.1, while for girls, the decline after age nine may be attributed to increased time spent on household chores, and there is a noticeable drop at around age 12. One possible explanation of this drop would be that girls begin menstruating around this age and so where facilities are insufficient, girls no longer attend school.

Figure 4.4 Per cent of children 5–17 years currently attending school by sex and age

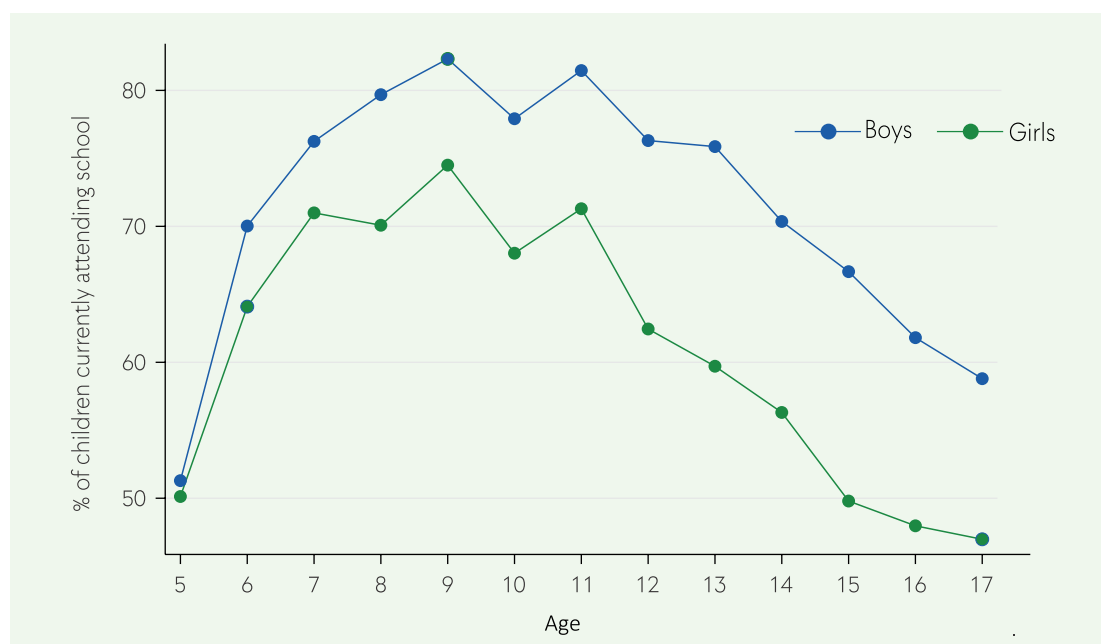


Table 4.12 presents data on the percentage of children aged 5–17 currently attending school, with an overall attendance rate of 66.9 per cent. Boys have a higher attendance rate than girls (71.5 per cent vs. 61.8 per cent), reflecting the trend observed in Figure 4.4. There is a strong positive correlation between a mother’s education level and a child’s school attendance. Among girls whose mothers have no formal education, 51.4 per cent are enrolled in school, compared to 93.8 per cent of those whose mothers have higher education. For boys, the respective figures are 65.4 per cent and 93.7 per cent, indicating that a mother’s education has a slightly greater influence on girls’ school attendance than on boys’. A similar positive relationship exists between school attendance and the education level of the household head, though it is less pronounced compared to the mother’s education. Attendance also increases with household wealth, with the gender gap narrowing at higher wealth index quintiles. Additionally, children in urban areas are more likely to attend school than those in rural areas, regardless of gender.

Table A4.18 in the Appendix highlights district-level school attendance rates. The highest attendance rates are observed in Karachi Central (83.2 per cent), Karachi South (81.4 per cent), and Karachi East (80.8 per cent). In contrast, the lowest attendance rates are found in Sujawal (35.6 per cent), Kashmir (44.6 per cent), and Thatta (47.0 per cent).

Table 4.12 Number and per cent of children 5–17 years currently attending school by sex, by single years of age, education of mother, education of household head, wealth index quintile and area of residence

Characteristic	Total children		Total attending school		Total boys	Total boys attending school		Total girls	Total girls attending school		
	Number	Per cent	Number	Per cent	Number	Number	Per cent of total boys	Number	Number	Per cent of total girls	
Total 5-17	15,636,417	66.9	10,462,839	66.9	8,225,054	5,880,447	71.5	7,410,765	4,582,012	61.8	
Age											
5	1,614,530	50.7	819,178	50.7	843,010	432,421	51.3	771,519	386,757	50.1	
6	1,486,103	67.1	997,783	67.1	763,517	534,641	70.0	722,586	463,143	64.1	
7	1,542,896	73.8	1,137,811	73.8	807,638	615,820	76.2	735,174	521,907	71.0	
8	1,586,773	75.1	1,191,990	75.1	831,901	662,892	79.7	754,610	528,836	70.1	
9	1,074,620	78.6	844,543	78.6	562,206	462,784	82.3	512,414	381,759	74.5	
10	1,410,695	73.2	1,032,660	73.2	738,571	575,456	77.9	672,124	457,204	68.0	
11	885,119	76.6	678,134	76.6	463,274	377,379	81.5	421,845	300,755	71.3	
12	1,299,373	69.9	907,980	69.9	696,394	531,412	76.3	602,946	376,535	62.5	
13	1,021,762	68.2	696,704	68.2	536,084	406,701	75.9	485,677	290,003	59.7	
14	978,905	63.6	622,998	63.6	511,041	359,562	70.4	467,824	263,435	56.3	
15	1,002,882	58.6	588,014	58.6	525,304	350,206	66.7	477,579	237,808	49.8	
16	935,924	55.3	517,409	55.3	494,433	305,613	61.8	441,491	211,796	48.0	
17	796,836	53.7	427,634	53.7	451,681	265,561	58.8	344,975	162,073	47.0	

Characteristic	Total children	Total attending school		Total boys	Total boys attending school		Total girls	Total girls attending school	
		Number	Per cent		Number	Per cent of total boys		Number	Per cent of total girls
Edu. mother									
None/Pre-school	10,416,971	6,125,696	58.8	5,525,246	3,612,089	65.4	4,891,568	2,513,491	51.4
Primary	1,226,687	980,329	79.9	619,415	507,292	81.9	607,010	472,774	77.9
Middle	711,215	587,252	82.6	362,340	297,231	82.0	348,875	290,021	83.1
Secondary	1,233,143	1,089,279	88.3	648,970	568,441	87.6	584,173	520,838	89.2
Higher	1,378,449	1,292,560	93.8	719,911	674,839	93.7	658,538	617,721	93.8
Other	1,443	1,288	89.3	906	751	82.9	537	537	100.0
Don't know/Missing	660,087	379,799	57.5	343,693	215,866	62.8	316,214	163,933	51.8
Edu. HH head									
None/Pre-school	7,238,316	3,832,855	53.0	3,841,747	2,257,371	58.8	3,396,483	1,575,399	46.4
Primary	2,239,157	1,511,561	67.5	1,164,976	842,982	72.4	1,074,181	668,579	62.2
Middle	1,169,812	894,106	76.4	598,687	481,591	80.4	571,125	412,515	72.2
Secondary	2,152,389	1,730,763	80.4	1,137,250	949,956	83.5	1,015,069	780,776	76.9
Higher	2,815,043	2,478,100	88.0	1,468,991	1,338,143	91.1	1,345,609	1,139,695	84.7
Other	10,483	6,811	65.0	6,321	4,481	70.9	4,162	2,330	56.0
Don't know/Missing	6,568	5,003	76.2	4,110	3,130	76.2	2,458	1,873	76.2

Characteristic	Total children		Total attending school		Total boys	Total boys attending school		Total girls		
	Number	Per cent	Number	Per cent	Number	Number	Per cent of total boys	Number	Per cent of total girls	
WIQ										
Poorest	3,415,303		1,575,466	46.1	1,798,693	983,969	54.7	1,616,430	591,496	36.6
Second	3,290,671		1,919,550	58.3	1,739,166	1,145,401	65.9	1,551,452	774,096	49.9
Middle	3,283,225		2,361,634	71.9	1,745,212	1,343,126	77.0	1,538,013	1,018,508	66.2
Fourth	2,983,795		2,255,135	75.6	1,552,374	1,187,930	76.5	1,431,349	1,067,173	74.6
Richest	2,663,423		2,351,054	88.3	1,389,608	1,220,021	87.8	1,273,521	1,130,739	88.8
Residence										
Rural	8,439,694		4,926,310	58.4	4,459,528	2,949,125	66.1	3,980,112	1,977,132	49.7
Urban	7,196,724		5,536,529	76.9	3,765,525	2,931,322	77.8	3,430,653	2,604,880	75.9

The sum of boys and girls in the table does not equal the total number of children since the table does not include transgender. These records account for 6 individuals from the unweighted survey responses, which when weighted represent 598 children.

The education of the household head omits the category of "Non-formal". These records account for 55 children from the unweighted survey responses respectively, which when weighted represent 4648 children.

The education of the mother omits the category of "Non-formal". These records account for 67 children from the unweighted survey responses respectively, which when weighted represent 8423 children.

Table 4.13 provides an overview of children's educational attainment. Among children aged 5–17, 49.1 per cent have no formal education, while 27.1 per cent have completed some primary education (grades 1–4). Additionally, 5.8 per cent have completed primary education, 11.4 per cent have completed at least one grade beyond primary, and 4.7 per cent have completed at least one grade of secondary education. As children age, the level of education tends to increase. Having no education seems stable from 10 to 17, stabilising at around 28 per cent, suggesting children do not enter school after age 10. Across all age groups, girls are more likely to have no education than boys. For children aged 10–13, boys are more likely to have completed primary education compared to girls (48.3 per cent vs. 40.7 per cent). Among children aged 14–17, while boys are slightly more likely to complete some primary education, girls are more likely to complete it (but not more education). However, boys are more likely to complete secondary and higher education. As expected, the proportion of children without education decreases as the education level of the household head and household wealth increase. This trend is accompanied by a rise in the percentage of children completing primary, secondary, and higher education. Additionally, school completion rates for primary, secondary, and higher education are slightly higher in urban areas compared to rural areas.

Table A4.19 in the Appendix presents the distribution of educational attainment across divisions and districts. In Mirpur Khas division, 58.2 per cent of children aged 5–17 have no education or only pre-school education, whereas in Karachi division, this figure is 37.2 per cent. Karachi division therefore records the highest proportion of children who have completed primary education or higher, as well as secondary or higher.

Table 4.13 Population of children 5–17 years by highest grade of school completed, by age group, sex, education of household head, wealth index quintile and area of residence

Characteristic	Highest grade completed								Total number of children
	None/Pre-school	Primary Grades 1-4	Primary Completed	Middle	Secondary	Higher	Other	Don't know/Missing	
	Per cent	Per cent	Per cent	Per cent	Per cent	Per cent	Per cent	Per cent	
Total 5-17	49.1	27.1	5.8	11.4	4.7	1.3	0.3	0.4	15,636,417
Both sexes									
5-9	72.8	25.9	0.2	0.5	0.1	0.1	0.3	0.1	7,304,921
10-13	27.8	44.7	12.6	13.8	0.4	0.2	0.3	0.2	4,616,949
14-17	28.7	7.5	8.6	29.6	18.9	5.3	0.2	1.3	3,714,547
Boys									
5-9	71.5	27.2	0.2	0.6	0.1	0.1	0.3	0.1	3,808,272

Characteristic	Highest grade completed								Total number of children
	None/Pre-school	Primary Grades 1-4	Primary Completed	Middle	Secondary	Higher	Other	Don't know/Missing	
	Per cent	Per cent	Per cent	Per cent	Per cent	Per cent	Per cent	Per cent	
Boys									
10-13	22.8	48.3	13.1	14.5	0.4	0.2	0.4	0.2	2,434,323
14-17	22.5	7.6	8.4	33.0	20.8	5.8	0.2	1.6	1,982,459
Girls									
5-9	74.4	24.5	0.2	0.5	0.1	0.0	0.3	0.1	3,496,303
10-13	33.4	40.7	11.9	13.0	0.4	0.1	0.3	0.1	2,182,593
14-17	35.7	7.3	8.8	25.7	16.7	4.7	0.2	0.9	1,731,869
Edu. HH head									
None/Pre-school	61.2	22.6	4.6	7.5	2.7	0.7	0.3	0.4	7,238,316
Primary	49.1	29.3	6.3	9.9	3.8	1.0	0.3	0.4	2,239,157
Middle	41.6	31.1	6.4	14.1	4.4	1.4	0.5	0.5	1,169,812
Secondary	35.5	31.9	7.5	16.4	6.6	1.5	0.3	0.4	2,152,389
Higher	31.2	31.4	7.2	17.5	8.9	3.3	0.2	0.3	2,815,043
Other	51.1	27.7	0.8	12.7	4.3	2.0	1.5	0.0	10,483
Don't know/Missing	33.2	44.1	0.3	11.2	4.0	1.6	0.4	5.0	6,568
WIQ									
Poorest	70.6	20.2	3.1	3.9	1.1	0.3	0.2	0.6	3,415,303
Second	58.2	24.8	5.7	7.6	2.4	0.6	0.2	0.5	3,290,671
Middle	43.4	30.7	6.9	12.0	4.9	1.3	0.2	0.5	3,283,225
Fourth	38.2	30.2	6.8	15.8	6.5	1.8	0.4	0.2	2,983,795
Richest	29.1	30.7	7.1	19.8	9.6	3.2	0.5	0.1	2,663,423
Residence									
Rural	58.0	24.8	5.2	7.7	2.8	0.8	0.2	0.5	8,439,694
Urban	38.6	29.7	6.6	15.7	6.8	2.0	0.4	0.3	7,196,724

The sum of boys and girls in the table does not equal the total number of children since the table does not include transgender children. These records account for 6 individuals from the unweighted survey responses, which when weighted represent 598 children.

The education of the household head omits the category of "Non-formal". These records account for 55 children from the unweighted survey responses respectively, which when weighted represent 4648 children.

Table 4.14 presents data on the average number of completed years of schooling¹⁷ for children aged 5–17, which stands at 2.4 years overall. Boys have a slightly higher average than girls, with 2.6 years compared to 2.1 years. When examining differences by area of residence, girls show a slightly higher average than boys (0.1 years) in urban settings, with differences remaining small across ages, though not always in favour of girls. By age 17, boys in urban areas have completed an average of 7.7 years of schooling, while girls have completed 7.6 years on average. Conversely, in rural areas, the gender gap is evident as early as age 6, with boys consistently achieving more years of schooling than girls. By age 17, boys in rural areas have completed an average of 5.8 years of education, whereas girls have completed only 3 years.

Table 4.14 Average number of years of school completed of population of children 5-17 years, by area of residence and sex, by single years of age

Age	Average number of years of school completed								
	Total			Rural			Urban		
	Total	Boys	Girls	Total	Boys	Girls	Total	Boys	Girls
Total 5-17	2.4	2.6	2.1	1.8	2.2	1.4	3.1	3.0	3.1
5	0.3	0.3	0.3	0.2	0.2	0.2	0.3	0.3	0.3
6	0.4	0.4	0.4	0.3	0.4	0.3	0.4	0.4	0.4
7	0.6	0.6	0.6	0.6	0.6	0.5	0.6	0.6	0.6
8	0.9	1.0	0.9	0.8	0.9	0.7	1.0	1.1	1.0
9	1.4	1.5	1.4	1.3	1.5	1.1	1.6	1.6	1.6
10	1.9	2.0	1.7	1.6	1.8	1.3	2.2	2.2	2.3
11	2.7	2.9	2.5	2.3	2.8	1.9	3.1	3.0	3.1
12	3.1	3.3	2.9	2.5	3.0	1.9	3.8	3.7	3.8
13	3.8	4.0	3.6	3.1	3.5	2.5	4.7	4.6	4.8
14	4.5	4.9	4.1	3.4	4.2	2.6	5.5	5.6	5.5
15	4.9	5.4	4.3	3.7	4.7	2.5	6.1	6.1	6.0
16	5.5	5.9	4.9	4.0	5.0	2.8	6.9	6.9	6.9
17	6.2	6.8	5.5	4.6	5.8	3.0	7.6	7.7	7.6

The number of years of school is missing for 2447 children from the unweighted survey responses, which when weighted represent 223296 children.

¹⁷ Children are assumed to start school (Grade 1) at the age of 5 years, attend Grade 5 when they are 9 years old, Grade 8 when they are 12, Grade 10 when they are 14 years old and Grade 11 when they are 15 years or older. Primary school is comprised of 5 years, whereas middle school is comprised of 3 years.

Table 4.15 presents the number and percentage of children aged 5–17 who have never attended school, with an overall non-attendance rate of 27.9 per cent. Girls have a higher rate of non-attendance compared to boys (32.6 per cent vs. 23.6 per cent).

The likelihood of never attending school decreases as the mother's education level increases, with this effect being more pronounced for girls. Notably, among children with missing information on their mother's education, girls are less likely to have attended school than boys (39.7 per cent vs. 29.4 per cent). A similar trend is observed with the education level of the household head and household wealth, as higher levels are associated with lower non-attendance rates. Geographical differences also play a role, with girls in rural areas being far less likely to have attended school than those in urban areas (45.0 per cent vs. 18.3 per cent). For boys, the respective figures are 29.5 per cent in rural areas and 16.7 per cent in urban areas. In urban areas, the gender gap is much smaller.

According to Table A4.20 in the Appendix, Sujawal district has the highest percentage of children who have never attended school (60.6 per cent), with a significant gender disparity—67.6 per cent of girls compared to 54.2 per cent of boys. Ghotki district exhibits the largest gender gap, at 25.8 percentage points. In contrast, Karachi Central district has the lowest percentage of children who have never attended school, with 9.5 per cent of girls and 11.7 per cent of boys never having attended.

Table 4.15 Number and per cent of children 5-17 years who never attended school by sex, by single years of age, education of mother, education of household head, wealth index quintile and area of residence

Characteristic	Total children		Total never attended school		Total boys	Boys never attended school		Total girls	Girls never attended school		
	Number	Per cent	Number	Per cent	Number	Number	Per cent of total boys	Number	Number	Per cent of total girls	
Total 5-17	15,635,514	27.9	4,361,818	27.9	8,224,275	1,942,370	23.6	7,410,640	2,419,229	32.6	
Age											
5	1,614,530	49.0	790,572	49.0	843,010	408,297	48.4	771,519	382,275	49.5	
6	1,486,063	32.4	481,049	32.4	763,517	225,990	29.6	722,546	255,059	35.3	
7	1,542,896	24.9	384,857	24.9	807,638	181,729	22.5	735,174	203,128	27.6	
8	1,586,740	23.6	374,650	23.6	831,901	159,187	19.1	754,577	215,463	28.6	
9	1,074,527	19.5	209,828	19.5	562,165	89,061	15.8	512,362	120,767	23.6	
10	1,410,695	23.6	332,156	23.6	738,571	143,687	19.4	672,124	188,469	28.0	
11	885,119	19.2	170,350	19.2	463,274	68,252	14.7	421,845	102,098	24.2	
12	1,299,231	24.3	315,220	24.3	696,252	126,228	18.1	602,946	188,993	31.3	
13	1,021,733	24.5	250,490	24.5	536,055	100,609	18.8	485,677	149,881	30.9	
14	978,905	26.9	262,935	26.9	511,041	106,467	20.8	467,824	156,428	33.4	
15	1,002,882	29.4	294,587	29.4	525,304	118,206	22.5	477,579	176,382	36.9	
16	935,357	29.4	275,282	29.4	493,866	116,388	23.6	441,491	158,894	36.0	
17	796,836	27.6	219,841	27.6	451,681	98,270	21.8	344,975	121,392	35.2	

Characteristic	Total children	Total never attended school		Total boys	Boys never attended school		Total girls	Girls never attended school	
		Number	Per cent		Number	Per cent of total boys		Number	Per cent of total girls
Edu. mother									
None/Pre-school	10,416,253	3,740,735	35.9	5,524,620	1,646,222	29.8	4,891,477	2,094,474	42.8
Primary	1,226,687	158,255	12.9	619,415	67,261	10.9	607,010	90,994	15.0
Middle	711,182	74,985	10.5	362,340	39,893	11.0	348,842	35,092	10.1
Secondary	1,232,991	96,740	7.8	648,818	54,219	8.4	584,173	42,521	7.3
Higher	1,378,449	62,767	4.5	719,911	33,114	4.6	658,538	29,652	4.5
Other	1,443	0	0.0	906	0	0.0	537	0	0.0
Don't know/Missing	660,087	226,851	34.4	343,693	101,054	29.4	316,214	125,617	39.7
Edu. HH head									
None/Pre-school	7,237,605	3,036,533	42.0	3,841,121	1,390,778	36.2	3,396,398	1,645,755	48.5
Primary	2,239,157	564,359	25.2	1,164,976	241,430	20.7	1,074,181	322,928	30.1
Middle	1,169,660	201,976	17.3	598,535	77,889	13.0	571,125	124,087	21.7
Secondary	2,152,349	294,252	13.7	1,137,250	130,392	11.5	1,015,029	163,821	16.1
Higher	2,815,043	259,192	9.2	1,468,991	99,447	6.8	1,345,609	159,565	11.9
Other	10,483	3,123	29.8	6,321	1,382	21.9	4,162	1,742	41.8
Don't know/Missing	6,568	1,446	22.0	4,110	920	22.4	2,458	525	21.4

Characteristic	Total children		Total never attended school		Total boys		Boys never attended school		Total girls		Girls never attended school	
			Number	Per cent	Number	Per cent of total boys	Number	Per cent of total boys	Number	Per cent of total girls	Number	Per cent of total girls
			WIQ									
Poorest	3,414,919		1,699,698	49.8	1,798,310	732,383	40.7	1,616,430	967,135	59.8		
Second	3,290,671		1,211,894	36.8	1,739,166	519,812	29.9	1,551,452	692,082	44.6		
Middle	3,283,037		731,230	22.3	1,745,070	318,492	18.2	1,537,967	412,738	26.8		
Fourth	2,983,495		520,960	17.5	1,552,153	266,418	17.2	1,431,270	254,503	17.8		
Richest	2,663,392		198,036	7.4	1,389,577	105,265	7.6	1,273,521	92,771	7.3		
			Residence									
Rural	8,439,276		3,105,462	36.8	4,459,145	1,314,084	29.5	3,980,079	1,791,378	45.0		
Urban	7,196,237		1,256,356	17.5	3,765,130	628,286	16.7	3,430,561	627,850	18.3		

The sum of boys and girls in the table does not equal the total number of children since the table does not include transgender children. These records account for 6 individuals from the unweighted survey responses, which when weighted represent 598 children.

The education of the mother omits the category of "Non-formal". These records account for 67 children from the unweighted survey responses respectively, which when weighted represent 8423 children.

The education of the household head omits the category of "Non-formal". These records account for 55 children from the unweighted survey responses respectively, which when weighted represent 4648 children.

The total number of children in this table does not include children for whom information about whether the child is currently attending/has ever attended school is missing. These records account for 10 children from the unweighted survey responses, which when weighted represent 904 children.

4.4 Experience of the 2022 floods

Just over 60 per cent of households reported that their economic well-being was impacted by the floods in August 2022. Among them, 31.6 per cent were classified as highly or severely affected. A greater share of households in urban areas remained unaffected compared to those in rural areas (47.6 vs. 39.4 per cent in rural areas). While no clear pattern emerges based on the education level of the household head, households where the head has higher education show the highest proportion of those unaffected (48.6 per cent). Additionally, the share of households reporting not being affected by the floods increases with the wealth levels, with 59.1 per cent of the richest households reporting no affectation compared to 28.5 per cent of the poorest. In contrast, the poorest households more commonly classified as being highly or severely affected.

Table 4.16 Per cent of households affected by flooding by education of household head, wealth index quintile, and area of residence

Characteristic	Not at all affected	Mildly affected	Moderately affected	Highly affected	Severely affected	Don't know	Total
Total	38.0	14.8	14.3	17.3	14.3	1.4	6,392,064
Education of HH Head							
None/Pre-school	34.2	14.0	14.2	20.0	16.0	1.6	2,924,285
Primary	32.8	15.6	15.4	18.9	16.3	1.1	881,981
Middle	38.6	15.3	15.1	16.9	13.5	0.7	454,209
Secondary	40.5	15.8	15.4	14.8	12.3	1.2	872,099
Higher	48.6	15.1	12.7	11.8	10.5	1.2	1,250,606
Other	42.6	35.5	1.0	15.5	5.3	0.0	3,892
Don't know	37.2	17.9	12.1	1.3	31.6	0.0	2,551
Wealth Index Quintile							
Poorest	28.5	13.4	13.6	22.3	20.9	1.3	1,336,932
Second	25.5	13.2	15.3	24.1	20.3	1.6	1,335,516
Middle	32.9	15.3	15.6	17.7	16.3	2.1	1,304,323
Fourth	46.7	17.1	13.8	13.2	8.2	1.0	1,198,407
Richest	59.1	15.1	13.0	7.9	4.3	0.6	1,216,887
Residence							
Rural	29.4	13.9	14.6	21.7	18.8	1.7	3,374,746
Urban	47.6	15.8	14.0	12.4	9.3	1.0	3,017,318

Table 4.17 presents the percentage of households at different stages of economic well-being recovery after being affected by flooding. Overall, 39.9% of households report partial recovery, although they are still in a worse position than before the flood. Meanwhile, 26.0% of households state they have not recovered at all, and 23.5% have managed to return to their pre-flood economic well-being. In turn, 10.6% of households report being better off than before the disaster. While there appears to be no clear correlation between the education level of the household head and either partial or non-recovery, the percentage of households reporting a recovery that is better than before tends to increase with higher levels of education. As expected, the share of households that either did not recover or ended up in a worse off position than previously, decreases with household wealth. Conversely, higher wealth quintiles show a higher percentage of households that either recovered to the same level or are now better off. Lastly, urban households generally experienced more successful recovery compared to their rural counterparts.

Table 4.17 Percentage of households's economic well-being after floods by education of household head, wealth index quintile, and area of residence

Characteristic	Did not recover	Recovered some, but worse off	Recovered to the same level	Recovered and better off	Total
Total	26.0	39.9	23.5	10.6	3,041,993
Education of HH Head					
None/Pre-school	26.8	41.5	22.4	9.33	1,623,321
Primary	27.8	37.6	24.8	9.8	491,015
Middle	25.6	39.7	24.5	10.2	173,726
Secondary	24.1	40.1	24.1	11.68	325,155
Higher	22.1	37.0	25.2	15.74	425,079
Other	14.7	21.2	43.1	21.05	1,365
Don't know	55.0	17.3	0.0	27.73	1,383
Wealth Index Quintile					
Poorest	30.5	41.3	20.6	7.56	936,315
Second	25.9	42.5	21.3	10.31	969,671
Middle	23.1	38.0	26.5	12.46	796,536
Fourth	20.2	36.3	28.7	14.78	255,405
Richest	20.9	24.4	36.8	17.95	84,066
Residence					
Rural	26.5	40.1	23.4	9.99	2,298,161
Urban	24.2	39.6	23.7	12.54	743,833

5. DEFINITIONS RELATED TO CHILDREN'S ACTIVITIES AND LEGAL FRAMEWORK

5.1 Legal framework

5.1.1 International labour standards

The most important international legal instruments pertaining to child labour are the UN Convention on the Rights of the Child (UNCRC, 1989), ILO Convention 138 (1973) and ILO Convention 182 (1999). We include the key passages below.

UN Convention on the Rights of the Child (1989), in which Article 32 stipulates the following (OHCHR, 2019):

Article 32

1. *States Parties recognize the right of the child to be protected from economic exploitation and from performing any work that is likely to be hazardous or to interfere with the child's education, or to be harmful to the child's health or physical, mental, spiritual, moral, or social development.*
2. *States Parties shall take legislative, administrative, social and educational measures to ensure the implementation of the present article. To this end, and having regard to the relevant provisions of other international instruments, States Parties shall in particular:*
 - (a) *Provide for a minimum age or minimum wages for admission to employment;*
 - (b) *Provide for appropriate regulation of the hours and conditions of employment;*
 - (c) *Provide for appropriate penalties or other sanctions to ensure the effective enforcement of the present article.*

The convention was ratified by Pakistan on November 12, 1990. Under the UNCRC, a child is defined as any individual under the age of eighteen (or according to the age of majority, which is eighteen in Pakistan according to the Majority Act, 1875).

ILO Minimum Age Convention, No. 138 (1973), which seeks to set a minimum age so that children do not enter work too young, ideally only by the completion of their compulsory education (15 years of age) (ILO, 2017a):

Article 7

1. *National laws or regulations may permit the employment or work of persons 13 to 15 years of age on light work which is--*
 - (a) *not likely to be harmful to their health or development; and*
 - (b) *not such as to prejudice their attendance at school, their participation in vocational orientation or training programmes approved by the competent authority or their capacity to benefit from the instruction received.*

The Convention was ratified by Pakistan on July 6, 2006.

ILO Worst Forms of Child Labour (WFCL) Convention No. 182 (1999), which defines what are the worst forms of child labour and obliges ratifying states to take immediate action in eliminating the WFCL (ILO, 2017b).

Article 3

For the purposes of this Convention, the term the worst forms of child labour comprises:

- (a) *all forms of slavery or practices similar to slavery, such as the sale and trafficking of children, debt bondage and serfdom and forced or compulsory labour, including forced or compulsory recruitment of children for use in armed conflict;*
- (b) *the use, procuring or offering of a child for prostitution, for the production of pornography or for pornographic performances;*
- (c) *the use, procuring or offering of a child for illicit activities, in particular for the production and trafficking of drugs as defined in the relevant international treaties;*
- (d) *work which, by its nature or the circumstances in which it is carried out, is likely to harm the health, safety or morals of children.*

The Convention was ratified by Pakistan on October 11, 2001. Under Convention No. 182, a child is defined as "all persons under the age of 18".

Within the framework of the *International Conference of Labour Statisticians (ICLS)*, the 18th ICLS Resolution provides the operational definition for the statistical measurement of child labour using the United Nations System of National Accounts (SNA). These concepts and definitions were later updated with the adoption of new international standards of statistics on work, employment and labour underutilisation (19th ICLS). To align the child labour statistics with this updated standards, the 20th ICLS amended the previous resolution (ILO, 2018) in accordance with the 19th ICLS (ILO, 2018).

In this report, the definition of economic activity corresponds to the 20th ICLS, which defines working children aged 5–17 as those engaged in any activity falling within the SNA production boundary for at least one hour during the reference week. For the purposes of this report, the child labour indicator excludes all household chores as those fall outside the SNA production boundary. In this sense, child labour is a subset of working children plus children engaged in

the worst forms of child labour not comprised in the group of working children. This report does not cover the worst forms of child labour other than hazardous work.

5.1.2 Sindh regulation

Pakistan's provinces have a large degree of autonomy. The Government of Sindh has therefore, put in place four main bills or legal documents relevant to child labour. The *Sindh Prohibition of Employment of Children Act, 2017*, fixes the standards and cut-off points that determine what is prohibited. These standards provide the necessary details to define the statistical definition of child labour in the provincial context. Three other documents refer to the conditions of work which are permitted for children, though these do not restrict the work permitted further than the Sindh Prohibition of Employment of Children Act, 2017. These are:

- Sindh Factories Act, 2015 – section 81 – which states “No child who has not completed his fourteenth year shall be allowed to work in any factory”. Section 82 further states “No adolescent shall be allowed to work in any factory unless (a) a certificate of fitness granted to him under section 83 is in the custody of the manager of the factory; and (b) he carries while he is at work a token giving a reference to such certificate”. Section 85 states “No adolescent shall be allowed to work in a factory except between 7 a. m. and 7 p. m.”.
- Sindh Shops and Commercial Establishment Act, 2015 – section 20 – which states “No child shall be required or allowed or employed to work in any establishment for any nature of work”.
- Sindh Bonded Labor System (Abolition) Act, 2015 – section 4 – which states “On the commencement of this Act, the bonded labour system shall stand abolished and every bonded labourer shall stand freed and discharged from any obligation to render any bonded labour”.

Sindh Prohibition of Employment of Children Act, 2017

The Act prohibits the employment of children and regulates the employment of adolescents in Sindh.

- **Children:** No child shall be employed or permitted to work in any establishment. Children are defined as persons who have not completed their fourteenth year of age.
- **Adolescents:** No adolescent shall be employed or permitted to hazardous work in any establishment. Adolescents are defined as persons who have completed their fourteenth but not eighteenth year of age.
- **Work time:** Period of work shall not exceed seven hours, including the time spent in waiting for work on any day. Every adolescent employed in an establishment shall be allowed in each week a holiday of one whole day.
- **Rest time:** No adolescent shall work for more than three hours before he has an interval of at least one hour for rest.
- **Night work:** No adolescent shall be permitted or required to work between 7.00 p.m. to 8.00 a.m. of the following day.

The *Sindh Prohibition of Employment of Children Act 2017* also provides a list of 38 hazardous occupations and industries. The complete list of hazardous industries and occupations is in Appendix 1. Each of the items is translated into a code for occupation and/or industry according to the PSCO and PSIC, respectively, and categorised as hazardous.

Exceptions: In Sindh, the prohibitions related to employment, such as restrictions on working hours, and weekly holidays do not apply to adolescents working with family (parents or siblings) or in an educational setting to learn skills (see section 9(3) in Part III of the Act). In practice this means that adolescents identified as working with their families who work long hours, during the night or work seven days in a week are not categorised as being engaged in child labour. Working with the family was classified on the basis of the responses to questions defining industry, occupation and work situation. This adjustment was made following consultations with the Labour Department Sindh, who requested the statistical definition be adjusted to align with this paragraph of the law, as well as ILO. Adolescents working in other hazardous work (industries, occupations, tools etc.) remain classified as child labour.

5.2 Economic activity and economically active population

The 13th ICLS Resolution specifies that “(...) the economically active population comprises all persons of either sex who furnish the supply of labour for the production of economic goods and services, as defined by the United Nations systems of national accounts and balances, during a specified time-reference period.” This means that a person is economically active if they contribute to production of goods and services that fall within the SNA production boundary.

The definition of **economic activity** therefore includes:

- Those in paid employment (paid in cash or in kind)
- Self-employed persons
- Own-account workers¹⁸
- Apprentices who receive payment in cash or in kind
- Unpaid family workers who produce economic goods for their own household consumption¹⁹.
- The unemployed²⁰

¹⁸ This refers to a self-employed individual who does not use hired labour and who either works alone or relies on unpaid family workers to run a business, cultivate land/plot/garden, tend animals, etc. Two or more individuals may share the same premises and assist each other or share work; if they do not employ regular workers, these individuals are considered to be own account workers. An individual working for commission will also be categorised as an own account worker.

¹⁹ Services for own consumption fall outside the SNA production boundary and are classified as household chores under non-economic activity.

²⁰ The 18th ICLS defines that the concept of unemployed for children is not accurate as children below the minimum age of work cannot legally seek work or be employed. However, to identify the group of potential child workers, this group of children can be considered as “children seeking work”.

This definition excludes household chores²¹ performed in the own household and activities that are part of schooling but includes activities such as firewood and water collection.

The current economic activity is defined as above but uses a **reference period** of the past 7 days preceding the interview.

Thus, the **currently active population** refers to all those who produced goods and services under the SNA during the past week. The current economic activity is the timeframe used for estimating the labour force.

People who have worked at any point during the past 12 months are called the **usually active population**.

5.3 Non-economic activity

Activities that fall outside the production boundary of the UN SNA are non-economic activities. Such activities include services rendered by and for household members. Some examples are:

- Preparing and serving meals
- Mending, washing and ironing clothes
- Shopping
- Caring for siblings and sick/disabled household members
- Cleaning and maintaining the household dwelling
- Repairing household durables
- Transporting household members and their goods.

5.4 Working children, child labour and hazardous work

Working children

The quantitative measure of working children comprises those children who declare that they worked during the reference period in the production of economic goods and services as defined by the UN SNA. This definition encompasses those included in the economic activity definition (see Chapter 5.2, above), except for unemployed. Boys and girls may be considered working if they participated in any work, including domestic work, for someone who is not a member of their own household; or performed any family work, i.e. on a family farm or business. In the case of children, the above definition excludes those who are without work but seeking work, as well as those carrying out household chores. However, in this report the participation of children in household chores and the incidence of work-seeking children are analysed separately.

²¹ However, domestic work performed outside of the own household is considered to be an economic activity.

One of the limitations of focusing on children that worked only during the last 7 days, is that it might fail to capture seasonal work, or work that children carry out during school vacation or because of specific family needs. These limitations are discussed in this report.

Child labour in the international framework²²

Child labour is a subset of working children. The group includes children in the worst forms of child labour and working children below the minimum age, excluding children in permissible light work where applicable²³. Not all work harms children’s well-being, and this is why child labour is a narrower concept than working children as it excludes those children who are working only a few hours a week in permitted light work and those above the minimum age whose work is not classified as a worst form of child labour, including hazardous work. Table 5.1 below summarises the definition of child labour according to the 18th ICLS.

Table 5.1 Children’s work				
Age group	SNA production			
	(1a) Light work in SNA production¹	(1b) Regular work in SNA production¹	Worst forms of child labour (WFCL)	
			(2a) Hazardous work in SNA production	(2b) WFCL other than hazardous work
Children below the minimum age specified for light work (for example 5–11 years)	Work in SNA production below the minimum age for light work	Work in SNA production below the general minimum working age	Work in industries and occupations designated as hazardous, or work for long hours and/or at night in industries and occupations not designated as hazardous	Children trafficked for work; forced and bonded child labour; commercial sexual exploitation of children; use of children for illicit activities and armed conflict
Children within the age range specified for light work (for example, 12–13 years)				
Children at or above the general minimum working age (for example, 14–17 years)				

Source: Resolution to amend the 18th ICLS Resolution concerning statistics of child labour. 20th International Conference of Labour Statisticians (ICLS). Document ICLS/20/2018/Resolution IV. Geneva, 10-19 October 2018

¹ Work within SNA production boundary includes employment work, own-use production of goods, unpaid trainee work, volunteer work in market and non-market units and volunteer work in household producing of goods, in line with 19th ICLS Resolution concerning statistics of work, employment and labour underutilisation, 2013.

²² According to the ILO, Child Labour refers to work that deprives children (any person under 18) of their childhood, their potential, and their dignity, and that is harmful to their physical and/or mental development.

²³ While light work is permissible under ILO Convention 138, there is no provision for light work in the Sindh Prohibition of Employment of Children Act, 2017. Thus, all work for children under the age of 14 is considered regular work in Sindh and so is counted as child labour.

Hazardous work represents any activity or occupation that, by its nature or type, has or leads to adverse effects on the child’s safety, health and moral development. In general, hazardous work may include night work and long hours of work²⁴; exposure to physical, psychological or sexual abuse; work underground, under water, at dangerous heights or in confined spaces; work with dangerous machinery, equipment and tools, or which involves the manual handling or transport of heavy loads; and work in an unhealthy environment, which may, for example, expose children to hazardous substances, agents or processes, or to temperatures, noise levels, or vibrations damaging their health. Hazardous work by children is often treated as a proxy for the Worst Forms of Child Labour. This is for two reasons. First, reliable national data on the worst forms other than hazardous work, such as commercial sexual exploitation and children engaged in conflict, are still difficult to come by. Second, children in hazardous work account for the overwhelming majority of those in the worst forms of child labour.

5.5 Worst forms of Child Labour

- A child under 18 who participates in activities that are “hazardous by nature or circumstance” for 1 or more hours per week (ILO Convention 138 Article 3 Paragraph 1, Convention 182 Worst Forms of Child Labour)
- A child under 18 who participates in an “unconditional worst form of child labour” defined in ILO Convention 182 Article 3 as:
 - all forms of slavery or practices similar to slavery, such as the sale and trafficking of children, debt bondage and serfdom and forced or compulsory labour, including forced or compulsory recruitment of children for use in armed conflict.
 - the use, procuring or offering of a child for prostitution, to produce pornography or for pornographic performances.
 - the use, procuring or offering of a child for illicit activities, in particular for the production and trafficking of drugs as defined in the relevant international treaties.
 - work which, by its nature or the circumstances in which it is carried out, is likely to harm the health, safety or morals of children.

²⁴ Any adolescent working beyond the legal limit is classified as hazardous work, since it falls under “long hours of work”.

Child Labour: The definition of child labour employed in this report follows the 20th ICLS as a general frame and encompasses within it the Sindh Prohibition of Employment of Children Act, 2017

- A child under the age of 14 who is economically active for 1 or more hours per week (*ILO Convention 138*, ratified by Pakistan in 2006 and *Sindh Prohibition of Employment of Children Act, 2017*). Note that light work for children aged 12-13 is not mentioned under the Sindh Prohibition of Employment of Children Act, 2017 and therefore no allowance is made when defining child labour.
- An adolescent who has reached the age of 14 but not attained the age of 18, who is economically active for more than 42 hours per week (*Sindh Prohibition of Employment of Children Act, 2017*, Part III, on the hours and periods of work). Note that the threshold defined by 18th ICLS is 43 hours or more per week for this age group (ILO Convention 138, Article 2 Paragraph 4). Adolescents are not considered engaged in child labour due to long hours, night work or no weekly holiday if they work in an establishment where they operate with the support of their family or in a government-established, assisted, or recognised school for skill-based learning (Article 9, Paragraph 3).
- Regarding hazardous work, the *Sindh Prohibition of Employment of Children Act, 2017* establishes a list of 38 occupations, industries, processes and work environments considered as hazardous. The list includes, among others, working in the carpet weaving industry and being exposed to cement dust.

Statistical definition of child labour for Sindh. The legal dispositions mentioned above delimits the group of child workers that are considered as children in child labour. Table 5.2 mentions the age specific thresholds for the duration of the working time, and the child labour conditions that apply to all children 5–17.

Table 5.2 Statistical definition of child labour Sindh Prohibition of Employment of Children Act 2017

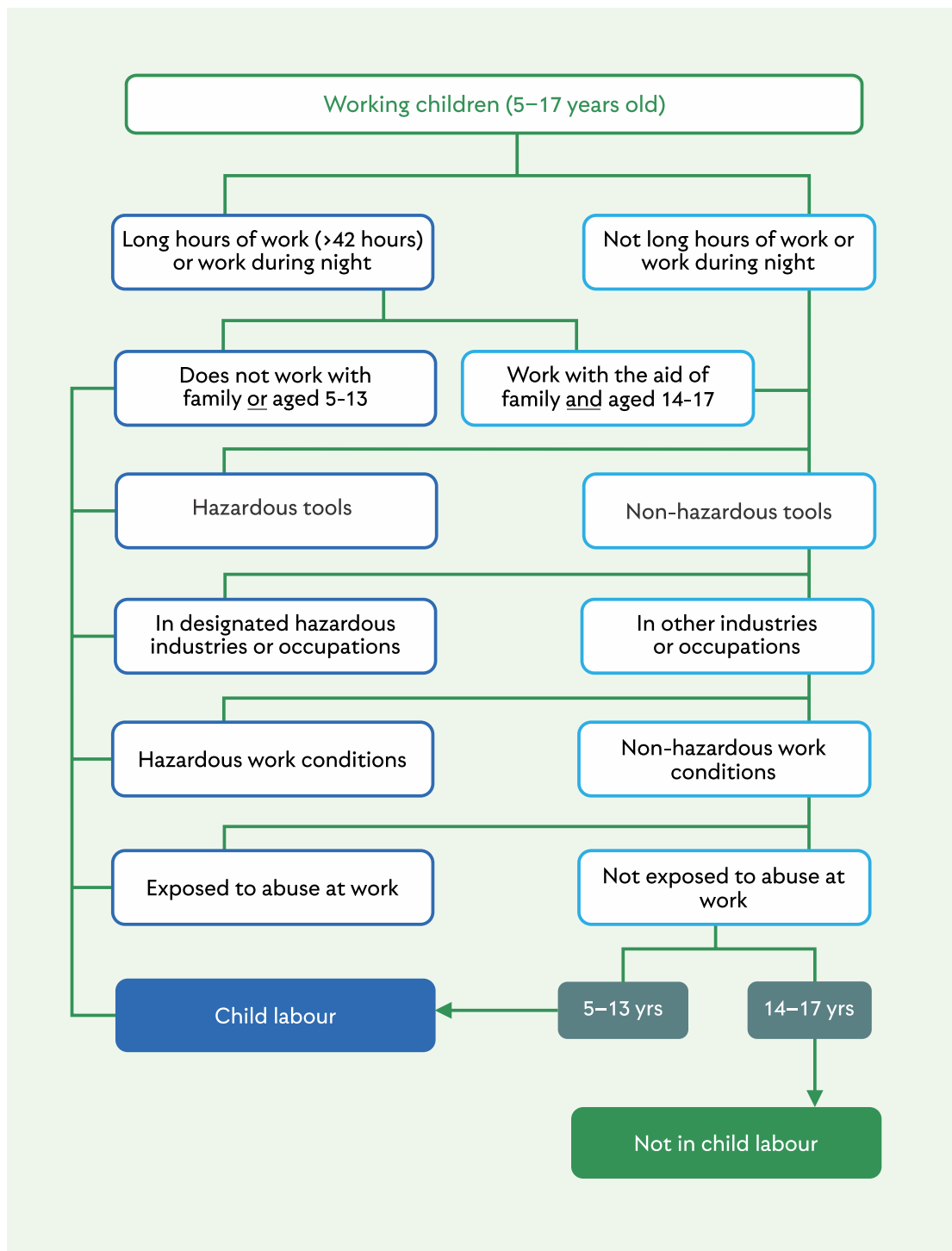
Age group	Age specific conditions	Conditions that apply to all children
Children aged 5–13 years	No employment permitted in economic activity (no hours permitted)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ Night work and long hours (exceptions for adolescents working with family) ■ Hazardous industry ■ Hazardous occupation ■ Hazardous condition ■ Hazardous tool ■ Abuse at work
Children aged 14–17 years	Limit of working hours: No more than 42 ²⁵ . Exceptions are made for hour limits for adolescents if the work is carried out with the support of their family. ²⁶	

²⁵ The threshold of 42 hours is defined over the subsection 5 that defines: “The total period of work of an adolescent in a day, including the mandatory interval for rest, shall, in no case, exceed seven hours.” The period of rest defined in subsection 5 is not observable under the SIMPOC questionnaire and therefore, is excluded from the statistical definition of child labour.

²⁶ Family is classified as the wife or husband in a household and their children, meaning for children that it refers to their parents and siblings but not more distant relatives.

Figure 5.1 provides a visual representation of the definition of child labour, where adolescents working long hours or nights with family are not necessarily classified as child labour, unless another feature of their work leads to their categorisation under child labour.

Figure 5.1 Structure of child labour in Sindh



6. CHILDREN'S ACTIVITIES

This chapter presents an overview of the activities in which children take part and focuses on involvement of boys and girls in work, household chores, school attendance, and characteristics of work. The chapter focuses on children that reported to be working in the past 7 days for at least an hour.

6.1 Working children

Table 6.1 provides insights into the number and proportion of children aged 5–17 who were engaged in work during the last seven days, with data categorised by age, gender, household head's education, wealth, and residence. Overall, 12.0 per cent of children in this age range reported working in the past week.

The proportion of working children increase with age. For instance, 4.3 per cent of children aged 5–9 report to have been working in the last seven days, compared to 13.2 per cent of those aged 10–13 and 25.5 per cent of those aged 14–17. Gender disparities are also evident, with 15.2 per cent of boys reporting work activity in the past week, compared to only 8.4 per cent of girls.

Parental education plays a significant role, as children from households where the head has no or only pre-school education have the highest work participation rate (16.1 per cent), whereas this figure drops to just 4.8 per cent in households where the head has higher education.

Economic status also influences the proportion of working children. Among children from the poorest households, 22.2 per cent worked in the past week, compared to only 2.9 per cent among those in the richest households. Lastly, rural children are more likely to work than their urban counterparts, with 17.0 per cent of rural children working in the past week versus 6.1 per cent of urban children.

Table 6.1 Number and per cent of children 5–17 years that worked in the last 12 months and the last 7 days by sex, age group, education of household head, wealth index quintile and area of residence

Characteristic	Working Children				Total number of children
	Last 12 months		Last 7 days		
	Number	Per cent	Number	Per cent	
Both sexes					
Total 5-17	2,079,746	13.3	1,872,512	12.0	15,636,417
5-9	376,921	5.2	316,524	4.3	7,304,921
10-13	672,756	14.6	607,776	13.2	4,616,949
14-17	1,030,070	27.7	948,212	25.5	3,714,547
Boys					
Total 5-17	1,364,612	16.6	1,248,847	15.2	8,225,054
5-9	220,596	5.8	187,127	4.9	3,808,272
10-13	435,198	17.9	395,894	16.3	2,434,323
14-17	708,818	35.8	665,825	33.6	1,982,459
Girls					
Total 5-17	715,134	9.7	623,665	8.4	7,410,765
5-9	156,324	4.5	129,396	3.7	3,496,303
10-13	237,558	10.9	211,882	9.7	2,182,593
14-17	321,252	18.6	282,386	16.3	1,731,869
Edu. HH head					
None/Pre-school	1,284,730	17.8	1,162,778	16.1	7,238,316
Primary	320,699	14.3	290,290	13.0	2,239,157
Middle	125,671	10.7	111,989	9.6	1,169,812
Secondary	192,228	8.9	170,075	7.9	2,152,389
Higher	153,697	5.5	135,113	4.8	2,815,043
Other	1,207	11.5	999	9.5	10,483
Don't know/Missing	634	9.7	387	5.9	6,568
WIQ					
Poorest	839,903	24.6	757,507	22.2	3,415,303
Second	599,114	18.2	536,012	16.3	3,290,671
Middle	371,571	11.3	328,324	10.0	3,283,225
Fourth	185,252	6.2	173,501	5.8	2,983,795
Richest	83,906	3.1	77,167	2.9	2,663,423

Characteristic	Working Children				Total number of children
	Last 12 months		Last 7 days		
	Number	Per cent	Number	Per cent	
Residence					
Rural	1,602,374	19.0	1,432,539	17.0	8,439,694
Urban	477,373	6.6	439,973	6.1	7,196,724

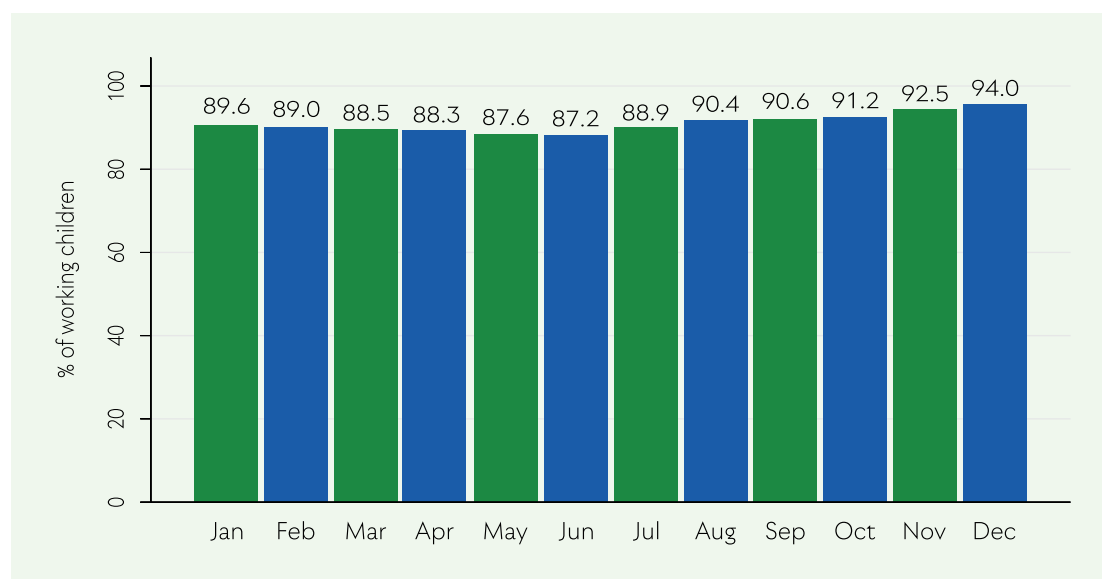
The sum of boys and girls in the table does not equal the total number of children since the table does not include transgender children. These records account for 6 individuals from the unweighted survey responses, which when weighted represent 598 children.

The education of the household head omits the category of "Non-formal". These records account for 55 individuals from the unweighted survey responses respectively, which when weighted represent 4648 children.

Table A6.1 in the Appendix presents results by division and district. Mirpur Khas division has the highest percentage of working children, 24.8 per cent in the past 7 days, followed by Hyderabad district at 16.1 per cent. In contrast, Karachi division reports the lowest percentage, with 4.3 per cent of children working in the past week. Among districts, Sujawal has the highest prevalence (41.5 per cent), followed by Tharparkar (32.5 per cent), while Malir has the lowest at 3.0 per cent.

Figure 6.1 presents the percentage of children who were engaged in work in each month in the past 12 months. The graph shows that a little under 90 per cent of the children who were working in the past year, reported working at least one day in every month. The month with highest incidence of child work is December with 94.0 per cent and the lowest in June with 87.2 per cent.

Figure 6.1 Child work per month (among children who did any work in the last 12 months)



6.2 Household chores

Household chores, or unpaid household services, include tasks such as cooking, cleaning, shopping, and childcare performed for household members without pay. When done under reasonable conditions and supervision, these activities are a normal part of family life and child development.

However, excessive workloads may interfere with education or well-being, potentially resembling child labour. Unlike domestic work for a third party, household chores are not classified as economic activity and so are not included under our definition of work. Chores may be included in a more extensive definition of child labour but are not included for the purpose of this report.

Engaging in household chores can benefit children by fostering self-competence, social skills, and self-efficacy (Riggioa, Valenzuelab, & Weiser, 2010). It may also protect them from hazardous work and allow adults more time for income-generating activities, indirectly improving children's welfare.

However, in developing countries, household chores can come at an economic cost. Caring for younger siblings, for example, may reduce an older child's educational opportunities while also hindering the younger sibling's verbal and cognitive development (Ennew, 1982). Some tasks may also pose physical risks, such as long hours, exposure to hazardous materials, or carrying heavy loads.

Recognising these risks, international frameworks like the UNCRC and ILO Convention No. 182 call for protecting children from work that harms their health or development. Recommendation No. 201 further emphasises eliminating hazardous domestic work and monitoring children's conditions, though domestic work refers to tasks carried out in another household.

This part of chapter 6 examines the burden of household chores across gender and age to assess the trade-offs between these responsibilities, education, and leisure.

Figure 6.2 shows that 53.1 per cent of children aged 5–17 are reported to engage in household chores²⁷. As expected, girls are more involved in household chores than boys, with 56.6 per cent compared to 49.9 per cent. The likelihood of engaging in household chores increases with age, starting at 37.5 per cent for children aged 5–11 and reaching 72.9 per cent among those aged 14–17. In this older age group, the gender gap becomes even more pronounced, with 66 per cent of boys participating in household chores compared to 80.8 per cent of girls.

²⁷ This engagement is derived from a set of yes-no questions asked to the adult respondent, whether the child engages in various chores. The total number of hours in these household tasks is recorded subsequently but not used in the definition of Figure 6.2.

Figure 6.2 Engagement in household chores by sex and age group

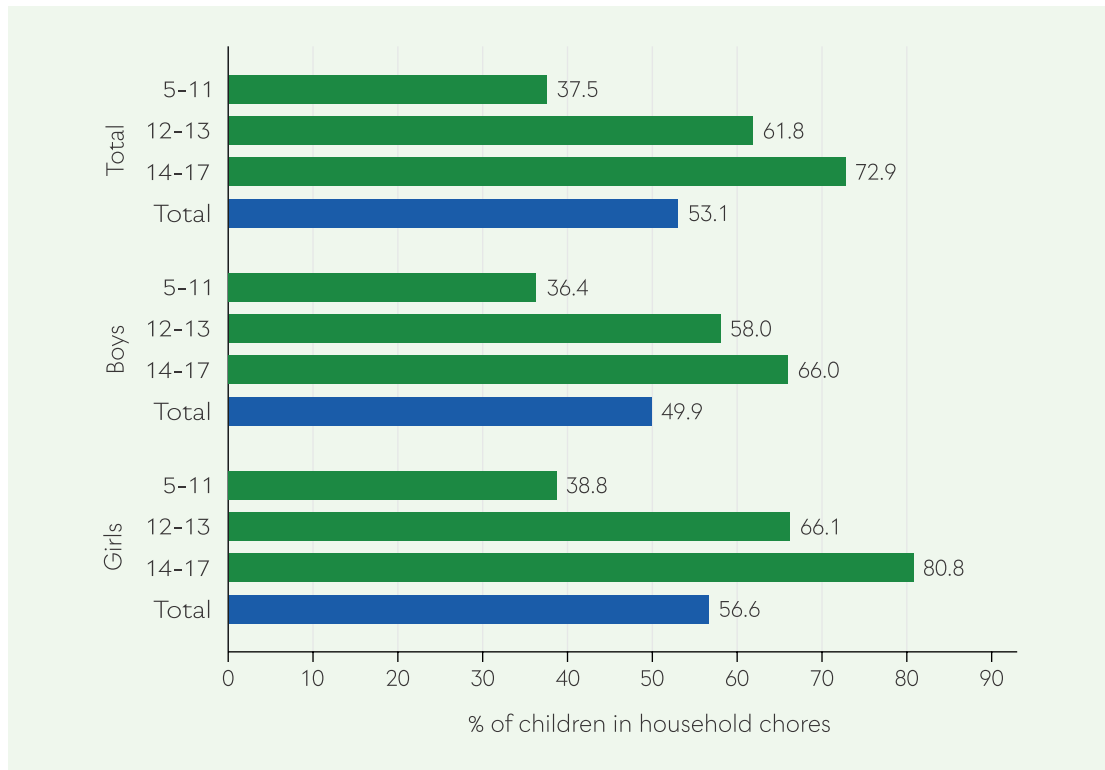


Figure 6.3 further highlights this gender gap, showing that girls engaged in chores consistently spend more time on household chores. The disparity is most evident at ages 14–17, where girls spend an average of 13.9 hours per week, compared to 7.6 hours for boys.

Figure 6.3 Average number of hours per week spent in household chores by age group and sex

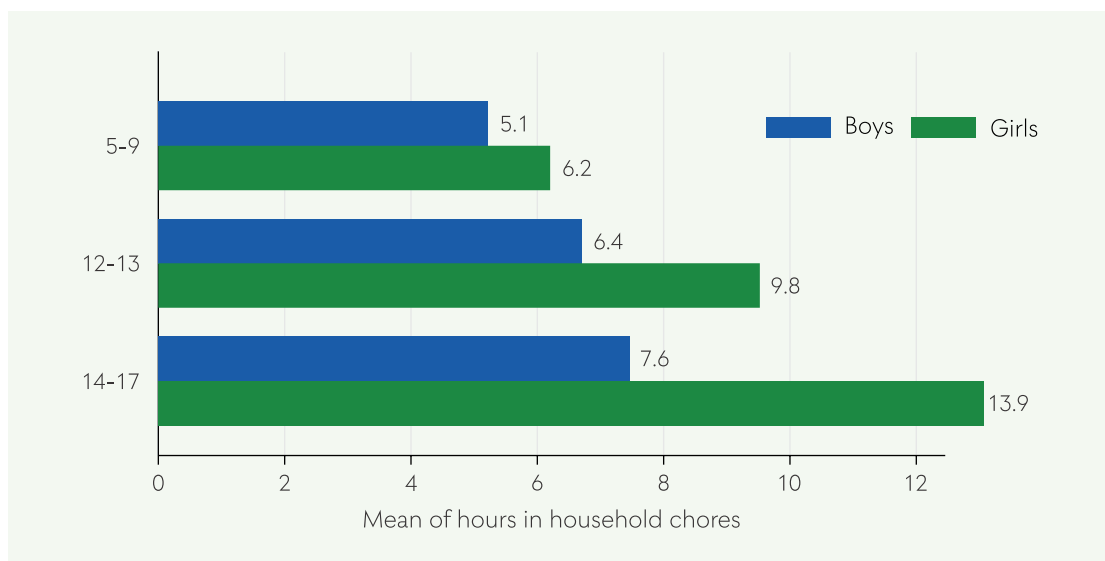


Table 6.2 provides an analysis of children's participation in household chores, categorised by the number of hours spent per week. The data shows that younger children (ages 5–9) are more likely to spend fewer hours on chores, with 82.6 per cent working seven hours or less per week. In the age range from 14–17 years, 26.1 per cent spend 8 to 14 hours, 11.7 per cent spend 15 to 21 hours, and a small percentage (1.3 per cent) exceed 42 hours per week.

Gender differences are significant, with girls spending more time on household tasks than boys. Among girls, 23.1 per cent devote 8 to 14 hours weekly, compared to 15.1 per cent of boys. Additionally, 16.9 per cent of girls aged 14–17 spend 15 to 21 hours on chores, compared to only 6.1 per cent of boys in the same age range.

Marital status also plays a role, as ever-married children dedicate more time to household chores than their never-married peers. While 9.5 per cent of never-married children spend 15 to 21 hours on chores, this figure rises to 25.3 per cent among ever-married children. Since the marital status question was only asked to children aged 10–17, the table reflects data for that group.

School attendance influences household chore participation, with children not attending school spending more hours on household tasks. Among those not attending school, 11.6 per cent dedicate 15 to 21 hours to chores, compared to just 5.5 per cent of those who attend school.

Lastly, rural children are slightly more involved in household chores than their urban counterparts. In rural areas, 21.6 per cent of children spend 8 to 14 hours on chores, compared to 15.9 per cent in urban areas.

Table 6.2 Per cent of children 5–17 years involved in household chores by number of hours devoted per week, by sex, age group, marital status, school attendance and area of residence

Characteristic	Children involved in household chores							
	Hours devoted							Total number of children
	7 and below	8 to 14	15 to 21	22 to 28	29 to 35	36 to 42	More than 42	
Both sexes								
Total 5-17	67.0	19.2	7.6	3.3	1.6	0.7	0.7	8,203,680
5-9	82.6	11.3	3.5	1.3	0.8	0.3	0.2	2,689,214
10-13	66.9	20.0	7.6	3.0	1.3	0.6	0.6	2,822,833
14-17	51.6	26.1	11.7	5.5	2.7	1.1	1.3	2,691,633

Characteristic	Children involved in household chores							
	Hours devoted							Total number of children
	7 and below	8 to 14	15 to 21	22 to 28	29 to 35	36 to 42	More than 42	
Boys								
Total 5-17	77.7	15.1	4.4	1.4	0.7	0.3	0.4	4,040,904
5-9	85.9	9.7	2.8	0.8	0.5	0.2	0.2	1,355,126
10-13	77.4	15.4	4.3	1.5	0.6	0.3	0.5	1,391,007
14-17	69.4	20.5	6.1	1.9	0.9	0.5	0.7	1,294,769
Girls								
Total 5-17	56.7	23.1	10.7	5.1	2.5	1.0	0.9	4,162,294
5-9	79.2	13.0	4.2	1.8	1.2	0.5	0.1	1,333,825
10-13	56.7	24.6	10.8	4.5	1.9	0.9	0.7	1,431,826
14-17	35.2	31.2	16.9	8.9	4.4	1.6	1.8	1,396,643
Marital status								
Never married	59.7	23.0	9.5	4.2	1.9	0.8	0.9	5,474,877
Ever married	25.9	19.9	25.3	9.3	9.3	6.3	4.0	38,631
School attendance								
Not attending	52.6	23.9	11.6	5.9	3.1	1.5	1.5	2,848,810
Attending	74.7	16.7	5.5	1.9	0.8	0.2	0.2	5,354,869
Residence								
Rural	61.9	21.6	8.7	4.0	2.1	0.8	0.9	4,717,747
Urban	74.0	15.9	6.0	2.3	0.9	0.5	0.4	3,485,935

The sum of boys and girls in the table does not equal the total number of children since the table does not include transgender. These records account for 3 individuals from the unweighted survey responses, which when weighted represent 482 children.

The sum of never married and ever married children in the table does not equal the total number of children since the marital status was only asked to 10-17-year-olds. Additionally, information about the marital status is missing for 9 from the unweighted survey responses, which when weighted represent 958 children.

The total number of children involved in household chores in this table does not include children who reported to engage in household chores for 0 hours during the past week. These records account for 903 children from the unweighted survey responses, which when weighted represent 98922 children.

A closer look at residential differences in Table 6.3 shows that among children spending 8 up to more than 42 hours per week on household chores, a higher proportion comes from rural households compared to urban one. By gender, girls from rural households spend more hours in household chores than in urban areas. For a detailed overview by district level refer to Table A6.2 in the Appendix.

Table 6.3 Number and per cent of children 5-17 years involved in household chores by number of hours devoted per week by sex, age group and area of residence

Characteristic	Children involved in household chores							
	Hours devoted							Total number of children
	7 and below	8-14	15-21	22-28	29-35	36-42	More than 42	
Urban								
Both sexes								
Total 5-17	74.0	15.9	6.0	2.3	0.9	0.5	0.4	3,485,935
5-9	88.4	8.2	2.3	0.7	0.2	0.1	0.1	958,890
10-13	76.4	15.3	5.0	1.8	0.6	0.5	0.3	1,230,277
14-17	61.1	22.3	9.8	4.0	1.6	0.6	0.6	1,296,768
Boys								
Total 5-17	82.4	12.1	3.7	1.1	0.3	0.2	0.2	1,796,784
5-9	89.8	7.1	2.2	0.6	0.2	0.0	0.1	512,408
10-13	83.5	11.4	3.4	1.2	0.2	0.2	0.2	648,675
14-17	75.4	16.9	5.2	1.5	0.4	0.2	0.3	635,701
Girls								
Total 5-17	65.1	20.0	8.5	3.6	1.5	0.8	0.5	1,688,668
5-9	86.8	9.4	2.4	0.9	0.3	0.2	0.1	446,218
10-13	68.5	19.7	6.8	2.5	1.1	0.9	0.4	581,602
14-17	47.5	27.5	14.2	6.3	2.6	1.0	0.9	660,846
Rural								
Both sexes								
Total 5-17	61.9	21.6	8.7	4.0	2.1	0.8	0.9	4,717,747
5-9	79.4	13.1	4.1	1.6	1.2	0.4	0.2	1,730,324
10-13	59.6	23.7	9.6	3.9	1.8	0.7	0.8	1,592,557
14-17	42.8	29.6	13.5	7.0	3.8	1.5	1.9	1,394,866

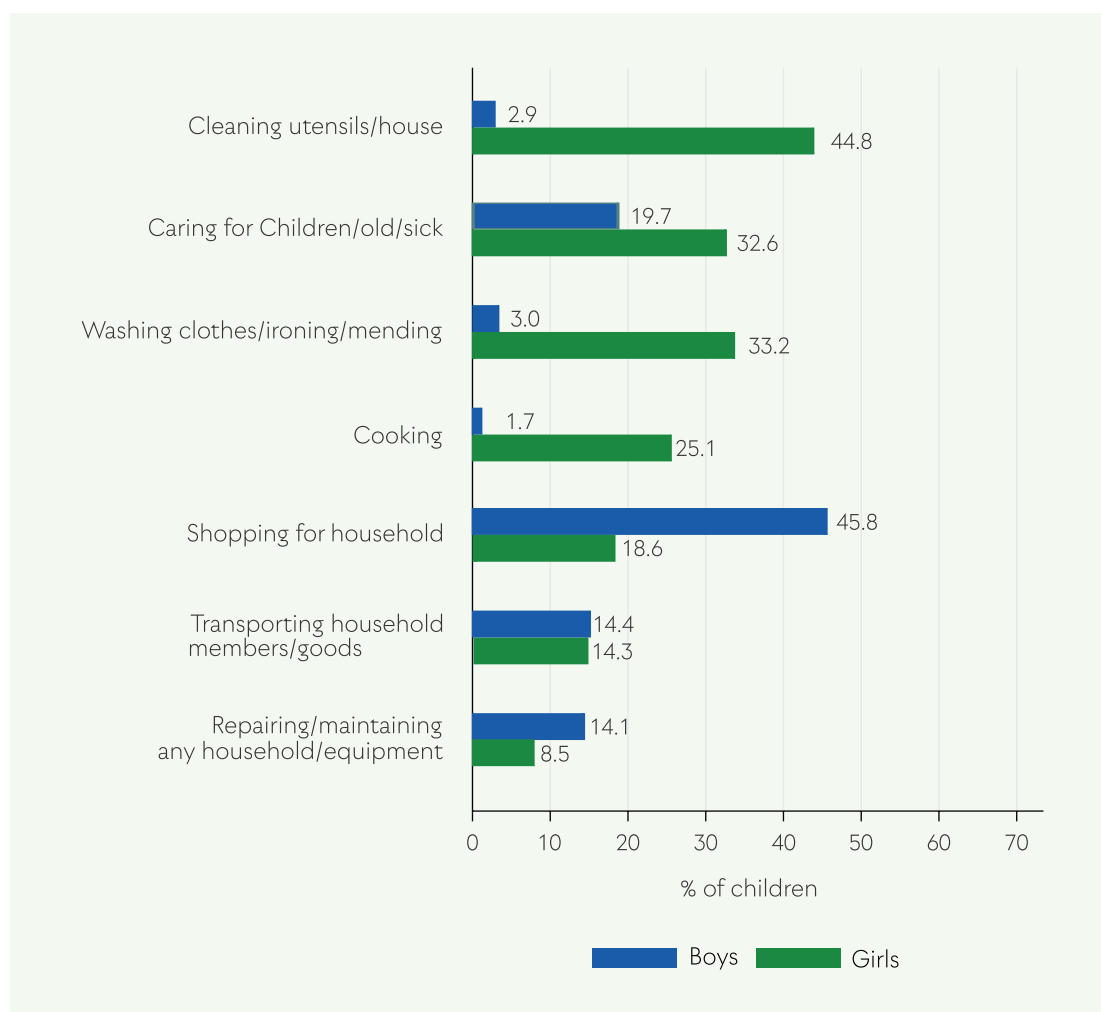
Characteristic	Children involved in household chores							Total number of children
	Hours devoted							
	7 and below	8-14	15-21	22-28	29-35	36-42	More than 42	
Boys								
Total 5-17	73.9	17.5	4.9	1.6	1.0	0.4	0.6	2,244,120
5-9	83.6	11.3	3.1	0.9	0.7	0.2	0.2	842,719
10-13	72.2	18.8	5.2	1.7	1.0	0.4	0.7	742,332
14-17	63.6	24.0	7.0	2.3	1.3	0.7	1.1	659,069
Girls								
Total 5-17	50.9	25.2	12.2	6.2	3.2	1.2	1.1	2,473,626
5-9	75.3	14.9	5.1	2.3	1.7	0.6	0.2	887,606
10-13	48.6	27.9	13.4	5.9	2.4	0.9	0.9	850,225
14-17	24.2	34.6	19.4	11.2	6.0	2.1	2.6	735,796

The sum of boys and girls in the table does not equal the total number of children since the table does not include transgender. These records account for 3 individuals from the unweighted survey responses, which when weighted represent 482 children.

The total number of children involved in household chores in this table does not include children who reported to engage in household chores for 0 hours during the past week. These records account for 903 children from the unweighted survey responses, which when weighted represent 98922 children.

Figure 6.4 presents the percentage of children engaged in household chores by type of chore and gender. The figure shows that boys are more likely than girls to shop for the household (45.8 per cent vs. 18.6 per cent). In contrast, girls are more likely than boys to clean utensils (44.8 per cent vs. 2.9 per cent), care for children, the elderly, or the sick (32.6 per cent vs. 19.7 per cent), wash, iron, or mend clothes (33.2 per cent vs. 3.0 per cent), and cook (25.1 per cent vs. 1.7 per cent), all activities carried out within the household. This suggests traditional gender roles are reflected in the division of household chores.

Figure 6.4 Percentage of children doing household chores by type and sex



6.3 School attendance

Table 6.4 highlights the proportion of working children attending school, with further breakdowns by household chores. 40.6 per cent of working children are in school, among those attending school, 76.7 per cent also perform household chores, compared to 73.9 per cent of those not in school. School attendance decreases with age, with 58.6 per cent of younger children (5–9 years) in school, dropping to 45.8 per cent for ages 10–13 and 31.3 per cent for ages 14–17. By gender, boys have a higher school attendance rate (45.9 per cent) than girls (30 per cent). Girls are more likely to participate in chores regardless of school attendance, though the gap is larger among those not attending school. In terms of residence, rural children are less likely to attend school (40.5 per cent) compared to their urban counterparts (41.0 per cent). See Table A6.3 in the Appendix for the results by division and district.

Table 6.4 Number and per cent of working children 5-17 years by school attendance and involvement in household chores, by sex, age group and area of residence

Characteristic	Working children																		
	Attending school						Not attending school												
	Total working children in school			Household chores			No household chores			Total working children not in school			Household chores			No household chores			
	Number	Per cent of total working children		Number	Per cent of total working children in school		Number	Per cent of total working children in school		Number	Per cent of total working children		Number	Per cent of total working children not in school		Number	Per cent of total working children not in school		
Total 5-17	760,875	40.6		583,829	76.7		177,046	23.3		1,111,637	59.4		821,448	73.9		290,189	26.1		1,872,512
5-9	185,397	58.6		134,933	72.8		50,463	27.2		131,127	41.4		89,276	68.1		41,852	31.9		316,524
10-13	278,529	45.8		216,451	77.7		62,078	22.3		329,247	54.2		249,451	75.8		79,797	24.2		607,776
14-17	296,949	31.3		232,444	78.3		64,505	21.7		651,263	68.7		482,722	74.1		168,541	25.9		948,212
	Both sexes																		
Total 5-17	573,543	45.9		414,666	72.3		158,877	27.7		675,303	54.1		421,846	62.5		253,457	37.5		1,248,847
5-9	123,699	66.1		82,618	66.8		41,081	33.2		63,428	33.9		34,300	54.1		29,127	45.9		187,127
10-13	211,974	53.5		153,598	72.5		58,376	27.5		183,920	46.5		113,405	61.7		70,515	38.3		395,894
14-17	237,870	35.7		178,450	75.0		59,419	25.0		427,955	64.3		274,140	64.1		153,815	35.9		665,825
	Boys																		

Working children													
Characteristic	Attending school						Not attending school						
	Total working children in school		Household chores		No household chores		Total working children not in school		Household chores		No household chores		
	Number	Per cent of total working children	Number	Per cent of total working children in school	Number	Per cent of total working children in school	Number	Per cent of total working children	Number	Per cent of total working children not in school	Number	Per cent of total working children not in school	
Girls													
Total 5-17	187,331	30.0	169,162	90.3	18,169	9.7	436,334	70.0	399,603	91.6	36,731	8.4	623,665
5-9	61,697	47.7	52,315	84.8	9,382	15.2	67,699	52.3	54,975	81.2	12,724	18.8	129,396
10-13	66,555	31.4	62,853	94.4	3,702	5.6	145,327	68.6	136,046	93.6	9,282	6.4	211,882
14-17	59,079	20.9	53,994	91.4	5,085	8.6	223,307	79.1	208,582	93.4	14,726	6.6	282,387
Residence													
Rural	580,687	40.5	449,128	77.3	131,559	22.7	851,852	59.5	650,604	76.4	201,248	23.6	1,432,539
Urban	180,188	41.0	134,701	74.8	45,487	25.2	259,786	59.0	170,844	65.8	88,941	34.2	439,973

Table 6.5 presents data on children aged 5–17 who are not working, categorised by school attendance and involvement in household chores. Overall, 70.5 per cent of non-working children attend school, a significant increase compared to the school attendance rate of working children in Table 6.4 (40.6 per cent). Among those in school, 50 per cent also undertake household chores. Meanwhile, 49.6 per cent of children who do not attend school are also not engaged in household chores. School attendance among non-working children generally increases with age, rising from 68.8 per cent for ages 5–9 to 75.8 per cent for ages 10–13. However, among those aged 14–17, the proportion attending school declines to 67.2 per cent.

By gender, a higher proportion of boys (76.1 per cent) attend school compared to girls (64.8 per cent). Among school-going children, boys and girls are almost equally likely to perform household chores (49.4 per cent vs 50.7 per cent). However, among those not attending school, the gap widens significantly, with 58.7 per cent of girls doing household chores compared to 38.7 per cent of boys. Regarding place of residence, school attendance is lower among rural children (62.0 per cent) than urban children (79.3 per cent).

Refer to Table A6.4 in the Appendix for a detailed breakdown of results by division and district. Sujawal stands out as the district with the highest proportion of children neither working nor attending school, with 59.4 per cent falling into this category, followed by Kashmor at 54.3 per cent. Conversely, Karachi has the highest proportion of children attending school and not working (82–85 per cent), followed closely by Korangi, where 81 per cent of children fall into this category.

Table 6.5 Number and per cent of children 5-17 years not working, by school attendance and involvement in household chores, by sex, age group and area of residence

Characteristic	Children not working												Total children not working			
	Attending school						Not attending school									
	Total children not working in school			No household chores			Household chores			Total children not working not in school				Household chores		
	Number	Per cent of total children not working	Per cent of total children working in school	Number	Per cent of total children not working in school	Per cent of total children working in school	Number	Per cent of total children not working in school	Per cent of total children working in school	Number	Per cent of total children not working not in school	Per cent of total children working not in school		Number	Per cent of total children not working not in school	Per cent of total children working not in school
	Both sexes															
Total 5-17	9,701,964	70.5	50.0	4,852,447	50.0	4,061,941	29.5	2,047,808	50.4	2,014,133	49.6	13,763,905				
5-9	4,805,909	68.8	37.7	2,993,510	62.3	2,182,488	31.2	703,596	32.2	1,478,893	67.8	6,988,397				
10-13	3,036,949	75.8	57.5	1,291,147	42.5	972,224	24.2	643,599	66.2	328,625	33.8	4,009,173				
14-17	1,859,106	67.2	69.5	567,790	30.5	907,229	32.8	700,613	77.2	206,616	22.8	2,766,335				
	Boys															
Total 5-17	5,306,904	76.1	49.4	2,683,992	50.6	1,669,303	23.9	645,573	38.7	1,023,730	61.3	6,976,207				
5-9	2,584,858	71.4	37.7	1,610,945	62.3	1,036,287	28.6	294,149	28.4	742,137	71.6	3,621,144				
10-13	1,678,974	82.4	56.7	727,085	43.3	359,455	17.6	192,990	53.7	166,465	46.3	2,038,429				
14-17	1,043,073	79.2	66.8	345,961	33.2	273,561	20.8	158,434	57.9	115,127	42.1	1,316,634				

Figure 6.5 illustrates the relationship between the number of hours children aged 5–17 spend on household chores and their school attendance, broken down by rural and urban areas. In both rural and urban settings, there is a clear negative correlation between the amount of time children devote to household chores and their school attendance. Specifically, as the number of hours children spend on chores increases, the percentage of children attending school decreases.

Figure 6.5 Number of hours engaged in household chores for children 5–17 and school attendance

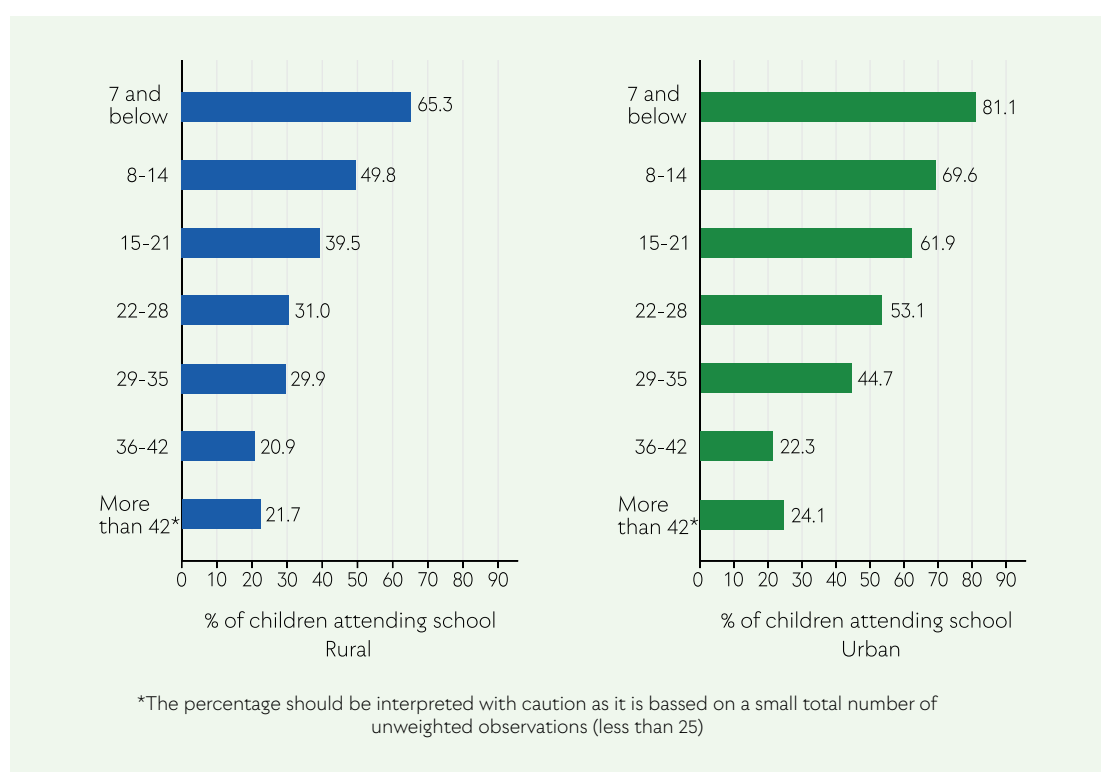


Table 6.6 presents the number of hours that working children spend on work and school attendance. Working children work a median of 24 hours per week. Among those who attend school, the median number of hours worked is 18, while those who do not attend school, work a median of 30 hours. When broken down by age, older children tend to dedicate more time to work, with those aged 14–17 working an average of 33 hours per week, compared to 21 hours for those aged 10–13.

By gender, among working children boys work a median of 29 hours per week, while girls work a median of 18 hours. This means boys are more likely to work and they work more given they are working. Both boys and girls work more hours when not attending school, with boys working 41 hours and girls working 31 hours. In terms of location, children in urban areas work longer hours than those in rural areas, with a median of 35 hours in urban areas compared to 21 hours in rural areas. This pattern holds true for both those attending and not attending school, with

children in urban areas generally working longer hours. Note that 6.1 per cent of children in urban areas are working children.

Table A6.5 in the Appendix provides a breakdown of the results by division and district. Working hours for working children were noticeably lower if the child attends school in all divisions, though the gap in Ghotki division was lower (20 vs 19 hours). The highest median working hours were in Karachi (48 hours) where the proportion of working children was lowest.

Table 6.6 Median number of hours worked per week for working children 5-17 years attending and not attending school by sex, age group and area of residence

Characteristic	Working children		
	Total	Attending school	Not attending school
	Median number of hours	Median number of hours	Median number of hours
Both sexes			
Total 5-17	24	18	30
5-9	14	13	16
10-13	21	15	25
14-17	33	24	36
Boys			
Total 5-17	29	20	41
5-9	14	13	21
10-13	23	16	32
14-17	40	28	46.5
Girls			
Total 5-17	18	14	21
5-9	12.5	11	14
10-13	17	14	20
14-17	21	19	21
Residence			
Rural	21	16	28
Urban	35	24	48

Table 6.7 provides data on the number of hours children spend on household chores. Children aged 5–17 spend a median of 5.5 hours per week on chores. For those attending school, the median is 4.5 hours per week, while those not attending school spend a higher median of 7 hours.

When analysed by age, older children dedicate more time to household chores. A gender comparison reveals that girls spend more time on household chores than boys, regardless of whether they attend school, though the gap is larger for those not attending school.

Furthermore, in urban areas, children who do not attend school spend the same amount of time on chores as those in rural areas, with both groups spending a median of 7 hours per week. However, among school-going children, those in rural areas spend more time on chores than their urban peers, with a median of 5 hours compared to 4 hours. For results categorised by division and district, see Table A6.6 in the Appendix.

Table 6.7 Median number of hours per week devoted to household chores for children 5-17 years attending and not attending school by sex, age group and area of residence

Characteristic	Household chores		
	Median number of hours		
	Total	Attending school	Not attending school
Both sexes			
Total 5-17	5.5	4.5	7
5-9	3.5	3.5	4
10-13	5.5	4.5	7
14-17	7	7	11
Boys			
Total 5-17	4	4	5
5-9	3.5	3.5	3.5
10-13	4	4	5.5
14-17	5.5	5	6
Girls			
Total 5-17	7	5.5	10
5-9	3.5	3.5	4.5
10-13	7	6	10
14-17	12	7	14
Residence			
Rural	6	5	7
Urban	4.5	4	7

Furthermore, Figure 6.6 illustrates the activities of children by age. As children get older, the percentage of those exclusively engaged in studying, after initially rising, begins to decline starting at ages 9 and 11. After age 9, there is a noticeable shift, with more children transitioning to either working only or not engaging in any activity. By age 17, the proportion of children not participating in any activity reaches approximately 22 per cent. As school attendance drops, the category growing most is “only work”.

Figure 6.6 Children’s activities by age

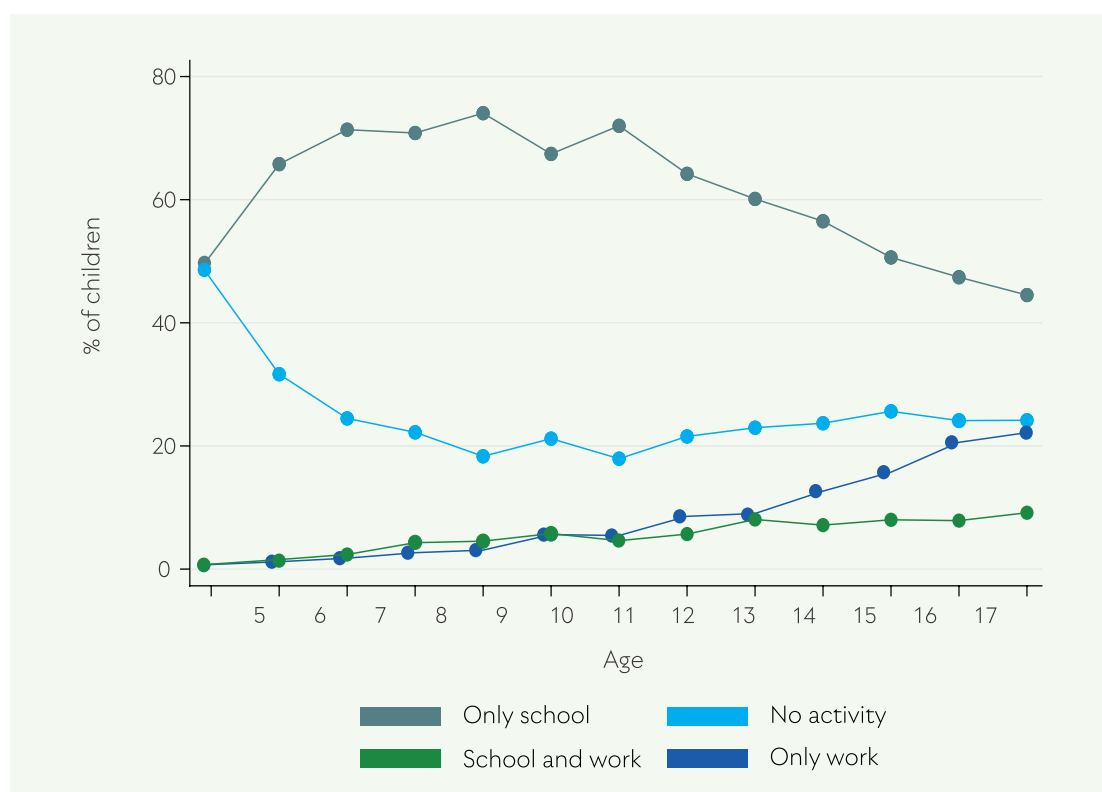


Figure 6.7 shows the differences in activities between boys and girls aged 5 to 17. Boys are more likely to be exclusively focused on studying than girls, with 64.5 per cent of boys engaged solely in education, compared to 59.3 per cent of girls. Furthermore, a larger percentage of girls (32.3 per cent) are not participating in any activity—neither studying nor working—compared to 20.3 per cent of boys. This gap points to a gender difference in both educational involvement and participation in economic activities, which could have lasting effects on children’s development and future prospects.

Figure 6.7 Children’s activities. By sex (age 5–17)

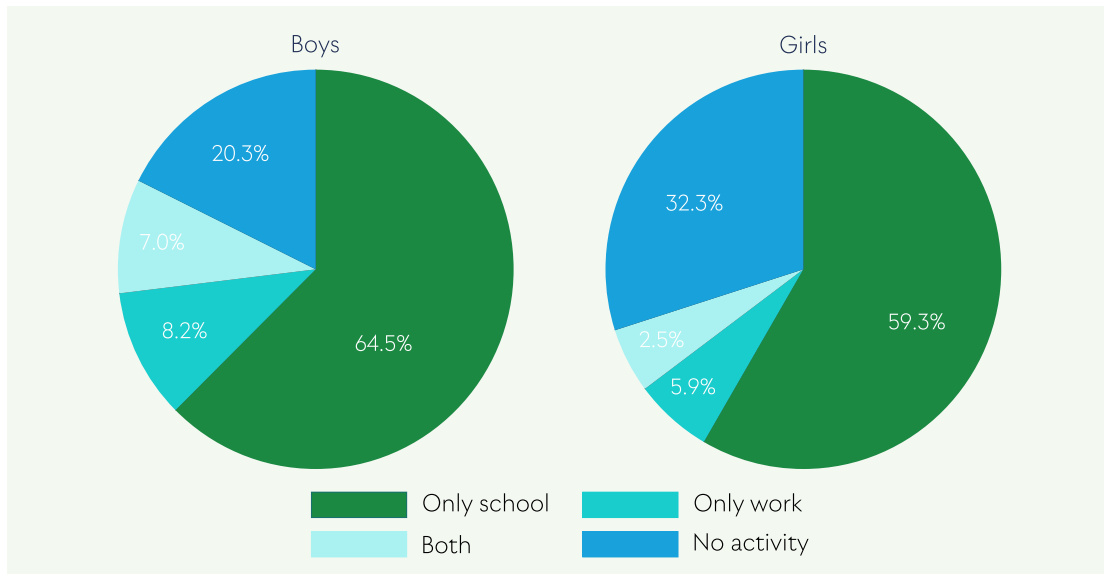


Figure 6.8 illustrates the differences in activities between children aged 5 to 17 based on their disability status. The data shows that 70.6 per cent of children with disabilities are neither studying nor working. Additionally, 24.6 per cent of these children are solely attending school, while only 3.5 per cent are exclusively engaged in work. In comparison, among children without disabilities, 62.7 per cent attend school, and 25.2 per cent are not involved in any activity.

These figures reveal a significant gap in educational and work participation between children with and without disabilities

Figure 6.8 Children’s activities by disability status 5–17

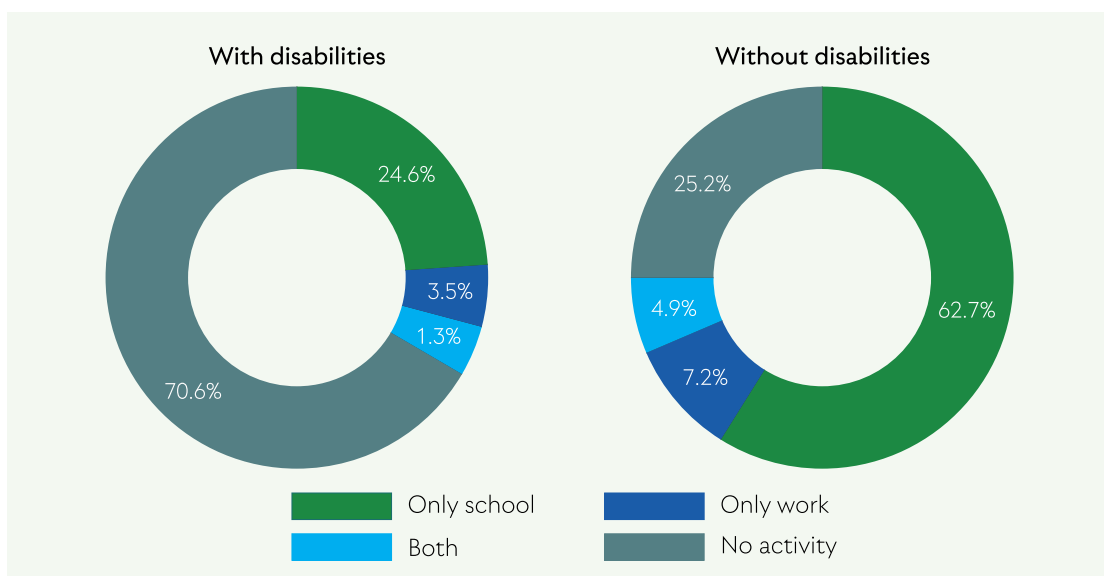


Table 6.8 compares children's activities across different age groups, sex, area of residence, and marital status. Among married children aged 10 to 17, 57.7 per cent are neither employed nor attending school, a stark contrast to the 22.4 per cent of never-married children in the same situation. This impact is dominated by married girls, as explained below. Additionally, 23.0 per cent of married children are engaged solely in employment, 14.4 per cent attend school exclusively, and only 4.8 per cent balance both work and education. This is largely a result of the ever married group being on average older.

Consistent with previous trends, boys are more likely to be exclusively in school, with 47 per cent attending compared to just 13.0 per cent of girls. Looking specifically at the 14–17 age group, 58.9 per cent of ever-married children do not participate in either work or education.

Independent of marital status, children in rural areas are less likely to attend school than those in urban areas, with 23.2 per cent of married urban children in school compared to 11.1 per cent among those unmarried.

Table 6.8 Number and per cent of children 10-17 years by activity status, by age group, sex, area of residence and marital status

Characteristic	Never married				Ever married (or Nikah)			
	Only in school	Only in employment	In employment and school	Neither in employment nor in school	Only in school	Only in employment	In employment and school	Neither in employment nor in school
a. Percentage								
Total 10-17	59.0	11.7	6.9	22.4	14.4	23.0	4.8	57.7
Sex								
Boys	61.7	13.8	10.2	14.3	28.9	47.5	12.4	11.2
Girls	55.9	9.4	3.2	31.4	8.4	13.0	1.7	76.9
Age group								
10-13	65.8	7.1	6.0	21.0	28.5	15.2	9.3	47.0
14-17	50.5	17.5	8.0	24.0	12.9	23.9	4.3	58.9
Residence								
Rural	44.9	17.1	9.8	28.1	11.1	26.6	4.9	57.5
Urban	73.7	6.1	3.9	16.4	23.2	13.7	4.7	58.5
b. Number								
Total 10-17	4,887,508	969,322	573,135	1,851,180	7,002	11,189	2,343	28,054

Characteristic	Never married				Ever married (or Nikah)			
	Only in school	Only in employment	In employment and school	Neither in employment nor in school	Only in school	Only in employment	In employment and school	Neither in employment nor in school
b. Number								
Sex								
Boys	2,717,318	605,156	448,085	631,433	4,090	6,719	1,759	1,583
Girls	2,170,190	364,165	125,051	1,219,747	2,911	4,469	584	26,471
Age group								
10-13	3,034,361	328,536	278,091	970,018	1,338	712	438	2,206
14-17	1,853,146	640,786	295,045	881,163	5,664	10,477	1,904	25,847
Residence								
Rural	1,895,298	723,071	415,725	1,185,473	3,880	9,343	1,710	20,176
Urban	2,992,210	246,251	157,411	665,707	3,122	1,846	632	7,877
There are 24 children from the unweighted survey responses for whom information about the marital status is missing, which when weighted represent 1765 children.								

6.4 Characteristics of work

Analysing the sectors in which children are employed is essential for understanding their working conditions. Table 6.9 presents the percentage of working children by industry, showing that the most common sector of employment is agriculture, forestry, and fishing (52.5 per cent), followed by manufacturing (15.5 per cent) and wholesale and retail trade (11.3 per cent). As children grow older, their involvement in manufacturing (20.8 per cent) and wholesale and retail trade (14.2 per cent) increases.

Boys are more likely to work in agriculture, forestry, and fishing, as well as in wholesale and retail trade, construction, and other industries. In contrast, girls are more commonly found in the manufacturing sector, water collection and activities of households as employers (i.e. domestic work).

Economic disparities also shape employment patterns. Children from poorer households are primarily found in agriculture (in line with rural areas being poorer), water collection and manufacturing, while those from wealthier backgrounds are mostly engaged in wholesale and retail trade. Detailed findings by division and district can be found in Table A6.7 in the Appendix.

Table 6.9 Per cent of working children 5-17 years by industry, by sex, age group, wealth index quintile and area of residence

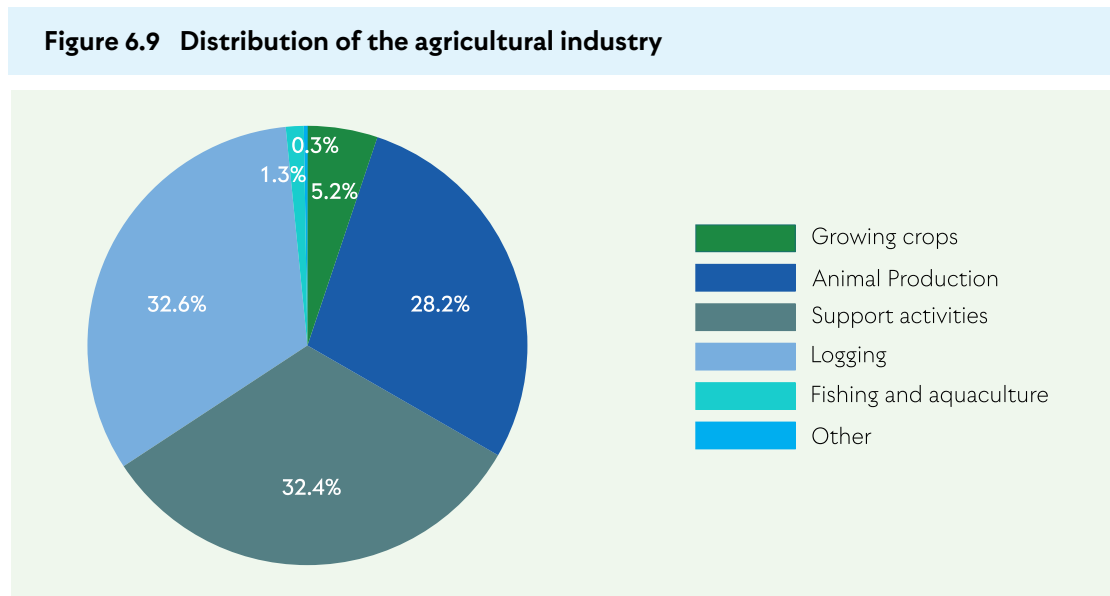
Characteristic	Working children								
	Industry								Total working children
	Agriculture, forestry and fishing	Manufacturing	Wholesale and retail trade	Water collection	Construction	Accommodation and food service activities	Activities of households as employers	Other industries	
Both sexes									
Total 5-17	52.5	15.5	11.3	6.4	4.7	2.3	1.8	5.4	1,837,411
5-9	71.9	4.4	5.4	15.2	0.5	0.3	0.6	1.7	310,098
10-13	60.3	13.1	9.8	7.9	1.5	2.0	2.1	3.2	595,237
14-17	41.2	20.8	14.2	2.6	8.1	3.1	1.9	8.1	932,077
Boys									
Total 5-17	54.5	8.2	16.2	3.3	6.9	3.2	1.2	6.5	1,238,111
5-9	77.7	2.9	8.3	7.4	0.8	0.4	0.3	2.3	184,539
10-13	64.6	6.4	14.0	4.5	2.2	2.7	1.5	4.1	391,514
14-17	42.1	10.8	19.6	1.4	11.4	4.3	1.2	9.0	662,059
Girls									
Total 5-17	48.5	30.6	1.3	12.9	0.1	0.3	2.9	3.3	599,300
5-9	63.4	6.6	1.2	26.7	0.0	0.3	1.1	0.8	125,559
10-13	52.1	26.1	1.8	14.4	0.3	0.6	3.2	1.6	203,723
14-17	38.8	45.3	1.0	5.4	0.0	0.1	3.6	5.8	270,018
WIQ									
Poorest	71.9	7.8	4.3	8.3	3.3	1.4	0.9	2.0	742,806
Second	57.6	14.7	8.3	7.7	5.4	2.2	1.5	2.7	524,399
Middle	36.3	23.1	18.2	3.8	6.8	2.8	2.0	7.1	322,631
Fourth	6.1	32.5	27.4	1.5	5.8	5.1	4.3	17.1	171,046
Richest	2.6	26.3	35.6	1.5	2.0	3.1	4.5	24.4	76,529

Working children									
Characteristic	Industry								Total working children
	Agriculture, forestry and fishing	Manufacturing	Wholesale and retail trade	Water collection	Construction	Accommodation and food service activities	Activities of households as employers	Other industries	
Residence									
Rural	64.6	11.2	6.7	7.5	4.5	1.5	1.1	2.8	1,403,982
Urban	13.5	29.5	26.3	2.8	5.5	4.7	3.8	14.0	433,429

The total number of working children in this table does not include children for whom information about the industry is missing. These records account for 184 children from the unweighted survey responses, which when weighted represent 35100 children.

Other industries include: 1) Activities of households as employers; undifferentiated goods- and services-producing activities of households for own use, 2) Other service activities, 3) Administrative and support service activities, 4) Human health and social work activities, 5) Education, 6) Mining and quarrying, 7) Public administration and defence; compulsory social security, 8) Information and communication, 9) Professional, scientific and technical activities, 10) Arts, entertainment and recreation, 11) Real estate activities, and 12) Electricity, gas, steam and air conditioning supply

Figure 6.9 shows that roughly a third of the children engaged in agriculture are involved in each of logging (32.6 per cent), which includes the collection of firewood, and in support activities (32.4 per cent), with animal production the other larger group (28.2 per cent). Growing crops and fishing make up a much smaller part of the group of children in agriculture, while others include mixed farming, and other minor forestry categories.



Many of the patterns observed by industry are also reflected in occupations. Table 6.10 presents the distribution of working children by occupation, highlighting key trends across age, gender, and socioeconomic status. The most common occupations among working children are elementary occupations (50.5 per cent), skilled agricultural, forestry, and fishery work (18.9 per cent), and craft and related trades (17.8 per cent).

Younger children aged 5–9 are predominantly engaged in low skilled elementary occupations (71.5 per cent). As children grow older, their involvement in elementary occupations decreases—though it remains significant (43.3 per cent among those aged 14–17). Instead, older children are more likely to work in craft and related trades (23.3 per cent). Boys and girls participate in elementary occupations at nearly equal rates (50.3 per cent for boys vs. 51.0 per cent for girls). However, girls are more likely to be engaged in craft and related trades (30.2 per cent compared to 11.7 per cent for boys).

Children from poorer households are more frequently employed in skilled agriculture (22.5 per cent, whereas Children from wealthier households are more likely to work in service and sales roles (29.7 per cent in the richest quintile). Rural children predominantly work in skilled agriculture, whereas urban children are more concentrated in craft-related trades, service, and sales. See Table A6.8 in the Appendix, for the results by division and district, which are in line with the rural-urban split.

Table 6.10 Per cent of working children 5-17 years by occupation, by sex, age group, wealth index quintile and area of residence

Characteristic	Working children						
	Major group of occupation						Total working children
	Service and sales workers	Skilled agricultural, forestry and fishery worker	Craft and related trades workers	Plant and machine operators, and assemblers	Elementary occupation	Other occupations	
Both sexes							
Total 5-17	9.4	18.9	17.8	1.8	50.5	1.6	1,841,572
5-9	2.8	19.1	5.8	0.4	71.5	0.4	309,242
10-13	7.3	25.2	15.4	0.7	51.0	0.4	598,302
14-17	13.0	14.7	23.3	3.0	43.3	2.7	934,027
Boys							
Total 5-17	13.4	20.9	11.7	2.6	50.3	1.2	1,234,688
5-9	4.2	23.4	5.3	0.5	66.3	0.3	184,270

Characteristic	Working children						
	Major group of occupation						Total working children
	Service and sales workers	Skilled agricultural, forestry and fishery worker	Craft and related trades workers	Plant and machine operators, and assemblers	Elementary occupation	Other occupations	
Both sexes							
10-13	10.5	28.6	10.3	0.9	49.1	0.5	390,413
14-17	17.6	15.5	14.3	4.1	46.6	1.9	660,005
Girls							
Total 5-17	1.4	14.9	30.2	0.2	51.0	2.3	606,883
5-9	0.8	12.8	6.5	0.2	79.3	0.5	124,972
10-13	1.2	18.8	25.1	0.2	54.5	0.3	207,889
14-17	1.9	12.9	44.8	0.3	35.5	4.7	274,022
WIQ							
Poorest	3.4	22.5	9.1	0.6	64.3	0.2	747,288
Second	7.0	23.0	17.1	1.1	51.4	0.4	526,438
Middle	14.8	16.4	26.9	2.1	38.6	1.2	319,998
Fourth	24.1	2.5	36.1	6.3	25.2	5.8	171,040
Richest	29.7	1.7	28.8	7.4	16.9	15.5	76,807
Residence							
Rural	5.8	23.4	13.0	0.8	56.6	0.4	1,407,775
Urban	21.3	4.2	33.3	4.9	30.9	5.5	433,796
The total number of working children in this table does not include children for whom information about the occupation is missing. These records account for 161 children from the unweighted survey responses, which when weighted represent 30940 children. Other occupations include: Managers, professionals, Technicians and associate professionals, Clerical support workers							

Figure 6.10 presents a breakdown of elementary occupations involving working children. The largest proportion of children are employed as refuse workers and other elementary labourers (47.3 per cent) which includes water and firewood collectors, followed by those in agriculture, forestry, and fishery (34.1 per cent). Additionally, 11.7 per cent work in mining, construction, manufacturing, and transport. Other roles include cleaners and helpers (4.0 per cent) and food preparation assistants (2.4 per cent).

Figure 6.10 Sub-major group distribution among children in elementary occupations

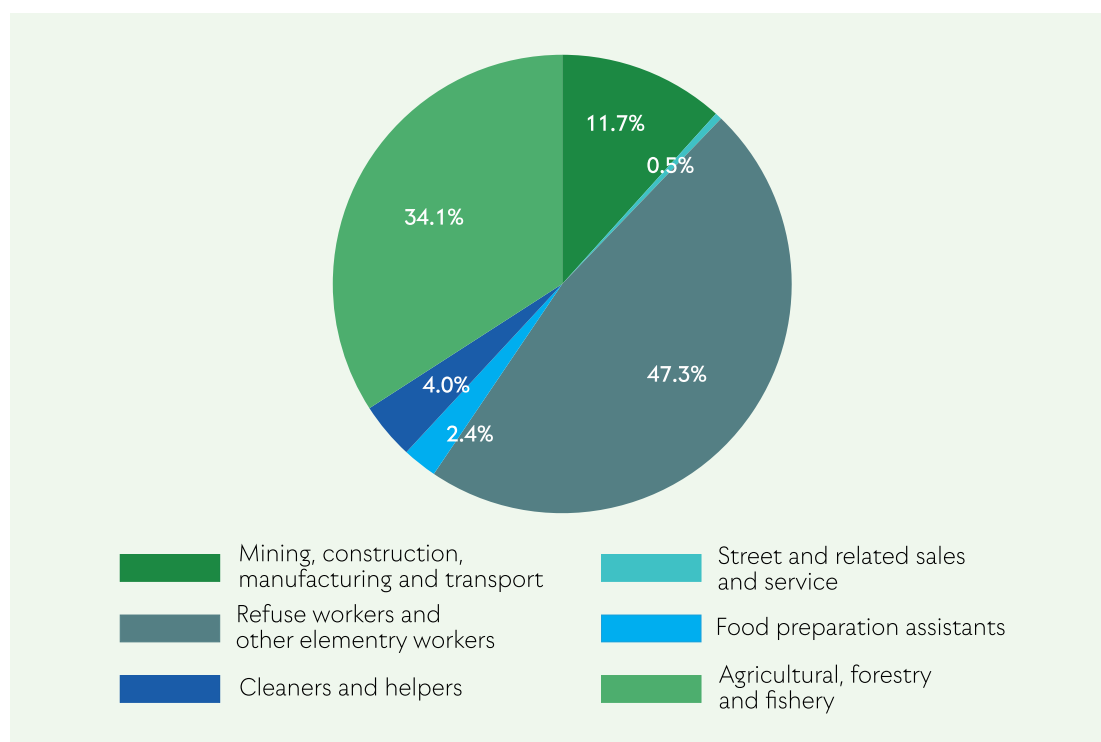


Table 6.11 compares the employment status of working children. The most common forms of employment are unpaid family work (49.1%) and self-employment in non-agricultural sectors (13.7%). Notably, around 45% of those engaged in unpaid family work are involved in agriculture.

Younger children aged 5–9 predominantly work as unpaid family workers (80.1 per cent). Older children aged 14–17 are also frequently unpaid family workers (31.5 per cent), but they are more likely to be self-employed in non-agricultural (19.2 per cent) and agricultural sectors (14.2 per cent).

Gender differences are also evident. Boys are more likely to be self-employed in non-agriculture (16.7 per cent compared to 7.5 per cent for girls). They also have higher participation as agricultural labourers (9.7 per cent versus 3.4 per cent for girls). In contrast, girls are more commonly unpaid family workers (59.8 per cent compared to 43.7 per cent for boys) and are slightly more represented in self-employment within agriculture (12 per cent versus 9 per cent for boys) and other occupations (4.4 per cent versus 3.8 per cent).

Economic background influences employment patterns as well. Children from poorer households are more likely to work as unpaid family workers (57.9 per cent) or as labourers in non-agriculture (11.2 per cent). In contrast, children from wealthier families have a more balanced distribution across different employment types, with around 20 per cent engaged in each, unpaid family work, self-employment (both agricultural and non-agricultural), and agricultural labour.

Geographical location also plays a role. Children in rural areas are more likely to be unpaid family workers (55.9 per cent) compared to those in urban areas (26.8 per cent). Conversely, self-employment in non-agriculture is more common among urban children (24.4 per cent) than rural children (10.3 per cent).

Finally, school attendance has an impact on employment status, with children who attend school being more likely to engage in unpaid family work. Refer to Table A6.9 in the Appendix for the detailed results by division and district.

Table 6.11 Number and per cent of working children 5–17 years by status in employment, by age group, sex, wealth index quintile, area of residence and school attendance

Characteristic	Working children								Total working children
	Status in employment								
	Unpaid family worker	Self-employed (non-agriculture)	Self-employed (agriculture)	Labourer (agriculture)	Labourer (non-agriculture)	Employee	Apprenticeship	Other	
Both sexes									
Total 5-17	49.1	13.7	10.0	7.6	8.7	4.9	2.1	4.0	1,872,512
5-9	80.1	4.4	2.8	2.9	3.5	2.2	1.1	2.9	316,524
10-13	60.3	9.8	7.2	5.3	7.5	4.7	1.8	3.3	607,776
14-17	31.5	19.2	14.2	10.6	11.1	5.9	2.7	4.8	948,212
Boys									
Total 5-17	43.7	16.7	9.0	9.7	8.8	5.3	2.9	3.8	1,248,847
5-9	77.2	5.7	2.9	4.0	3.2	2.4	1.9	2.6	187,127
10-13	57.2	11.4	6.8	6.9	6.9	5.4	2.5	3.0	395,894
14-17	26.3	23.0	12.0	12.9	11.6	6.1	3.5	4.6	665,825
Girls									
Total 5-17	59.8	7.5	12.0	3.4	8.3	4.0	0.5	4.4	623,665
5-9	84.3	2.5	2.6	1.4	3.9	2.0	0.0	3.4	129,396
10-13	66.2	6.9	8.0	2.2	8.8	3.5	0.5	3.9	211,882
14-17	43.8	10.3	19.4	5.2	9.9	5.5	0.7	5.3	282,387

Characteristic	Working children								
	Status in employment								Total working children
	Unpaid family worker	Self-employed (non-agriculture)	Self-employed (agriculture)	Labourer (agriculture)	Labourer (non-agriculture)	Employee	Apprenticeship	Other	
WIQ									
Poorest	57.9	8.9	5.2	5.3	11.2	6.3	0.6	4.6	757,507
Second	55.3	13.5	9.0	4.9	8.1	5.0	1.8	2.4	536,012
Middle	39.9	16.0	16.1	7.6	7.8	4.7	2.3	5.7	328,324
Fourth	20.6	27.3	17.8	19.2	4.2	0.7	6.3	4.0	173,501
Richest	22.9	21.4	21.3	22.1	1.7	0.3	9.1	1.2	77,167
Residence									
Rural	55.9	10.3	7.8	4.9	9.9	6.0	0.9	4.2	1,432,539
Urban	26.8	24.4	17.2	16.4	4.6	1.3	6.0	3.3	439,973
School attendance									
No	40.0	16.3	11.0	9.2	11.4	6.1	1.9	4.0	1,111,637
Yes	62.4	9.8	8.6	5.3	4.6	3.1	2.4	3.9	760,875

Figure 6.11 illustrates the average hourly earnings of paid child workers across various industries. The data is derived from survey responses on average monthly income from primary employment and the number of hours worked in the past week. The calculation of average hourly earnings assumes that children worked a consistent number of hours each week throughout the month. Among industries, children engaged in construction earn the highest hourly earnings, reaching 76.9 PKR, this is followed by accommodation and food services where the hourly earnings are 60.2 PKR. Children that are working in water collection have the lowest hourly earnings with 2 PKR.

Figure 6.11 Average hourly earnings for children 5–17 years by industry

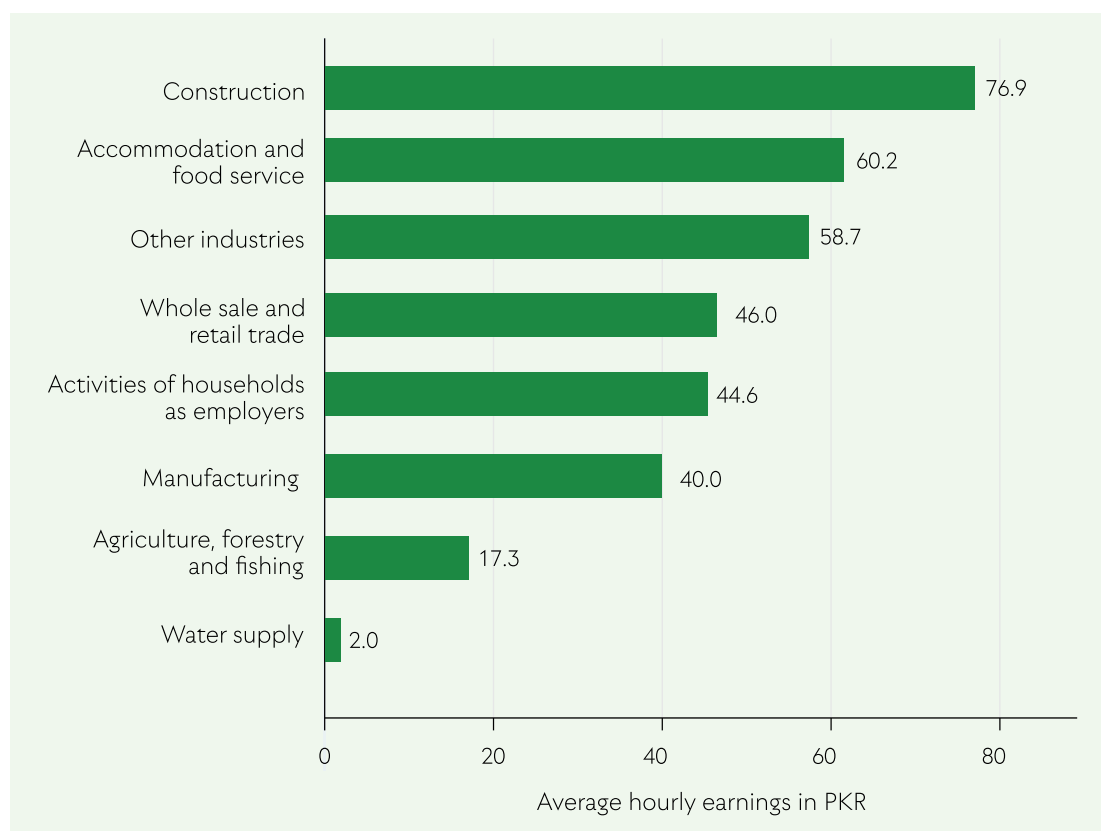


Table 6.12 presents the number and percentage of children who are either actively seeking or willing to work. Overall, very few children are looking for employment, with only 0.1% actively seeking work and 0.3% expressing a willingness to work. Older children show a slightly higher inclination, with 0.5% actively seeking employment and 0.7% willing to work. Table A6.10 in the Appendix provides a breakdown of the results by division and district.

Table 6.12 Number and per cent of children 5-17 years seeking work and willing to work by age group

Characteristic	Seeking		Willing		Total number of children
	Number	Per cent	Number	Per cent	
Total 5-17	22,647	0.1	38,745	0.3	15,636,417
5-9	1,800	0.0	5,725	0.1	7,304,921
10-13	3,777	0.1	6,003	0.1	4,616,949
14-17	17,070	0.5	27,016	0.7	3,714,547

Table 6.13 presents the percentage of working children based on their place of work. The majority (74.1 per cent) work away from home, with this trend becoming more pronounced as children grow older. Boys are significantly more likely to work away from home (86.1 per cent), whereas girls have a more balanced distribution, with 50 (per cent) working both at home and away. Among younger girls (aged 5–9), 62.6 (per cent) work away from home, but this proportion decreases with age, dropping to 39.7% for those aged 14–17.

Both the poorest and wealthiest children show a similar likelihood of working away from home, with 75.6 per cent of children from the lowest income quintile and 76.3 per cent from the highest. Geographic differences are minimal, as 73.6 per cent of working children in rural areas and 75.5% in urban areas are employed outside their homes. See Table A6.11 in the Appendix, for the results by division and district. Children are most likely to work away from home in Hyderabad division (80.8 per cent)

Table 6.13 Number and per cent of all working children 5-17 years working at home or away from home by sex, age group, wealth index quintile and area of residence

Characteristic	Working children				
	Location of work				Total number of working children
	At home		Away from home		
	Number	Per cent (row)	Number	Per cent (row)	
Both sexes					
Total 5-17	485,275	25.9	1,387,237	74.1	1,872,512
5-9	90,182	28.5	226,341	71.5	316,524
10-13	166,195	27.3	441,581	72.7	607,776
14-17	228,898	24.1	719,314	75.9	948,212
Boys					
Total 5-17	173,280	13.9	1,075,567	86.1	1,248,847
5-9	41,800	22.3	145,328	77.7	187,127
10-13	72,763	18.4	323,131	81.6	395,894
14-17	58,717	8.8	607,108	91.2	665,825
Girls					
Total 5-17	311,995	50.0	311,670	50.0	623,665
5-9	48,383	37.4	81,014	62.6	129,396

Characteristic	Working children				
	Location of work				Total number of working children
	At home		Away from home		
	Number	Per cent (row)	Number	Per cent (row)	
Girls					
10-13	93,432	44.1	118,450	55.9	211,882
14-17	170,180	60.3	112,206	39.7	282,387
WIQ					
Poorest	184,950	24.4	572,557	75.6	757,507
Second	142,445	26.6	393,568	73.4	536,012
Middle	99,582	30.3	228,743	69.7	328,324
Fourth	40,002	23.1	133,499	76.9	173,501
Richest	18,297	23.7	58,870	76.3	77,167
Residence					
Rural	377,552	26.4	1,054,987	73.6	1,432,539
Urban	107,724	24.5	332,250	75.5	439,973

Table 6.14 presents the distribution of working hours among children aged 5–17, highlighting variations by sex, age, household education level, wealth index, and place of residence. The data shows that the median number of hours worked per week varies across different groups, with boys generally working longer hours than girls (29 vs 18 hours). Older children tend to work more hours than younger ones, with a notable increase in those working more than 42 hours per week as they grow older. Household characteristics also influence working hours, as children from households where the head has lower education levels tend to work longer hours (median of 25.5 hours), compared to 19 hours when the parents have higher education level.

Children from the richest households have higher proportions of long working hours (47.5 per cent working more than 42 hours in comparison with 18.8 per cent in poorest households). Geographical differences indicate that urban children work more hours on average compared to those in rural areas (35 median hours vs 21 median hours).

Table 6.14 Median number of hours worked, and per cent of working children 5-17 years by number of hours worked per week, by sex, age group, education of household head, wealth index quintile and area of residence

Characteristic	Working children								
	Total hours worked							Median hours worked	Total number of working children
	7 and below	8-14	15-21	22-28	29-35	36-42	More than 42		
Both sexes									
Total 5-17	12.9	16.7	15.8	12.9	10.0	8.3	23.1	24	1,872,512
5-9	30.7	24.8	17.3	10.3	6.2	3.8	6.7	14	316,524
10-13	15.5	20.9	16.9	14.8	10.0	7.0	14.8	21	607,776
14-17	5.3	11.3	14.7	12.6	11.3	10.6	33.8	33	948,212
Boys									
Total 5-17	10.8	13.3	13.0	12.5	10.3	9.8	30.1	29	1,248,847
5-9	28.1	23.7	16.0	12.3	6.7	4.8	8.3	14	187,127
10-13	13.7	18.2	16.6	14.9	10.0	7.8	18.8	23	395,894
14-17	4.2	7.5	10.1	11.2	11.5	12.3	43.0	40	665,825
Girls									
Total 5-17	17.3	23.5	21.4	13.7	9.4	5.3	8.9	18	623,665
5-9	34.6	26.5	19.2	7.6	5.4	2.3	4.3	12.5	129,396
10-13	18.9	25.9	17.3	14.5	9.9	5.6	7.5	17	211,882
14-17	8.2	20.4	25.5	15.9	10.9	6.6	12.2	21	282,387
Edu. HH head									
None/Pre-school	12.4	16.0	15.7	12.7	10.5	8.9	23.7	25.5	1,162,778
Primary	11.0	16.8	16.4	14.3	9.7	8.1	23.1	24	290,290
Middle	14.4	18.2	15.1	9.8	9.9	8.5	23.6	24.5	111,989
Secondary	15.6	16.4	15.8	14.3	7.6	6.9	22.8	22	170,075
Higher	17.1	21.8	16.5	12.7	9.1	5.6	17.0	19	135,113

Characteristic	Working children								
	Total hours worked							Median hours worked	Total number of working children
	7 and below	8-14	15-21	22-28	29-35	36-42	More than 42		
WIQ									
Poorest	14.6	17.4	17.1	14.4	9.9	7.7	18.8	22	757,507
Second	15.1	20.1	16.4	11.7	10.3	7.7	18.5	21	536,012
Middle	10.9	16.2	16.8	13.8	10.4	9.0	22.5	25	328,324
Fourth	6.0	8.4	10.5	9.4	9.1	10.2	45.9	41	173,501
Richest	5.8	7.9	6.8	11.1	9.3	11.2	47.5	42	77,167
Residence									
Rural	14.7	18.3	17.4	13.8	9.9	7.6	18.1	21	1,432,539
Urban	7.2	11.5	10.7	10.1	10.3	10.4	39.3	35	439,973
The education of the household head omits the category of "Other". These records account for 6 individuals from the unweighted survey responses, which when weighted represent 999 children.									

Table 6.15 presents the median number of hours worked by industry, highlighting sectors where children tend to work the longest hours. The proportion of children working different weekly hours varies across industries. Some sectors, such as water supply, have a higher percentage of children working only a few hours per week, while others, like construction and accommodation, are among the most demanding industries, with 54.9 per cent and 53.4 per cent of children, respectively, working more than 42 hours per week. This is followed by wholesale and retail trade.

Details by district can be found in Appendix A6.12. Karachi is the division with the highest percentage of children working more than 42 hours (55.5 per cent), though recall that fewer children work in Karachi division.

Table 6.15 Median number of hours worked, and per cent of working children 5-17 years by number of hours worked per week, by industry

	Total hours worked							Median number of hours	Total number of working children
	1-7	8-14	15-21	22-28	29-35	36-42	More than 42		
Total 5-17	12.8	16.8	15.8	12.8	10.0	8.3	23.3	24.0	1,837,411
Industry									
Agriculture, forestry and fishing	15.9	20.4	18.4	14.0	9.4	6.9	14.8	21.0	965,542
Manufacturing	5.2	16.9	20.8	14.7	10.2	7.3	24.1	25.0	285,515
Wholesale and retail trade	3.0	8.4	9.6	12.5	11.4	12.0	43.0	40.0	207,967
Water Supply	43.9	25.2	14.3	7.7	4.4	1.6	2.4	10.0	117,911
Construction	0.9	3.1	3.0	7.1	14.2	16.8	54.9	47.0	86,525
Accommodation	3.1	3.7	6.5	8.9	16.4	7.7	53.4	46.0	41,848
Activities of households as employers	3.9	5.7	8.4	14.2	15.3	13.8	38.7	36.0	32,080
Other industries	5.7	10.1	7.8	8.0	11.6	14.8	41.7	38.0	100,024

The total number of working children in this table does not include children for whom information about the industry is missing. These records account for 184 children from the unweighted survey responses, which when weighted represent 35100 children.

Other industries include: Mining and quarrying; Electricity, gas, steam and air conditioning supply; Transportation and storage; Information and communication; Financial and insurance activities; Real estate activities; Professional, scientific and technical activities; Administrative and support service activities; Public administration and defence, compulsory social security ;Education; Human health and social work activities; Arts, entertainment and recreation; Activities of extraterritorial organizations and bodies

7. INCIDENCE AND CHARACTERISTICS OF CHILD LABOUR

The next two chapters are dedicated to specifically examining children engaged in child labour, a distinct subset of working children. As outlined in Chapter 5, a child is classified as being in child labour if, during the reference week, they met any of the following criteria: (i) exceeded the legally permitted working hours for their age group, (ii) worked night shifts, (iii) were employed in a hazardous industry or occupation, (iv) worked under dangerous conditions, (v) used hazardous tools, or (vi) experienced abuse in the workplace. Recall that when adolescents aged 14–17 are working with their immediate family this is not classified under child labour. While Chapter 8 explores the specific risks associated with child labour, this chapter focuses on the general characteristics of work undertaken by children in child labour.

Table 7.1 presents the prevalence of child labour among all children and within the group of working children. In Sindh, 9.3 per cent of children aged 5–17 are engaged in child labour. Among working children specifically, this translates to 78.1 per cent (see Figure 7.3). The likelihood of child labour increases with age, rising from 4.3 per cent among children aged 5–9 to 14.5 per cent for those aged 14–17. Child labour is more common among boys (12.4 per cent) than girls (5.9 per cent), with the gender gap widening as children grow older—boys aged 12–13 and 14–17 are significantly more likely to be in child labour compared to girls of the same age group. Particularly, considering the prevalence of child labour among 14–17-year-old girls decreases to 5.7 per cent compared to 9.7 per cent of 10–13-year-olds, a result of the exception made for adolescents working with family.

Education and household wealth also influence child labour prevalence. Children from households where the head has no formal education are the most likely to be engaged in child labour (13.0 per cent), whereas the rate drops to 3.2 per cent in households where the head has higher education. Similarly, child labour is more common among children from poorer households, affecting 18.8 per cent of those in the lowest wealth quintile compared to 1.9 per cent in the highest quintile. Additionally, children living in rural areas are much more likely to be in child labour (13.4 per cent) than those in urban areas (4.6 per cent).

Table 7.1 Number and per cent of all working children 5-17 years old who are in child labour by sex, age group, education of household head, wealth index quintile and area of residence

Characteristic	Children in child labour			Total number of children	Total working children
	Number	Per cent of total children	Per cent of child workers		
Both sexes					
Total	1,610,037	10.3	86.0	15,636,417	1,872,512
5-9	316,524	4.3	100.0	7,304,921	316,524
10-13	607,776	13.2	100.0	4,616,949	607,776
14-17	685,737	18.5	72.3	3,714,547	948,212
Boys					
Total	1,123,029	13.7	89.9	8,225,054	1,248,847
5-9	187,127	4.9	100.0	3,808,272	187,127
10-13	395,894	16.3	100.0	2,434,323	395,894
14-17	540,008	27.2	81.1	1,982,459	665,825
Girls					
Total	487,007	6.6	78.1	7,410,765	623,665
5-9	129,396	3.7	100.0	3,496,303	129,396
10-13	211,882	9.7	100.0	2,182,593	211,882
14-17	145,729	8.4	51.6	1,731,869	282,387
Educ. HH head					
None/Pre-school	1,020,010	14.1	87.7	7,238,316	1,162,778
Primary	249,136	11.1	85.8	2,239,157	290,290
Middle	94,638	8.1	84.5	1,169,812	111,989
Secondary	140,423	6.5	82.6	2,152,389	170,075
Higher	104,048	3.7	77.0	2,815,043	135,113
WIQ					
Poorest	688,786	20.2	90.9	3,415,303	757,507
Second	459,568	14.0	85.7	3,290,671	536,012
Middle	262,581	8.0	80.0	3,283,225	328,324

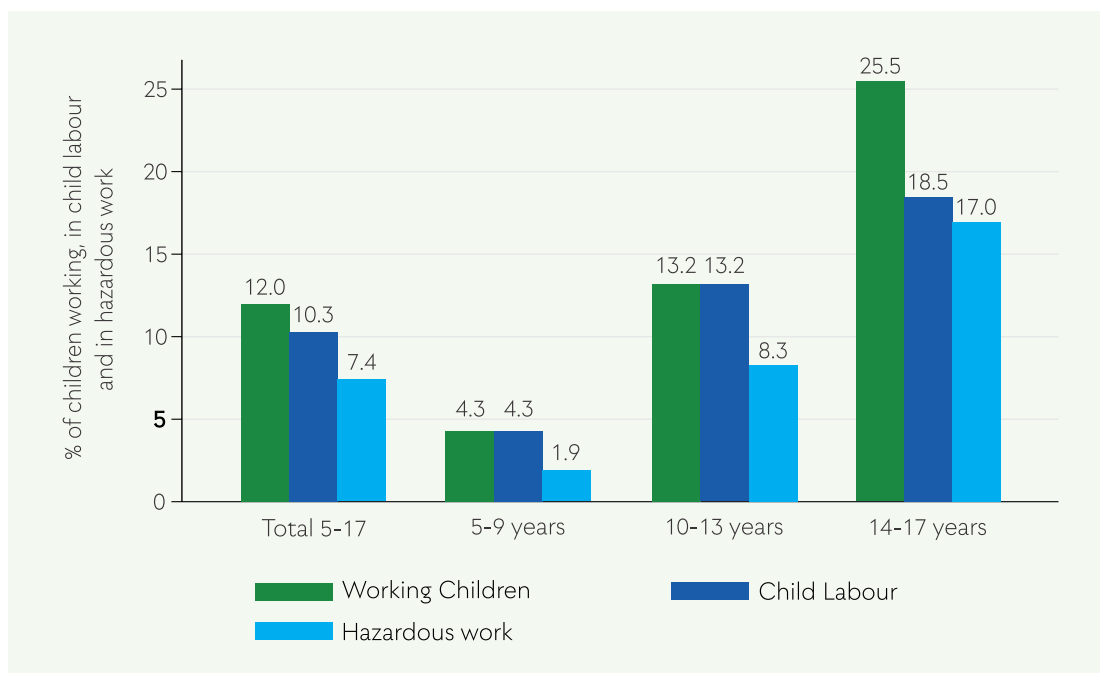
Characteristic	Children in child labour			Total number of children	Total working children
	Number	Per cent of total children	Per cent of child workers		
Fourth	141,216	4.7	81.4	2,983,795	173,501
Richest	57,886	2.2	75.0	2,663,423	77,167
Residence					
Rural	1,246,053	14.8	87.0	8,439,694	1,432,539
Urban	363,983	5.1	82.7	7,196,724	439,973
<p>The sum of boys and girls in the table does not equal the total number of children since the table does not include transgender children. These records account for 6 individuals from the unweighted survey responses, which when weighted represent 598 children</p> <p>The education of the household head omits the categories of "Non-formal" and "Other". These records account for 4 and 4 individuals from the unweighted survey responses respectively, which when weighted represent 856 and 583 children.</p>					

Figure 7.1 provides a summary of children who are working, engaged in child labour, or involved in hazardous work, while Figure 7.2 presents a breakdown by gender, and Figure 7.3 highlights key risk factors. Under The Sindh Prohibition of Employment of Children Act, 2017, all working children aged 5–13 are classified as being in child labour. For those aged 14–17, employment is only allowed if it does not exceed 42 hours per week (or is with family). Any work classified as hazardous—whether due to excessive hours (over 42 per week), employment in dangerous industries or occupations, use of hazardous tools, unsafe working conditions, night shifts, or exposure to abuse—is strictly prohibited for all children, with the exception of adolescents working with family for whom long hours do not count towards child labour, as documented in the exceptions under section 9 article 3. Furthermore, the Act defines child labour for adolescents

In total, 12.0 per cent of children aged 5–17 participate in work, 10.3 per cent fall under the definition of child labour, and 7.4 per cent are involved in hazardous work. As shown in Figure 7.1, the difference between working children and hazardous work becomes more pronounced with age, growing from 2.4 percentage points among 5–9-year-olds to 8.5 percentage points among 14–17-year-olds. The prevalence of work increases as children grow older, in line with legal allowances, and the nature of their employment shifts, accordingly, as discussed later in this chapter.

Figure 7.3 further explores the defining factors of hazardous work, with excessive working hours (more than 42 per week) emerging as the most common risk factor.

Figure 7.1 Working children, child labour and hazardous work



As Figure 7.2 shows, boys are generally more likely to be engaged in work, child labour and hazardous work, with gaps ranging from 6.8 percentage points for working children to 7.1 and 6.1 percentage points among child labour and hazardous work, respectively.

Figure 7.2 Working children, child labour and hazardous work by sex

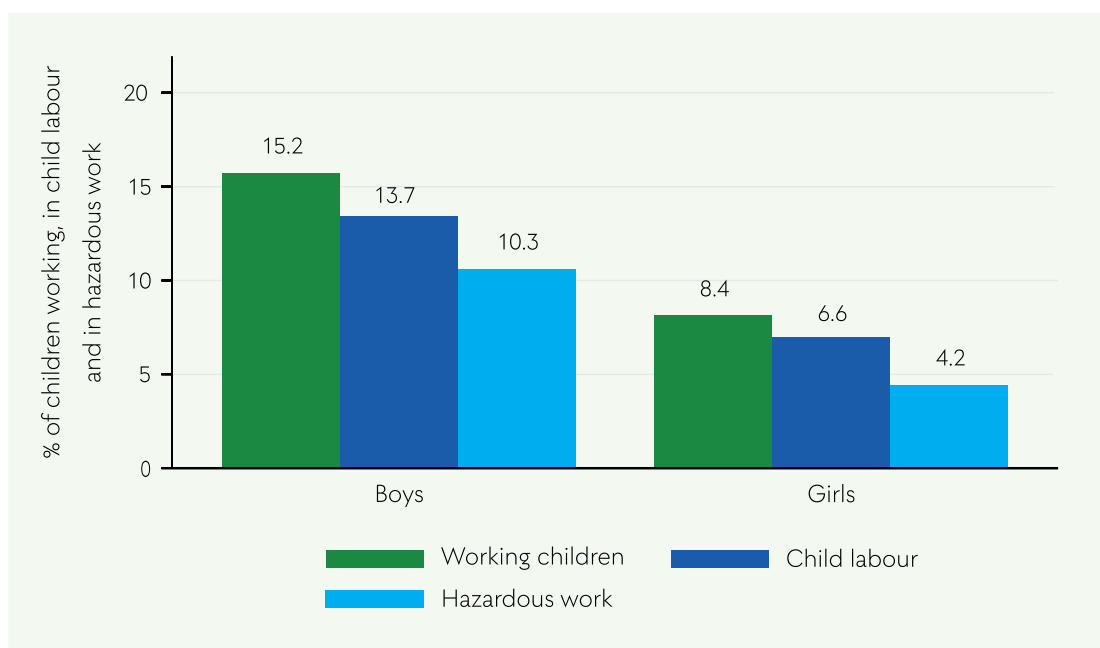


Figure 7.3 Summary of results for Children 5–17 years old

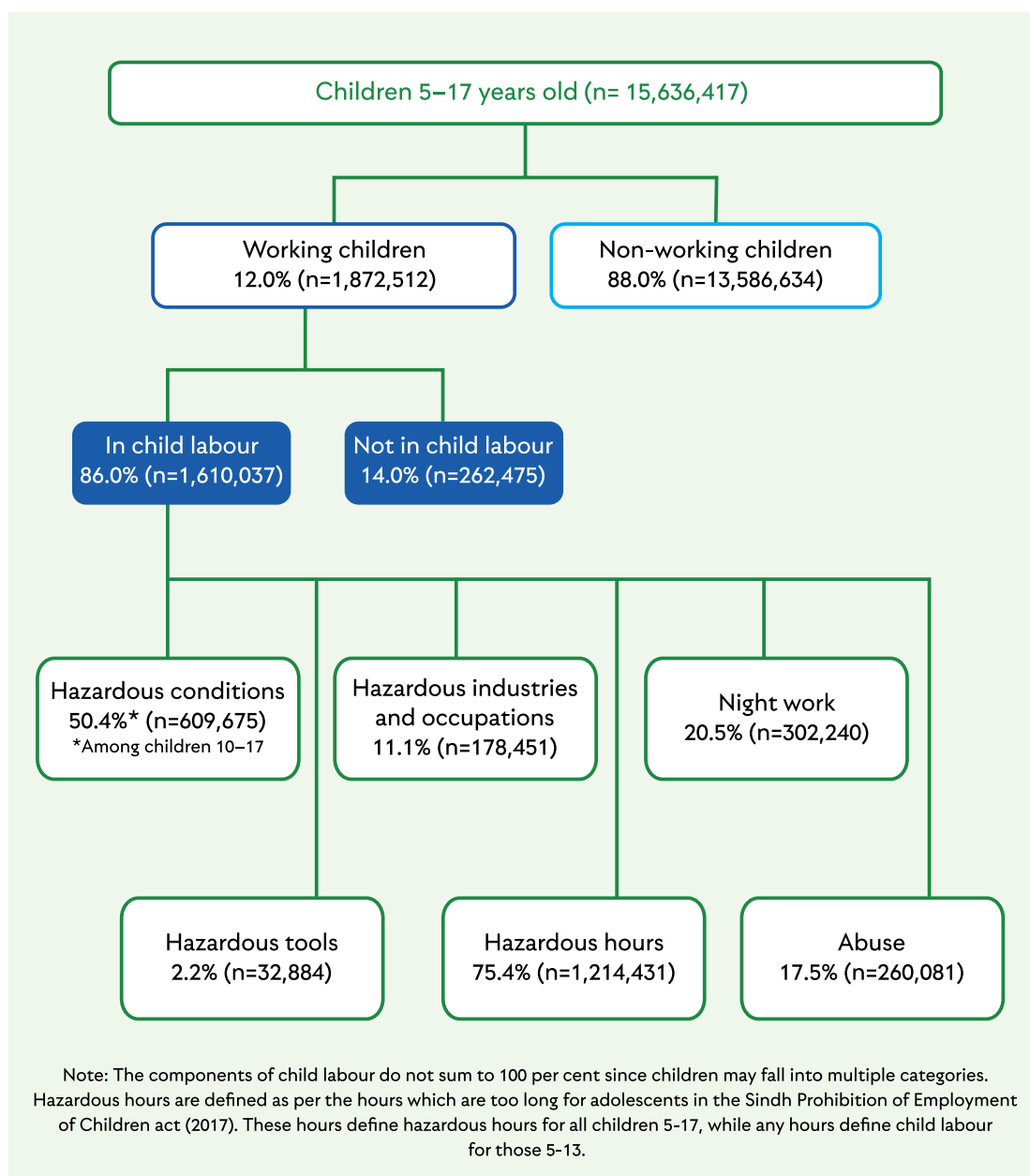


Figure 7.4 provides an overview of child labour prevalence among children aged 5–17 at the district level, with a more detailed breakdown by division and district available in Table A7.1 in the Appendix, also showing what percent of working children are defined as being in child labour. Among divisions, Mirpur Khas has the highest incidence of child labour at 23.1 per cent, while Karachi records the lowest at 3.5 per cent. At the district level, Sujawal (35.1 per cent) reports the highest child labour rate, whereas Malir (2.6 per cent), Karachi South (3.0 per cent), and Karachi East (3.1 per cent) have the lowest prevalence.

Figure 7.4. Sindh child labour incidence (5–17)

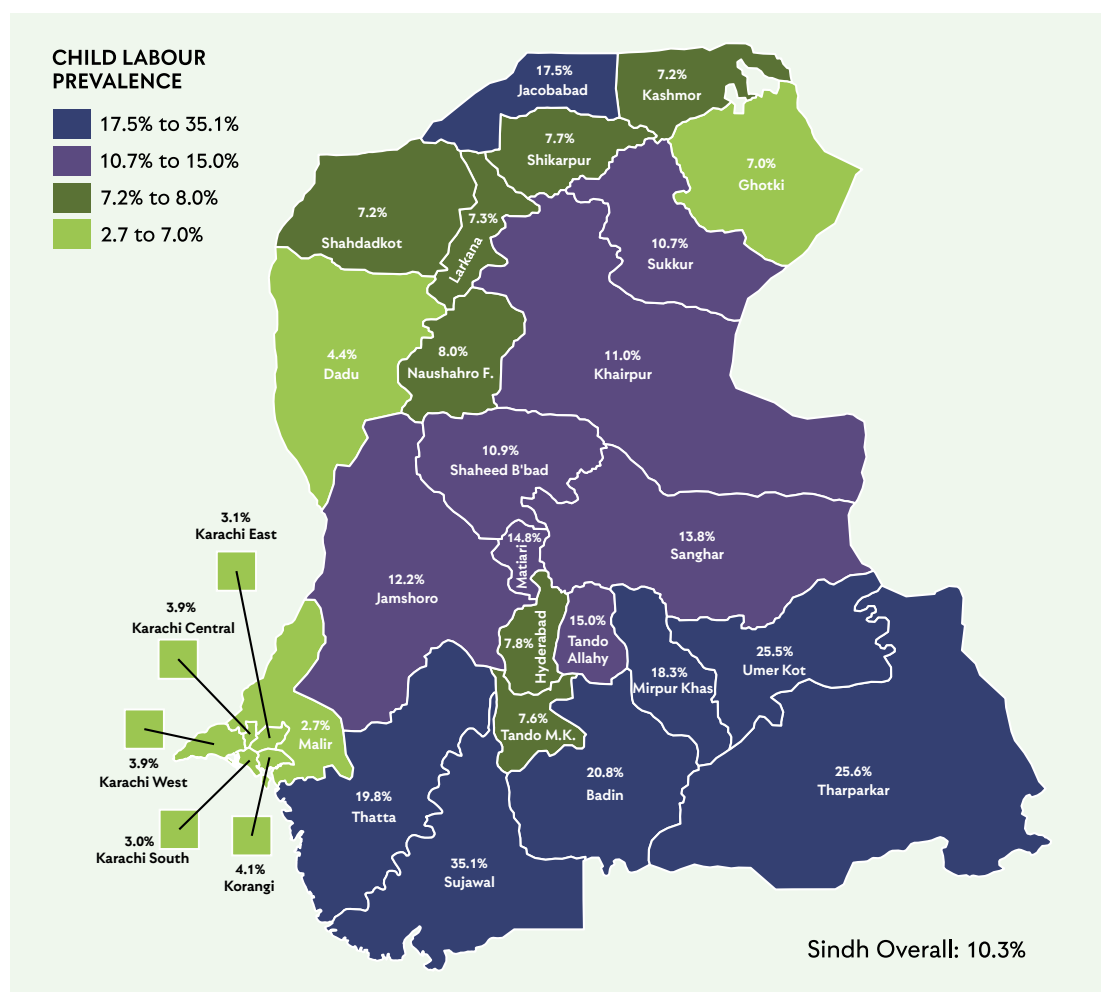


Table 7.2 presents the breakdown of children in child labour by industry, disaggregated by various demographic and socioeconomic factors, highlighting that the highest proportion of children in child labour is engaged in agriculture, forestry, and fishing (55.1 per cent), followed by manufacturing (12.4 per cent) and wholesale and retail trade (10.8 per cent), along with water supply (7.0 per cent). The sectors with lower child labour prevalence include accommodation and food service activities (2.3 per cent) and activities of households as employers (1.8 per cent).

Boys in child labour are predominantly involved in agriculture (54.9 per cent), wholesale and retail trade (14.8 per cent), manufacturing (8.2 per cent), and construction (7.7 per cent). In contrast, girls are more commonly found in agriculture (55.5 per cent), manufacturing (22.3 per cent), and water supply (15.1 per cent). In comparison to boys, girls' engagement in manufacturing and water supply is considerably higher, with boys' proportion of involvement in these industries reaching 8.2 per cent and 3.5 per cent, respectively. However, when interpreting these results, it is essential to note that the overall prevalence of child labour

among girls is below half that of boys. Therefore, the distribution of child labour within industries does not necessarily indicate whether more boys or girls are engaged in a particular sector.

Additionally, child labour in agriculture decreases as the education level of the household head increases, reporting 60.0 per cent for those with a household head with no education vs. 44.8 per cent for those reaching higher education. Conversely, manufacturing, wholesale and retail trade, and other industries become more prevalent among children from households where the head has attained higher education. Aligned with these findings, as household wealth increases, child labour in wholesale and retail trade, manufacturing and other industries becomes more prevalent. In contrast, engagement in agriculture, forestry, and fishing declines with wealth.

As could be expected, agriculture is predominantly rural (66.8 per cent), while wholesale and retail trade (26.4 per cent) and manufacturing (27.3 per cent) are more common in urban areas. In contrast, construction is more evenly distributed across urban and rural areas. A regional breakdown in Table A7.2 (Appendix) supports this trend, with Karachi division exhibiting the lowest proportion of child labour in agriculture, reflecting the rural-urban divide in industry distribution.

Table 7.2 Per cent of children in child labour by industry, by sex, age group, education of household head, wealth index quintile, marital status and area of residence

Characteristic	Children in child labour								
	Industry								Total number of children in child labour
	Agriculture, forestry and fishing	Manufacturing	Wholesale and retail trade; repair of motor vehicles and motorcycles	Water Supply	Construction	Accommodation and food service activities	Activities of households as employers	Other industries	
Both sexes									
Total	55.1	12.4	10.8	7.0	5.5	2.3	1.8	5.2	1,584,633
5-11	71.9	4.4	5.4	15.2	0.5	0.3	0.6	1.7	310,098
12-13	60.3	13.1	9.8	7.9	1.5	2.0	2.1	3.2	595,237
14-17	42.9	15.4	14.1	2.4	11.2	3.4	2.1	8.5	679,298
Boys									
Total	54.9	8.2	14.8	3.5	7.7	3.1	1.2	6.5	1,113,977
5-11	77.7	2.9	8.3	7.4	0.8	0.4	0.3	2.3	184,539
12-13	64.6	6.4	14.0	4.5	2.2	2.7	1.5	4.1	391,514
14-17	40.1	11.4	17.5	1.5	14.1	4.3	1.4	9.7	537,925

Characteristic	Children in child labour								
	Industry								Total number of children in child labour
	Agriculture, forestry and fishing	Manufacturing	Wholesale and retail trade; repair of motor vehicles and motorcycles	Water Supply	Construction	Accommodation and food service activities	Activities of households as employers	Other industries	
Girls									
Total	55.5	22.3	1.4	15.1	0.1	0.4	3.1	2.0	470,656
5-11	63.4	6.6	1.2	26.7	0.0	0.3	1.1	0.8	125,559
12-13	52.1	26.1	1.8	14.4	0.3	0.6	3.2	1.6	203,723
14-17	53.5	30.9	1.1	5.8	0.1	0.1	5.0	3.7	141,374
Edu. HH head									
None/Pre-school	60.0	11.3	8.4	6.5	5.4	2.1	1.9	4.5	1,007,733
Primary	53.1	11.9	12.9	6.0	6.2	2.2	2.0	5.7	244,349
Middle	39.3	18.8	18.0	7.5	3.9	4.3	1.9	6.4	92,358
Secondary	40.6	16.9	16.7	9.2	6.4	2.2	1.3	6.7	136,518
Higher	44.8	12.7	15.0	10.7	4.9	2.9	1.5	7.5	101,894
WIQ									
Poorest	73.1	6.3	4.1	8.5	3.6	1.3	1.0	2.1	676,631
Second	59.6	10.9	8.0	8.5	6.3	2.0	1.7	2.9	451,878
Middle	37.9	16.7	19.2	4.4	8.4	3.2	2.3	7.8	259,517
Fourth	7.2	32.2	25.3	1.6	7.2	5.8	4.5	16.4	139,224
Richest	1.8	28.7	38.4	2.0	2.7	3.5	3.5	19.3	57,384
Marital status									
Never married	51.1	14.3	12.2	5.0	6.7	2.8	2.1	5.9	1,263,155
Ever married	43.2	13.3	6.5	2.7	6.7	1.3	2.6	23.8	13,527
Residence									
Rural	66.8	8.1	6.2	8.1	5.1	1.4	1.2	3.0	1,225,773
Urban	15.0	27.3	26.4	3.1	6.6	5.2	3.7	12.7	358,860
<p>The education of the household head omits the categories of "Non-formal" and "Other". These records account for 4 and 4 individuals from the unweighted survey responses respectively, which when weighted represent 856, 583 and 0 children.</p> <p>The total number of children in this table does not include children for whom the industry is missing. These records account for 128 children from the unweighted survey responses, which when weighted represent 25403 children.</p>									

Table 7.3 provides an overview of the occupational distribution of children engaged in child labour, highlighting that the majority are employed in unskilled elementary occupations (54.9 per cent), followed by skilled agricultural, forestry, and fishery work (18.7 per cent) and craft and related trades (14.9 per cent). Younger children, particularly those aged 5–9, are predominantly involved in elementary occupations (71.5 per cent). As children grow older, participation in skilled agricultural and craft-related trades increases, while engagement in elementary occupations declines, though remaining predominant. Gender disparities in child labour are evident. Boys are more likely than girls to work in service and sales (12.1 per cent vs. 1.3 per cent), skilled agricultural occupations (20.1 per cent vs. 15.4 per cent) and plant/machine operators (2.8 per cent vs. 0.3 per cent). In contrast, a higher proportion of girls are engaged in elementary occupations (60.7 per cent vs 52.4 per cent of boys) and craft and related trades (21.4 per cent vs. 11.7 per cent).

The education level of the household head plays a significant role in determining the type of work children undertake. Children from households where the head has no formal education are more likely to be engaged in elementary occupations (58.7 per cent), while those from households with higher education levels show increased participation in service and sales, as well as craft-related trades. Similarly, economic status influences occupational distribution. Children from the poorest households are disproportionately engaged in elementary occupations (66.9 per cent), whereas those from wealthier households are more likely to work in service and sales (30.2 per cent) or craft-related trades (31.9 per cent).

Urban-rural differences further shape the types of work children perform. Rural children are more commonly employed in skilled agricultural, forestry, and fishery work (20.8 per cent), while their urban counterparts are more likely to be involved in craft-related trades (31.4 per cent) or service and sales (20.8 per cent). Nevertheless, elementary occupations remain the most common type of work in both rural and urban settings, though the prevalence is significantly higher in rural areas (60.8 per cent) compared to urban areas (34.7 per cent). Additional details on occupational distribution by division and district can be found in Table A7.3 in the Appendix, further reinforcing these trends.

Table 7.3 Per cent of children in child labour by occupation, by sex, age group, education of household head, wealth index quintile, marital status and area of residence

Characteristic	Children in child labour						
	Major group of occupation						Total number of children
	Service and sales workers	Skilled agricultural, forestry and fishery workers	Craft and related trades workers	Plant and machine operators	Elementary occupations	Other occupations	
Both sexes							
Total	8.8	18.7	14.6	2.1	54.9	0.9	1,586,308
5-9	2.8	19.1	5.8	0.4	71.5	0.4	309,242
10-13	7.2	25.2	15.4	0.7	51.0	0.4	598,302
14-17	13.0	12.8	17.9	4.0	50.7	1.6	678,763
Boys							
Total	12.1	20.1	11.7	2.8	52.4	1.0	1,111,115
5-9	4.2	23.4	5.3	0.5	66.3	0.3	184,270
10-13	10.5	28.6	10.3	0.9	49.1	0.5	390,413
14-17	15.9	12.7	14.9	5.0	50.0	1.6	536,432
Girls							
Total	1.3	15.4	21.4	0.3	60.7	0.8	475,193
5-9	0.8	12.8	6.5	0.2	79.3	0.5	124,972
10-13	1.2	18.8	25.1	0.2	54.5	0.3	207,889
14-17	2.0	13.0	29.1	0.5	53.5	1.8	142,332
Educ. HH Head							
None/Pre-school	6.8	19.2	13.0	1.7	58.7	0.6	1,011,068
Primary	10.0	20.2	15.2	2.4	51.6	0.6	244,467
Middle	13.4	15.3	21.0	4.9	43.6	1.8	93,332
Secondary	12.4	15.6	21.0	2.6	46.6	1.8	136,343
Higher	16.9	17.7	15.2	1.6	45.3	3.3	99,316
WIQ							
Poorest	3.2	21.6	7.5	0.6	66.9	0.1	680,734
Second	6.9	23.2	13.0	1.3	55.4	0.3	451,707
Middle	15.3	15.7	20.8	2.5	44.5	1.1	256,984

Characteristic	Children in child labour						
	Major group of occupation						
	Service and sales workers	Skilled agricultural, forestry and fishery workers	Craft and related trades workers	Plant and machine operators	Elementary occupations	Other occupations	Total number of children
WIQ							
Fourth	21.5	3.0	36.1	7.5	28.1	3.8	139,203
Richest	30.2	0.7	31.9	9.5	20.2	7.7	57,680
Marital status							
Never married	10.3	18.7	16.8	2.4	50.8	1.1	1,265,685
Ever married	13.0	9.0	11.7	11.6	51.9	2.9	13,527
Residence							
Rural	5.3	22.9	9.7	1.0	60.8	0.3	1,226,970
Urban	20.8	4.3	31.4	5.8	34.7	3.0	359,337
<p>The education of the household head omits the categories of "Non-formal" and "Other". These records account for 4, 4 and 0 individuals from the unweighted survey responses respectively, which when weighted represent 856 and 583 children.</p> <p>The total number of children in this table does not include children for whom the marital status is missing. These records account for 1493 children from the unweighted survey responses, which when weighted represent 307095 children.</p> <p>The total number of children in this table does not include children for whom the occupation is missing. These records account for 120 children from the unweighted survey responses, which when weighted represent 23729 children.</p>							

Table 7.4 highlights the different types of employment among children in child labour, with unpaid family work being the most prevalent form of employment (49.6 per cent). This is followed by self-employment in non-agricultural sectors (14.3 per cent), non-agricultural labour (9.2 per cent), and self-employment in agriculture (8.2 per cent).

Age is a key determinant of employment type. Younger children, particularly those aged 5–9, are predominantly engaged in unpaid family work (80.1 per cent), but this proportion declines significantly as children grow older, falling to 26.0 per cent among 14–17-year-olds. With age, there is a notable shift towards other categories of work such as self-employment and paid labour. For instance, self-employment in non-agricultural activities rises from 4.4 per cent among the youngest group to 22.8 per cent among the oldest. Similarly, engagement in agricultural and non-agricultural labour increases with age, peaking at 12.9 per cent and 13.3 per cent, respectively, for 14–17-year-olds.

Gender differences are also apparent. Girls are far more likely to be unpaid family workers (63.8 per cent) compared to boys (43.4 per cent), while boys have higher participation in self-employment and agricultural paid labour. Employment status also varies by household characteristics. Children from wealthier households are more likely to be engaged in agricultural labour, whereas those from poorer households are more commonly found in unpaid family work. Similarly, children in rural areas predominantly work as unpaid family workers (55.7 per cent), while urban children have higher engagement in self-employment and agricultural labour roles. Further details, including a breakdown by division and district, can be found in Table A7.4 in the Appendix.

Table 7.4 Per cent of children in child labour by status in employment, by sex, age group, education of household head, wealth index quintile and area of residence

Characteristic	Children in child labour								Total number of children
	Status in employment								
	Unpaid family worker	Self-employed (non-agric)	Self-employed (agric)	Labourer (agric)	Labourer (non-agric)	Employee	Apprenticeship	Other	
Both sexes									
Total	49.6	14.3	8.2	8.1	9.2	5.0	2.0	3.6	1,610,037
5-9	80.1	4.4	2.8	2.9	3.5	2.2	1.1	2.9	316,524
10-13	60.3	9.8	7.2	5.3	7.5	4.7	1.8	3.3	607,776
14-17	26.0	22.8	11.6	12.9	13.3	6.4	2.7	4.3	685,737
Boys									
Total	43.4	17.5	8.4	10.0	9.1	5.3	2.8	3.5	1,123,029
5-9	77.2	5.7	2.9	4.0	3.2	2.4	1.9	2.6	187,127
10-13	57.2	11.4	6.8	6.9	6.9	5.4	2.5	3.0	395,894
14-17	21.7	26.0	11.4	14.4	12.7	6.2	3.3	4.3	540,008
Girls									
Total	63.8	7.0	7.7	3.5	9.5	4.2	0.4	3.9	487,007
5-9	84.3	2.5	2.6	1.4	3.9	2.0	0.0	3.4	129,396
10-13	66.2	6.9	8.0	2.2	8.8	3.5	0.5	3.9	211,882
14-17	41.9	11.1	12.0	7.4	15.5	7.2	0.7	4.3	145,729

Characteristic	Children in child labour								Total number of children
	Status in employment								
	Unpaid family worker	Self-employed (non-agric)	Self-employed (agric)	Labourer (agric)	Labourer (non-agric)	Employee	Apprenticeship	Other	
Edu. HH head									
None/Pre-school	48.5	14.5	7.7	7.9	10.7	5.7	1.5	3.6	1,020,010
Primary	49.2	14.7	8.8	8.6	7.9	4.0	2.3	4.6	249,136
Middle	46.1	16.1	8.6	9.4	6.7	3.5	4.9	4.6	94,638
Secondary	53.0	14.7	10.4	7.7	4.4	4.3	3.3	2.2	140,423
Higher	60.1	9.7	8.7	7.9	6.0	2.1	2.5	3.0	104,048
WIQ									
Poorest	57.8	9.2	4.5	5.5	11.4	6.3	0.5	4.7	688,786
Second	56.2	13.7	7.7	5.3	8.5	4.9	1.9	1.8	459,568
Middle	38.8	18.1	13.8	8.8	8.3	4.8	2.4	5.0	262,581
Fourth	19.9	29.8	14.6	21.0	4.9	0.7	6.0	3.1	141,216
Richest	21.1	24.7	15.5	25.1	2.0	0.2	10.3	1.1	57,886
Residence									
Rural	56.5	10.7	6.3	5.2	10.4	6.1	0.9	3.8	1,246,053
Urban	25.8	26.5	14.8	17.8	5.0	1.1	6.0	3.0	363,983

The education of the household head omits the categories of "Non-formal", "Other". These records account for 4, 4 individuals from the unweighted survey responses respectively, which when weighted represent 856, 583 children.

Table 7.5 provides insights into the proportion of children in child labour working either at home or away from home. The likelihood of working away from home increases with age, rising from 71.5 per cent among children aged 5–9 to 86.5 per cent for those aged 14–17. This trend is largely driven by boys, with 77.7 per cent of younger boys (5–9 years) working away from home, climbing to 93.7 per cent in the oldest age group (14–17 years). In contrast, girls exhibit the opposite pattern. Among younger girls, 62.6 per cent work away from home, but this proportion declines slightly to 59.7 per cent for the 14–17 group. Across all age groups, girls are consistently less likely to work away from home than boys.

There is no clear correlation between the education level of the household head and whether children work away from home. However, household wealth appears to influence this dynamic — children from the wealthiest households (84.0) are significantly more likely to work away from home than those from the poorest households (77.9 per cent). Geographical differences also exist, with rural children slightly less likely to work away from home (77.5 per cent) compared to their urban counterparts (81.3 per cent). Additional details, including a breakdown by division and district, are available in Table A7.5 in the Appendix.

Table 7.5 Number and per cent of 5-17-year-olds in child labour working at home or outside of home by sex, age group, education of household head, wealth index quintile and area of residence

Characteristic	Children in child labour						Total number of children in child labour
	Location of work						
	Home			Outside of home			
	Number	Per cent (row)	Per cent (column)	Number	Per cent (row)	Per cent (column)	
Both sexes							
Total	349,051	21.7	100.0	1,260,986	78.3	100.0	1,610,037
5-9	90,182	28.5	25.8	226,341	71.5	17.9	316,524
10-13	166,195	27.3	47.6	441,581	72.7	35.0	607,776
14-17	92,673	13.5	26.6	593,064	86.5	47.0	685,737
Boys							
Total	148,460	13.2	100.0	974,569	86.8	100.0	1,123,029
5-9	41,800	22.3	28.2	145,328	77.7	14.9	187,127
10-13	72,763	18.4	49.0	323,131	81.6	33.2	395,894
14-17	33,898	6.3	22.8	506,110	93.7	51.9	540,008
Girls							
Total	200,590	41.2	100.0	286,417	58.8	100.0	487,007
5-9	48,383	37.4	24.1	81,014	62.6	28.3	129,396
10-13	93,432	44.1	46.6	118,450	55.9	41.4	211,882
14-17	58,775	40.3	29.3	86,953	59.7	30.4	145,729
Edu. HH head							
None/Pre-school	205,739	20.2	58.9	814,271	79.8	64.7	1,020,010
Primary	51,282	20.6	14.7	197,855	79.4	15.7	249,136
Middle	29,759	31.4	8.5	64,879	68.5	5.2	94,638
Secondary	33,870	24.1	9.7	106,552	75.9	8.5	140,423
Higher	28,400	27.3	8.1	75,648	72.7	6.0	104,048

Characteristic	Children in child labour						Total number of children in child labour
	Location of work						
	Home			Outside of home			
	Number	Per cent (row)	Per cent (column)	Number	Per cent (row)	Per cent (column)	
WIQ							
Poorest	152,439	22.1	43.7	536,347	77.9	42.5	688,786
Second	101,215	22.0	29.0	358,353	78.0	28.4	459,568
Middle	60,647	23.1	17.4	201,934	76.9	16.0	262,581
Fourth	25,470	18.0	7.3	115,746	82.0	9.2	141,216
Richest	9,280	16.0	2.7	48,606	84.0	3.9	57,886
Residence							
Rural	280,855	22.5	80.5	965,198	77.5	76.5	1,246,053
Urban	68,196	18.7	19.5	295,788	81.3	23.5	363,983
The education of the household head omits the categories of "Other". These records account for 4 individuals from the unweighted survey responses respectively, which when weighted represent 583 children.							

Table 7.6 provides insights into the timing of work among children in child labour, distinguishing between those who work during the day, in the evening or night, or across both periods. The majority (89.8 per cent) are engaged in work during the day, while 20.5 per cent work in the evening or nighttime hours. The likelihood of evening or night work increases slightly with age, rising from 18.2 per cent among younger children (5–9 years) to 20.3 per cent for those aged 14–17. Gender differences are notable, with girls consistently less likely than boys to work in the evening or at night. This disparity is particularly pronounced among older children, with a gap of roughly 10 percentage points in the 14–17 age group.

The level of household wealth also plays a role, as children from wealthier households are more likely to engage in evening or night work. The proportion rises from 12.7 per cent among children from the poorest households to 56.6 per cent among the richest. This trend may be linked to the fact that children in poorer households are more likely to work in agriculture, where tasks are concentrated during daylight hours. While no clear pattern emerges regarding education of the household head, there is a geographical distinction. Rural children are less frequently involved in evening or night work (15.6 per cent) compared to those in urban areas (37.5 per cent). Among different regions, Karachi division records the highest proportion of children working in the evening or night, at 47.7 per cent. This and further details, including regional and district-level breakdowns, are available in Table A7.6 in the Appendix.

Table 7.6. Number and percent of children in child labour by time of day of work, by sex, age group, education of household head, wealth index quintile and area of residence

Characteristic	Children in child labour				
	Time of the day				Total number of children in child labour
	Day (after sunrise and before sunset)		Evening or night		
	Number	Per cent	Number	Per cent	
Both sexes					
Total 5-17	1,324,337	89.8	302,240	20.5	1,474,212
5-9	245,872	89.5	49,895	18.2	274,791
10-13	498,282	88.6	122,839	21.8	562,584
14-17	580,182	91.1	129,506	20.3	636,837
Boys					
Total 5-17	900,676	88.4	230,403	22.6	1,018,650
5-9	139,900	87.1	30,247	18.8	160,584
10-13	312,892	86.5	87,770	24.3	361,693
14-17	447,884	90.2	112,386	22.6	496,373
Girls					
Total 5-17	423,661	93.0	71,837	15.8	455,562
5-9	105,972	92.8	19,648	17.2	114,207
10-13	185,391	92.3	35,069	17.5	200,891
14-17	132,298	94.2	17,120	12.2	140,464
Edu. HH head					
None/Pre-school	861,973	91.8	169,601	18.1	939,397
Primary	198,173	88.0	49,723	22.1	225,096
Middle	71,635	86.1	25,596	30.8	83,182
Secondary	112,344	86.8	33,834	26.1	129,458
Higher	78,787	82.4	23,312	24.4	95,611
WIQ					
Poorest	586,047	93.6	79,236	12.7	625,998
Second	375,530	88.7	82,215	19.4	423,568
Middle	206,272	85.9	58,227	24.2	240,164
Fourth	109,773	85.6	50,751	39.6	128,275
Richest	46,714	83.1	31,811	56.6	56,207

Characteristic	Children in child labour					Total number of children in child labour
	Time of the day					
	Day (after sunrise and before sunset)		Evening or night			
	Number	Per cent	Number	Per cent		
Residence						
Rural	1,045,363	91.3	178,705	15.6	1,144,515	
Urban	278,974	84.6	123,535	37.5	329,697	

The education of the household head omits the categories of "Non-formal", "Other". These records account for 4 and 2 individuals from the unweighted survey responses respectively, which when weighted represent 903 and 434 children.

The total number of children in this table does not include children for whom the time of day of work is missing. These records account for 1389 children from the unweighted survey responses, which when weighted represent 249700 children.

Figure 7.5 highlights the industries where evening or night work is most prevalent among children in child labour. The highest proportion is observed in other industries, where 36.1 per cent of child labourers work during these hours. This category includes administrative and support service activities, education, transportation and storage, among others²⁸. This category is followed by wholesale and retail trade (35.0 per cent) and accommodation and food services (33.0 per cent), both with significant evening or night work.

In contrast, the agriculture industry has the lowest share of children working during evening or nighttime hours, at just 14.6 per cent. The increased likelihood of evening or night work among children from wealthier households may be closely linked to the industries and occupations in which they are employed.

²⁸ In addition, the following industries are included in the "Other" category: Mining and quarrying; information and communication; real estate activities; professional, scientific and technical activities; human health and social work activities; arts, entertainment and recreation; other service activities; and activities of extraterritorial organizations and bodies.

Figure 7.5 Per cent of 5–17-year-olds in child labour working at night by industry

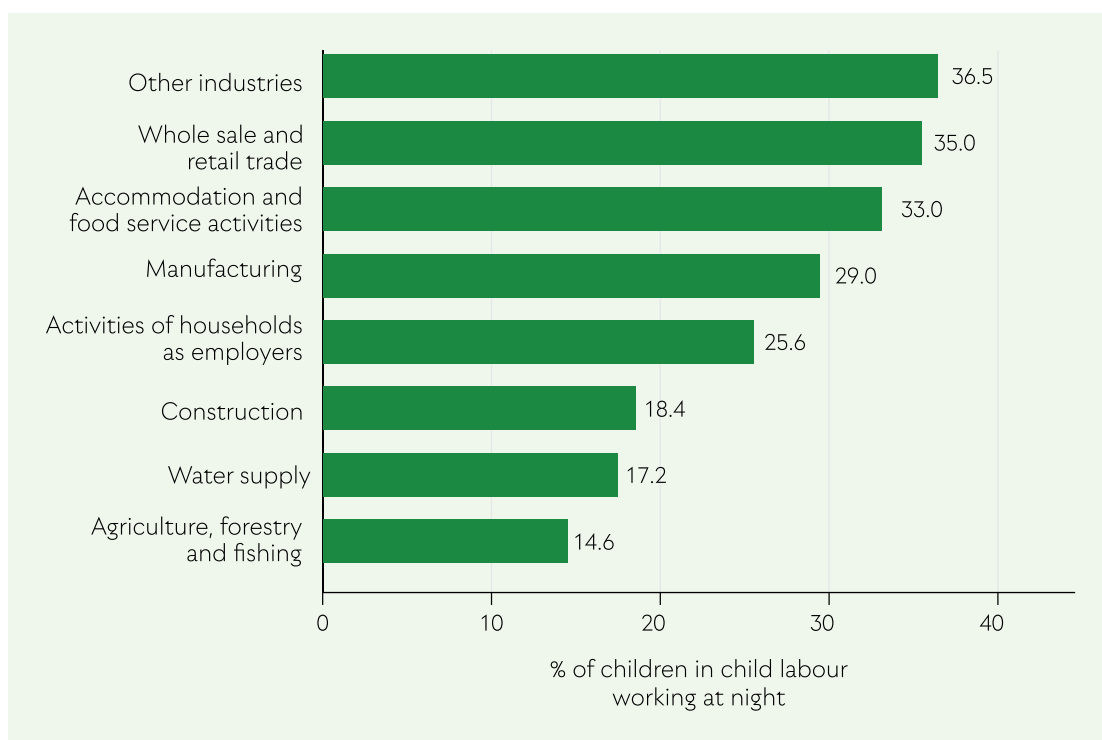


Table 7.7 presents the median number of hours worked per week by children in child labour, showing significant variation across industries. The overall median work per week across all age groups is 25.5 hours. Among industries, accommodation and food service activities have the highest median working hours (48 hours), whereas construction has the lowest (10 hours). These findings align with those for all working children (see Table 6.15). While hazardous industries, such as construction, maintain similar work hour patterns, sectors like accommodation and food services report slightly higher median hours.

Work hours increase with age, with children aged 5–9 working a median of 14 hours per week, rising to 42 hours for those aged 14–17. Overall, boys tend to work longer hours than girls across industries, with the median workweek for boys reaching 30 hours in the oldest age group compared to 18 hours for girls. Notably, in accommodation and food services, girls work longer than boys in the older age groups (72 hours vs. 53.5 hours for boys). Children in child labour with disabilities generally work fewer hours than those without, with a median of 22 hours per week compared to 26 hours for children without disabilities.

Education level of the household head also influences work hours, with children in households where the head has no or pre-school education working a median of 27 hours per week, compared to 19 hours for those in households with a head who has higher education. Additionally, household wealth also plays a role, with children in the poorest households working a median of 23 hours per week, compared to 48 hours in the wealthiest households. Geographically, rural children in child labour work considerably fewer hours (22 hours)

compared to their urban counterparts (41 hours). Further details by division and district can be found in Table A7.7 in the Appendix, where median work hours vary widely, reflecting industry composition and local economic conditions.

Table 7.7 Median number of hours worked per week for children in child labour by industry, by sex and age group

Characteristic	Industry								Total median hours
	Agriculture, forestry and fishing	Manufacturing	Wholesale and retail trade	Water collection	Construction	Accommodation and food service activities	Activities of households as employers	Other industry	
Total	21	29	41	10	47	48	42	43	25
Both Sexes									
5-11	14	20	26	7	30	28	26	35	14
12-13	19	24	33	10.5	41	35	35	29	21
14-17	30	40	48	14	48	52	46	48	38
Boys									
Total	21	48	42	11.5	47	48	48	46	29
5-11	14	28	27	7	30	34	7	37	14
12-13	20	42	34	12	42	40	42	30	23
14-17	30	52	48	20	48	52	60	48	42
Girls									
Total	18	21	21	9	14	12	35	32	18
5-11	14	15	21	7	.	12	28	8	12.5
12-13	17	21	14	9.5	14	9	30	16	17
14-17	28	22	21	14	15	21	35	47	26
Disability									
Without disability	21	29	42	10	47	48	42	43	25
With disability	21	42	14	15	72	.	6	42	22

Characteristic	Industry								Total median hours
	Agriculture, forestry and fishing	Manufacturing	Wholesale and retail trade	Water collection	Construction	Accommodation and food service activities	Activities of households as employers	Other industry	
Educ. HH head									
None/Pre-school	21	29	42	10	48	46	36	47	26
Primary	21	28	43	7.5	48	45	48	47	26
Middle	16	30	36	7	48	51	36	42	25
Secondary	17	27	35	13	45	59	46	46	23
Higher	14	28	36	10	30	40	62	25	19
WIQ									
Poorest	21	28	35	10	48	55	42	42	22
Second	19	23	36	9.5	44	48	43	39	21
Middle	18	26	35	8	46	35	28	42	27
Fourth	21	48	48	40	53	49	36	48	47
Richest	27	48	54	16.5	28	49	48	48	48
Residence									
Rural	21	24	35	10	45	51	42	42	22
Urban	17	42	46	12	48	43	36	48	40

8. CHILD LABOUR AND CHILDREN'S SCHOOLING AND HEALTH

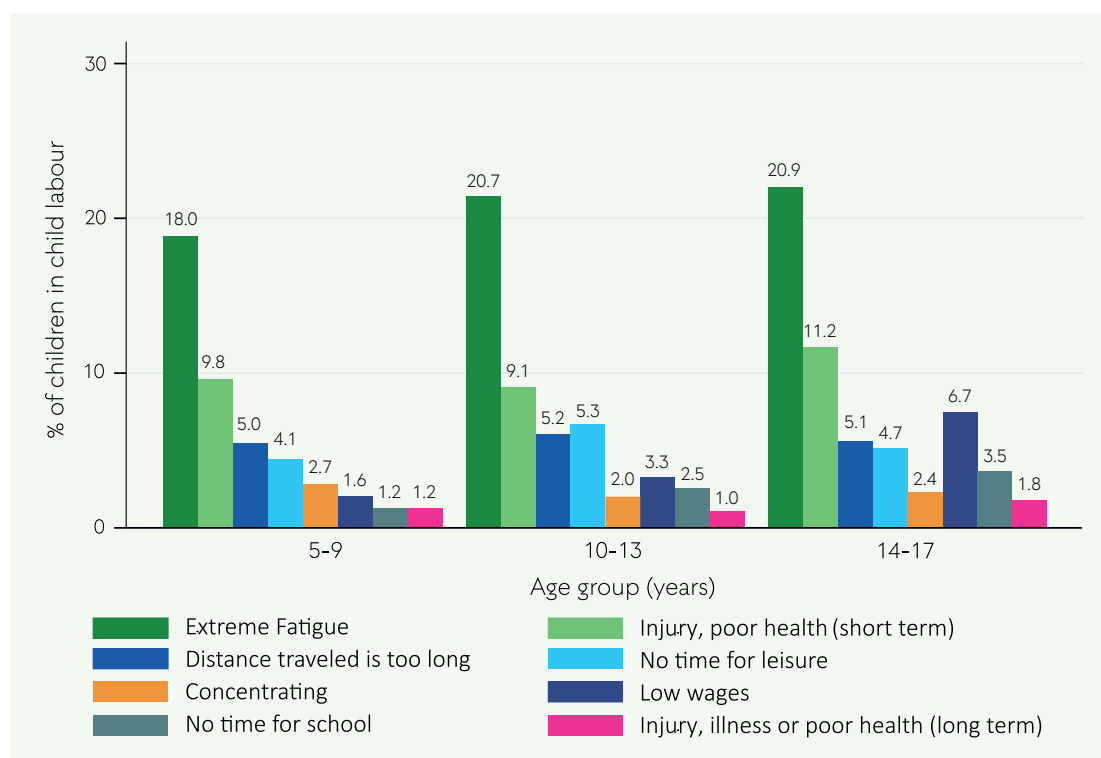
8.1 Consequences of child labour

Economic research has examined the effects of child labour on education and human capital development, finding that it negatively impacts learning outcomes and increases the risk of future health problems. The consequences of child labour are influenced by factors such as the duration of work, available study time, and whether the work is performed at home or elsewhere (Heady, 2003; O'Donnell, Rosati, & Doorslaer, 2005)

This chapter explores the link between child labour and schooling. It is important to emphasize that the findings presented do not establish causal relationships—meaning it cannot be definitively concluded that child labour directly causes differences in schooling or health outcomes between working and non-working children. However, these correlations provide valuable insights into the potential effects of child labour and highlight key areas where policy interventions may be necessary.

Figure 8.1 illustrates adult respondents' views on the negative effects of child labour on children in their households. The most commonly reported consequence is extreme fatigue, which is particularly concerning due to its impact on various aspects of life, including reduced mental stimulation, difficulty concentrating, exhaustion, stress, and a higher risk of accidents (Admassie, 2003). Other significant negative effects mentioned by respondents include injuries or poor health, long travel distances, and a lack of time for leisure.

Figure 8.1 Negative consequences of Child Labour



8.2 Schooling

The impact of participating in child labour on schooling is a key factor to study, as education is essential for developing both cognitive and non-cognitive skills. For this reason, it is important to examine the relationship between child labour and school attendance. To this end, Table 8.1 shows that 41.2 per cent of children engaged in child labour attend school, compared to 69.9 per cent of those not involved in child labour. While attendance rates for children not in child labour remain relatively steady across age groups, school attendance among children in child labour tends to reduce with age. Among 10–13-year-olds, attendance decreases to 45.8 per cent from 58.6 per cent in the younger age group, whereas only 29.1 per cent of 14–17-year-olds engaged in child labour continue attending school.

The disparity in school attendance between girls and boys is persistent both in and out of child labour, with boys attending school more than girls. Additionally, school attendance rates for both groups increase with the educational level of the household head. Among children not engaged in child labour, attendance also improves with household wealth, rising from 49.0 per cent in the poorest quintile to 89.3 per cent in the wealthiest. This trend is not evident in the case of children in child labour. Lastly, school attendance among children in child labour is slightly higher for children living in rural areas (41.8 per cent), as compared to those in urban locations (39.2 per cent). However, the opposite is true for children not in child labour, as children in urban areas have higher attendance rate (78.9 per cent) than those in rural (61.2 per cent). For more detailed results by division and district, see Table A8.1 in the Appendix.

Table 8.1 Per cent of 5–17-year-olds in child labour and not in child labour who are currently attending school, by sex, age group, wealth index quintile, education of household head and area of residence

Characteristic	Children in child labour		Children not in child labour	
	Attending school (Per cent)	Total number of children in child labour attending school	Attending school (Per cent)	Total number of children not in child labour attending school
Total 5-17	41.2	663,343	69.9	9,799,495
Both sexes				
5-9	58.6	185,397	68.8	4,805,909
10-13	45.8	278,529	75.8	3,036,949
14-17	29.1	199,418	64.6	1,956,638
Boys				
Total 5-17	45.5	511,379	75.6	5,369,068
5-9	66.1	123,699	71.4	2,584,858
10-13	53.5	211,974	82.4	1,678,974
14-17	32.5	175,705	76.6	1,105,237
Girls				
Total 5-17	31.2	151,965	64.0	4,430,048
5-9	47.7	61,697	66.0	2,220,705
10-13	31.4	66,555	68.9	1,357,943
14-17	16.3	23,712	53.7	851,400
Edu. HH head				
None/Pre-school	33.4	340,648	56.2	3,492,208
Primary	45.8	114,027	70.2	1,397,534
Middle	54.8	51,841	78.3	842,265
Secondary	57.0	80,010	82.0	1,650,752
Higher	73.2	76,178	88.6	2,401,922
Other	-	0	68.8	6,811
Don't know/Missing	-	212	77.0	4,792
WIQ				
Poorest	35.0	240,754	49.0	1,334,712
Second	45.6	209,601	60.4	1,709,948
Middle	51.4	135,025	73.7	2,226,609
Fourth	37.8	53,363	77.5	2,201,772
Richest	42.5	24,600	89.3	2,326,454

Characteristic	Children in child labour		Children not in child labour	
	Attending school (Per cent)	Total number of children in child labour attending school	Attending school (Per cent)	Total number of children not in child labour attending school
Residence				
Rural	41.8	520,628	61.2	4,405,681
Urban	39.2	142,715	78.9	5,393,814

The sum of boys and girls in the table does not equal the total number of children since the table does not include transgender. These records account for 6 individuals from the unweighted survey responses, which when weighted represent 3847 children.

The education of the household head omits the category of "Non-formal". These records account for 55 individuals from the unweighted survey responses respectively, which when weighted represent 4648 children.

- Figure not presented as there are fewer than 10 observations in the denominator.

Figure 8.2 illustrates school attendance by age group, showing that children engaged in child labour are consistently less likely to attend school across all age groups. The attendance gap widens with age, becoming particularly pronounced among 14-17-year-olds, where children in child labour have a 35-percentage point lower attendance rate. This growing disparity is largely driven by children in child labour who initially attended school but later dropped out. However, it remains unclear whether these children enter child labour after dropping out or leave school as a result of working. Additionally, the proportion of children who have never attended school is also higher among those in child labour, across all age groups.

Figure 8.2 Per cent of children in child labour and not in child labour attending school, currently not attending school, and never attended school by age group

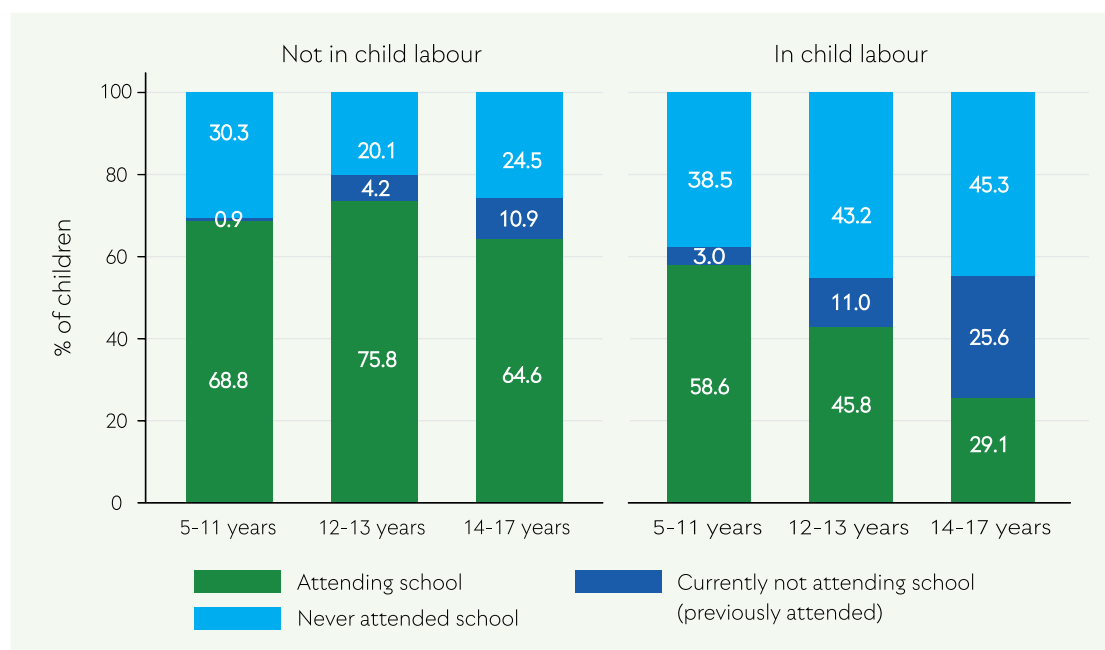


Table 8.2 presents the distribution of children in child labour by school attendance status across various industries. Overall, 58.8 per cent of working children do not attend school, with 15.7 per cent having dropped out 43.1 per cent never having been enrolled.

The highest school attendance rate is found among children engaged in construction (56.0 per cent), followed by those in water collection (49.3 per cent). Water collection is likely more compatible with school attendance, as it can often be done outside school hours. In contrast, the lowest attendance rate is observed among children working in transportation and storage, where only 16.9 per cent are currently enrolled in school.

Regarding age distribution, children working in construction have the youngest average age (10.2 years), while those in wholesale and retail trade and other industries tend to be older, with average ages of 15.4 per cent and 14.3 years, respectively. More detailed results by division and district are available in Table A8.2 in the Appendix, where it is clear that child labour is more strongly linked to dropping out of school in Karachi division.

Table 8.2 Per cent of children 5-17 years in child labour attending, currently not attending and never attended school by industry

Characteristic	Children in child labour				Number of children in child labour
	Attending school	Currently not attending school (previously attended)	Never attended school	Average age	
Total 5-17	41.1	15.7	43.1	12.5	1,584,249
Industry					
Agriculture, forestry and fishing	42.8	9.2	48.0	11.8	872,725
Manufacturing	29.4	27.7	42.9	13.6	196,666
Water collection	49.3	24.9	25.8	13.6	170,937
Construction	56.0	4.4	39.6	10.2	110,352
Wholesale and retail trade	24.7	29.0	46.3	15.4	86,525
Accommodation and food service activities	41.6	26.4	32.0	14.1	36,292
Transportation and storage	16.9	19.9	63.2	13.3	28,678
Other industries	40.4	31.7	27.9	14.3	82,073

The total number of children in child labour in this table does not include children for whom information about whether the child is attending, currently not attending or has never attended school is missing or children for whom information about the industry is missing. These records account for 1 and 128 children from the unweighted survey responses respectively, which when weighted represent 384 and 25403 children.

Table 8.3 highlights notable differences in the median number of hours worked per week based on children's school attendance status. On average, children in child labour, who are currently attending school, work a median of 17 hours per week, whereas those who have dropped out work 45 hours per week. Children who have never attended school work a median of 29 hours per week. While this suggests a link between leaving school and working longer hours, a direct causal relationship in either direction cannot be established.

Regardless of school attendance status, the median number of hours worked increases with age, with a more significant rise among those who have never attended school. Boys generally work more hours than girls, particularly among those not attending school, with boys working a median of 48 hours per week compared to 22 hours for girls. Among children in child labour who are still in school, boys work a median of 19 hours per week, compared to 14 hours for girls. Notably, girls who drop out of school work only about 8 more hours per week than those still attending, while for boys, the increase is more than double.

While education of the household head does not seem to be a determining factor for time spent working as the median number of hours show little variation, results show that the median number of hours worked tends to increase with household wealth (converse to the number of children in child labour as wealth increases). This relation is particularly strong among children who have never attended school, with those belonging to the poorest households working a median of 27 hours per week, compared to the median 59 hours per week among children in the richest households who never attended school. Additionally, children in urban areas work longer hours per week than those in rural areas. More detailed results by division and district can be found in Table A8.3 in the Appendix.

Table 8.3 Median number of hours worked per week for 5-17-year-olds in child labour attending, not attending and never attended school by sex, age group, education of household head, wealth index quintile and area of residence

Characteristic	Children in child labour			Total number of children in child labour
	Attending school	Currently not attending school (previously attended)	Never attended school	
Both sexes				
Total 5-17	17	45	29	1,609,653
5-9	13	30	15.5	316,524
10-13	15	31	24	607,776
14-17	28	48	40	685,353
Boys				
Total 5-17	19	48	36	1,122,646
5-9	13	36	21	187,127

Characteristic	Children in child labour			Total number of children in child labour
	Attending school	Currently not attending school (previously attended)	Never attended school	
Boys				
10-13	16	37	30	395,894
14-17	28	49	45	539,624
Girls				
Total 5-17	14	22	21	487,007
5-9	11	13	14	129,396
10-13	14	24	19	211,882
14-17	21	21	28	145,729
Edu. HH head				
None/Pre-school	17	42	29	1,019,627
Primary	18	48	27	249,136
Middle	18	48	29	94,638
Secondary	18	48	23	140,423
Higher	15	48	30	104,048
WIQ				
Poorest	15	36	27	688,402
Second	14	35	28	459,568
Middle	20	42	35	262,581
Fourth	28	54	49	141,216
Richest	29	60	59	57,886
Residence				
Rural	15	36	27	1,245,670
Urban	24	54	44	363,983

The education of the household head omits the categories of "Non-formal" and "Other". These records account for 4 and 4 individuals from the unweighted survey responses respectively, which when weighted represent 856 and 583 children.

The total number of children in child labour in this table does not include children for whom information about whether the child is attending, currently not attending or has never attended school is missing. These records account for 1 child from the unweighted survey responses respectively, which when weighted represent 384 children.

The education of the household head omits the categories of "Non-formal" and "Other". These records account for 4 and 4 individuals from the unweighted survey responses respectively, which when weighted represent 856 and 583 children.

Table 8.4 presents data on the percentage of 5–17-year-old children engaged in child labour who are currently attending school and report that work affects their attendance or studies. Among children in child labour who attend school, 5.7 per cent report that work negatively affects their attendance or studies, while 94.3 per cent say their school attendance is unaffected. The percentage of children whose school attendance is affected increases with age. Only 1.9 per cent of 5–9-year-olds in child labour report that work affects their schooling, while this percentage rises to 4.8 per cent among 10–13-year-olds and 10.3 per cent among 14–17-year-olds. Boys are generally slightly more likely than girls to report missing school due to work, though for both, the proportion reporting an effect on school attendance increases as they get older.

No clear pattern emerges in the relationship between wealth and child labour impacting school attendance, with the highest proportions being reported in the fourth quintile (6.6 per cent) and the poorest (6.5 per cent). Lastly, children in rural areas (5.8 per cent) are slightly more likely to report work affecting their school attendance compared to those in urban areas (5.4 per cent).

Table 8.4 Per cent of 5-17-year-olds in child labour who are currently attending school and report that work affects their regular attendance or studies by sex, age group, education of household head, wealth index quintile and area of residence

Characteristic	Children in child labour currently attending school		Number of children in child labour currently attending school
	School attendance not affected by work	School attendance affected by work	
Both sexes			
Total 5-17	94.3	5.7	692,720
5-9	98.1	1.9	189,367
10-13	95.2	4.8	293,335
14-17	89.7	10.3	210,018
Boys			
Total 5-17	93.8	6.2	531,568
5-9	97.9	2.1	124,077
10-13	95.2	4.8	221,660
14-17	89.4	10.6	185,831
Girls			
Total 5-17	96.0	4.0	161,152

Characteristic	Children in child labour currently attending school		Number of children in child labour currently attending school
	School attendance not affected by work	School attendance affected by work	
Girls			
5-9	98.4	1.6	65,290
10-13	95.2	4.8	71,675
14-17	91.8	8.2	24,188
Edu. HH head			
None/Pre-school	95.4	4.6	356,541
Primary	93.0	7.0	122,122
Middle	95.0	5.0	52,621
Secondary	90.7	9.3	82,713
Higher	94.8	5.2	78,273
WIQ			
Poorest	93.5	6.5	249,654
Second	94.7	5.3	221,971
Third	95.3	4.7	141,672
Fourth	93.4	6.6	54,773
Richest	95.6	4.4	24,650
Residence			
Rural	94.2	5.8	548,086
Urban	94.6	5.4	144,635

This table uses information about school attendance from the child questionnaire rather than the adult questionnaire.

The education of the household head omits the categories of "Non-formal". These records account for 2 individuals from the unweighted survey responses respectively, which when weighted represent 451 children.

Table 8.5 explores the reasons why children engaged in child labour do not attend school. It includes both those who have never been enrolled and those who previously attended but dropped out. Among children in child labour who are not in school, the most frequently cited reason is the inability to afford school (24.2 per cent). Other common barriers include issues related to school availability or quality (23.5 per cent), a lack of interest in schooling (18.8 per cent), and parental beliefs that undervalue the importance of education (11.0 per cent). The

high percentage citing affordability is particularly noteworthy, as Article 25-A of the Constitution of Pakistan guarantees free education for children aged 5–16. This suggests that some families may be unaware of this provision or perceive additional schooling costs—such as books, uniforms, and transportation—as unaffordable. The opportunity cost of attending school instead of working may also influence household decisions, particularly considering undervaluing education is also among the top reasons cited. Additionally, limited access to free public schools may exacerbate the issue, as private education in Pakistan involves financial costs.

Working or learning a job is another frequently mentioned reason for non-attendance (8.5 per cent), along with family disapproval (6.3 per cent), children being too young (2.3 per cent), among other reasons (3.3 per cent). Significant differences exist between boys and girls regarding the reasons for not attending school. Boys are more likely to be out of school due to financial constraints (28.6 per cent compared to 16.5 per cent for girls) and because of lack of interest (21.6 per cent vs. 14.0 per cent). On the other hand, girls more frequently report the unavailability of school facilities or teachers (30.2 per cent vs. 19.6 per cent for boys) as the most common reason for non-attendance.

Age trends also show shifts in the reasons for school non-attendance. As children grow older, financial constraints and lack of interest become more prominent. Among 5–9-year-olds, 13.4 per cent cite affordability as a barrier, compared to 31.5 per cent among those aged 14–17. Similarly, the proportion of children reporting a lack of interest rises from 13.8 per cent in the younger age group to 20.8 per cent in the older group. Learning a job becomes a more significant reason as well, increasing from 2.6 per cent among 5–9-year-olds to 11.9 per cent for 14–17-year-olds. Patterns also vary across wealth index quintiles. Children from the poorest households are more likely to cite poor school facilities or teacher unavailability as a reason for non-attendance (33.8 per cent in the poorest quintile vs. 1.2 per cent in the richest). In contrast, those from the wealthiest households more frequently mention financial constraints (47.8 per cent), lack of interest (26.6) and the need to work (13.9 per cent). As girls get older permission from the family becomes a more serious issue, with 15.8 per cent of 14–17-year-olds not attending because their family did not allow it, up from 7.7 per cent for 5–9-year-old girls.

Urban-rural differences are also evident. Children in urban areas are more likely to report financial difficulties as a barrier to schooling (43.3 per cent vs. 18.4 per cent in rural areas). Meanwhile, rural children cite inadequate school facilities (29.1 per cent vs. 4.7 per cent in urban areas) at higher rates. However, in both urban and rural areas, lack of interest and work- and job-related reasons remain among the most frequently cited barriers to school attendance. For additional details at the division and district levels, refer to Table A8.4 in the Appendix. Notably, school facility and teacher availability issues are reported most frequently in the Hyderabad and Larkana divisions, where 33.4 and 34.4 per cent of children cite them as barriers. Additionally, affordability issues are most commonly cited in Karachi (55.5 per cent).

Table 8.5 Per cent of 5-17-year-olds in child labour by reported reason for non-attendance in school, by sex, age group, education of household head, wealth index quintile and area of residence

Characteristic	Reason for not attending school											Number of children in child labour not attending school
	Cannot afford	No interest	Parents negligence/education not valuable	School facilities/teachers not available/poor quality	Family did not allow	Household chores	Work/learn job	Illness/disability	Learn holy book	Too young	Other reason	
Both sexes												
Total 5-17	24.2	18.8	11.0	23.5	6.3	1.4	8.5	0.6	0.2	2.3	3.3	924,700
5-9	13.4	13.8	15.5	33.9	4.6	0.9	2.6	0.5	0.4	12.0	2.5	134,185
10-13	22.5	17.9	12.3	28.0	7.5	1.7	6.0	0.4	0.2	0.5	2.9	322,039
14-17	28.4	20.8	8.8	17.4	5.9	1.3	11.9	0.7	0.2	0.8	3.8	468,477
Boys												
Total 5-17	28.6	21.6	8.8	19.6	2.7	0.9	11.9	0.7	0.2	1.8	3.3	586,725
5-9	16.7	15.3	14.0	34.4	1.3	0.0	4.5	0.8	0.2	10.2	2.8	65,050
10-13	27.4	20.6	9.9	24.8	3.7	1.0	8.6	0.5	0.3	0.5	2.6	177,258
14-17	31.5	23.2	7.2	14.1	2.4	1.0	15.0	0.8	0.2	0.9	3.7	344,417
Girls												
Total 5-17	16.5	14.0	14.8	30.2	12.6	2.2	2.6	0.4	0.2	3.2	3.3	337,975
5-9	10.3	12.4	16.8	33.5	7.7	1.7	0.8	0.3	0.6	13.7	2.2	69,134
10-13	16.5	14.6	15.2	31.8	12.2	2.6	2.9	0.4	0.1	0.4	3.3	144,782
14-17	20.0	14.1	13.1	26.5	15.8	2.2	3.3	0.4	0.1	0.7	4.0	124,059
Edu. HH head												
None/Pre-school	24.3	18.3	11.8	25.0	5.4	1.3	8.1	0.4	0.2	2.5	2.7	672,542
Primary	21.1	20.0	9.3	20.1	10.8	2.0	8.2	0.9	0.4	3.3	3.9	123,396
Middle	25.6	21.8	7.8	10.9	11.3	0.9	14.0	1.1	0.1	1.7	4.9	40,831
Secondary	28.4	16.3	7.1	23.7	4.3	2.4	9.1	1.6	0.1	0.0	7.0	60,622
Higher	24.4	25.5	11.2	17.4	5.6	0.0	11.3	0.0	0.0	0.0	4.6	26,293

Characteristic	Reason for not attending school											Number of children in child labour not attending school
	Cannot afford	No interest	Parents negligence/education not valuable	School facilities/teachers not available/poor quality	Family did not allow	Household chores	Work/learn job	Illness/disability	Learn holy book	Too young	Other reason	
WIQ												
Poorest	16.5	18.0	12.4	33.8	6.4	1.6	5.7	0.5	0.2	2.3	2.6	443,080
Second	22.7	18.3	10.5	22.2	6.8	1.6	9.8	0.8	0.4	3.8	3.1	244,609
Middle	31.6	19.1	12.7	9.6	7.8	1.2	11.6	0.7	0.1	1.3	4.3	121,019
Fourth	49.5	20.6	4.8	1.3	4.6	0.5	12.9	0.6	0.2	0.1	4.8	82,954
Richest	47.8	26.6	3.3	1.2	0.6	0.3	13.9	0.2	0.4	0.0	5.9	33,038
Residence												
Rural	18.4	18.6	12.3	29.1	6.7	1.5	6.8	0.5	0.2	2.8	3.0	711,347
Urban	43.3	19.4	6.5	4.7	5.1	1.0	14.2	0.9	0.2	0.6	4.2	213,353

In this table, questions C9 and C13 are used, for which only the most appropriate option is selected. These questions are answered by children.

The education of the household head omits the categories of "Non-formal" and "Other". These records account for 2 and 2 individuals from the unweighted survey responses respectively, which when weighted represent 451 and 434 children.

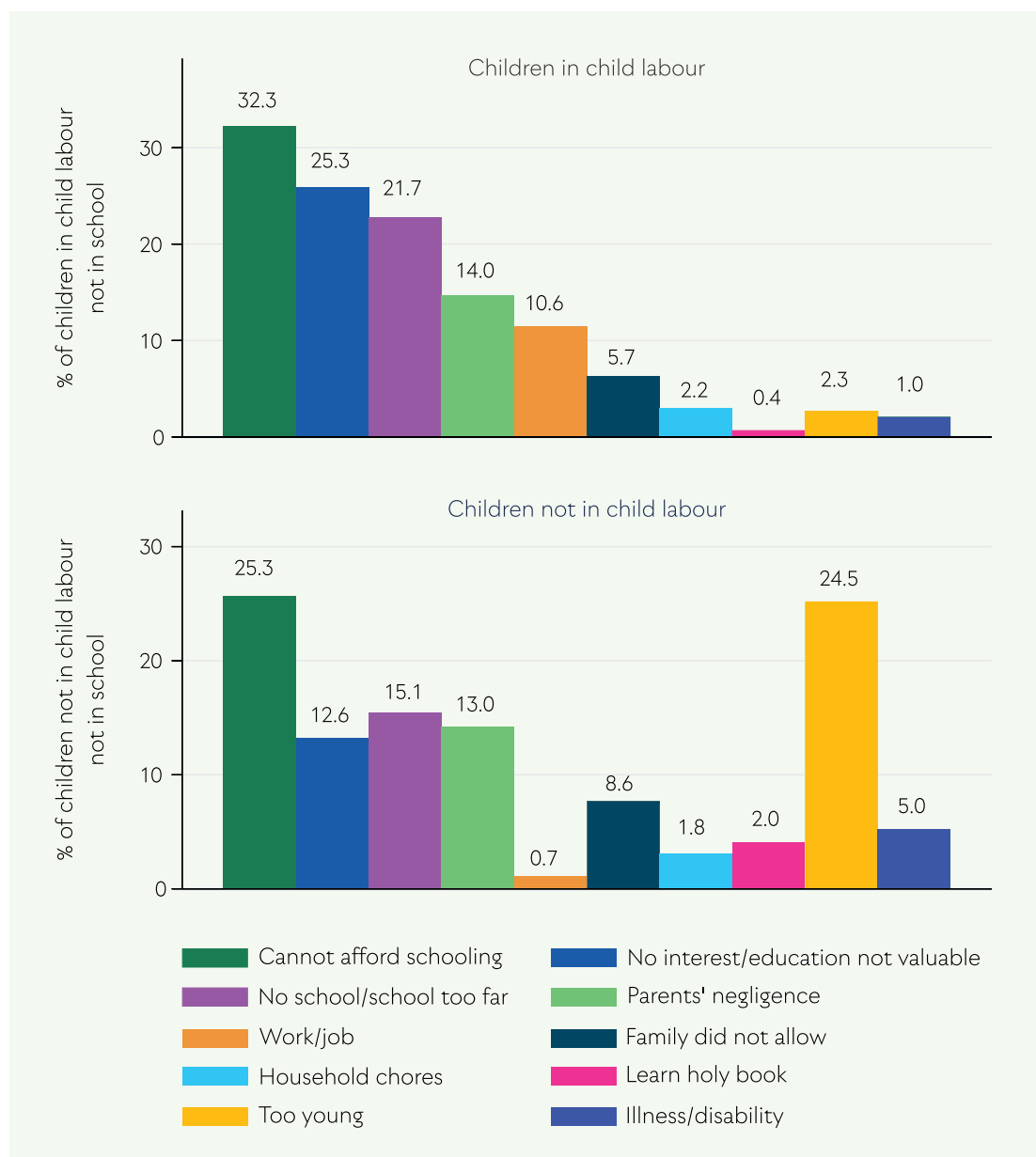
The total number of children in child labour not attending school in this table does not include children for whom information about the reason for not attending school is missing. These records account for 1 child from the unweighted survey responses respectively, which when weighted represent 52 children.

Figure 8.3 analyses the reasons children do not attend school, using responses from the adult questionnaire instead of the child questionnaire. It also compares these reasons between children involved in child labour and those who are not. Similar to the results presented in Table 8.5, for children engaged in child labour, the most frequently cited reason for not attending school is financial difficulties preventing families from affording education (32.3 per cent), followed by lack of interest in schooling (25.3 per cent). The unavailability of schools or long travel distances is another significant factor (21.7 per cent).

In contrast, for children not engaged in child labour, while the most common reason for school non-attendance is also financial difficulties (25.3 per cent), a close second is being too young (24.5 per cent), a factor that is rarely mentioned by children in child labour. Note, that children not in child labour are on average younger than those in child labour. Other notable reasons

include and the unavailability of schools or long travel distances (15.1 per cent), lack of interest (12.6) and parent's negligence (13.0 per cent).

Figure 8.3 Reported reason for non-attendance or dropping out of school for children in child labour (top figure) and children not in child labour (bottom figure)



Child labour can affect school attendance through two pathways: on the extensive margin, by influencing whether a child is enrolled in school at all, and on the intensive margin, by impacting how regularly an enrolled child attends classes. Consistent attendance is crucial for keeping up with schoolwork, and both factors play a role in shaping educational outcomes.

Table 8.6 illustrates the percentage of children who are behind their expected grade level according to the school syllabus. This includes students attending a grade lower than the intended level for their age, based on the assumption that children begin Year 1 at age 5, reaching Year 5 at age 9, Year 8 at age 12, Year 10 at age 14, and Year 11 at age 15 or older. The findings indicate that most enrolled children, regardless of child labour status, are behind their expected grade level. When comparing the proportion of children in child labour who are in the correct grade for their age (12.9 per cent) to their non-working peers (12.7 per cent), the difference is negligible.

Grade-age distortions are less pronounced in the earlier years of education and the latter ones, regardless of whether they are engaged in child labour. However, no specific pattern seems to emerge within different age groups, across child labour status. Similarly, there is no clear correlation between falling behind in school and the education level of the household head. In contrast, the percentage of children in child labour who are lagging in school tends to decrease with the wealth of the household, starting at 90.3 per cent for those among the poorest households and falling to 74.3 per cent for those belonging to the richest. This relation is also present among children not in child labour as well, though the changes across wealth levels are less in magnitude.

The proportion of children behind their expected grade level is similar in both rural and urban areas. However, among children in child labour, those in rural areas are slightly more likely to be behind (88.2 per cent) compared to their rural counterparts (82.9 per cent). For further details at the division and district levels, refer to Table A8.5 in the Appendix. While the percentage of children falling behind is similar across most divisions, slightly higher proportions of children lagging their intended grade are present in Shaheed Benazirabad for both children engaged in child labour (91.7 per cent) and those not (90.9 per cent).

Table 8.6 Percentage of grade-age distortions for 5-17-year-olds in child labour and not in child labour attending school by age, education of household head, wealth index quintile and area of residence

Characteristic	Children in child labour attending school		Total number of children in child labour attending school	Children not in child labour attending school		Total number of children not in child labour attending school	Total number of children attending school
	Per cent in corresponding grade	Per cent behind corresponding grade		Per cent in corresponding grade	Per cent behind corresponding grade		
Total 5-17	12.9	87.0	657,932	12.7	87.3	9,750,877	10,408,809
Age							
5	42.9	57.1	11,520	26.8	73.2	802,289	813,809
6	17.7	82.3	19,766	11.2	88.8	973,331	993,097
7	10.8	89.2	36,240	9.4	90.6	1,097,641	1,133,881
8	7.0	93.0	67,281	8.7	91.3	1,120,012	1,187,293
9	9.4	90.6	47,567	7.3	92.7	792,105	839,672
10	4.5	95.5	80,913	6.9	93.1	944,882	1,025,796
11	5.9	94.1	40,002	7.9	92.1	632,871	672,873
12	8.1	91.9	73,491	8.0	92.0	829,779	903,270
13	8.2	91.8	82,124	7.1	92.9	611,405	693,528
14	18.4	81.6	49,844	13.4	86.6	569,316	619,159
15	5.9	94.1	55,101	6.8	93.2	530,615	585,716
16	20.6	79.4	46,551	24.5	75.5	468,652	515,203
17	48.2	51.8	47,531	53.2	46.8	377,980	425,511
Edu. HH head							
None/Pre-school	11.2	88.8	336,765	10.7	89.3	3,473,889	3,810,653
Primary	13.5	86.5	113,479	11.2	88.8	1,391,056	1,504,534
Middle	9.0	91.0	51,293	10.9	89.1	835,355	886,649
Secondary	17.1	82.9	79,791	13.0	87.0	1,642,724	1,722,516
Higher	18.1	81.9	76,178	16.8	83.2	2,393,263	2,469,441
Other	.	.	0	15.6	84.4	6,811	6,811
Don't know/Missing	-	-	212	7.9	92.1	4,706	4,918

Characteristic	Children in child labour attending school		Total number of children in child labour attending school	Children not in child labour attending school		Total number of children not in child labour attending school	Total number of children attending school
	Per cent in corresponding grade	Per cent behind corresponding grade		Per cent in corresponding grade	Per cent behind corresponding grade		
WIQ							
Poorest	9.7	90.3	236,963	11.0	89.0	1,330,613	1,567,576
Second	13.1	86.9	208,691	11.8	88.2	1,705,033	1,913,724
Middle	14.4	85.6	134,964	13.2	86.8	2,219,262	2,354,226
Fourth	17.0	83.0	52,862	11.8	88.2	2,186,305	2,239,168
Richest	25.7	74.3	24,452	14.6	85.4	2,309,664	2,334,115
Residence							
Rural	11.8	88.2	515,971	12.3	87.7	4,392,389	4,908,359
Urban	17.1	82.9	141,961	13.0	87.0	5,358,489	5,500,450

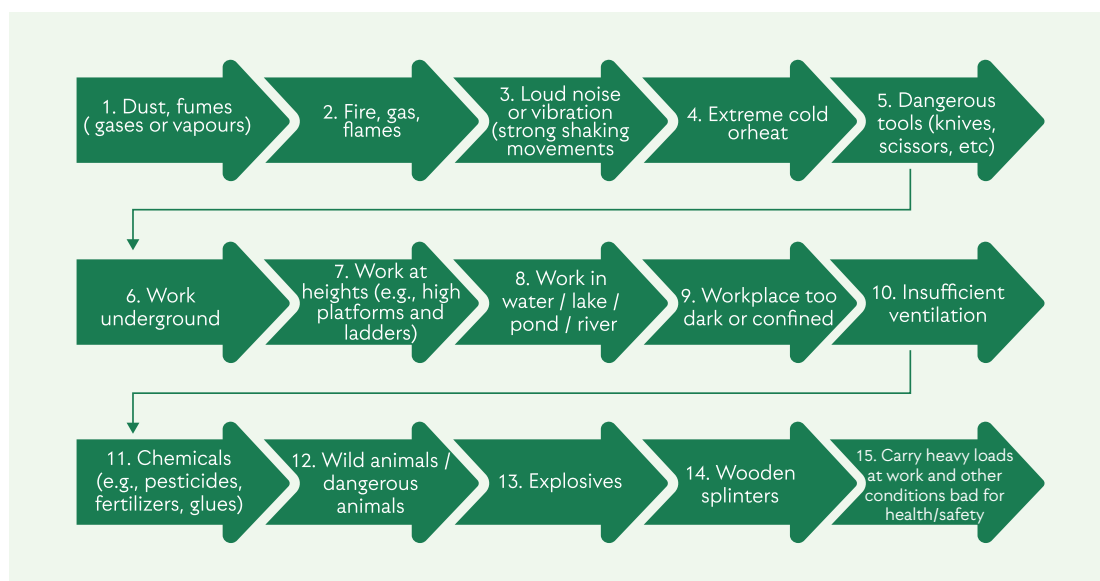
The education of the household head omits the category of "Non-formal". These records account for 44 individuals from the unweighted survey responses respectively, which when weighted represent 3639 children. The total number of children attending school in this table does not include children for whom information about the level of education is missing (non-formal or other standard/Madrassah education). These records account for 739 children from the unweighted survey responses respectively, which when weighted represent 54030 children.

- Figure not presented as there are fewer than 10 observations in the denominator.
- . No observations are available for this group

8.3 Physical and mental health

8.3.1 Hazardous conditions

This section explores the hazardous working conditions reported by children. Such conditions include tasks performed in environments where there is potential exposure to harmful substances, dangerous activities, extreme weather, loud noise, or vibrations, all of which can negatively impact a child's health, as defined by the 18th ICLS. Children aged 5 to 9 were not asked about their working conditions, as they were considered too young to provide reliable responses.



Hazardous work undertaken by children includes exposure to dangerous conditions (as outlined in the above questionnaire flow), employment in industries or occupations deemed hazardous, the use of dangerous tools or machinery, working long hours or night shifts, and experiencing violence in the workplace. The categorisation of hazardous occupations and industries is based on The Sindh Prohibition of Employment of Children Act, 2017, which lists 38 occupations, industries, processes, and work environments considered hazardous. Hazardous tools and equipment are identified through descriptions provided by the children themselves and by the specific tools mentioned. A tool is classified as hazardous if it is described as sharp, heavy, larger than the child, power-driven, or lacking appropriate safety features. Additionally, power-driven tools used for activities such as sawing, drilling, grinding, pressing, or cutting are considered hazardous, as defined by both the 18th ICLS and the The Sindh Prohibition of Employment of Children Act, 2017.

Table 8.7 displays the number and percentage of children aged 10–17 involved in child labour who reported working in hazardous conditions. Overall, 50.4 per cent of children in child labour are exposed to such conditions. The proportion is higher among boys (51.0 per cent) compared to girls (49.0 per cent), with a notably larger total number of boys in child labour. Among children aged 10–13, 44.4 per cent report working in hazardous conditions, while 55.7 per cent of those aged 14–17 report similar exposure.

When considering industries, the highest percentage of children in hazardous work is found in water supply, where 60.8 per cent of child labourers face hazardous conditions. This is followed by construction, where 57.9 per cent of child labourers are exposed to hazards. The agriculture, forestry, and fishing sector also has a high prevalence of hazardous work, with 56.2 per cent of children affected. On the other hand, manufacturing has a lower proportion of child labourers in hazardous conditions, at 36.3 per cent.

Children from wealthier households tend to be less likely to be exposed to hazardous conditions. In the poorest wealth quintile, 51.8 per cent of children in child labour work under hazardous conditions, with this figure gradually decreasing to 31.1 in the richest households. Interestingly, the second wealth quintile has the highest percentage of children in hazardous conditions, at 55.6 per cent, which is higher than the overall average. Additionally, a distinction is seen between rural and urban areas. In rural areas, 53.1 per cent of children in child labour report working in hazardous conditions, while in urban areas, the proportion decreases to 42.5 per cent. For further details by division and district, see Table A8.6 in the Appendix. A notably lower percentage of children in Karachi division are reported to be working in hazardous conditions (34.7 per cent).

Table 8.7 Number and per cent of 10-17-year-olds in child labour who reported working in hazardous conditions by sex, age group, industry, education of household head, wealth index quintile and area of residence

Characteristic	Children in child labour that reported working in hazardous conditions					
	Boys		Girls		Both sexes	
	Number	Per cent of children in child labour (Boys)	Number	Per cent of children in child labour (Girls)	Number	Per cent of children in child labour (Total)
Total 10-17	440,676	51.0	168,999	49.0	609,675	50.4
Age group						
5-9	.	.	.	.	.	.
10-13	166,834	45.8	84,747	41.8	251,581	44.4
14-17	273,842	54.7	84,252	59.3	358,094	55.7
Industry						
Agriculture, forestry and fishing	251,101	56.1	99,443	56.6	350,543	56.2
Manufacturing	28,689	37.7	33,299	35.2	61,988	36.3
Wholesale and retail trade	58,367	41.2	2,849	54.1	61,216	41.7
Water Supply	15,010	63.5	21,196	59.0	36,206	60.8
Construction	43,354	57.7	515	-	43,869	57.9
Accommodation and food service activities	12,192	42.5	424	45.5*	12,616	42.6

Characteristic	Children in child labour that reported working in hazardous conditions					
	Boys		Girls		Both sexes	
	Number	Per cent of children in child labour (Boys)	Number	Per cent of children in child labour (Girls)	Number	Per cent of children in child labour (Total)
Industry						
Activities of households as employers	3,293	37.3	4,838	37.3	8,131	37.3
Other	25,835	44.5	1,480	19.9	27,315	41.7
WIQ						
Poorest	162,932	52.5	80,366	50.6	243,297	51.8
Second	136,866	56.3	56,650	54.0	193,516	55.6
Middle	81,310	49.6	20,851	41.0	102,161	47.6
Fourth	44,970	44.7	8,723	38.6	53,693	43.6
Richest	14,599	31.2	2,410	31.0	17,009	31.1
Edu. HH head						
None/Pre-school	279,317	51.3	103,607	47.6	382,924	50.2
Primary	71,716	53.9	26,354	52.0	98,070	53.4
Middle	21,310	47.1	15,429	61.8	36,739	52.3
Secondary	44,762	53.0	14,181	49.5	58,943	52.1
Higher	23,475	41.2	9,427	41.2	32,902	41.2
Residence						
Rural	333,942	53.7	146,359	51.7	480,301	53.1
Urban	106,734	43.9	22,640	36.8	129,374	42.5

The education of the household head omits the categories of "Non-formal" and "Other". These records account for 2 and 1 individuals from the unweighted survey responses respectively, which when weighted represent 451 and 43 children.

* Figure should be interpreted with caution, since estimates are based on fewer than 25 observations in the denominator.

- Figure not presented as there are fewer than 10 observations in the denominator.

. No observations are available for this group

Table 8.8 outlines the percentage of children aged 10–17 involved in child labour who are exposed to hazardous conditions across various industries. Across industries the most cited hazard pertains to working in extreme heat or cold. In the agriculture, forestry, and fishing sector, extreme cold or heat is the most frequently reported hazard, affecting 35.0 percent of children, followed by exposure to dangerous tools (15.5 percent) and wooden splinters (14.4 percent). Similarly, in the manufacturing sector, dangerous tools are a major concern, reported by 14.4 percent of children in child labour, followed by exposure to extreme temperatures (12.4 percent).

Among children engaged in wholesale and retail trade, 20.4 percent report suffering from extreme cold or heat, while 8.5 percent are exposed to dangerous tools. Children involved in water collection are also predominantly affected by extreme temperatures, with 33.1 percent reporting exposure to extreme cold or heat. In the construction industry, extreme temperatures are the most commonly reported hazard (25.3 percent), followed by working at heights (10.2 percent). Children working in accommodation and food services also face high levels of exposure to extreme cold or heat (24.4 percent), as well as fire, gas, flames, or electric shocks (12.9 percent) Finally, children working in household activities as domestic workers report being exposed to extreme temperatures (18.9 percent), dust and fumes (4.5 percent), and dangerous tools (3.8 percent).

Table 8.8 Per cent of children 10-17 years in child labour by industry and type of hazardous condition at work

	Industry							
	Agriculture, forestry and fishing	Manufacturing	Wholesale and retail trade	Water collection	Construction	Accommodation and food service	Activities of households as	Other industry
Dust, fumes (gases or vapours)	3.6	4.3	7.9	3.6	7.9	8.4	4.5	8.2
Fire, gas, flames/electric shocks	0.4	2.4	2.9	0.6	3.1	12.9	1.1	1.5
Loud noise or vibration (strong shaking movements)	1.7	3.4	5.2	0.6	8.2	0.3	1.0	4.8
Extreme cold or heat	35.7	12.4	20.4	33.1	25.3	24.4	18.9	19.8
Dangerous tools	15.5	14.4	8.5	7.4	3.6	10.8	3.8	7.7

	Industry							
	Agriculture, forestry and fishing	Manufacturing	Wholesale and retail trade	Water collection	Construction	Accommodation and food service	Activities of households as	Other industry
Work underground	0.7	0.5	0.4	0.0	0.9	0.0	1.1	0.5
Work at heights	1.0	0.5	0.9	0.6	10.2	2.6	2.0	1.2
Work in water/lake/pond/river	3.0	0.8	0.2	18.1	0.3	1.5	3.4	1.1
Workplace too dark or confined	0.1	0.8	0.8	0.0	0.9	1.8	0.5	0.5
Insufficient ventilation	0.3	1.2	1.2	0.0	1.4	0.6	0.0	1.4
Chemicals	1.8	1.7	0.9	2.5	1.8	0.1	0.5	2.1
Wild animals/dangerous animals	11.8	0.3	2.1	5.9	1.7	0.9	0.1	2.0
Explosives	0.1	0.5	0.5	0.1	0.6	0.2	1.0	1.5
Wooden splinters	14.4	3.3	3.0	13.4	3.8	3.6	3.2	1.4
Other processes or conditions	0.4	0.1	0.9	0.0	0.1	0.9	0.1	1.0

Figure 8.4 depicts the most prevalent hazardous conditions encountered by children aged 10–17 involved in child labour. The most commonly reported risk is carrying heavy loads (29.8 per cent) followed by exposure to extreme cold or heat (28.1 per cent). Other significant hazards include working with dangerous tools (12.7 per cent), exposure to wooden splinters (9.7 per cent), and contact with wild or dangerous animals (7.2 per cent).

Figure 8.4 Most prevalent hazardous conditions among children in child labour

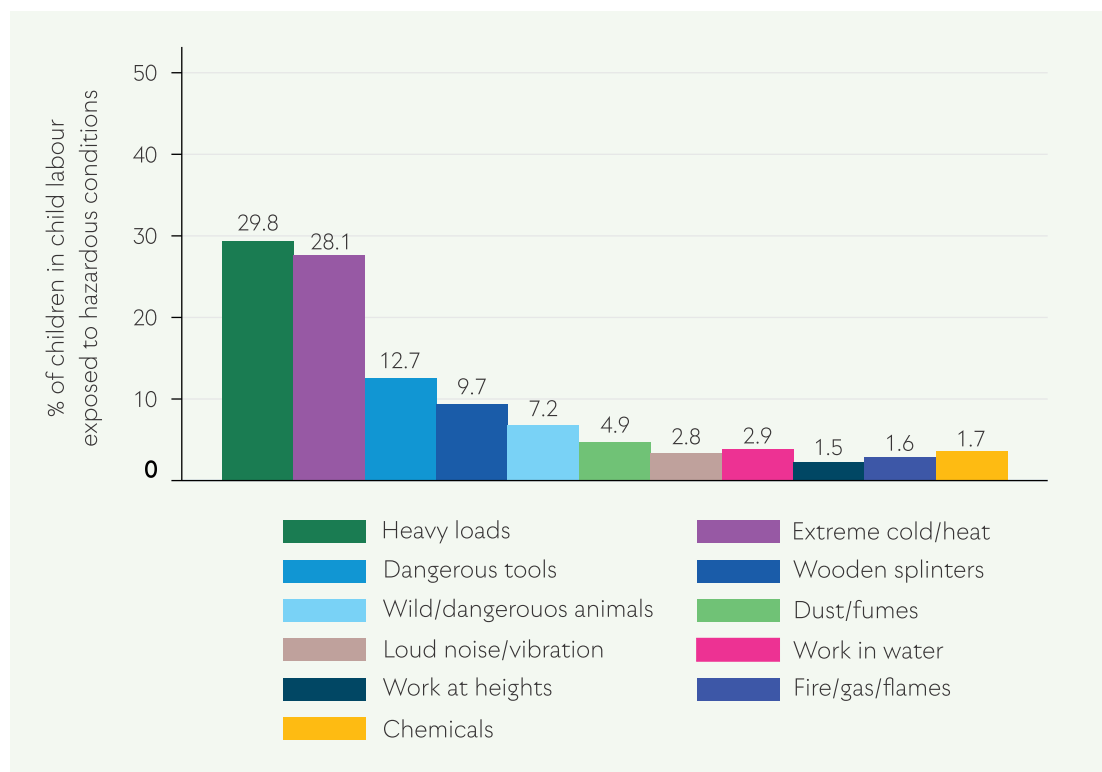


Table 8.9 highlights the occurrence of illnesses and injuries among working children, comparing those engaged in child labour with those working but not classified as child labourers. Overall, 43.5 per cent of children in child labour reported experiencing a work-related injury or illness, whereas 20.6 per cent of working children outside of child labour faced similar issues. The likelihood of injury or illness remains relatively steady with age, affecting 46.1 per cent of child labourers aged 14–17, compared to 40.9 per cent of those aged 10–13 and 42.9 per cent of children aged 5–9.

Gender differences are also evident. Among boys in child labour, 44.6 per cent reported an injury or illness due to work, while the proportion was slightly lower for girls at 41.0 per cent. This gap remains across the earlier age groups but reverses for children aged 14–17, where 48.2 per cent of girls in child labour reported work-related injuries or illnesses, compared to 45.4 per cent of boys.

The likelihood of work-related injuries or illnesses also remains relatively constant across the education level of the household head, reaching a peak in households where the head reached middle school, in which 46.1 per cent of children in child labour reported injuries. This rate decreases significantly to 36.5 per cent among children from households where the head had higher education. Furthermore, the findings indicate that children in child labour from the poorest wealth quintile report the highest rate of work-related injuries or illnesses, at 45.4 per cent, compared to 36.4 among those from the wealthiest quintile.

Regarding place of residence, children in rural areas are more affected than those in urban areas. Among child labourers in rural areas, 43.9 per cent reported experiencing an injury or illness due to work, whereas the proportion is lower in urban areas at 42.0 per cent. For a more detailed breakdown by division and district, refer to Table A8.7 in the Appendix. The highest incidence of work-related injuries among children in child labour is recorded in Hyderabad division (53.6 per cent), followed by Sukkur (51.8 per cent). Both these divisions also have the highest percentage of injuries among children working but not classified as child labourers (27.1 and 31.2 per cent, respectively). Larkana division had the lowest percentage with 10.8 not in child labour and 25.8 per cent of children in child labour.

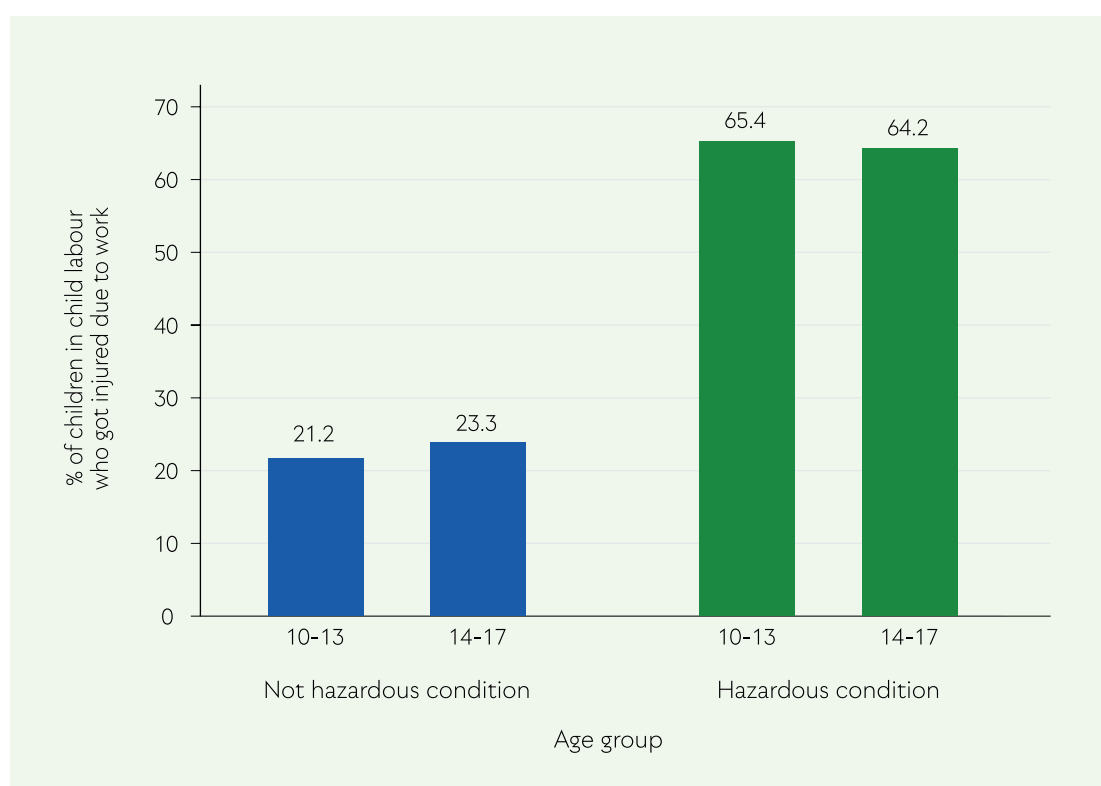
Table 8.9 Number and per cent 5-17-year-olds in child labour and not in child labour who got injured or ill due to work, by age group, sex, education of household head, wealth index quintile and area of residence

Characteristic	Working children			
	Not in child labour		In child labour	
	Total number of working children not in child labour	Percentage that got ill or injured due to work	Total number of working children in child labour	Percentage that got ill or injured due to work
Both sexes				
Total 5-17	219,817	20.6	1,487,073	43.5
5-9	0	.	277,331	42.9
10-13	0	.	566,747	40.9
14-17	219,817	20.6	642,995	46.1
Boys				
Total 5-17	103,849	20.8	1,027,052	44.6
5-9	0	.	162,190	45.9
10-13	0	.	363,958	42.8
14-17	103,849	20.8	500,905	45.4
Girls				
Total 5-17	115,968	20.5	460,021	41.0
5-9	0	.	115,142	38.7
10-13	0	.	202,789	37.3
14-17	115,968	20.5	142,090	48.2

Characteristic	Working children			
	Not in child labour		In child labour	
	Total number of working children not in child labour	Percentage that got ill or injured due to work	Total number of working children in child labour	Percentage that got ill or injured due to work
Edu. HH head				
None/Pre-school	116,273	22.5	947,307	43.4
Primary	34,317	22.3	227,712	44.8
Middle	15,028	9.6	83,916	46.1
Secondary	26,180	22.8	130,447	45.4
Higher	27,532	14.8	96,224	36.5
WIQ				
Poorest	57,598	25.5	630,979	45.4
Second	64,184	14.4	428,533	43.6
Middle	54,316	22.7	242,486	39.8
Fourth	27,038	21.5	128,800	43.5
Richest	16,680	19.2	56,275	36.4
Residence				
Rural	158,068	19.1	1,155,097	43.9
Urban	61,748	24.4	331,976	42.0
<p>The education of the household head omits the categories of "Non-formal", "Other". These records account for 5 and 4 individuals from the unweighted survey responses respectively, which when weighted represent 928 and 850 children.</p> <p>. No observations are available for this group</p>				

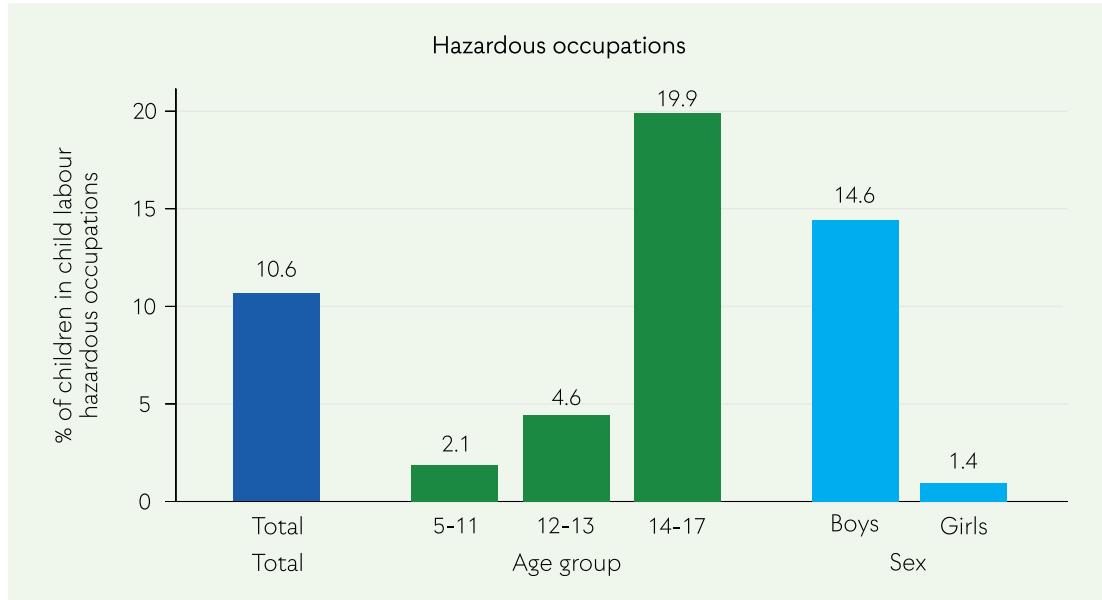
Children working in hazardous conditions are far more likely to suffer injuries or illnesses due to their work, as shown in Figure 8.5. The data reveals a significantly higher risk of injury among those engaged in hazardous work. Among 10–13-year-olds, 65.4 per cent of children in hazardous work reported injuries—44.2 percentage points higher than those in non-hazardous work. This trend continues across the older age group, with the injury rate among 14–17-year-olds in hazardous work exceeding that of their non-hazardous counterparts by 40.9 percentage points. This stark contrast in injury rates is particularly notable, considering that the comparison is made exclusively among children classified as being in child labour.

Figure 8.5 Percentage of children in child labour that experienced injuries by hazardous work condition



As mentioned in Chapter 5, child labour is not only characterised by hazardous working conditions but also includes employment in hazardous occupations and industries, as defined by Sindh law, as well as the use of dangerous tools. Overall, 10.6 per cent of children in child labour are engaged in occupations classified as hazardous, as shown in Figure 8.6. This percentage rises considerably with age, from 2.1 per cent among children aged 5–11 to 19.9 per cent for those aged 14–17. Additionally, boys in child labour are significantly more likely to be employed in hazardous occupations than girls, with a difference of 13 percentage points.

Figure 8.6 Per cent of 5–17-year-olds in child labour working in hazardous occupations by sex and age group



Furthermore, Figure 8.7 illustrates that 5.9 per cent of children in child labour are employed in hazardous industries. This proportion increases with age, reaching 12.0 per cent among those aged 14–17 in child labour, nearly double the rate observed among younger age groups—0.8 per cent for children aged 5–11 and 1.7 per cent for those aged 12–13. Additionally, boys in child labour are considerably more likely to work in hazardous industries than girls, with less than 1 per cent of girls working in hazardous compared to 8.3 per cent of boys.

Figure 8.7 Per cent of 5–17-year-olds in child labour working in hazardous industries by sex and age group

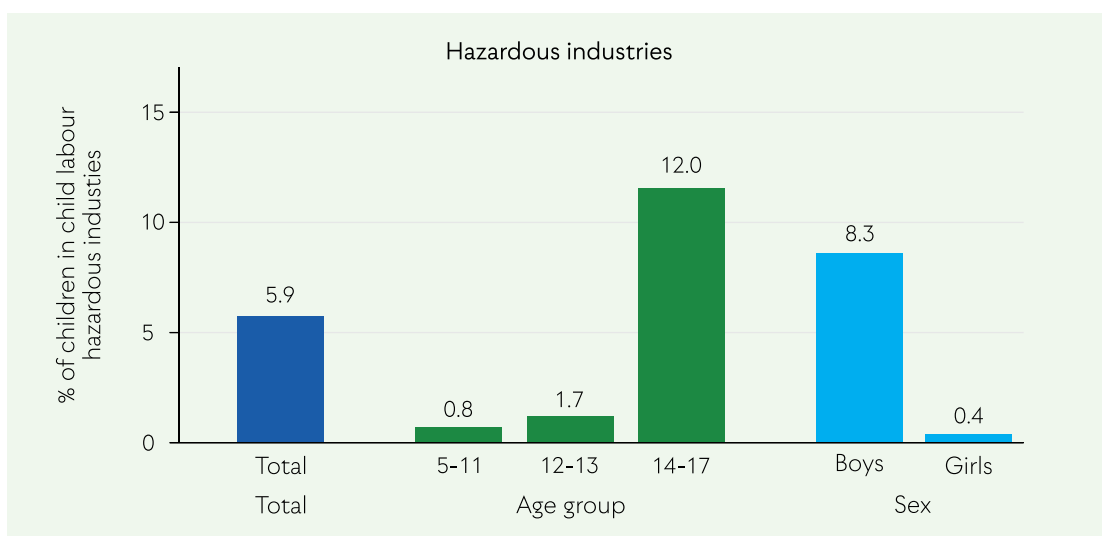
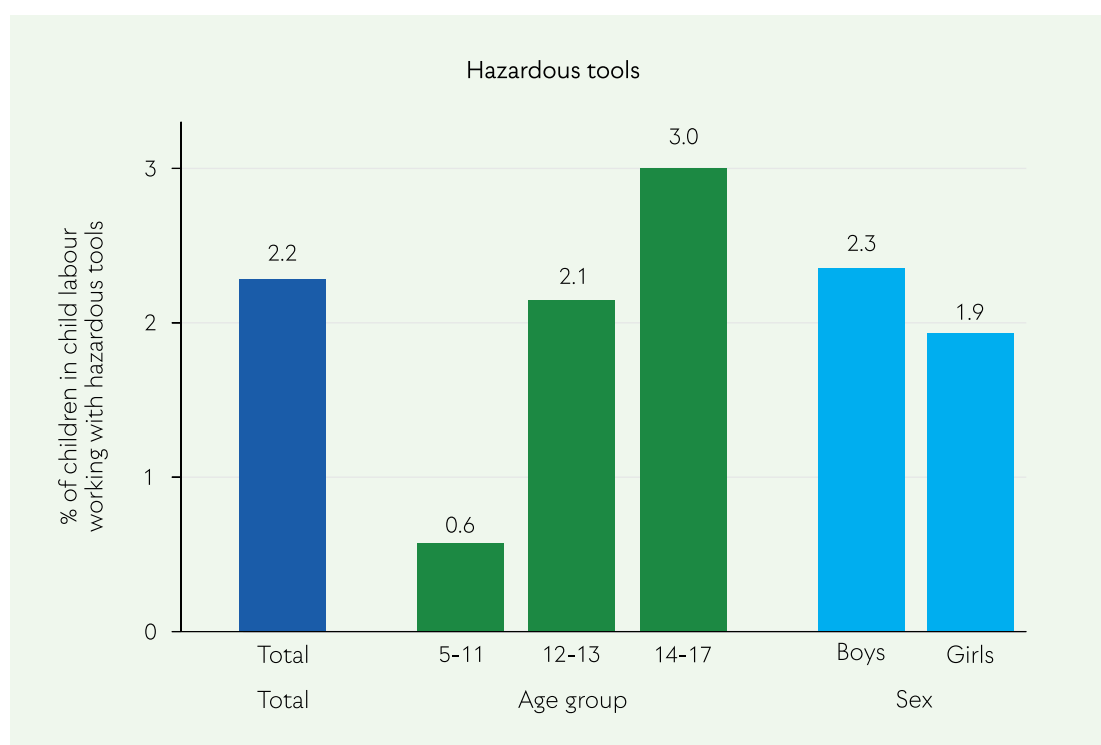


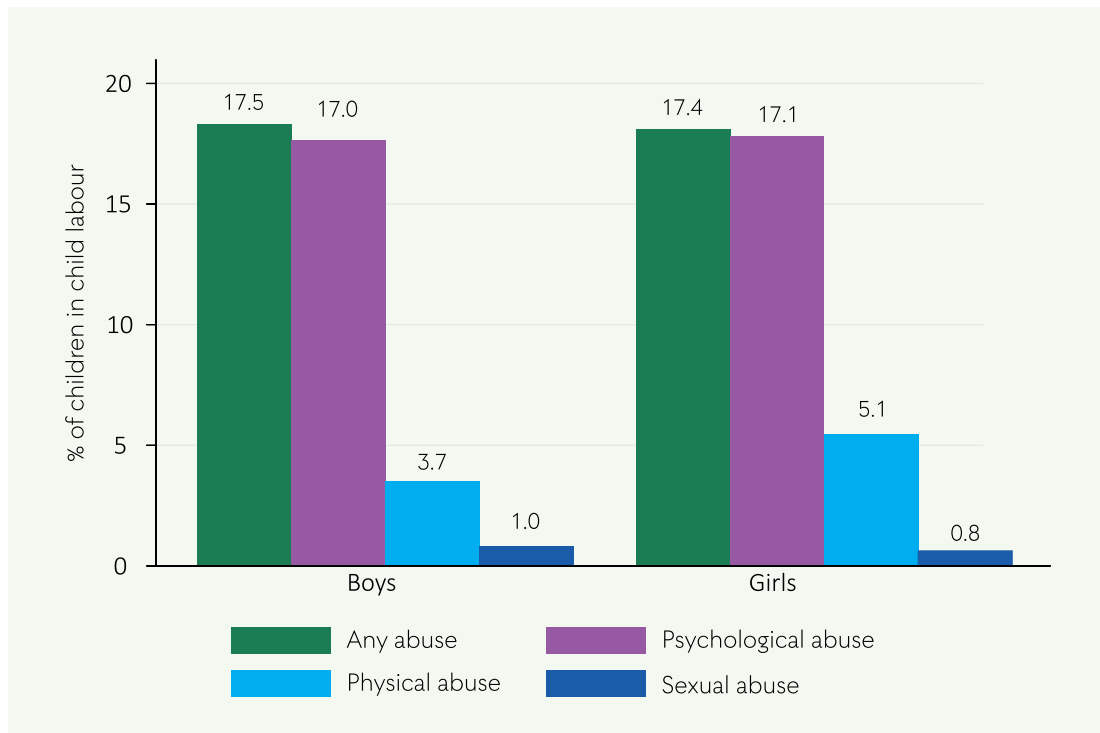
Figure 8.8 indicates that 2.2 per cent of children in child labour use hazardous tools. The likelihood of working with such tools increases with age, from 0.6 per cent among 5-11-year-olds in child labour to 3.0 per cent for those aged 14–17. As seen with hazardous occupations and industries, boys are more frequently exposed to hazardous tools than girls, with 2.3 per cent of boys in child labour using them compared to 1.9 per cent of girls.

Figure 8.8 Per cent of 5–17-year-olds in child labour working with hazardous tools by sex and age group



In this report, psychological abuse is defined as being persistently shouted at, repeatedly insulted, or discriminated against based on gender, religion, or caste. Physical abuse refers to being beaten or physically harmed, while sexual abuse involves unwanted touching or coercive actions against the respondent's will. Figure 8.9 presents the proportion of children in child labour who have experienced workplace abuse. Overall, there are only very small differences in the reporting of being subjected to some form of abuse between boys and girls (17.5 per cent versus 17.4 per cent), including psychological, physical, and sexual abuse. Among both genders, psychological abuse is the most common, affecting 17.0 per cent of boys and 17.1 per cent of girls, followed by physical and sexual abuse. It is important to acknowledge that these figures may be underreported due to factors such as stigma or cultural norms (Hyder & Malik, 2007). Although cases of sexual abuse remain relatively low, boys in child labour are slightly more likely to report such experiences (1.0 per cent) compared to girls (0.8 per cent).

Figure 8.9 Percentage of 5–17-year-olds in child labour that experienced abuse at work by type of violence and sex



Perhaps surprisingly, Figure 8.10 shows that children in child labour who work at their home are at a higher risk of experiencing abuse in the workplace, with 24.6 per cent reporting abuse compared to 15.6 per cent of those who work away from home.

Figure 8.10 Abuse at work against 5–17-year-olds in child labour and location of work

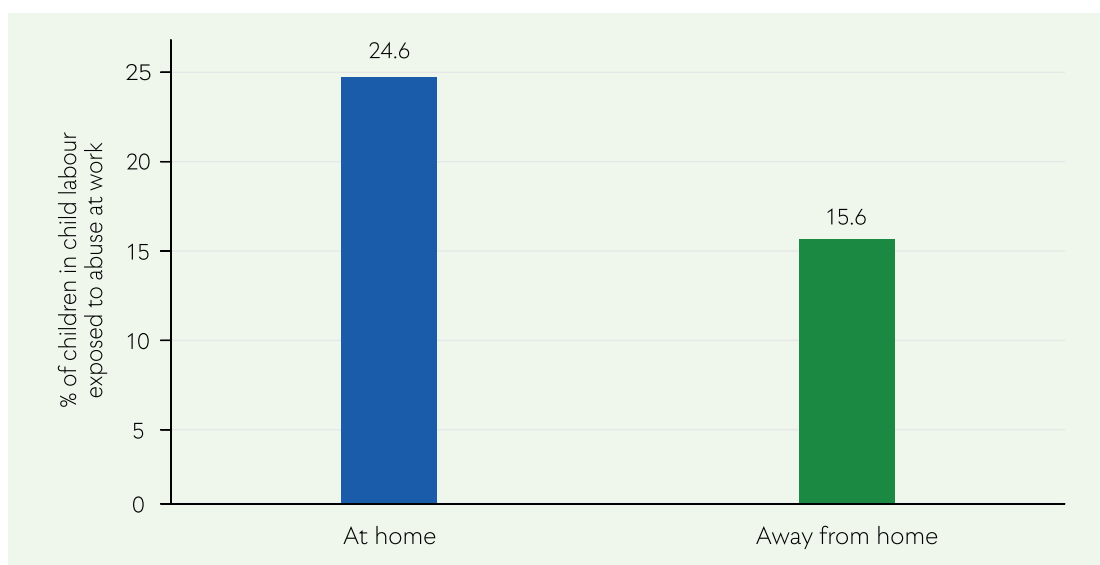


Table 8.10 presents data on the percentage of children aged 5–17 with disabilities based on their working status. The vast majority (95.2 per cent) are not engaged in any form of work. Meanwhile, 4.0 per cent are involved in child labour, and 0.8 per cent are working but not classified as child labourers.

Child labour is more common among boys, with 5.9 per cent engaged in such work compared to just 1.2 per cent of girls. As such, a higher proportion of girls (97.9 per cent) than boys (93.4 per cent) are not working. Age also plays a role, as child labour is more prevalent among children aged 10–13 (6.6 per cent), whereas the rate is lower at 1.4 per cent for children aged 5–9 and 5.2 per cent among children 14–17. Note that any children working aged 5–13 are by definition in child labour and so these cells have 0 per cent.

The likelihood of a child with disabilities being engaged in child labour is significantly higher in households where the head has only middle school education, with a rate of 5.8 per cent, though no linear relation is evident across education levels. In contrast, the prevalence of child labour among children with disabilities tends to decrease with household wealth. It is highest among those in the poorest wealth quintile (7.0 per cent) and lowest in the richest quintile, where 0.8 per cent of children in child labour reported. See Table A8.8 for a division and district-wise breakdown.

Table 8.10 Per cent of 5-17-year-olds with disabilities, by working status, by sex, age group, education of household head, wealth index quintile and area of residence

Characteristic	Children with disabilities			
	Children not working	Children working, not in child labour	Children in child labour	Total number of children with disabilities
Both sexes				
Total 5-17	95.2	0.8	4.0	252,422
5-9	98.6	0.0	1.4	105,218
10-13	93.4	0.0	6.6	72,785
14-17	92.1	2.7	5.2	74,419
Boys				
Total 5-17	93.4	0.7	5.9	152,598
5-9	98.2	0.0	1.8	62,063
10-13	90.5	0.0	9.5	45,980
14-17	89.6	2.5	7.9	44,555

Characteristic	Children with disabilities			
	Children not working	Children working, not in child labour	Children in child labour	Total number of children with disabilities
Girls				
Total 5-17	97.9	0.9	1.2	99,825
5-9	99.2	0.0	0.8	43,155
10-13	98.2	0.0	1.8	26,806
14-17	95.8	3.0	1.2	29,864
Edu. HH head				
None/Pre-school	94.7	0.5	4.8	123,123
Primary	94.6	1.9	3.5	35,168
Middle	93.9	0.4	5.8	19,596
Secondary	95.5	1.9	2.5	37,033
Higher	97.5	0.0	2.5	36,489
WIQ				
Poorest	92.8	0.2	7.0	64,609
Second	94.3	0.5	5.3	64,673
Middle	94.5	2.6	2.8	53,253
Fourth	98.5	0.3	1.2	39,006
Richest	98.9	0.3	0.8	30,881
Residence				
Rural	94.1	0.7	5.2	156,600
Urban	96.9	1.0	2.1	95,823
<p>The education of the household head omits the categories of "Non-formal", "Other". These records account for 2 and 3 individuals from the unweighted survey responses respectively, which when weighted represent 139 and 875 children.</p>				

Figure 8.11 illustrates the different activities carried out by children with and without disabilities, including school attendance, work, household chores, and child labour. A significant disparity exists in education, with 67.6 per cent of children without disabilities attending school, compared to only 25.9 per cent of children with disabilities. This highlights a major gap in educational participation among children with disabilities. Similarly, a greater proportion of children without disabilities (53.6 per cent) are involved in household chores compared to those with disabilities (22.3 per cent). When it comes to work, children with disabilities are less likely to be engaged in employment (4.8 per cent) or child labour (4.0 per cent) than their peers without disabilities, who report rates of 12.1 per cent and 10.4 per cent, respectively. This pattern may be influenced by factors such as parental decisions to keep children with disabilities out of work or cases where children stop working due to acquiring a disability in the workplace.

Figure 8.11 Percentage of children attending school, performing household chores, working, and engaged in child labour by disability status

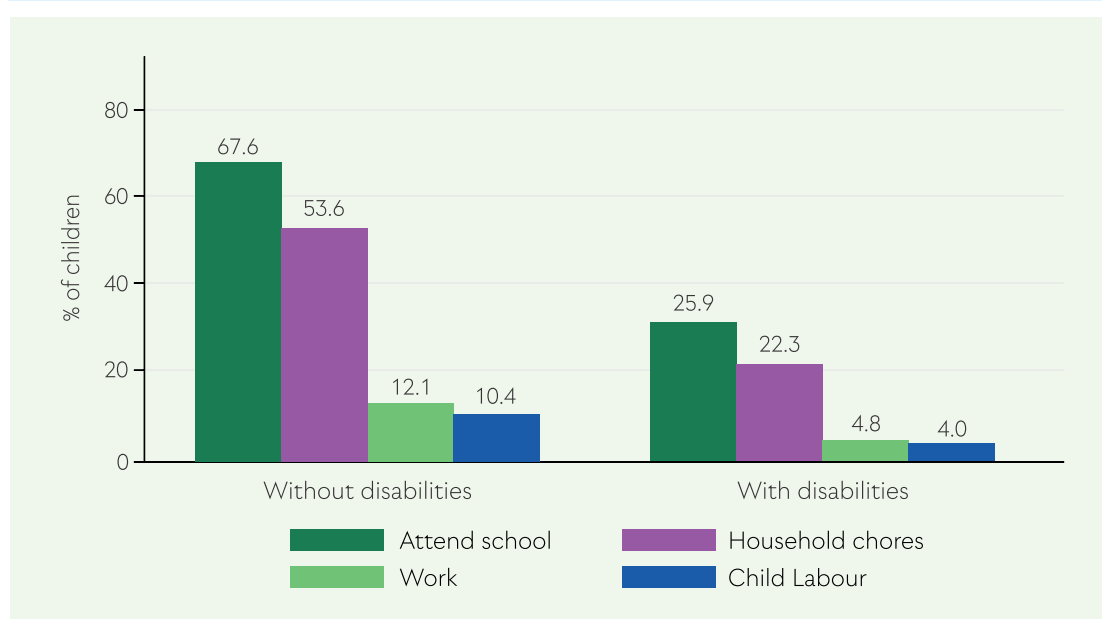


Table 8.11 outlines the timing of disability among working children with disabilities, differentiating between those in child labour and those working but not classified as child labourers. Among children in child labour with disabilities, 16.1 per cent acquired their disability after or at the same time as starting work, while the majority (83.9 per cent) had their disability prior to beginning their work. Furthermore, a higher percentage of boys in child labour (18.2 per cent) acquired their disability after or at the same time as starting work, while no girls reported this was the case.

It is important to note that acquiring a disability after or at the same time as starting work does not necessarily imply that the work caused the disability. For a similar breakdown by division and district, refer to Table A8.9 in the Appendix.

Table 8.11 Per cent of working 5-17-year-olds in child labour and not in child labour with disabilities, by timing of disability, by age group, sex, education of household head, wealth index quintile and area of residence

Characteristic	Working children not in child labour			Children in child labour		
	Disabled prior to starting work (per cent)	Disabled after or at the same time as starting work (per cent)	Total number of working children not in child labour with disabilities	Disabled prior to starting work (per cent)	Disabled after or at the same time as starting work (per cent)	Total number of children in child labour with disabilities
Both sexes						
Total 5-17	96.7*	3.4*	2,014	83.9	16.1	10,143
5-9	.	.	0	95.4*	4.6*	1,434
10-13	.	.	0	74.2*	25.8*	4,829
14-17	96.7*	3.4*	2,014	91.6*	8.4*	3,880
Boys						
Total 5-17	-	-	1,109	81.8	18.2	8,962
5-9	.	.	0	-	-	1,090
10-13	.	.	0	71.5*	28.5*	4,357
14-17	-	-	1,109	90.7*	9.3*	3,515
Girls						
Total 5-17	-	-	905	-	-	1,181
5-9	.	.	0	-	-	344
10-13	.	.	0	-	-	472
14-17	-	-	905	-	-	365
Edu. HH head						
None/Pre-school	-	-	551	96.7	3.3	5,931
Primary	-	-	679	-	-	1,216
Middle	-	-	76	-	-	1,127
Secondary	-	-	708	-	-	946
Higher	.	.	0	-	-	923
WIQ						
Poorest	-	-	120	69.5*	30.5*	4,509
Second	-	-	289	100.0*	0.0*	3,417
Middle	-	-	1,404	-	-	1,511
Fourth	-	-	106	-	-	467
Richest	-	-	94	-	-	239

Characteristic	Working children not in child labour			Children in child labour		
	Disabled prior to starting work (per cent)	Disabled after or at the same time as starting work (per cent)	Total number of working children not in child labour with disabilities	Disabled prior to starting work (per cent)	Disabled after or at the same time as starting work (per cent)	Total number of children in child labour with disabilities
Residence						
Rural	-	-	1,057	83.2	16.8	8,167
Urban	-	-	956	86.8*	13.2*	1,977
<p>* Figure should be interpreted with caution, since estimates are based on fewer than 25 observations in the denominator.</p> <p>- Figure not presented as there are fewer than 10 observations in the denominator.</p> <p>. No observations are available for this group</p>						

8.3.2 Mental health

To assess mental health, the Patient Health Questionnaire-9 (PHQ-9) was adapted for children and administered to all children aged 10–17 as part of the Child Labour Survey, with younger children excluded due to their age. The PHQ-9 is a widely recognised tool for diagnosing depression in primary care settings. It is a validated, concise diagnostic instrument with a simple scoring method, making it ideal for both clinical practice and research (Löwe, Unützer, Callahan, Perkins, & Kroenke, 2004) The questions are rated on a scale from 1 (not at all) to 4 (nearly every day), with the total score categorised into five levels of depression: none, mild, moderate, moderately severe, and severe.

Table 8.12 displays self-reported mental health conditions among children in and out of child labour. A total of 20.1 per cent of children in child labour reported experiencing symptoms of depression (ranging from mild to severe), compared to only 10.7 per cent of children not in child labour. Gender differences are not particularly significant, with almost no difference between the percentage of girls in child labour reporting depressive symptoms and boys' (20.3 per cent vs. 19.6 per cent reporting at least mild symptoms). Among children not in child labour, the difference is slightly bigger, with 11.8 per cent of girls and 9.5 per cent of boys reporting mild or worse mental health conditions.

The data confirms that children in child labour not exposed to hazardous conditions are less likely to report symptoms of depression. Specifically, 12.9 per cent of children working in non-hazardous conditions reported experiencing depressive symptoms, compared to 27.5 per cent of those in hazardous work. Further details on self-reported mental health conditions by division and district can be found in Table A8.10 in the Appendix. Mental health conditions appear to be worse overall in Sukkur division, with Larkana showing lower rates of mental health issues among child labourers.

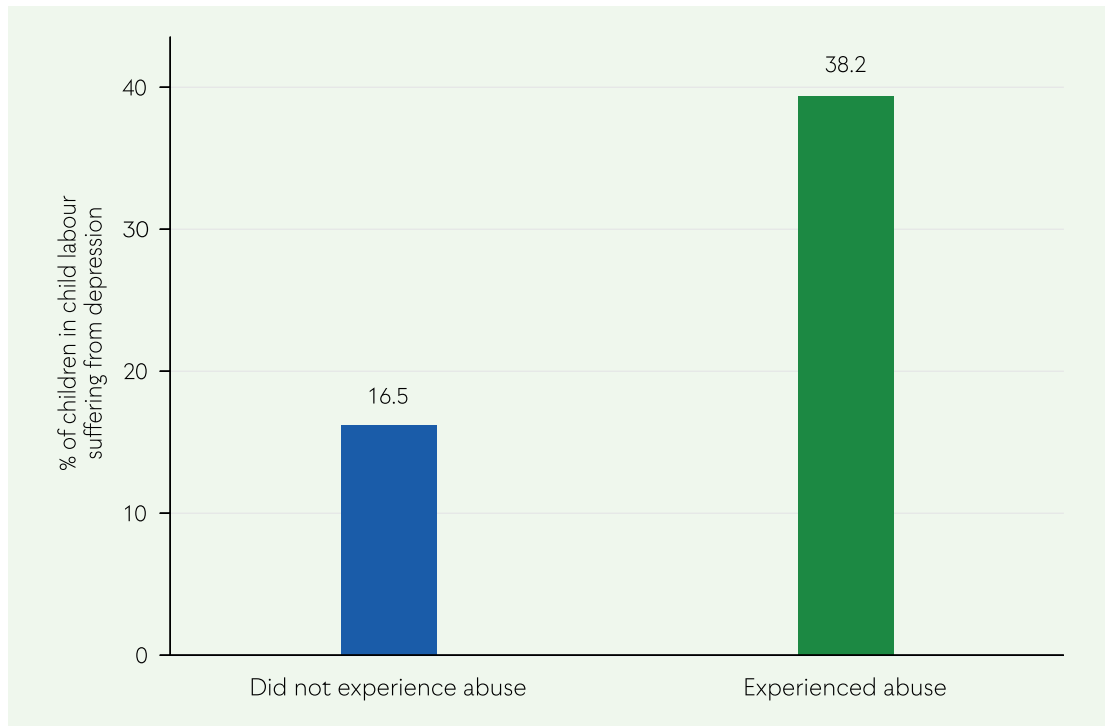
Table 8.12 Per cent of children 10-17 years in child labour and not in child labour with mental health condition, by sex, age group, education of household head, wealth index quintile, area of residence and hazardous condition

Characteristic	In child labour						Not in child labour					
	Mental health condition (self-reported)											
	None	Mild	Moderate	Moderately severe	Severe	Total number of 10-17-year-olds in child labour	None	Mild	Moderate	Moderately severe	Severe	Total number of 10-17-year-olds not in child labour
Both sexes												
Total 10-17	79.9	16.0	3.2	0.8	0.1	1,293,531	89.3	8.2	1.9	0.5	0.1	7,033,285
10-13	82.0	14.1	3.0	0.8	0.2	614,902	90.0	7.6	1.9	0.4	0.1	4,026,842
14-17	78.0	17.7	3.4	0.8	0.1	678,629	88.3	9.1	2.0	0.5	0.1	3,006,444
Boys												
Total 10-17	79.7	16.2	3.2	0.8	0.1	928,928	90.5	7.2	1.8	0.4	0.1	3,466,877
10-13	82.5	13.8	3.1	0.5	0.1	398,500	91.1	6.6	1.9	0.3	0.1	2,042,142
14-17	77.7	18.0	3.3	0.9	0.1	530,428	89.5	8.1	1.7	0.4	0.1	1,424,735
Girls												
Total 10-17	80.4	15.5	3.1	0.8	0.2	364,603	88.2	9.2	2.0	0.5	0.1	3,566,143
10-13	81.3	14.7	2.6	1.2	0.2	216,402	89.0	8.7	1.9	0.4	0.1	1,984,665
14-17	79.1	16.8	3.8	0.2	0.1	148,201	87.2	9.9	2.2	0.6	0.1	1,581,478
Edu. HH head												
None/Pre-school	79.1	16.7	3.1	0.9	0.2	815,333	87.6	9.1	2.5	0.7	0.1	2,923,191
Primary	80.2	15.8	3.6	0.3	0.2	194,908	87.8	9.9	1.9	0.3	0.1	953,422
Middle	73.3	19.0	6.0	1.6	0.1	75,514	90.4	7.9	1.5	0.1	0.1	563,300
Secondary	83.9	14.4	1.7	0.0	0.0	121,017	91.2	7.3	1.1	0.4	0.1	1,090,104
Higher	87.3	9.5	2.2	1.1	0.0	86,170	91.9	6.5	1.4	0.2	0.0	1,493,084
Other	-	-	-	-	-	43	95.8	4.2	0.0	0.0	0.0	5,039
Don't know/Missing	-	-	-	-	-	96	89.5	10.5	0.0	0.0	0.0	3,308

Characteristic	In child labour					Not in child labour						
	Mental health condition (self-reported)											
	None	Mild	Moderate	Moderately severe	Severe	Total number of 10-17-year-olds in child labour	None	Mild	Moderate	Moderately severe	Severe	Total number of 10-17-year-olds not in child labour
WIQ												
Poorest	79.6	16.0	3.5	0.9	0.1	503,252	85.7	10.7	2.4	1.0	0.2	1,075,400
Second	80.8	15.9	2.6	0.5	0.2	372,865	87.4	8.9	2.9	0.6	0.1	1,291,930
Middle	80.2	15.5	3.2	1.1	0.1	231,888	87.7	9.4	2.3	0.6	0.1	1,560,039
Fourth	76.6	18.2	4.4	0.7	0.1	129,606	91.1	7.1	1.5	0.2	0.1	1,576,663
Richest	84.4	13.7	1.7	0.1	0.0	55,920	93.3	5.9	0.7	0.1	0.0	1,529,253
Residence												
Rural	80.1	15.6	3.4	0.8	0.1	970,333	87.3	9.4	2.5	0.7	0.1	3,282,317
Urban	79.5	17.2	2.6	0.6	0.1	323,198	91.1	7.2	1.4	0.3	0.1	3,750,968
Hazardous condition												
Not hazardous	87.1	10.7	1.8	0.4	0.0	599,649	.	.	.	.	.	.
Hazardous	72.5	21.5	4.5	1.2	0.3	609,675	.	.	.	.	.	.
<p>The sum of boys and girls in the table does not equal the total number of children and adolescents since the table does not include transgender. These records account for 3 individuals from the unweighted survey responses, which when weighted represents 265 children and adolescents.</p> <p>The education of the household head omits the category of "Non-formal". These records account for 23 individuals from the unweighted survey responses, which when weighted represent 2289 children.</p> <p>- Figure not presented as there are fewer than 10 observations in the denominator.</p> <p>. No observations are available for this group</p>												

Figure 8.12 highlights the relation between workplace abuse and reported symptoms of depression. It shows that a higher percentage of children in child labour who experienced abuse report having a mental health condition, with 38.2 per cent of those abused affected, compared to 16.5 per cent of those who did not experience abuse.

Figure 8.12 Mental health condition for 10–14-year-olds in child labour and abuse at work



9. THE CONTEXT OF CHILD LABOUR

9.1 Household size and structure

Table 9.1 presents various household size measures, comparing these characteristics by child labour status. Results show that on average, children in child labour belong to larger households (7.2 members) with more children (4.2), compared to those not in child labour (6.9 members and 3.9 children). Moreover, the dependency ratio²⁹ is the same in households of children in child labour and those not in child labour (1.3). While for children not in child labour, the average household size tends to decrease with the education of the household head, no clear pattern becomes evident for those in child labour. In contrast, household size and number of children seem to decrease with household wealth index, for both children in child labour and not. This is evidenced by the largest households observed among the poorest quintiles (7.4 for non-child labour vs. 7.3 for child labour), while the richest present the smallest (6.0 and 6.4 respectively). Lastly, rural households are larger compared to urban households, with the dependency ration also being higher in rural areas. Table A9.1 in the Appendix shows the same information on household size by division and district, with the result reversed in Shaheed Benazirabad district, where households of children not in child labour are slightly larger.

Table 9.1 Average household size, number of children, number of adults, and dependency ratio for 5-17-year-olds in child labour and not in child labour, by age group, sex, education of household head, wealth index quintile and area of residence

Characteristic	Not in child labour				In child labour			
	Average household size	Average number of children	Average number of adults	Average dependency ratio	Average household size	Average number of children	Average number of adults	Average dependency ratio
Both sexes								
Total 5-17	6.9	3.9	3.0	1.3	7.2	4.2	3.0	1.3
5-9	6.8	4.0	2.8	1.6	7.1	4.4	2.8	1.8
10-13	7.0	4.0	2.9	1.4	7.3	4.4	2.9	1.6
14-17	6.9	3.6	3.3	0.7	7.1	3.9	3.2	0.8
Boys								
Total 5-17	6.8	3.8	3.0	1.3	7.1	4.1	3.0	1.2
5-9	6.8	4.0	2.8	1.5	7.1	4.3	2.8	1.7

²⁹ The dependency ratio is defined as the number of household members 14 or younger plus the number of household members 65 or older divided by the number of members aged 15–64.

Characteristic	Not in child labour				In child labour			
	Average household size	Average number of children	Average number of adults	Average dependency ratio	Average household size	Average number of children	Average number of adults	Average dependency ratio
Boys								
10-13	6.9	3.9	3.0	1.3	7.2	4.3	2.9	1.6
14-17	6.7	3.4	3.3	0.7	7.0	3.8	3.2	0.8
Girls								
Total 5-17	7.0	4.0	3.0	1.3	7.3	4.4	2.9	1.5
5-9	6.9	4.1	2.8	1.6	7.1	4.4	2.7	1.8
10-13	7.1	4.1	2.9	1.4	7.4	4.6	2.9	1.7
14-17	7.0	3.7	3.4	0.7	7.4	4.2	3.2	0.9
Edu. HH head								
None/Pre-school	7.1	4.1	3.0	1.4	7.1	4.1	3.0	1.3
Primary	7.2	4.1	3.1	1.4	7.2	4.2	3.1	1.3
Middle	6.7	3.8	2.9	1.3	6.9	4.2	2.8	1.4
Secondary	6.6	3.7	2.9	1.2	7.4	4.5	3.0	1.2
Higher	6.5	3.5	2.9	1.1	7.6	4.5	3.1	1.3
Other	9.4	5.1	4.2	1.8	10.6	6.2	4.4	3.7
Don't know/Missing	7.5	3.9	3.7	1.1	6.7	5.2	1.5	3.6
WIQ								
Poorest	7.4	4.5	2.9	1.6	7.3	4.4	2.9	1.5
Second	7.2	4.3	3.0	1.5	7.3	4.2	3.1	1.3
Middle	7.2	4.1	3.1	1.3	6.9	3.8	3.0	1.1
Fourth	6.5	3.5	2.9	1.2	6.8	3.8	3.1	0.9
Richest	6.0	3.1	3.0	1.0	6.4	3.3	3.1	0.7
Residence								
Rural	7.3	4.3	3.0	1.5	7.2	4.2	3.0	1.4
Urban	6.4	3.5	2.9	1.2	6.9	3.8	3.0	1.0

The sum of boys and girls in the table does not equal the total number of children since the table does not include transgender. These records account for 6 individuals from the unweighted survey responses, which when weighted represents 598 children.

The education of the household head omits the category of "Non-formal". These records account for 55 individuals from the unweighted survey responses, which when weighted represent 4648 children.

Table 9.2 examines the living arrangements of children aged 5–17, comparing those engaged in child labour with those who are not. In general, in both groups the majority of children live with both father and mother. While across the categories, differences between both groups are small, it is notable that a slightly larger per cent of children in child labour live with only their biological mother (6.6 per cent) when compared to children who are not in child labour (4.0 per cent). Among children engaged in child labour, they are more likely to be living only with their mother (6.6 per cent) or with neither biological parent (2.9 per cent) than living only with the father (2.2 per cent). Table A9.2 in the Appendix provides further breakdowns by division and district, with children in Shaheed Benazirabad much more likely to live with neither biological parent than other districts independent of child labour status, while in Hyderabad district the proportion living with neither mother nor father is very high among children in child labour.

Table 9.2 Per cent of 5-17-year-olds in child labour and not in child labour by household structure, by age group, sex, education of household head, wealth index quintile and area of residence

Characteristic	Not in child labour					In child labour				
	Living arrangements (biological parents)									
	With neither father nor mother	With father only	With mother only	With both father and mother	Number of children not in child labour	With neither father nor mother	With father only	With mother only	With both father and mother	Number of children in child labour
Both sexes										
Total 5-17	2.6	1.5	4.0	91.9	14,026,380	2.9	2.2	6.6	88.3	1,610,037
5-9	2.2	1.1	2.7	94.0	6,988,397	1.9	1.2	4.1	92.8	316,524
10-13	2.4	1.5	4.6	91.6	4,009,173	1.9	2.0	5.7	90.4	607,776
14-17	4.0	2.3	6.1	87.6	3,028,811	4.2	2.9	8.6	84.3	685,737
Boys										
Total 5-17	2.5	1.5	3.9	92.1	7,102,024	3.0	2.4	6.5	88.1	1,123,029
5-9	2.2	1.1	2.8	93.9	3,621,144	1.9	0.7	3.1	94.3	187,127
10-13	2.3	1.4	4.6	91.6	2,038,429	2.3	2.2	5.3	90.2	395,894
14-17	3.4	2.5	5.9	88.2	1,442,451	3.8	3.1	8.7	84.4	540,008
Girls										
Total 5-17	2.8	1.5	4.0	91.8	6,923,758	2.8	1.7	6.8	88.7	487,007
5-9	2.1	1.1	2.6	94.1	3,366,906	1.8	1.9	5.5	90.8	129,396

Characteristic	Not in child labour					In child labour				
	Living arrangements (biological parents)									
	With neither father nor mother	With father only	With mother only	With both father and mother	Number of children not in child labour	With neither father nor mother	With father only	With mother only	With both father and mother	Number of children in child labour
Girls										
10-13	2.5	1.6	4.5	91.5	1,970,711	1.3	1.4	6.5	90.7	211,882
14-17	4.5	2.1	6.4	87.0	1,586,140	5.7	2.0	8.2	84.1	145,729
Edu. HH head										
None/Pre-school	2.6	1.8	5.2	90.4	6,218,306	2.8	2.3	7.8	87.2	1,020,010
Primary	3.2	2.0	2.9	91.9	1,990,020	2.6	3.4	4.4	89.6	249,136
Middle	2.2	1.3	3.2	93.3	1,075,174	3.5	1.1	8.0	87.4	94,638
Secondary	2.8	0.9	3.2	93.0	2,011,966	3.3	1.4	3.7	91.5	140,423
Higher	2.4	0.8	2.8	94.0	2,710,995	3.5	0.7	3.1	92.8	104,048
Non-formal	0.0	0.0	8.0	92.0	3,792	-	-	-	-	856
Other	3.3	0.0	4.2	92.5	9,901	-	-	-	-	583
WIQ										
Poorest	2.7	1.8	3.4	92.1	2,726,517	2.8	2.1	6.4	88.8	688,786
Second	3.3	1.9	3.6	91.3	2,831,103	3.2	2.3	4.5	89.9	459,568
Middle	3.0	1.4	3.9	91.6	3,020,644	2.6	1.4	8.7	87.2	262,581
Fourth	2.9	1.2	4.7	91.3	2,842,580	3.1	3.6	9.1	84.2	141,216
Richest	1.1	1.1	4.2	93.6	2,605,537	2.9	2.5	10.9	83.8	57,886
Residence										
Rural	2.6	1.7	3.6	92.1	7,193,640	2.9	2.0	5.9	89.2	1,246,053
Urban	2.7	1.2	4.3	91.8	6,832,740	3.1	2.7	9.1	85.1	363,983
<p>The sum of boys and girls in the table does not equal the total number of children since the table does not include transgender. These records account for 6 individuals from the unweighted survey responses, which when weighted represents 598 children.</p> <p>- Figure not presented as there are fewer than 10 observations in the denominator</p>										

Table 9.3 examines the relationship between parental loss and child labour status, highlighting the heightened vulnerability to being engaged in child labour of children who have lost their father. This seems to be consistent with the findings of the previous table regarding children in child labour living only with their mother. The percentage of children who have lost their father is notably higher among those in child labour (6.2 per cent) compared to those not in child labour (3.2 per cent). Breaking down the results among boys and girls shows no significant differences by sex both among children in child labour and not. Moreover, while the proportion of children not in child labour who have lost their father remains consistent across wealth quintiles, no clear pattern is evident in the case of children with child labour. Notably, the highest percentage of children in child labour who have lost their father is found in the richest households (9.8 per cent). Table A9.3 presents the results by division and district.

Table 9.3 Per cent of 5-17-year-olds in child labour and not in child labour by parental survival, by sex, age group, education of household head, wealth index quintile and area of residence

Characteristic	Children not in child labour				Children in child labour			
	Children who have lost both parents	Children who have lost mother	Children who have lost father	Number of children not in child labour	Children who have lost both parents	Children who have lost mother	Children who have lost father	Number of children in child labour
Both sexes								
Total 5-17	0.3	1.3	3.2	14,026,380	0.5	2.0	6.2	1,610,037
5-11	0.2	1.0	1.9	6,988,397	0.2	1.0	3.8	316,524
12-13	0.3	1.4	3.7	4,009,173	0.3	1.7	5.1	607,776
14-17	0.6	2.1	5.5	3,028,811	0.9	2.7	8.3	685,737
Boys								
Total 5-17	0.3	1.3	3.2	7,102,024	0.6	2.1	6.3	1,123,029
5-11	0.2	0.9	2.0	3,621,144	0.1	0.5	3.1	187,127
12-13	0.3	1.3	3.8	2,038,429	0.2	1.8	4.8	395,894
14-17	0.6	2.3	5.2	1,442,451	1.1	2.8	8.4	540,008
Girls								
Total 5-17	0.3	1.3	3.3	6,923,758	0.3	1.8	6.2	487,007
5-11	0.2	1.0	1.8	3,366,906	0.3	1.7	4.9	129,396
12-13	0.3	1.4	3.6	1,970,711	0.6	1.4	5.8	211,882
14-17	0.6	2.0	5.9	1,586,140	0.1	2.4	7.9	145,729

Characteristic	Children not in child labour				Children in child labour			
	Children who have lost both parents	Children who have lost mother	Children who have lost father	Number of children not in child labour	Children who have lost both parents	Children who have lost mother	Children who have lost father	Number of children in child labour
Edu. HH head								
None/Pre-school	0.4	1.6	4.4	6,218,306	0.6	1.9	7.3	1,020,010
Primary	0.2	2.0	2.4	1,990,020	0.6	3.6	4.0	249,136
Middle	0.2	1.0	2.4	1,075,174	0.1	0.9	7.8	94,638
Secondary	0.3	0.9	2.5	2,011,966	0.7	1.6	3.0	140,423
Higher	0.2	0.6	2.1	2,710,995	0.2	0.6	3.7	104,048
Non-formal	0.0	0.0	8.0	3,792	-	-	-	856
Other	0.0	0.8	3.9	9,901	-	-	-	583
WIQ								
Poorest	0.2	1.7	3.1	2,726,517	0.4	2.0	6.2	688,786
Second	0.4	1.8	3.3	2,831,103	0.7	2.0	4.5	459,568
Middle	0.2	1.3	3.4	3,020,644	0.6	1.3	8.0	262,581
Fourth	0.3	1.0	3.5	2,842,580	0.8	3.1	7.1	141,216
Richest	0.2	0.8	2.8	2,605,537	0.3	2.2	9.8	57,886
Residence								
Rural	0.3	1.6	3.1	7,193,640	0.5	1.9	5.8	1,246,053
Urban	0.2	1.0	3.3	6,832,740	0.7	2.2	7.6	363,983
<p>The sum of boys and girls in the table does not equal the total number of children since the table does not include transgender. These records account for 6 individuals from the unweighted survey responses, which when weighted represent 598 children</p> <p>- Figure not presented as there are fewer than 10 observations in the denominator</p>								

Table 9.4 displays the percentage of children engaged in child labour and those who are not, classified by whether the household head has migrated, including both seasonal and non-seasonal migration. The findings reveal that child labour rates are nearly identical between children in migrant-headed (10.6 per cent) and non-migrant-headed (10.3 per cent) households, suggesting that migration status has little relation with child labour prevalence. Additionally, across both groups, boys are around twice as likely to be engaged in child labour as girls.

When examining the results by wealth index quintile, children in households where the head has migrated are more likely to be engaged in child labour across all wealth levels. However, when analysed by the household head's level of education, no clear pattern emerges in the link between migration status and child labour. The percentage of children in child labour is higher in migrant-headed households only at lower education levels. Lastly, children in rural areas—regardless of whether the household head has migrated—are more likely to be engaged in child labour than those in urban households.

Table A9.4 in the Appendix presents the results by division and district, highlighting significant regional variations. For example, in Umer Kot, Matiari and Mirpur Khas districts, child labour is considerably higher among children in households where the head has migrated. Conversely, in some districts, such as Badin, Jamshoro, and Tando Allahyar, the trend is reversed, with lower child labour rates observed in migrant-headed households.

Table 9.4 Per cent of 5-17-year-olds in child labour and not in child labour by migration status of household head, by age group, sex, education of household head, wealth index quintile and area of residence

Characteristic	Household head never migrated			Household head migrated		
	Percentage of children not in child labour	Percentage of children in child labour	Total number of children	Percentage of children not in child labour	Percentage of children in child labour	Total number of children
Both sexes						
Total 5-17	89.7	10.3	14,256,563	89.4	10.6	1,379,854
5-11	95.7	4.3	6,664,871	95.2	4.8	640,050
12-13	86.7	13.3	4,204,360	87.7	12.3	412,589
14-17	81.7	18.3	3,387,331	80.3	19.7	327,216
Boys						
Total 5-17	86.4	13.6	7,504,993	85.9	14.1	720,061
5-11	95.1	4.9	3,474,111	94.8	5.2	334,161
12-13	83.7	16.3	2,223,506	84.0	16.0	210,817
14-17	72.9	27.1	1,807,376	71.3	28.7	175,083
Girls						
Total 5-17	93.4	6.6	6,751,003	93.3	6.7	659,762
5-11	96.4	3.6	3,190,445	95.7	4.3	305,858
12-13	90.2	9.8	1,980,822	91.6	8.4	201,771
14-17	91.7	8.3	1,579,736	90.8	9.2	152,133

Characteristic	Household head never migrated			Household head migrated		
	Percentage of children not in child labour	Percentage of children in child labour	Total number of children	Percentage of children not in child labour	Percentage of children in child labour	Total number of children
Edu. HH head						
None/Pre-school	86.1	13.9	6,682,142	83.7	16.3	556,175
Primary	89.0	11.0	2,062,276	86.9	13.1	176,880
Middle	92.0	8.0	1,049,041	91.4	8.6	120,771
Secondary	93.3	6.7	1,918,015	94.7	5.3	234,374
Higher	96.2	3.8	2,526,450	96.9	3.1	288,593
Non-formal	82.9	17.1	3,747	-	-	901
Other	93.8	6.2	9,362	100.0*	0.0*	1,121
WIQ						
Poorest	80.3	19.7	3,215,477	72.2	27.8	199,826
Second	86.2	13.8	3,096,870	83.1	16.9	193,801
Middle	92.1	7.9	3,083,976	90.7	9.3	199,249
Fourth	95.5	4.5	2,573,604	93.7	6.3	410,192
Richest	98.0	2.0	2,286,636	96.6	3.4	376,787
Residence						
Rural	85.6	14.4	7,947,717	79.9	20.1	491,976
Urban	95.0	5.0	6,308,846	94.7	5.3	887,878
<p>The sum of boys and girls in the table does not equal the total number of children since the table does not include transgender. These records account for 6 individuals from the unweighted survey responses, which when weighted represent 598 children.</p> <p>- Figure not presented as there are fewer than 10 observations in the denominator</p>						

Figure 9.1 illustrates the percentage of children engaged in child labour based on the primary reason for the household head's migration. The highest child labour prevalence is among those reporting seeking better agricultural land as the reason for migrating, exceeding 30 per cent. Enmity and social and political problems also account for a notable proportion, with prevalence rates over 15 per cent. Those citing marriage-related reasons, and health concerns also report child labour prevalence numbers above the national average, though these latter two categories and enmity should be interpreted with caution due to their small sample size. If the head migrates due to finding a job or being transferred within an existing job, the proportion in child labour is lower than the average. This may be because these individuals are able to send remittances back to their family.

Figure 9.1 Percentage of children in child labour by reported reason for the household head to change the place of residence

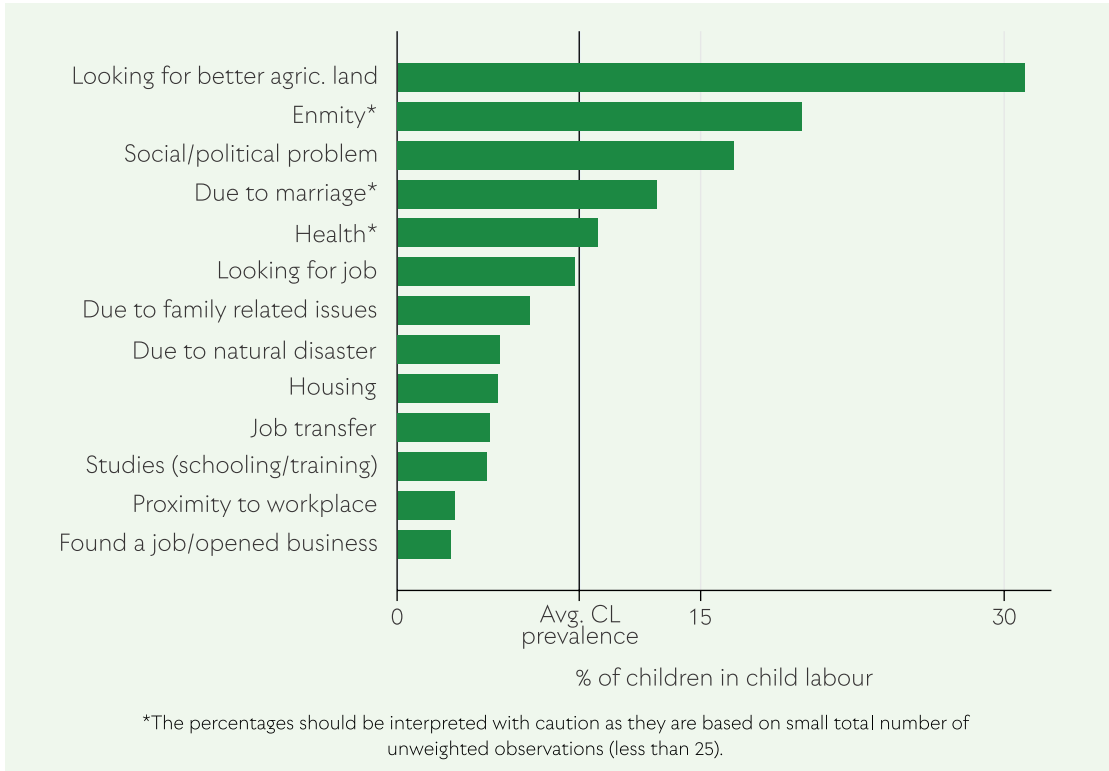
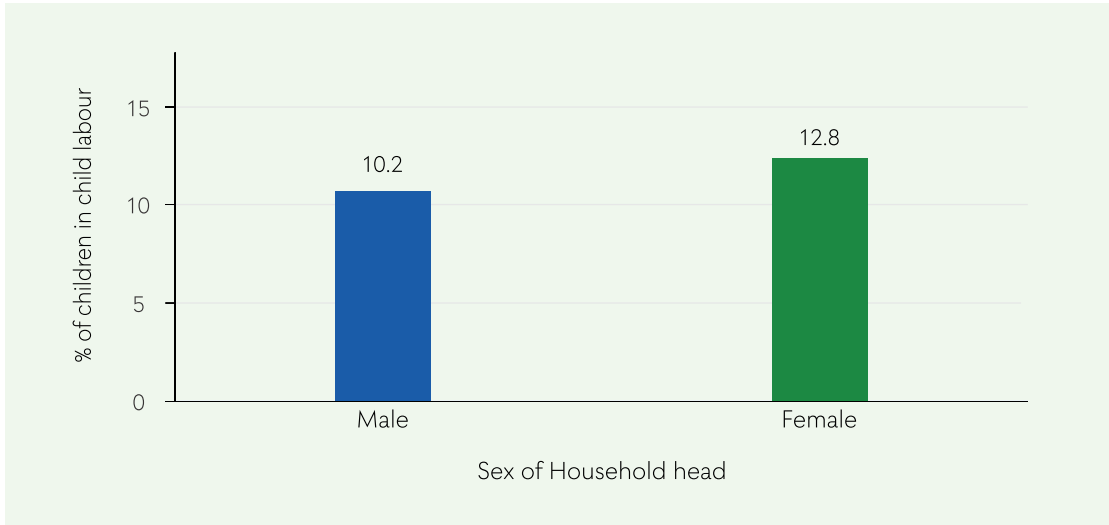


Figure 9.2 illustrates the connection between child labour and the sex of the household head, placing in evidence that child labour is more prevalent in households led by a female head, despite households with female heads more often being in the richer wealth quintiles.

Figure 9.2 Percentage of children in child labour by sex of household head



9.2 Birth certificate

Birth registration plays a crucial role in inspecting child labour, as it provides proof of whether a child has reached the legal working age or is being employed outside the limits of the law. Figure 9.3 displays the percentage of children with a birth certificate, broken down by their involvement in child labour. Among children not engaged in child labour, 64.9 per cent have a birth certificate, whereas the proportion is lower, at 50.1 per cent, for children who are involved in child labour.

Figure 9.3 Percentage of children 5–17 years with a birth certificate by child labour status

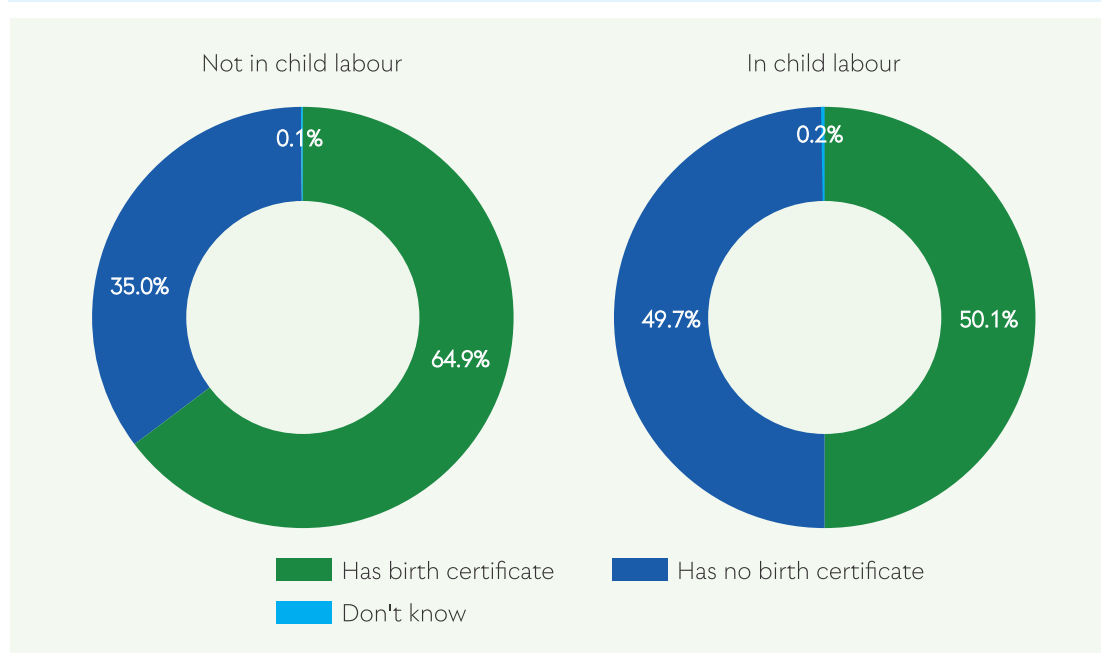


Table 9.5 presents demographic data on birth certificates for children engaged in child labour and those who are not. In this context, both categories—“Birth certificate seen” and “Birth certificate not seen”—indicate that the child is reported to have a birth certificate. However, in the first category, the document was verified by the enumerator, whereas in the second, it was not.

Overall, the percentage of children without a birth certification card is higher among children in child labour (49.7 per cent) than for those not in child labour (35.0 per cent). However, among children engaged in child labour, 18.1 per cent had a birth certificate that was shown to the enumerator, as compared to a lower 16.0 per cent of those not in child labour. Gender disparities are also evident, with girls being more likely to lack a birth certificate than boys, across both groups. For instance, 54.6 per cent of girls in child labour are missing a birth registration card, compared to 47.5 per cent of boys.

Additionally, Table 9.5 highlights a link between birth registration and household wealth. The proportion of children without a birth certificate generally decreases as the wealth index quintile increases, for both those in child labour and those not. Rural-urban disparities are also notable, with children in rural areas being more likely to lack birth registration, regardless of their labour status.

Further regional patterns are detailed in Table A9.5 in the Appendix, which presents data by division and district. Notably, the strongest association between child labour and lack of birth registration is observed in Hyderabad division, where 58.9 per cent of children in child labour have no birth registration card, compared to 48.3 per cent of those not engaged in child labour.

Table 9.5 Per cent of 5-17-year-olds in child labour and not in child labour with birth certificate, by age group, sex, education of household head, wealth index quintile and area of residence

Characteristic	Not in child labour					In child labour				
	Birth registration card seen	Birth registration card not seen	No birth registration card	Don't know	Total	Birth registration card seen	Birth registration card not seen	No birth registration card	Don't know	Total
Both sexes										
Total 5-17	16.0	48.9	35.0	0.1	14,024,909	18.1	32.0	49.7	0.2	1,607,503
5-11	16.2	45.4	38.3	0.1	6,987,448	25.8	25.9	48.3	0.0	315,063
12-13	16.9	51.1	31.8	0.1	4,008,991	20.0	31.4	48.3	0.3	607,173
14-17	14.2	53.9	31.7	0.2	3,028,470	12.9	35.4	51.5	0.2	685,268
Boys										
Total 5-17	15.9	49.5	34.5	0.1	7,100,701	17.9	34.4	47.5	0.3	1,120,496
5-11	16.0	45.5	38.3	0.1	3,620,239	26.7	27.0	46.2	0.0	185,666
12-13	16.7	51.7	31.5	0.1	2,038,285	20.7	32.2	46.8	0.4	395,291
14-17	14.4	56.3	29.1	0.1	1,442,177	12.8	38.5	48.5	0.3	539,539
Girls										
Total 5-17	16.1	48.3	35.5	0.1	6,923,610	18.6	26.6	54.6	0.1	487,007
5-11	16.4	45.3	38.2	0.1	3,366,862	24.4	24.4	51.3	0.0	129,396
12-13	17.2	50.6	32.1	0.2	1,970,674	18.8	29.9	51.1	0.1	211,882
14-17	14.0	51.6	34.1	0.2	1,586,074	13.3	23.9	62.8	0.1	145,729

Characteristic	Not in child labour					In child labour				
	Birth registration card seen	Birth registration card not seen	No birth registration card	Don't know	Total	Birth registration card seen	Birth registration card not seen	No birth registration card	Don't know	Total
Edu. HH head										
None/Pre-school	14.2	40.4	45.3	0.1	6,217,991	15.2	29.2	55.3	0.3	1,018,452
Primary	20.7	42.3	36.8	0.2	1,989,876	21.6	32.6	45.8	0.0	248,993
Middle	21.6	52.0	26.2	0.1	1,075,174	24.9	40.1	35.0	0.0	94,406
Secondary	17.6	57.5	24.9	0.0	2,011,929	24.1	37.7	38.2	0.0	140,216
Higher	13.2	65.5	21.1	0.1	2,710,021	24.5	43.6	31.6	0.4	104,022
Non-formal	16.3	66.1	17.6	0.0	3,792	-	-	-	-	856
Other	26.0	49.2	20.0	4.9	9,901	-	-	-	-	428
WIQ										
Poorest	16.0	31.7	52.0	0.3	2,725,776	16.5	23.4	59.8	0.3	688,542
Second	17.4	36.1	46.4	0.1	2,830,832	18.9	33.3	47.7	0.1	458,047
Middle	19.3	41.6	39.0	0.1	3,020,644	21.2	34.5	44.1	0.1	261,981
Fourth	15.7	59.8	24.4	0.1	2,842,354	17.2	50.9	31.3	0.6	141,175
Richest	10.8	77.4	11.7	0.1	2,605,303	18.1	67.6	14.2	0.1	57,758
Residence										
Rural	16.6	37.2	46.1	0.1	7,192,793	17.8	28.7	53.3	0.2	1,243,846
Urban	15.4	61.1	23.4	0.1	6,832,116	19.2	43.4	37.1	0.3	363,658
<p>The sum of boys and girls in the table does not equal the total number of children since the table does not include transgender. These records account for 6 individuals from the unweighted survey responses, which when weighted represent 598 children.</p> <p>There are 26 children from the unweighted survey responses for whom information about whether they have a birth certificate is missing, which when weighted represent 4004 children.</p> <p>- Figure not presented as there are fewer than 10 observations in the denominator</p>										

Table 9.6 provides a more detailed analysis of children without a birth certificate, focusing on whether a lack of awareness about the birth registration process contributes to this issue. The results indicate that while there is a proportion of respondents that lack awareness about this process, over 67 per cent of respondents across both groups report having knowledge about

the process. Specifically, among children not in child labour, only 67.4 per cent per cent of respondents are aware of the registration process, whereas this percentage is slightly higher for children in child labour at 69.4 per cent. The small difference of two percentage points suggests that awareness levels are relatively similar between the two groups.

Wealth index appears to be strongly related to awareness, with a similar trend regardless of child labour status. Knowledge of the registration process tends to increase with wealth level of the household. For children not in child labour, awareness rises from 62.1 per cent among the poorest households to 81.6 for the richest. Similarly, for children in child labour, where awareness tends to be generally higher, the percentages increase from 66.3 per cent to 76.6 per cent.

Residence-based differences are also notable across groups, with respondents living in rural areas reporting lower levels of awareness than those in urban areas. More detailed findings by division and district are available in Table A9.6 in the Appendix.

Table 9.6 Per cent of 5-17-year-olds in child labour and not in child labour without a birth registration card for whom the respondent is informed about the birth registration process, by age group, sex, education of household head, wealth index quintile and area of residence

Characteristic	Not in child labour		In child labour	
	Percentage of children not in child labour for whom the respondent is informed about birth registration processes	Total number of children not in child labour without a birth registration card	Percentage of children in child labour for whom the respondent is informed about birth registration processes	Total number of children in child labour without a birth registration card
Both sexes				
Total 5-17	67.4	4,909,809	69.4	798,230
5-11	68.0	2,674,483	68.5	152,187
12-13	65.9	1,274,487	69.5	293,166
14-17	67.7	960,839	69.7	352,878
Boys				
Total 5-17	68.0	2,449,918	68.8	532,069
5-11	68.6	1,387,893	67.2	85,835
12-13	66.1	642,290	67.6	184,822
14-17	68.7	419,735	70.1	261,412

Characteristic	Not in child labour		In child labour	
	Percentage of children not in child labour for whom the respondent is informed about birth registration processes	Total number of children not in child labour without a birth registration card	Percentage of children in child labour for whom the respondent is informed about birth registration processes	Total number of children in child labour without a birth registration card
Girls				
Total 5-17	66.8	2,459,890	70.6	266,161
5-11	67.4	1,286,590	70.1	66,352
12-13	65.7	632,197	72.6	108,344
14-17	66.9	541,104	68.5	91,465
Edu. HH head				
None/Pre-school	63.6	2,815,640	66.4	563,353
Primary	67.7	731,320	72.7	113,984
Middle	73.3	281,661	80.8	33,012
Secondary	74.2	501,597	78.2	53,617
Higher	77.0	573,175	84.7	32,854
Non-formal	-	667	-	856
Other	44.8*	1,977	-	422
WIQ				
Poorest	62.1	1,417,539	66.3	411,830
Second	66.2	1,313,579	72.5	218,386
Middle	68.3	1,179,193	72.3	115,671
Fourth	72.8	693,793	74.0	44,137
Richest	81.6	305,705	76.6	8,207
Residence				
Rural	66.2	3,314,402	68.9	663,148
Urban	70.0	1,595,406	71.6	135,082
<p>The sum of boys and girls in the table does not equal the total number of children since the table does not include other/transgender.</p> <p>- Figure not presented as there are fewer than 10 observations in the denominator</p>				

9.3 Socio-economic status

Existing research identifies poverty as a key driver of child labour (Pellerano, Porreca, & Rosati, 2018; Pinilla-Roncancio & Silva, 2018; Edmonds & Schady, 2012; Basu & Van, 1998; Eswaran, 1996). The findings in this section support this perspective, demonstrating that child labour is more prevalent in economically disadvantaged households. At the same time, they reveal a more complex dynamic, illustrating how socio-economic status interacts with other factors to shape child labour patterns.

Table 9.7 presents the median household income of children aged 5–17, disaggregated by child labour status and other sociodemographic measures. Overall, the median household income is 30,000 PKR, but it is notably lower for households with children in child labour (26,000 PKR) compared to those without (30,000 PKR).

Household structure appears to influence income levels. Among children in child labour, those living only with their father have a median household income of 25,000 PKR, whereas those living with their mother only have the lowest median income at 22,000 PKR. For children not engaged in child labour, median income remains consistent at 25,000–30,000 PKR across most household structures. Households headed by females report lower median incomes (23,000 PKR for children in child labour and 26,000 PKR for those not in child labour) compared to male-headed households (26,000 and 30,000, respectively). Parental survival also plays a role, with children who have lost their father experiencing a lower median household income (23,000 PKR for children in child labour and 25,000 PKR for those not in child labour). By contrast, households where neither parent is deceased report a higher median income of 26,000–30,000 PKR.

Notably, median income increases with household size, with the lowest income recorded among small households (25,000 PKR for those with 2–4 members) and the highest among large households (40,000 PKR for those with 11 or more members). This pattern holds for both children in and out of child labour. Household income is closely linked to the education level of the household head. Families where the head has no formal education or only primary education tend to have lower median incomes, contrasting with households where the head has attained higher education, which report significantly higher incomes. A similar pattern emerges across wealth index quintiles, where income levels steadily rise with economic status. Lastly, residence also plays a role in household income disparities. Urban households consistently report higher median incomes (30,000 PKR) than their rural counterparts (25,000 PKR), for both households with and without child labour.

Further details at the division and district level are available in Table A9.7 in the Appendix, where Karachi division records the highest median income for both groups. Moreover, the divisions of Hyderabad and Karachi show a reversal of the general trend, with the median income for households with child labour slightly higher than for those without child labour.

Table 9.7 Median household income of 5-17-year-olds in child labour and not in child labour by household structure, parental survival, household size, education of household head, wealth index quintile and area of residence

Characteristics	Median household income		
	Children in child labour	Children not in child labour	Overall
Total 5-17	26,000	30,000	30,000
Household structure			
Living with neither father nor mother	25,000	25,000	25,000
Living with father only	25,000	25,000	25,000
Living with mother only	22,000	25,000	25,000
Living with both father and mother	27,000	30,000	30,000
Living in a male-headed household	26,000	30,000	30,000
Living in a female-headed household	23,000	26,000	25,000
Parental survival			
Children who have lost both parents	26,000	30,000	29,000
Children who have lost mother	25,000	25,000	25,000
Children who have lost father	23,000	25,000	25,000
Children who have lost neither parent	26,000	30,000	30,000
Household size			
2-4	21,000	25,000	25,000
5-7	25,000	26,000	26,000
8-10	30,000	30,000	30,000
11+	40,000	40,000	40,000
Edu. HH head			
None/Pre-school	25,000	25,000	25,000
Primary	28,000	25,000	25,000
Middle	27,000	29,500	28,000
Secondary	28,000	30,000	30,000
Higher	33,000	45,000	45,000
Non-formal	30,000	40,000	30,000
Other	40,000	50,000	50,000

Characteristics	Median household income		
	Children in child labour	Children not in child labour	Overall
WIQ			
Poorest	23,000	20,000	20,000
Second	30,000	25,000	25,000
Middle	30,000	30,000	30,000
Fourth	32,000	30,000	30,000
Richest	40,000	45,000	45,000
Residence			
Rural	25,000	25,000	25,000
Urban	30,000	30,000	30,000
The household structure omits the category of living in a household with a transgender/other household head. These records account for 5 individuals from the unweighted survey responses, which when weighted represent 772 children.			

Table 9.8 presents the percentage of children, both in and not in child labour, who reside in households that have received BISP or other forms of government financial assistance. The findings indicate that a higher proportion of children in child labour come from households receiving BISP (47.1 per cent) compared to children not in child labour (28.7 per cent). A similar trend is observed for households receiving other financial assistance, though in smaller magnitude. Children in child labour are slightly more likely to come from households receiving other forms of financial assistance (2.1 per cent) than those not in child labour (1.6 per cent).

The likelihood of receiving BISP varies across household characteristics. Larger households are more likely to report BISP receipt, regardless of child labour status. Similarly, children from male-headed households are more likely to receive BISP than those from female-headed households. Education level of the household head is also related to BISP receipt, with the highest rates observed in households where the head has none or only pre-school education (36.2 per cent for children not in child labour). In contrast, the lowest rates are seen where the head has higher education (14.2 per cent). However, this link is not as straightforward in the case of children in child labour. Lastly, poorer households are more likely to be receiving BISP but are more likely to be beneficiaries of other financial assistance.

Other forms of government financial assistance follow a similar trend, with children in child labour more likely to be in recipient households (2.1 per cent) than those not in child labour (1.6 per cent). Such targeted social protection programmes indicate the household has been identified as poorer by the government (and not that these programmes cause child labour). Additional results, detailed in Table A9.8 in the Appendix, indicate that this trend is less pronounced in Zhob and Mekran divisions.

Table 9.8 Per cent of 5-17-year-olds in child labour and not in child labour from households currently receiving BISP or other financial assistance during the last 3 years, by age group, sex, household size, sex of household head, education of household head, wealth index quintile and area of residence

Characteristics	Households currently receiving BISP				Households that received any other financial assistance from government (last three years)			
	Per cent of children not in child labour receiving BISP	Total number of children not in child labour receiving BISP	Per cent of children in child labour receiving BISP	Total number of children in child labour receiving BISP	Per cent of children not in child labour receiving any other financial assistance	Total number of children not in child labour receiving any other financial assistance	Per cent of children in child labour receiving any other financial assistance	Total number of children in child labour receiving any other financial assistance
Both sexes								
Total 5-17	28.7	4,022,261	47.1	757,754	1.6	225,005	2.1	33,821
5-11	29.9	2,089,232	51.5	163,170	1.5	105,723	2.5	7,776
12-13	28.6	1,146,090	49.8	302,809	1.6	62,266	2.5	15,153
14-17	26.0	786,939	42.5	291,775	1.9	57,016	1.6	10,892
Boys								
Total 5-17	28.3	2,010,872	45.6	512,421	1.6	109,878	1.9	21,200
5-11	29.9	1,084,307	53.2	99,513	1.4	50,021	2.5	4,749
12-13	28.4	578,094	48.8	193,000	1.7	34,856	2.1	8,163
14-17	24.2	348,471	40.7	219,908	1.7	25,000	1.5	8,289
Girls								
Total 5-17	29.1	2,011,389	50.4	245,333	1.7	115,127	2.6	12,621
5-11	29.9	1,004,925	49.2	63,657	1.6	55,702	2.3	3,027
12-13	28.8	567,996	51.8	109,809	1.4	27,409	3.3	6,990
14-17	27.6	438,469	49.3	71,867	2.0	32,015	1.8	2,604
Household size								
2-3	10.1	45,379	23.6	13,131	1.5	6,853	1.1	583
4-5	16.2	660,432	36.7	130,498	1.7	69,728	2.6	9,406
6-7	29.5	1,504,940	46.8	279,168	1.7	86,077	1.8	10,508
8-9	39.8	1,071,639	57.3	216,908	1.5	39,675	2.6	9,844
10+	43.1	739,871	52.5	118,049	1.3	22,673	1.6	3,481

Characteristics	Households currently receiving BISP				Households that received any other financial assistance from government (last three years)			
	Per cent of children not in child labour receiving BISP	Total number of children not in child labour receiving BISP	Per cent of children in child labour receiving BISP	Total number of children in child labour receiving BISP	Per cent of children not in child labour receiving any other financial assistance	Total number of children not in child labour receiving any other financial assistance	Per cent of children in child labour receiving any other financial assistance	Total number of children in child labour receiving any other financial assistance
Sex HH head								
Male	28.8	3,867,013	47.5	722,856	1.6	208,126	2.0	29,873
Female	25.3	155,248	38.8	34,898	2.8	16,879	4.4	3,948
Edu. HH head								
None/Pre-school	36.0	2,237,289	48.8	498,051	1.5	95,915	2.2	22,363
Primary	35.9	714,984	49.8	124,039	1.3	25,206	1.1	2,676
Middle	24.3	260,925	33.3	31,501	2.6	27,886	3.4	3,246
Secondary	20.8	417,989	42.1	59,074	2.3	45,716	2.4	3,339
Higher	14.2	384,442	42.2	43,941	1.1	29,866	2.1	2,197
Non-formal	-	667	-	856	-	414	-	0
Other	46.5*	4,604	-	155	-	0	-	0
WIQ								
Poorest	49.5	1,350,073	56.4	388,623	0.8	22,852	1.1	7,944
Second	44.6	1,261,885	51.9	238,501	0.8	23,254	1.7	7,777
Middle	34.2	1,032,488	40.5	106,243	1.4	41,612	1.8	4,805
Fourth	10.3	291,895	13.9	19,689	3.0	84,846	6.8	9,662
Richest	3.3	85,920	8.1	4,698	2.0	52,440	6.3	3,632
Residence								
Rural	43.0	3,091,909	52.3	651,577	1.0	71,417	1.8	21,844
Urban	13.6	930,352	29.2	106,177	2.2	153,587	3.3	11,977

The sum of boys and girls in the table does not equal the total number of children since the table does not include transgender. These records account for 6 individuals from the unweighted survey responses, which when weighted represent 598 children.

The sum of children in households with male and female household heads does not equal the total number of children since the table does not include children in households with transgender household heads. These records account for 5 individuals from the unweighted survey responses, which when weighted represent 772 children.

- Figure not presented as there are fewer than 10 observations in the denominator

* Figure should be interpreted with caution, since estimates are based on fewer than 25 observations in the denominator.

Figures 9.4 and 9.5 depict the proportion of households with at least one child aged 5–17 engaged in child labour across household characteristics. Overall, 17.5 per cent of households report having a child in labour, with a higher prevalence in rural areas (25.8 per cent) compared to urban areas (9.0 per cent). The incidence of child labour also varies by household wealth, displaying a general downward trend as wealth increases. Among the poorest households, 33.7 per cent have at least one working child, a rate that is considerably higher than that of the wealthiest households, at 3.8 per cent.

The prevalence of child labour is also negatively linked to the education level of the household head. In households where the head has no formal schooling or only preschool education, 24.2 per cent have a child engaged in labour. This percentage decreases as education levels increase, finally reaching 5.9 per cent in households where the head has completed higher education.

Figure 9.4 Per cent of households with at least one child 5-17 years in child labour by area of residence and wealth index quintile

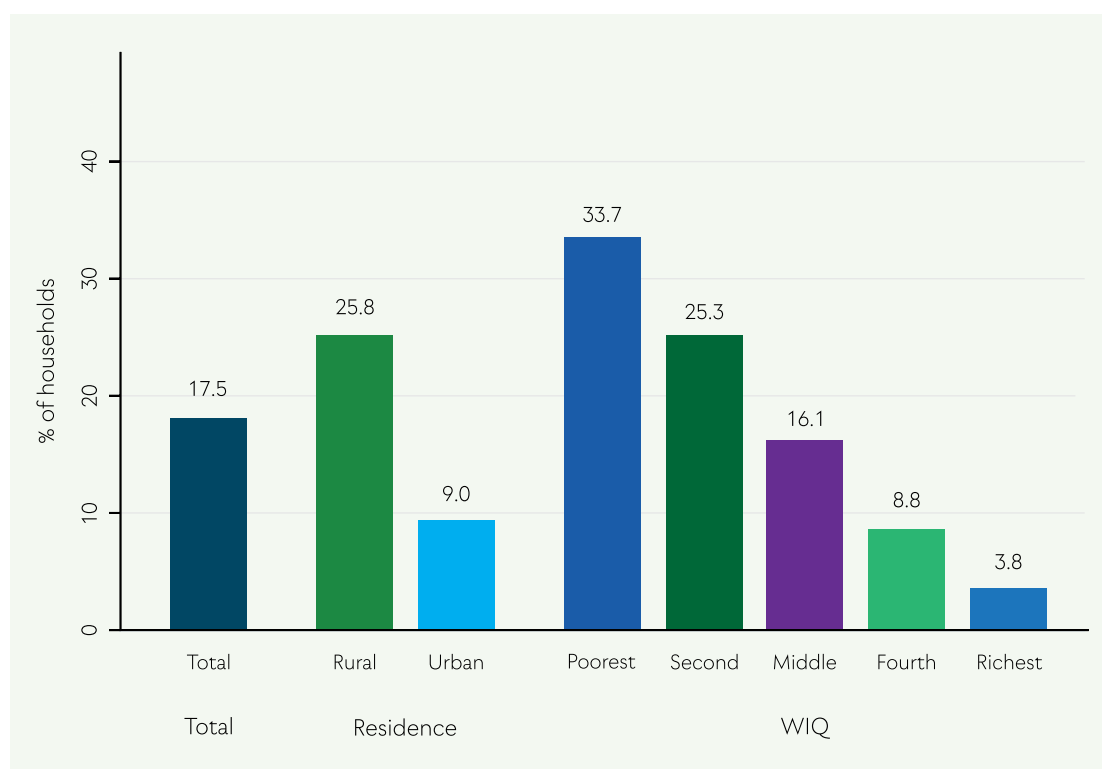


Figure 9.5 Per cent of households with at least one child 5-17 years in child labour by education of household head

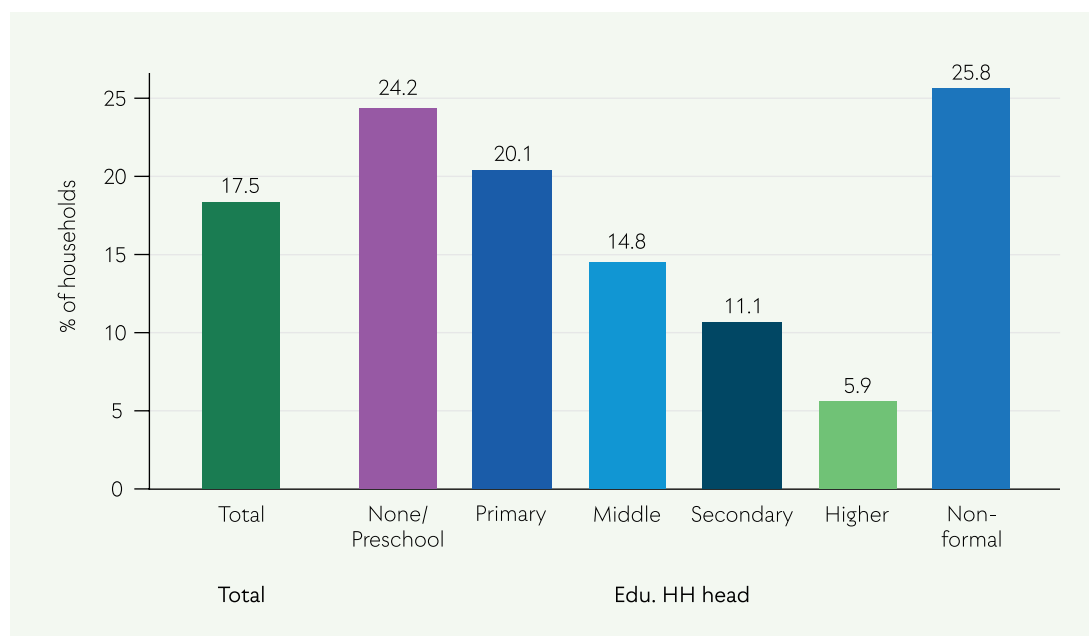


Table 9.9 provides an overview of household assets, cooking fuel sources, and water access, highlighting patterns that closely follow the wealth index. Overall, urban households generally enjoy better access to modern amenities, including improved sanitation and more efficient cooking methods. However, across both areas of residence, households that do not have children in child labour show better sanitation and cooking conditions. For instance, urban households without children in child labour have the better access to sanitation, with 77.2 per cent of them connected to public sewage, compared to 61.8 per cent of households with a child in labour. In contrast, only 19.2 per cent of rural households without child labour and just 9.6 per cent of those with a child in labour have the same access.

In rural areas, households with at least one child in child labour mostly rely on wood (88.5 per cent) as their primary cooking fuel, while only 4.6 per cent use gas. Drinking water sources also differ, with 59.7 per cent relying on hand pumps. Access to piped water is lower (18.4 per cent) in these households compared to 24.7 per cent in those without child labour, a trend possibly linked to children being involved in water collection as part of their labour.

In urban areas, access to improved sanitation and modern cooking fuels is generally higher, though disparities remain. Households without children in child labour are more likely use gas as their primary cooking fuel (82.3 per cent) compared to 62.2 per cent of households with child labour. When it comes to drinking water, 48.5 per cent of households with child labour have piped water access, significantly lower than the 57.1 per cent observed in non-child labour households. Additionally, a greater proportion of child labour households depend on hand pumps (27.2 per cent vs. 13.1 per cent).

Table 9.9 Number and per cent of households having at least one 5-17-year-old in child labour by socio-economic characteristics and area of residence

Characteristic	Rural				Urban			
	Total number of households with at least one 5-17-year-old in child labour	Per cent of households with at least one 5-17-year-old in child labour	Total number of households without any 5-17-year-old in child labour	Per cent of households without any 5-17-year-old in child labour	Total number of households with at least one 5-17-year-old in child labour	Per cent of households with at least one 5-17-year-old in child labour	Total number of households without any 5-17-year-old in child labour	Per cent of households without any 5-17-year-old in child labour
Total	874,945	100.0	2,517,347	100.0	297,920	100.0	2,998,285	100.0
Type of toilet								
Flush connected to public sewage	83,564	9.6	482,526	19.2	183,980	61.8	2,314,393	77.2
Flush connected to pit/septic tank	129,242	14.8	478,904	19.0	30,335	10.2	280,348	9.3
Flush connected to open drain	91,924	10.5	350,195	13.9	31,925	10.7	219,010	7.3
Dry raised latrine	103,821	11.9	235,589	9.4	12,350	4.2	57,235	1.9
Dry pit latrine	142,969	16.3	404,332	16.1	14,833	5.0	68,130	2.3
No toilet in the household	323,425	37.0	565,802	22.5	24,497	8.2	59,169	2.0
Main source of energy for cooking								
Wood	774,608	88.5	1,974,623	78.4	102,090	34.3	419,146	14.0
Gas	40,217	4.6	324,958	12.9	185,179	62.2	2,469,189	82.3
Kerosene oil	133	0.0	399	0.0	6	-	2,044	0.1*
Dung cake	49,521	5.7	190,812	7.6	6,109	2.0	37,252	1.2
Electricity	147	0.0	1,811	0.1	1,162	0.4*	16,274	0.5
Crop residue	867	0.1	968	0.0	92	-	659	-
Charcoal/coal	270	0.0	1,248	0.1	609	-	1,832	0.1
Solar	431	0.1	631	0.0	0	0.0	181	-
Biogas	3,190	0.4	6,070	0.2	2,179	0.7*	50,201	1.7
Bushes and branches of tree	5,561	0.6	15,826	0.6	494	-	1,507	0.1*

Characteristic	Rural				Urban			
	Total number of households with at least one 5-17-year-old in child labour	Per cent of households with at least one 5-17-year-old in child labour	Total number of households without any 5-17-year-old in child labour	Per cent of households without any 5-17-year-old in child labour	Total number of households with at least one 5-17-year-old in child labour	Per cent of households with at least one 5-17-year-old in child labour	Total number of households without any 5-17-year-old in child labour	Per cent of households without any 5-17-year-old in child labour
Main source of drinking water								
Piped water	161,216	18.4	622,222	24.7	144,494	48.5	1,713,077	57.1
Hand pump	522,063	59.7	1,438,925	57.2	81,193	27.2	392,210	13.1
Motorized pumping/tube well	29,655	3.4	139,196	5.5	27,316	9.2	285,911	9.5
Open well	60,122	6.9	116,325	4.6	681	0.2*	4,324	0.1
Closed well	2,581	0.3	2,867	0.1	63	-	2,572	0.1
Pond/canal/river/stream/rain water pond	65,261	7.5	95,606	3.8	5,454	1.8	16,709	0.6
Spring	3,616	0.4	7,341	0.3	39	-	1,292	-
Mineral water/bottled water	1,118	0.1	6,769	0.3	4,340	1.5	196,584	6.6
Tanker/truck/water bearer	18,841	2.1	52,854	2.1	23,937	8.0	216,417	7.2
Filtration plant	10,474	1.2	35,243	1.4	10,403	3.5	169,188	5.6
- Figure not presented as there are fewer than 10 observations in the denominator								
* Figure should be interpreted with caution, since estimates are based on fewer than 25 observations in the denominator.								

Table 9.10 provides an overview of income sources, wealth index quintiles, and income quintiles for households with and without children engaged in child labour across rural and urban areas. In urban settings, the highest proportion of households with at least one child in labour is found depending on public social transfers (18.5 per cent) and scholarships (15.7 per cent) as sources of income, highlighting their position of economic vulnerability. In rural areas, reliance on these income sources is considerably higher (35.4 per cent and 32.7 per cent, respectively). In terms of wealth and income, while child labour prevalence declines as the wealth income rises, there is no consistent decline as income increases in either urban or rural areas. Among households in the poorest wealth index quintile, 34.6 per cent in rural areas and 26.3 per cent in urban areas have at least one child engaged in labour. Looking at income quintiles, child labour prevalence is highest in the fourth quintile of both rural (32.9 per cent) and urban households (12.1 per cent).

Table 9.10 Number and per cent of households having at least one child 5-17 years in child labour by area of residence, source of income, wealth index quintile and income quintile

Characteristic	Rural				Urban			
	Total number of households without any child in child labour	Per cent of households without any child in child labour	Total number of households with at least one child in child labour	Per cent of households with at least one child in child labour	Total number of households without any child in child labour	Per cent of households without any child in child labour	Total number of households with at least one child in child labour	Per cent of households with at least one child in child labour
Total	2,517,347	74.2	874,945	25.8	2,998,285	91.0	297,920	9.0
Source of income								
Employment/work	2,399,756	73.7	855,611	26.3	2,885,634	90.8	291,656	9.2
Social transfers from public sources	377,230	64.6	207,065	35.4	173,985	81.5	39,387	18.5
Scholarship	12,129	67.3	5,898	32.7	12,006	84.3	2,229	15.7
Rent/property/investments/stock exchange	35,186	79.8	8,892	20.2	75,716	97.1	2,246	2.9
Private transfers	41,665	75.5	13,542	24.5	84,777	91.6	7,742	8.4
Savings/pension	62,623	81.8	13,924	18.2	138,367	94.5	7,981	5.5
WIQ								
Poorest	780,989	65.4	413,384	34.6	105,723	73.7	37,762	26.3
Second	875,979	74.0	308,315	26.0	123,584	80.6	29,694	19.4
Middle	668,099	82.6	140,487	17.4	454,101	85.8	75,172	14.2
Fourth	131,485	91.8	11,781	8.2	1,089,031	91.2	105,288	8.8
Richest	60,794	98.4	978	1.6	1,225,847	96.1	50,003	3.9
Income quintile								
Poorest	751,631	77.1	223,261	22.9	455,396	89.7	52,467	10.3
Second	715,982	75.1	237,437	24.9	668,920	91.6	61,174	8.4
Middle	331,990	71.2	134,190	28.8	447,887	89.8	50,577	10.2
Fourth	378,607	67.1	185,930	32.9	582,088	87.9	80,313	12.1
Richest	339,137	78.3	94,128	21.7	843,889	94.0	53,388	6.0
The number of households by source of income is greater than the total number of households because a household can have several sources of income.								

Figure 9.6 examines the relationship between natural and economic shocks experienced by households and the prevalence of child labour. Given that the overall child labour rate in Sindh is 10.3 per cent, the results reveal that this percentage tends to be higher among households facing some of these shocks. The most severe impact is observed in households affected by price inflation, where child labour reaches 17.9 per cent. Additionally, households experiencing the effects of falling agricultural prices report child labour rates of 12.1 per cent. Lastly, households facing business closures report below average child labour prevalence, at 3.5 per cent.

Figure 9.6 Child labour and shocks faced by household

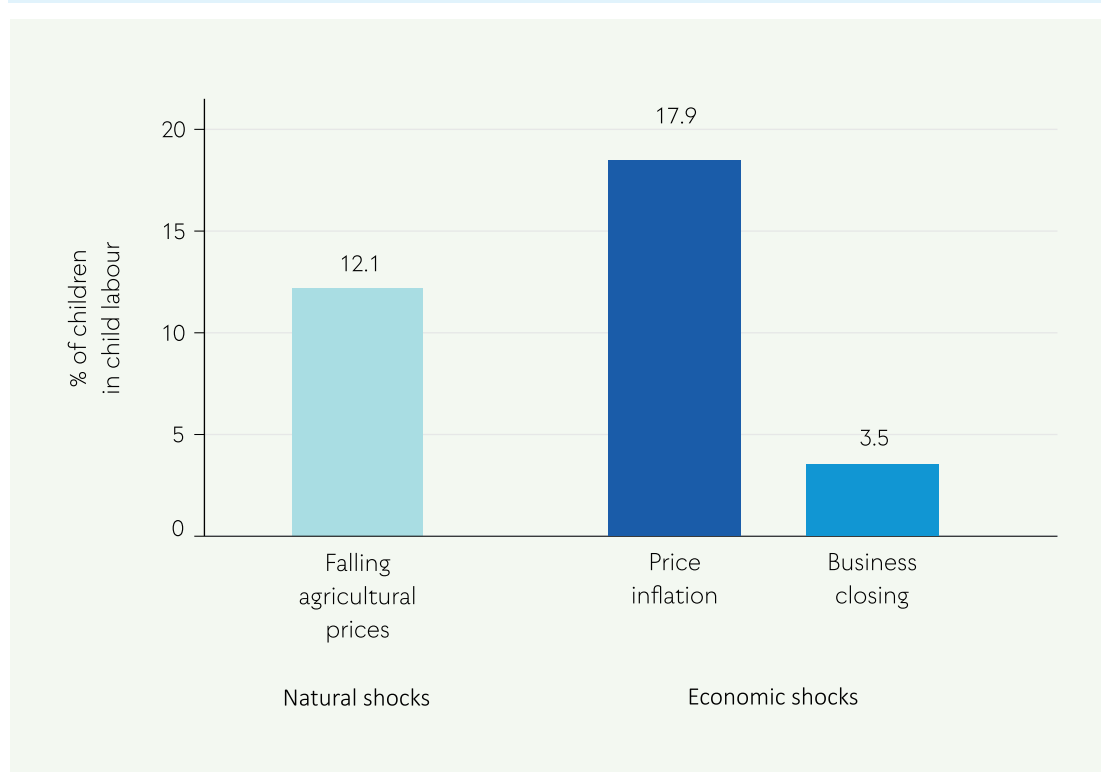
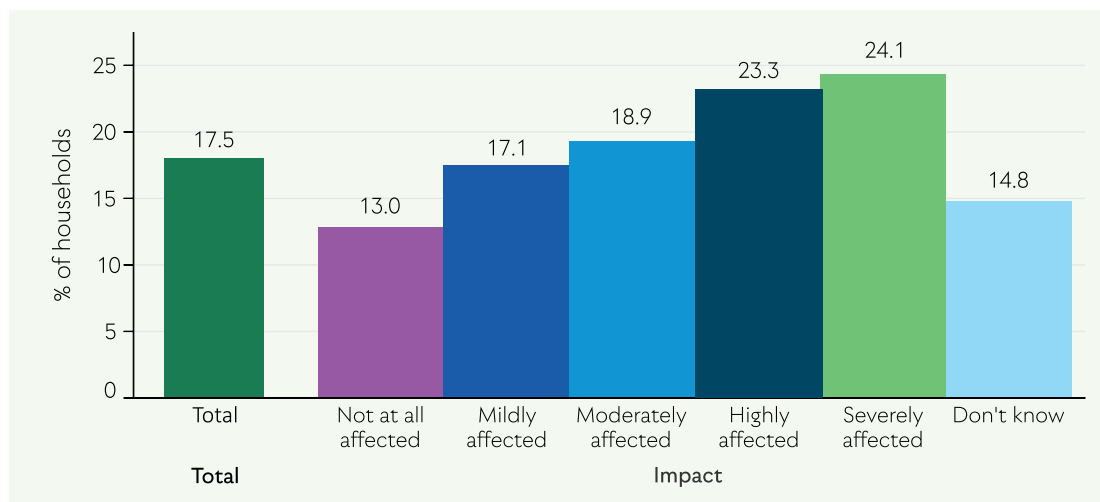


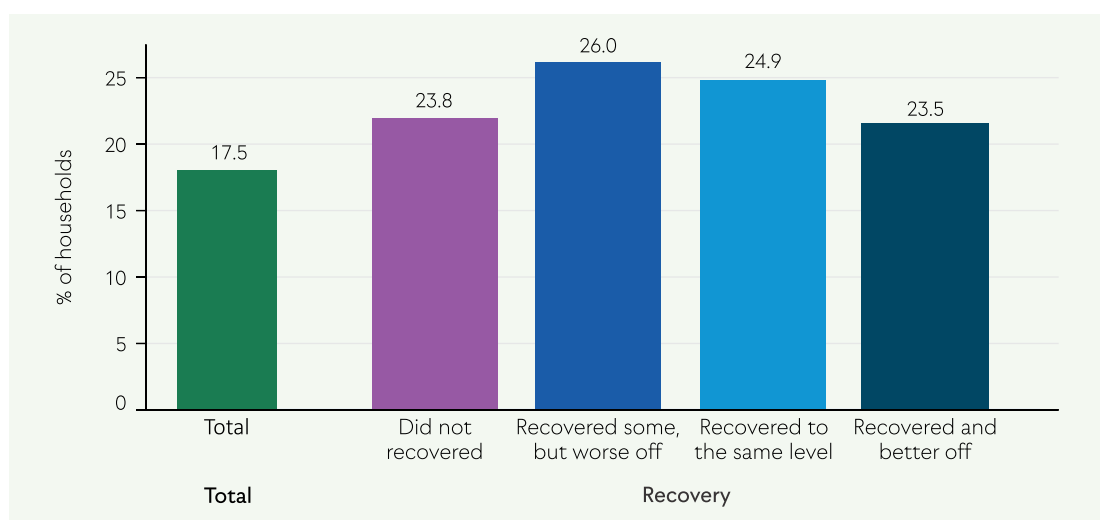
Figure 9.6 specifically examines the impact of the 2022 floods on households with child labour. Households that were unaffected by flooding had the lowest incidence of child labour at 13.0 per cent, while those reporting severe impact had the highest prevalence at 24.1 per cent. This pattern may suggest that households with children engaged in child labour were also among the most vulnerable populations in the face of natural disasters.

Figure 9.7 Per cent of all households having at least one child 5-17 years in child labour by impact of the flooding from the monsoon rains that began in August 2022 on their economic well-being



In turn, Figure 9.7 shows child labour prevalence among households that faced the consequences of the floods, based on their level of recovery. As results show, there are only very small differences in child labour prevalence, across households that recovered to different degrees of recovery. The 2022 floods are clearly linked to higher child labour rates. This might indicate that while context may link the affectation from the flooding and child labour prevalence, there is no clear indication that self-perceived recovery is linked with reduced propensity to engage children in child labour.

Figure 9.8 Per cent of flood-affected households having at least one child 5-17 years in child labour by extent to which the households' economic well-being recovered from the flooding from the monsoon rains that began in August 2022



9.4 Perceptions on reason child works, what is best for child and expectations around schooling

Table 9.11 presents the most frequently cited reasons by parents or guardians for permitting their children to work, with respondents able to provide multiple reasons. The primary justification for child labour is to supplement family or household income (44.3 per cent), with other common reasons including supporting household needs (22.0 per cent), helping in the household enterprise (18.2 per cent), and learning skills (17.1 per cent). Some gender differences are evident, with 49.7 per cent of boys being involved in child labour to supplement family income, while the same is also the case for only 31.8 per cent of girls.

Notably, while the proportion of parents or guardians allowing their children to work to support household needs decreases with the wealth index quintile, the opposite trend is observed for those citing supplementing household income and learning skills.

Additionally, parents or guardians in rural areas (26.4 per cent) are over four times more likely than those in urban areas (6.6 per cent) to permit child labour to support household needs. Regional differences are evident, as detailed in Table A9.9 in the Appendix. While across all divisions, supplementing family income is the most common reason to let children engage in child labour, in Mirpur Khas division, parents report a higher-than-average incidence of children working for their own interest (13.1 per cent).

Children engaged in child labour who earn an income were asked how they typically use their earnings, with the results outlined in Table 9.12. Among all working children, only 37.1 per cent reported knowing their average monthly cash income from their primary job. Among those aware of their earnings, 66.2 per cent give all or part of their wages to their parents or guardians, while in 15 per cent of cases, the employer directly hands over the earnings to the parents or guardians. Additionally, 22.4 per cent use their income to purchase items for themselves, and 16.4 per cent spend money on household items.

Notably, fewer girls than boys reported knowing their earnings—only 28.5 per cent of girls compared to 42.0 per cent of boys. Girls are also less likely than boys to use their earnings to buy things from the household (9.5 per cent vs. 17.8 per cent) and are more likely to spend money on themselves (28.7 per cent vs. 40.8 per cent for boys). Additionally, children in child labour from wealthier households are more likely to earn and report an income than those from the poorest wealth quintiles. Additionally, a higher percentage of working children in urban areas (54.5 per cent) reported knowing their average monthly income compared to those in rural areas (32.1 per cent). More detailed breakdowns by division and district are provided in Table A9.10 in the Appendix.

Table 9.11 Per cent of 5–17-year-olds in child labour by reported reason of parent or guardian for letting child work, by sex, age group, education of household head, wealth index quintile and area of residence

Characteristics	Children in child labour								
	Reasons for letting child work								Total number of children in child labour
	Supplement family/household income	Learn skills	Support household needs	Help in household enterprise	Own will/interest	Cannot afford school fees	Other educational reasons	Other reasons	
Both sexes									
Total 5-17	44.3	17.1	22.0	18.2	6.6	3.1	6.0	5.8	1,610,037
5-11	19.0	20.1	39.8	18.2	7.8	2.1	6.8	5.8	316,524
12-13	38.2	18.3	25.3	19.4	7.4	2.6	5.9	5.1	607,776
14-17	61.4	14.8	10.7	17.2	5.2	4.1	5.6	6.4	685,737
Boys									
Total 5-17	49.7	15.6	18.9	17.3	6.1	3.6	5.5	6.0	1,123,029
5-11	21.7	19.0	36.0	18.5	8.0	2.4	6.4	6.9	187,127
12-13	41.8	16.3	24.3	19.3	7.0	3.0	5.3	5.3	395,894
14-17	65.2	14.0	9.0	15.4	4.8	4.5	5.2	6.3	540,008
Girls									
Total 5-17	31.8	20.6	29.0	20.2	7.6	2.1	7.2	5.2	487,007
5-11	15.1	21.6	45.4	17.6	7.7	1.5	7.4	4.3	129,396
12-13	31.4	22.1	27.2	19.6	8.3	2.0	7.0	4.7	211,882
14-17	47.2	17.7	17.0	23.5	6.5	2.7	7.1	6.6	145,729
Edu. HH head									
None/Pre-school	46.2	15.3	22.0	18.9	5.6	2.9	6.1	6.1	1,020,010
Primary	43.0	19.3	19.7	17.3	8.2	2.8	6.4	5.7	249,136
Middle	47.3	20.5	20.5	16.7	6.4	6.7	4.1	4.9	94,638
Secondary	40.1	22.6	24.8	15.4	8.0	3.8	6.9	4.3	140,423
Higher	31.1	20.4	24.1	18.9	10.7	2.0	4.3	4.9	104,048

Characteristics	Children in child labour								
	Reasons for letting child work								
	Supplement family/household income	Learn skills	Support household needs	Help in household enterprise	Own will/interest	Cannot afford school fees	Other educational reasons	Other reasons	Total number of children in child labour
WIQ									
Poorest	36.9	16.0	29.1	19.6	6.1	2.6	7.3	5.6	688,786
Second	41.3	16.2	23.9	18.9	7.6	2.2	5.9	6.0	459,568
Middle	51.9	17.7	14.4	18.8	7.2	2.3	3.0	5.7	262,581
Fourth	67.7	19.9	3.6	9.9	4.3	8.1	4.7	5.5	141,216
Richest	64.5	29.4	1.0	12.6	6.5	8.8	6.8	6.6	57,886
Residence									
Rural	39.3	16.1	26.4	19.0	6.8	2.4	6.6	5.8	1,246,053
Urban	61.4	20.6	6.6	15.4	5.9	5.8	3.8	5.8	363,983

The sum of boys and girls in the table does not equal the total number of children since the table does not include transgender children. These records account for 0 individual from the unweighted survey responses, which when weighted represent 0 children in child labour.

The education of the household head omits the categories of "Non-formal", "Other" and "Don't know". These records account for 4, 4 and 0 individuals from the unweighted survey responses respectively, which when weighted represent 856, 583 and 0 children.

Table 9.12 Per cent of 5-17-year-olds in child labour that earn an income by contribution to household income, by age group, sex, education of household head, wealth index quintile and area of residence

Characteristic	Children in child labour that earn an income									Percentage of children in child labour that earn an income	Number of children in child labour that earn an income
	Give all/part of money to my parents/guardian	Employer gives all/part of money to my parents/guardians	Pay my school fees	Buy things for school	Buy things for household	Buy things for myself	Save	Travel expenses	Other		
Both sexes											
Total 5-17	66.2	15.0	2.5	4.4	16.4	22.4	3.4	0.3	0.9	37.1	639,454
5-11	39.4	4.9	2.9	5.7	9.9	52.9	5.3	0.0	0.5	20.2	68,936
12-13	67.2	14.5	1.8	5.7	15.4	18.1	3.1	0.0	0.2	27.4	178,314
14-17	70.5	17.1	2.6	3.6	18.0	19.0	3.2	0.5	1.4	53.7	392,204
Boys											
Total 5-17	67.1	15.8	2.6	4.6	18.4	20.7	3.4	0.3	1.2	40.8	488,907
5-11	43.9	5.4	2.7	7.3	12.4	45.4	5.0	0.0	0.8	20.5	41,338
12-13	64.7	14.8	2.2	6.3	18.2	19.3	3.3	0.1	0.3	28.9	122,439
14-17	70.9	17.5	2.8	3.7	19.3	18.1	3.2	0.5	1.6	56.6	325,129
Girls											
Total 5-17	63.6	12.6	0.0	3.8	9.9	27.9	3.5	0.0	0.0	28.7	150,547
5-11	32.6	4.1	0.0	3.2	6.1	64.2	5.6	0.0	0.0	19.7	27,597
12-13	72.7	13.8	0.0	4.5	9.3	15.6	2.6	0.0	0.0	24.5	55,875
14-17	68.7	15.2	0.0	3.5	12.0	23.2	3.3	0.0	0.0	43.0	67,074
Edu. HH head											
None/Pre-school	68.1	15.3	1.8	3.3	16.4	20.2	2.9	0.2	0.9	38.4	418,642
Primary	63.9	15.7	2.2	5.6	18.5	24.8	3.3	0.5	0.6	36.7	98,050

Characteristic	Children in child labour that earn an income									Percentage of children in child labour that earn an income	Number of children in child labour that earn an income
	Give all/part of money to my parents/guardian	Employer gives all/part of money to my parents/guardians	Pay my school fees	Buy things for school	Buy things for household	Buy things for myself	Save	Travel expenses	Other		
Edu. HH head											
Middle	65.4	16.1	5.3	7.5	14.6	23.8	3.7	0.3	1.8	37.4	37,944
Secondary	61.3	13.2	3.3	7.0	19.6	31.9	7.1	1.1	0.8	33.9	51,005
Higher	58.5	12.1	7.5	8.0	7.9	26.8	4.5	0.0	2.2	29.7	33,231
WIQ											
Poorest	63.5	15.3	0.9	3.0	17.6	25.5	3.4	0.2	0.5	31.8	236,264
Second	63.4	17.1	2.4	5.2	16.6	21.1	4.1	0.0	0.8	31.8	156,728
Middle	66.5	15.5	2.8	6.5	19.3	19.5	2.8	0.4	0.6	44.5	122,905
Fourth	74.2	11.4	5.5	4.7	11.6	18.9	1.6	0.6	1.4	56.6	84,810
Richest	76.8	12.0	4.7	3.3	9.3	25.7	6.4	1.1	4.0	62.7	38,747
Residence											
Rural	62.7	16.0	1.8	4.4	17.9	24.2	3.6	0.2	0.6	32.1	429,596
Urban	73.5	13.1	3.7	4.6	13.2	18.8	2.9	0.6	1.6	54.5	209,857
<p>The education of the household head omits the categories of "Non-formal", "Other". These records account for 4, 4 and 0 individuals from the unweighted survey responses respectively, which when weighted represent 903, 609.</p>											

10. POLICY RECOMMENDATIONS AND CONCLUSIONS

Tackling child labour requires a thorough understanding of the social, economic, cultural, and political factors that drive it. The findings of this study provide a strong foundation for further research aimed at eliminating child labour in all its forms. This chapter presents key insights from the Sindh Child Labour Survey and highlights critical issues that policymakers should prioritize. Effectively addressing child labour demands a coordinated, multi-sectoral approach, encompassing education, social protection, labour laws, and economic policies. The following section introduces policy measures inspired by successful interventions in other contexts. However, before implementing these strategies in Sindh, a comprehensive evaluation is essential—one that is gender- and age-sensitive and considers the unique conditions of each division and district.

10.1 Education

Conclusions

- The majority of children aged 5–17 (62.1 per cent) is enrolled in school and do not work, while 26.0 per cent are neither attending school nor engaged in labour, often categorized as economically idle. Notably, the proportion of idle girls (32.3 per cent) is significantly higher than that of boys (20.3 per cent). Overall, girls are also more involved in household chores (56.6 per cent vs. 49.9 per cent of boys), which can help explain their lower school attendance rates. Additionally, the situation is even more concerning for married girls, as only 8.4 per cent of those aged 10–17 attend school, compared to 55.9 per cent of their unmarried peers. These figures highlight the need for targeted efforts to improve educational access, particularly for girls and vulnerable groups.
- Among younger children aged 5–9, there is some disparity in school attendance between those who work and those who do not, with 58.6 per cent of working children attending school compared to 68.8 per cent of non-working children. However, this difference becomes more pronounced as children grow older. In the 14–17 age group, only 29.1 per cent of working adolescents attend school, whereas 64.6 per cent of those not working do. Meanwhile, almost 9 in 10 children (both in child labour and not) that are currently attending school are behind the expected grade for their age. These findings align with the common understanding that there is a trade-off between work and education.
- School attendance rises until age 9 for both boys and girls, reaching a peak of 78.6 per cent, before beginning to decline, as they transition towards higher levels of education. As children grow older, financial constraints and lack of interest become more significant barriers to education, with the proportion citing affordability rising from 13.4 per cent at ages 5–9 to 28.4 per cent at 14–17, and those reporting lack of interest increasing from 13.8 per cent to 20.8 per cent over the same period.

- Although education in Pakistan is officially free for children aged 5–16, 24.2 per cent of children in Sindh not attending school cite financial constraints as the primary reason. This financial burden often extends beyond tuition fees, encompassing expenses such as uniforms, books, and transportation, which can be prohibitive for many families. Additionally, in areas where public schools are either too far or unavailable, families may opt for nearby private institutions, which come with higher costs, further limiting access to education for children from low-income households. These financial challenges highlight the need for additional support measures, such as subsidies or school supply assistance, to ensure that all children can attend school regardless of their economic background.
- Inadequate school facilities and poor teacher availability is another commonly cited issue affecting children’s school attendance and is particularly prevalent in the case of girls and generally, in rural areas.

Policy recommendations

- To prevent dropouts and support the transition to middle school, children should have access to targeted interventions such as early warning systems, counselling, and remedial education programs. These initiatives can identify at-risk students early on and provide them with the necessary support to stay on track academically and socially. Additionally, specialised training can benefit adolescents who leave the formal education system due to financial constraints, providing them with alternative learning opportunities, like practical skills and vocational training, can help them transition towards work outside of informality and hazardous conditions.
- Public awareness campaigns also play a crucial role in emphasizing the importance of education and encouraging continued school attendance (Ghazi, Ali, Shahzad, & Hukamdad, 2010). By engaging families and communities in the conversation about the value of education, students can be provided a stronger support system. Moreover, fostering an environment where teachers are trained to support diverse learners and where families are actively involved in their children's education can help reduce dropout rates and promote long-term academic success.
- The indirect costs of schooling include lost income for children who could otherwise be working, making education a financial challenge for poor households. Conditional cash transfer programs help offset this loss by providing financial support, encouraging school attendance (ILO, 2017). For example, the Punjab Female School Stipend Program, launched in 2003, successfully increased school enrolment and reduced child labour among girls (Alam, Baez, & Carpio, 2011). Similar trends have been observed elsewhere (de Hoop & Rosati, 2014) though cash transfers can sometimes lead to investments in productive assets that increase children's work participation. Therefore, careful planning is essential to ensure these programs effectively support education without unintended consequences. Cash transfer programmes linked to education are already in place, such as the Benazir Taleemi Wazaif run nationwide by BISP, though their impacts should be reviewed to understand how to make these programmes achieve their potential gains.

- Communities face concerns regarding significant barriers to schooling, including long distances to the nearest school, inadequate infrastructure, and a lack of essential resources such as sufficient teachers or proper facilities. Reviewing the accessibility of schools is a crucial step in improving educational opportunities, particularly for rural communities.
- Additionally, assessing whether girls are underserved in some areas by the education system network can help to strategically fill these gaps and ensure equal access to education. According to a report developed by the Sindh Education Foundation (2020), girls tend to drop out of schools after completing primary education due to the lack of middle and high schools nearby, with dropout rates increasing from grade 4 onwards, especially when there is no female teacher. In high schools and secondary schools, factors such as the absence of functional, private, and secure washrooms and inadequate school infrastructure, including boundary walls, prevent girls from attending. Additionally, the scarcity of middle, secondary, and higher secondary schools in Sindh, along with parents' reluctance to send their daughters to distant schools, significantly contribute to the lower educational participation of girls.
 - Targeted interventions can be developed to improve education access, which can include setting up more schools closer to populated areas, offering transportation, improving facilities, or providing financial support for families. In particular, transportation options that enable girl's access to school facilities should be safe and widely available, ensuring that parents feel confident in the safety of their children while commuting to school.

10.2 Work

Conclusions

- In Sindh, the overall prevalence of working children is 12 percent. Working children are more prevalent among older children, boys, and those from poorer households. Children in rural areas are more likely to work than those in urban settings. Household characteristics also play a role, with lower education levels of the household head being associated with higher rates of child working. Economic disparity is a key factor, as children from the poorest backgrounds are significantly more likely to be engaged in work compared to those from wealthier families.
- Unlike domestic work for a third party, household chores are not classified as economic activities and are not considered part of the formal definition of work. However, analysing them is important due to their potential negative impact on children's development and the trade-offs they create with other activities, such as school. In Sindh, girls tend to be more involved in household chores than boys; the likelihood of engaging in chores increases with age, and marital status also plays a role with ever-married children, spending more time on household chores compared to their never-married peers. In addition, children not attending school tend to spend more hours on household tasks and rural children are slightly more involved in chores than urban children, with rural girls dedicating more time to household tasks compared to their urban counterparts.

- Children's employment is predominantly in agriculture, forestry, and fishing, followed by manufacturing and wholesale/retail trade. As they grow older, their involvement in manufacturing and trade increases. Boys are more likely to work in agriculture, construction, and wholesale/retail trade, while girls tend to be employed in manufacturing, water collection, and household-related tasks. Economic background also influences employment patterns, with children from poorer households primarily working in agriculture, water collection, and manufacturing, while those from wealthier households are more likely to engage in wholesale and retail trade. In addition, most children work away from home. Boys generally work longer hours than girls (29 vs 18 hours), and children from richest households have higher proportions of long working hours once engaged in work (47.5 per cent working more than 42 hours in comparison with 18.8 per cent in poorest households).
- Sectors as water supply (mostly carrying water), have a higher percentage of children working only a few hours per week, while others, like construction and accommodation, are among the most demanding industries, with 54.9 per cent and 53.4 per cent of children, respectively, working more than 42 hours per week. This is followed by wholesale and retail trade.

Policy recommendations

- It is necessary to raise family awareness on child labour since many working children are employed within their families, it is essential to educate families on how working conditions affect children's development. Counselling programs can provide guidance on reducing hazardous work conditions at home.
- Education helps reduce child labour and early marriage. Providing financial incentives, such as stipends for girls who stay in school, can encourage families to prioritize education over labour. Awareness campaigns should highlight the long-term financial and health benefits of investing in girls' education.
- Introduce flexible schooling options and vocational training for married children to ensure continued education. Strengthen legal frameworks to prevent child marriage and conduct community outreach programs to raise awareness about its negative impact on children's education and well-being.
- Expand free and compulsory education programmes, particularly in rural areas and for older children (14–17 years), who have the highest work participation rates. In addition, encouraging adult literacy and education programmes since higher parental education is linked to lower child labour rates. In addition, establish evening and flexible schooling options for older children engaged in day work, ensuring they have an alternative path to education.
- Inclusive education for children with disabilities: Improve accessibility in schools, develop vocational training programs tailored to children with disabilities, and provide financial support to help families overcome barriers to education and employment.

- Targeted poverty alleviation programs in rural areas can reduce the economic necessity of child labour in poor households. As well as introducing livelihood support initiatives for families in rural areas, such as access to microcredit, and skill training for adults.
- Regulate agricultural child work by providing safe work conditions and enforcing child labour laws in agriculture, forestry and fishing in rural areas. Additionally, labour inspections in manufacturing and service sectors should be enforced and strengthened to prevent child workers exploitation, particularly in urban areas.

10.3 Child Labour

Conclusions

- Child labour in Sindh is deeply entrenched in socio-economic inequalities, with poverty and household education levels playing a role in determining both the prevalence and form of child employment. In Sindh, 10.3 per cent of children aged 5–17 engage in child labour, with boys more frequently involved than girls. Additionally, 7.4 per cent are engaged in hazardous work, a distinction that becomes more pronounced as children age.
- The sectoral distribution of child labour reflects systemic vulnerabilities, with agriculture, forestry, and fishing absorbing 55.1 per cent of child workers, particularly among poorer and rural households. In contrast, manufacturing and retail trade are more common among children from wealthier and more educated families, underscoring how economic status influences the types of work children undertake. The majority of children in child labour are concentrated in low-skilled, elementary occupations. Children aged 5–9 years old are mostly engaged in these jobs, while older children transition into skilled agricultural and craft-related trades. However, elementary work remains dominant, suggesting persistent barriers to accessing better employment.
- Gender disparities persist with boys having greater access to skilled agricultural and service jobs, whereas girls are disproportionately trapped in elementary occupations and low-paid craft-related trades, more often in the home. Rural children remain largely tied to agricultural labour, whereas urban children have marginally better access to craft-related trades and service-sector jobs. However, across both settings, elementary occupations remain the most prevalent form of child labour, particularly in rural areas.
- The most prevalent form of employment among children in child labour is unpaid family work (49.6 per cent), followed by self-employment in non-agricultural sectors (14.3 per cent), non-agricultural day labour (9.2 per cent), and agricultural day labour (8.1 per cent).
- Additionally, girls are more likely to be unpaid workers (63.8 per cent) compared to boys (43.4 per cent), while boys have a greater likelihood of shifting to self-employment and paid labour as they grow older.
- The findings indicate that a higher proportion of children in child labour come from households receiving BISP (47.1 per cent) compared to children not in child labour (28.7 per cent). A similar trend is observed for households receiving other financial assistance, though in smaller magnitude. Children in child labour are slightly more likely to come from

households receiving other forms of financial assistance (2.1 per cent) than those not in child labour (1.6 per cent).

- The data highlights significant disparities in birth registration rates between children engaged in child labour and those not involved in it. A higher percentage of children in child labour lack a birth certificate (49.7 per cent) compared to those not in child labour (35.0 per cent), which suggests that children in vulnerable situations are less likely to have official documentation. Gender disparities further emerge, with girls in child labour being more likely to be without a birth certificate compared to boys. The data also shows that birth registration is linked to household wealth, with children in wealthier households more likely to have a birth certificate. Additionally, rural areas display higher rates of children without birth registration, indicating a geographical divide in access to birth registration services.
- Households that were unaffected by flooding had the lowest incidence of child labour at 12.1 per cent, while those reporting severe impact had the highest prevalence at 22.3 per cent. This pattern may suggest that households with children engaged in child labour were also among the most vulnerable populations in the face of natural disasters.

Policy recommendations

- Since the concentration of child labour in Sindh comes from unpaid family work, raising awareness among families about the long-term consequences of child labour on children's education, health, and future opportunities is key. Many families rely on children's labour due to financial hardships or traditional practices, often unaware of its harmful effects. To address this, community-based programs could be implemented to educate parents on the benefits of keeping children in school and provide alternative economic support, such as microfinance programs, conditional cash transfers, and vocational training for adults. For example, in Malawi, community dialogues have successfully changed attitudes toward child labour by engaging local leaders, parents, and teachers to collectively ensure children remain in school rather than working in farms or businesses .
- Given the positive relationship between cash transfers and child labour (even when controlling for poverty), this shows that cash transfers targeted at poverty reduction are not sufficient alone to reduce child labour, and so complementary policies and programmes are needed. It would be interesting to understand how conditional (e.g. Benazir Taleemi Wazaif programme) versus unconditional transfers promote school attendance and offset the need for income generation through child employment. In addition, the amount of the transfer, in combination with other factors such as targeting mechanisms, household dynamics, local labour market conditions, and access to quality education, can influence the effectiveness of cash transfers in reducing child labour. For instance, if the transfer amount is too low, families may still rely on child employment to meet basic needs.
- The lower proportion of children holding birth certificate among children in child labour suggest that age verification by labour inspectors may help enforce age restrictions but also reflect the broader issue of lower birth registration in rural areas, poorer households

and girls groups. Targeted policies are needed to address these gaps, particularly for children in child labour, while considering gender, wealth, and rural-urban disparities. However, care must be taken to avoid pushing children into the informal sector, where conditions may be worse (ILO, 2017). Birth registration has been linked to better access to education, healthcare, and social services, which could help prevent children from entering child labour (Brito, Corbacho, & Osorio, 2017). Furthermore, documentation may be necessary to access social protection programmes such as cash transfers targeted to children.

- The higher incidence of child labour in households severely affected by flooding highlights the vulnerability of these families during natural disasters. Policies should focus on providing targeted support to disaster-affected households, including financial aid, livelihood assistance, and access to emergency education programs. Additionally, integrating child protection measures into disaster response efforts can help prevent an increase in child labour by ensuring that children's needs for safety, education, and basic services are met during and after a disaster.

10.4 Occupation safety and health

Conclusions

- Among children aged 10–17 engaged in child labour, 50.4 per cent report working in hazardous conditions, with boys experiencing a slightly higher prevalence (51.0 per cent) than girls (41.8 per cent). Older children are more affected by hazardous work, with exposure increasing as they age. While 44.4 per cent of children aged 10–13 encounter hazardous conditions, the rate escalates in the 14–17 age group, with 55.7 per cent engaged in dangerous work environments. Among the industries employing child labour, children employed in water supply report the highest rate of being in hazardous conditions (60.8 per cent). This is followed by the construction sector, with 47.9 per cent, and agriculture forestry and fishing with 56.2 per cent. The most common risks include carrying heavy loads (29.8 per cent), exposure to extreme temperatures (28.1 per cent), and working with dangerous tools (12.7 per cent).
 - Extreme cold and heat are among the most commonly reported hazardous conditions by children across various sectors. The highest incidence is reported in the agriculture sector, where 35.7 per cent of children are exposed to extreme temperatures. This is followed by 33.1 per cent in both the water collection and water supply sectors. Additionally, many child workers encounter other industry-specific dangers. In agriculture, 15.5 per cent are exposed to dangerous tools, while 14.4 per cent suffer from wooden splinters. Meanwhile, in the water collection sector, 18.1 per cent of children work in bodies of water, further increasing their risk of injury.
- Over 43.5 per cent of all children engaged in child labour experience illness or injuries due to their work, regardless of the hazardous conditions they face. Boys are particularly affected, with 44.6 per cent reporting work-related injuries or illnesses, compared to 41.0 per cent of girls. The risk is considerably higher for those working in hazardous

environments, where injury and illness rates vary significantly by age. Among 14–17-year-olds, the difference is 40.9 percentage points, while in the 10–13 age group, it rises to 44.2 percentage points. These figures highlight the urgent need for stronger protections and safer working conditions for children.

- Regarding mental health conditions, children involved in child labour are at a significantly higher risk of experiencing depressive symptoms, compared to their peers who are not engaged in child labour. One of the primary contributing factors is found to be workplace abuse, with children who have suffered mistreatment reporting higher rates of depression. Additionally, hazardous working conditions are linked to an increased likelihood of depressive symptoms. The impact of abuse is particularly notable, as 38.2 per cent of children in child labour who have experienced abuse report having a mental health condition, compared to 16.5 per cent of those who have not faced abuse. These findings highlight the urgent need for interventions to address both the psychological and physical well-being of child workers.

Policy recommendations

- To combat hazardous child labour, the government must enforce the regulations that prohibit children from engaging in dangerous work, particularly in high-risk industries. Increased labour inspections and monitoring should focus on these sectors to ensure compliance with laws and safety standards. To improve inspection effectiveness, it is essential to identify specific activities and tasks that lead to hazardous conditions, allowing regulators to address the root causes of danger. Businesses offering safer alternatives to hazardous work for legal underage workers should be incentivised. Additionally, it is crucial that these efforts do not push children into the informal sector or other industries with similar risks. Effective cross-sectoral cooperation is necessary to ensure that addressing child labour in one sector does not simply reallocate these children to other sectors or tasks with less visibility. This comprehensive approach could help promote safer working environments for child labourers, across all sectors.
- Implementing measures that require establishments employing children aged 14–17 to provide formal registration can play a key role in ensuring that their work is safe and complies with legal standards. This registration process would help guarantee that children are not exposed to hazardous conditions, such as handling dangerous tools, working with harmful substances, or being in extreme environments that could jeopardise their health. By formalising and registering child work, authorities can better monitor and regulate working conditions, ensuring that employers adhere to child protection laws. This approach would also enable the identification of unsafe practices early on, allowing for timely interventions. Ultimately, such measures would ensure that young workers, regardless of their workplace type, are provided with safe, fair, and decent working conditions that protect their rights, promote their well-being, and prevent exploitation.
- It is essential that both formal and informal workplaces, including family-run businesses, are well-informed and equipped to prevent exposure to these dangers. Educational materials and guidelines should focus on the specific risks associated with dangerous tools,

hazardous substances, and extreme temperatures, which are common in high-risk sectors. Raising awareness of these risks within the workplace is crucial to ensuring that employers and workers understand the potential harms. Additionally, providing clear and accessible information about relevant safety regulations and laws will help employers better comply with legal requirements, promoting safer environments for young workers and reducing the likelihood of accidents or health issues.

- In a similar vein, public awareness campaigns should play a crucial role in educating communities about the dangers of child labour. These campaigns can raise awareness of the physical and emotional harm children face when exposed to hazardous work environments. By spotlighting the risks, these campaigns can shift public perception and foster a broader societal understanding of the need to protect children from exploitative labour practices. In addition to raising awareness, these campaigns should also promote industry-specific regulations that ensure better working conditions and safeguard child workers. For example, in the construction sector, enforcing regulations on safety equipment and restricting hazardous tasks. By combining public education with robust regulatory frameworks, safer environment for children can be promoted, protecting their health, development, and rights while ensuring that industries comply with the necessary child protection standards.
- In the case of children working alongside family members, these environments may be seen as less hazardous, but it remains essential to ensure their tasks are safe and appropriate for their age. Even within a family setting, children can be exposed to dangerous conditions, such as hazardous tools or physically demanding labour, which can harm their health and development. To protect them, the same safety standards and legal protections that apply to formal workplaces should also be enforced in family work settings.
- Establishing a clear monitoring and inspection system to track child employment should also include documenting workplace injuries. Recording the types and frequency of injuries can help identify patterns, allowing authorities and organisations to develop targeted safety interventions and preventive measures.
- Furthermore, it is crucial to implement safety measures and protocols in workplaces to offer quick, affordable access to health services for child labourers in the event of an accident, regardless of their employment status. For those working illegally or informally, fear of seeking help through official channels often prevents them from accessing necessary healthcare and assistance. Therefore, it is important to provide alternative, confidential options, such as community-based health services or anonymous support, that can bridge this gap, allowing all workers to seek care without fear of legal repercussions. Providing immediate health support not only aids in recovery but also helps prevent long-term physical and psychological harm, reinforcing the importance of safeguarding children in the workforce.
- Community-based protection programs play a vital role in identifying and addressing cases where children are engaged in hazardous work. These programs should be built on strong

collaboration between community leaders, schools, local health authorities, and social services to create a comprehensive support network.

- Children experiencing symptoms of depression should have access to comprehensive mental health support, including medical treatment, therapy, counselling, and community-based interventions. Equally important is addressing the stigma surrounding mental health to ensure that children feel safe and encouraged to seek help (ILO, 2017). Integrating mental health care into state programs can provide consistent and accessible services, ensuring that young workers receive the necessary support and protection. A holistic approach that combines mental health services with broader social protection measures can play a crucial role in improving the overall well-being of children in the workforce, offering them the care and stability they need to thrive.
- While these findings are notable and critical for decision-making, self-reported accounts of depression among children in child labour have limitations that may lead to underreporting or inaccuracies. Factors such as personal perception, social and environmental influences, reporting biases, and the lack of clinical validation can all affect the reliability of mental health assessments. Therefore, it may be difficult and inaccurate to attribute experiences of psychological distress to one reason, as it may stem from factors beyond physical working conditions, such as abuse and emotional strain. To address these challenges, policymakers and researchers should supplement self-reported data with clinical evaluations and multi-source assessments. This approach would help develop more accurate and effective interventions to support the mental health of child labourers.

11. REFERENCES

- Admassie, A. (2003). Child labour and schooling in the context of a subsistence rural economy: can they be compatible? *International Journal of Educational Development*, 23(2), 167-185.
- Alam, A., Baez, J. E., & Carpio, X. V. (2011). Does cash for school influence young women's behaviour in the long term? Evidence from Pakistan. *World Bank Policy Research Working Paper*.
- Basu, K., & Van, P. H. (1998). The Economics of Child Labor. *The American Economic Review*, 88(3), 412-427.
- Blanco Allais, F., & Hagemann, F. (2008). *Child labour and education: Evidence from SIMPOC surveys*. Geneva: ILO.
- Bureau of Statistics, Planning & Development Board, Government of Sindh. (2020). *Sindh Multiple Indicator Cluster Survey 2018-19, Survey Findings Report*. Karachi, Pakistan: Bureau of Statistics Sindh, Planning & Development Board, Government of Sindh. Retrieved from <https://reliefweb.int/report/pakistan/sindh-multiple-indicator-cluster-survey-2018-19-survey-findings-report-monitoring>
- Bureau of Statistics, Planning & Development Department, Government of Khyber Pakhtunkhwa. (2021). *Khyber Pakhtunkhwa Multiple Indicator Cluster Survey, 2019, Survey Findings Report*. Peshawar, Pakistan: Bureau of Statistics, Planning & Development Department, Government of Khyber Pakhtunkhwa.
- de Hoop, J., & Rosati, F. C. (2014). Cash transfers and child labor. *The World Bank Research Observer*, 200-234.
- Edmonds, E. V., & Schady, N. (2012). Poverty alleviation and child labor. *American Economic Journal: Economic Policy*, 4(4), 100-124.
- Ennew, J. (1982). Family Structure, Unemployment and Child Labour in Jamaica. *Development and Change*, 13(4), 551-563.
- Eswaran, M. (1996). *Fertility, literacy, and the institution of child labour*. The University of British Columbia.
- Federal Bureau of Statistics (FBS), Statistics Division; Ministry of Labour, Manpower and Overseas Pakistanis; International Labour Organization (ILO); and International Programme on the Elimination of Child Labour (IPEC). (1996). *Summary results of Child Labour Survey in Pakistan (1996)*. Islamabad, Pakistan: International Labour Organization.
- Ghazi, S. R., Ali, R., Shahzad, S., & Hukamdad, H. (2010). Parental Involvement in Children Academic Motivation. *Asian Social Science*, 4(4).
- Government of Khyber Pakhtunkhwa. (n.a.). *About Khyber Pakhtunkhwa*. Retrieved from https://kp.gov.pk/page_type/message/page/welcome#:~:text=The%20total%20area%20of%20the,11.9%25%20of%20Pakistan%27s%20total%20population.
- Government of Pakistan Pakistan Bureau of Statistics. (2017). *Final results of the 2017 population and housing census*. Government of Pakistan. Retrieved from <https://www.pbs.gov.pk/content/final-results-census-2017-0>

- Government of Pakistan, Ministry of Planning Development & Special Initiatives, Pakistan Bureau of Statistics. (2021). *Pakistan Labour Force Survey 2020 -21*. Pakistan: Government of Pakistan. Retrieved from <https://www.pbs.gov.pk/publication/labour-force-survey-2020-21-annual-report>
- Government of Pakistan, Ministry of Planning, Development & Special Initiatives, Pakistan Bureau of Statistics . (n.d.). *Pakistan Labour Force Survey 2020-21*. Government of Pakistan, Ministry of Planning, Development & Special Initiatives, Pakistan Bureau of Statistics .
- Government of Pakistan, Ministry of Planning, Development and Special Initiatives, Pakistan Bureau of Statistics. (2017). *2017 Provincial Census Report Sindh*. Government of Pakistan. Retrieved from https://www.pbs.gov.pk/sites/default/files/population/census_reports/pcr_sindh.pdf
- Government of Pakistan, Ministry of Planning, Development and Special Initiatives, Pakistan Bureau of Statistics. (2017). *Provincial Census Report Khyber Pakhtunkhwa* . Islamabad.
- Government of Pakistan, Pakistan Bureau of Statistics, Ministry of Planning Development and Special Initiatives. (2021). *PSLM - 2019-20 Pakistan Social and Living Standards Measurement Survey District Level*. Islamabad.
- Heady, C. (2003). The Effect of Child Labor on Learning Achievement. *World Development*, 31(2), 385-398.
- Hyder, A. A., & Malik, F. A. (2007). Violence against children: a challenge for public health in Pakistan. *Journal of health, population, and nutrition*, 25(2), 168-178.
- ILO. (2017). *Ending child labour by 2025: A review of policies and programmes*. Geneva.
- Löwe, B., Unützer, J., Callahan, C. M., Perkins, A. J., & Kroenke, K. (2004). Monitoring Depression Treatment Outcomes With the Patient Health Questionnaire-9. *Medical Care*, 42(12), 1194–1201.
- O'Donnell, O., Rosati, F. C., & Doorslaer, E. v. (2005). Health effects of child work: Evidence from rural Vietnam. *Journal of Population Economics*, 18(3), 437–467.
- Pellerano, L., Porreca, E., & Rosati, F. C. (2018). The Income Elasticity of Child Labour: Do Cash Transfers Have an Impact on the Poorest Children? *IZA Journal of Development and Migration*, 11(1).
- Pinilla-Roncancio, M., & Silva, R. (2018). Children in Angola: Poverty, Deprivation and Child Labour. *Child Indicators Research*, 11(3), 981-1005.
- Riggioa, H. R., Valenzuelab, A. M., & Weiser, D. A. (2010). Household responsibilities in the family of origin: Relations with self-efficacy. *Personality and Individual Difference*, 48(5), 568-573.
- Sindh Education Foundation. (2020). *Issues of Girls' Education in Sindh*. Sindh: Government of Sindh.
- United Nations Development Programme. (2020). *Pakistan National Human Development Report 2020*. Islamabad, Pakistan: UNDP.
- United Nations Statistics Division. (2005). *Household Sample Surveys in Developing and Transition Countries*. New York: United Nations.

