



# Socio-Economic and Cultural Background of Child Workers in Goalpara District

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## Abstract

Child labor is a global issue influenced by socio-economic and cultural factors. It is often a reflection of systemic issues like poverty, lack of access to quality education, and social norms perpetuating economic exploitation. In developing countries, families struggle with extreme poverty and limited resources, forcing children to work in hazardous conditions. Structural issues like unemployment and informal labor markets exacerbate the cycle. Cultural beliefs and practices also shape attitudes towards child labor, normalizing the practice and blurring the line between acceptable work and exploitation. Understanding these factors is crucial for developing effective strategies to combat child labor.

Children, who are deprived from even the most basic of their rights: the right to education. Children are innocent, vulnerable and dependent, and they are unable to understand their rights as such, during their formative age they are prone to exploitation. Lakhs of children are toiling at inhuman working conditions to earn their livelihood. Child labour has a harsh reality and global phenomena. This paper has examined the issue of child labour in rural areas of Goalpara district of Assam through statistical analysis and suggests ways to mitigate Child labour through various judiciary and humanitarian measures.

**Key word:** Child labor, global issue socio-economic, poverty, Cultural beliefs

## Introduction:

Child labor remains a pervasive issue across the globe, entangled in the fabric of socio-economic and cultural dynamics that influence the lives of millions of children. Understanding the socio-economic and cultural background of child workers is crucial for developing effective strategies to combat this issue. Child labor is not merely a product of individual circumstances; rather, it is often a reflection of broader systemic issues, including poverty, lack of access to quality education and social norms that perpetuate economic exploitation.

The socio-economic factors contributing to child labor are numerous and complex. In many developing countries, families grapple with extreme poverty and limited access to resources, prompting them to rely on every member of the household, including children, to contribute to the family income. In regions where economic opportunities are scarce, children may be compelled to work in hazardous conditions to support their families. This situation is exacerbated by structural issues such as inadequate social safety nets, unemployment, and the informal nature of many labor markets. The earnings from child labor, although often minimal, can be crucial for family survival, which creates a vicious cycle that makes it difficult for families to escape poverty.

Cultural beliefs and practices also play a significant role in shaping attitudes toward child labor. In some cultures, children are viewed as valuable contributors to the household economy, and work is seen as a rite of passage or a way to instill discipline and responsibility. These cultural perspectives can normalize the practice of child labor, making it challenging for communities to recognize the negative implications of such work on children's health, education, and overall development. Moreover, in societies where there are strong expectations for children to assist with household chores or family businesses, the line between acceptable work and exploitation becomes blurred, further complicating efforts to eliminate child labor.

In addition to economic necessity and cultural acceptance, other factors such as lack of education and poor access to quality schooling significantly influence child labor's prevalence. Many families prioritize immediate financial survival over long-term educational investments, forcing children into work instead of school. This decision has dire consequences, as children who forgo education often remain trapped in low-skilled, low-paid jobs throughout their adult lives, perpetuating a cycle of poverty that spans generations. Furthermore, in areas where educational institutions are underfunded, overcrowded, or located far from children's homes, attendance rates plummet, leaving many children with no choice but to contribute to the family income.

Globalization and market demands also exacerbate the issue of child labor. Multinational corporations often seek to minimize production costs, leading to a reliance on cheap labor, including that of children, in supply chains, particularly in sectors such as agriculture, textiles, and mining. The competition to provide low-cost goods can lead to exploitative labor practices, where children work in unsafe conditions for meager wages. In this manner, global economic structures not only create demand for child labor but also desensitize consumers to its existence, further embedding it within the socio-economic landscape.

Efforts to address child labor must, therefore, account for the interplay between socio-economic conditions and cultural perspectives. To effectively combat this issue, it is imperative to adopt a holistic approach that integrates education, economic development, and cultural change. Providing families with economic support, such as conditional cash transfers, can alleviate financial pressure and reduce the need for child labor. Access to quality education must be prioritized, ensuring that schools are not only available but also equipped to meet the needs of all children, including those from vulnerable backgrounds. Community awareness programs can also play a pivotal role in shifting cultural perceptions around child labor, advocating for the importance of education and children's rights.

Child laborers' socioeconomic and cultural backgrounds are complex issues that require a thorough grasp of the systemic elements at action. A future where children can enjoy their fundamental rights to education, safety, and an unexploited childhood can be achieved by tackling the economic factors that drive families to use child labor and by questioning cultural norms that support its acceptability. In addition to being morally right, ending child labor is essential to sustainable development and creating a more just and equal society for future generations.

### **Scope of the study area:**

The present Paper limits its scope to study on working children of Goalpara district. Specific aspects of the child labour in organized and non- organized sectors have been highlighted with reference to Goalpara district only.

Considering the nature and extent of the problem prevailing in the North Eastern Region in general and Goalpara district in particular the study was undertaken with the following objectives: -

### **Objectives: -**

1. To study the Socio economic and cultural background of child workers in Goalpara district.

## **RESEARCH METHODOLOGY**

### **STUDY AREA: GOALPARA DISTRICT OF ASSAM:**

The present Goalpara district is situated in the western part of Assam where the mighty Brahmaputra following all along thorough its northern bordering from east to west while the southern part is surrounded by the foot hills of Meghalaya. In the eastern side, there is Kamrup district and Dhubri district its west.

Sample size A convenience sample is simply one where the units that are selected for inclusion in the sample

are the easiest to access. This is in stark contrast to [\*probability sampling techniques\*](#), where the selection of units is made randomly. In our example of the 1000 working children, we were only interested in achieving a sample size of 300 children who would take part in our research. As such, we would continue to invite children to take part in the research until our sample size was reached. Since the aim of convenience sampling is easy access.

**Sample unit:** A decision has to be taken concerning a sampling unit before selecting sample. • Sampling unit may be geographical one such as state, district, block village etc. or construction units such as or house flat or social units such as family, club school etc or may be an individual. • The researcher selected one working child as a sample unit.

### **Sampling methods**

The localities participating in the door-to-door enumeration were organized alphabetically before selecting a sample of 300 individuals. To ensure convenience in the selection process, random number tables were used. Special precautions were observed to avoid including siblings performing similar roles in the sampled group, as indicated in the accompanying table. As data collection progressed, it was discovered that 1000 children had either changed their jobs or relocated from their previous homes. This information underscores the dynamic nature of the data and highlights the challenges of maintaining accurate records throughout the enumeration process. By effectively managing sampling methods and being aware of participant movement, the study aimed to ensure the reliability of its findings while accounting for external factors that may influence the results. Such efforts were crucial for drawing valid conclusions from the collected data and understanding the demographic landscape in the localities surveyed.

### **Convenient method:**

Convenience sampling is a non-probability sampling method that involves selecting participants based on their availability and accessibility, making it a practical choice for quick and cost-effective data collection. This approach is particularly useful in exploratory research or preliminary studies where the goal is to gather initial insights without the need for a representative sample.

The aim of the study is a study on child abuse of working children and its effect on society with special reference to Goalpara district, Assam, in India. The study is based on both secondary and primary data; the study was collected from 300 sample respondents by using a well-structured questionnaire. The sampling method used in the study is convenient sampling. The independent variables are

age, gender, occupation, place of living, and educational qualification, and the dependent variable is public opinion on “Child abuse in India.

### Sources of data collection<sup>1</sup>

Data is a set of values of qualitative or quantitative variables. Data is facts or figures from which conclusions can be drawn. Before one can present and interpret information, there has to be a process of gathering and sorting data. Just as trees are the raw material from which paper is produced, so too, can data be viewed as the raw material from which information is obtained (Ajayi, 2016). Data as a general concept refers to the fact that some existing information or knowledge is represented or coded in some form suitable for better usage or processing. Data is collected and analyzed; data only becomes information suitable for making decision in some fashion. Gathering data can be accomplished through a primary source (researcher is the first person obtain the data) or a secondary source (the researcher obtains the data that has already been collected by other sources, such as data disseminated in a scientific journal Sources of Primary Data Primary data refer to the first hand data gathered by the researcher himself. Some sources of primary data are surveys, observations, questionnaires, focus groups, case study and interviews as highlighted:

Secondary data collection phase was initiated, involving door-to-door enumeration. The locations visited during this stage included the Labour Department, the Goalpara District Library, the District Court of Goalpara, the Goalpara Law College Library, and the Rangjuli Tribal Development Block. The primary aim was to gather data on previous studies concerning child workers carried out by various organizations.

The study conducted by collecting both primary as well as secondary data. Primary data were based on closed ended questions arranged in the form of a questionnaire which were distributed among the target group in various rural and urban areas of Goalpara district. Secondary data were collected from journals, books, reports and various websites in the internet and previous studies.

Both primary and secondary data sources are incorporated into the research methods used in this study. The secondary data was collected from a range of sources in order to provide a basic understanding of child abuse, especially as it relates to child labor. Since there was a conspicuous dearth of data, the emphasis was on comprehending child abuse among child professionals. Various regions with high concentrations of child labor were pinpointed for further investigation, leading to personal visits aimed at identifying these young

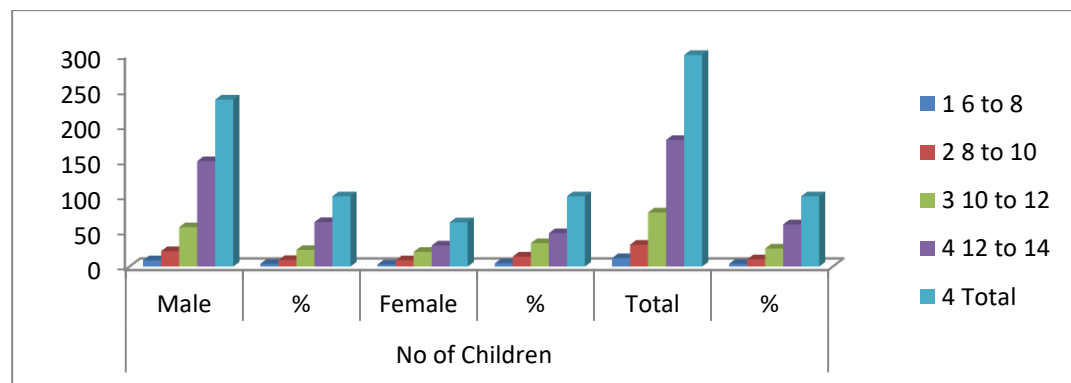
<sup>1</sup> KoulLokesh, *Methodology of Education Research*, 2005, Vikas Publishing House Pvt Ltd P.435.

workers.

### The Population Sample of Goalpara District, Assam

**Table 4.1**  
**Age Group Wise Number of Children**

Sl. No.	Age Group	Number of Children					
		Male	%	Female	%	Total	%
1.	6-8	9	3.79	3	4.76	12	4.00
2.	8-10	22	9.28	9	14.28	31	10.33
3.	10-12	56	23.62	21	33.33	77	25.67
4.	12-14	150	63.29	30	47.61	180	60.00
<b>Total</b>		237	100	63	100	300	100



The Goalpara District, Assam, demographic sample offers important information about how children are distributed throughout different age groups. Understanding this region's demography is essential for developing policies and initiatives that address the demands of the younger generation. According to Table -4.1, the sample divides children into four age groups: 6–8 years, 8–10 years, 10–12 years, and 12–14 years. In the youngest age group (6-8 years), the data reveals that there is a total of 12 children, composed of 9 males and 3 females. This represents 4% of the total sample, indicating a relatively smaller segment of the population in this age bracket. The gender disparity is noticeable, reflecting societal patterns that may influence birth rates or child-rearing practices within the community (Table-4.1).

As we move to the 8-10 age groups, the sample shows an increase to 31 children in total, consisting of 22 males and 9 females. This age group captures 10.33% of the population, suggesting a growing segment as children become slightly older. The ratio again points to a significant gender imbalance, which may warrant further investigation into the cultural or socio-economic factors at play (Table-4.1).

The 10-12 age group marks a substantial rise in numbers, encompassing 77 children—56 males and 21 females—making up 25.67% of the sampled population. The increase can be attributed to the transition of children entering school age, where educational institutions often play a critical role in community engagement. The noticeable gender gap persists, suggesting that the underlying factors influencing these numbers are consistent across the early years of childhood (Table-4.1).

The most significant concentration of children appears in the 12-14 age group, with a total of 180 children (150 males and 30 females), representing a staggering 60% of the total sample. This age group often encompasses the transition from primary education to higher schooling levels, which can be pivotal in shaping future opportunities for these children. The high percentage indicates not only a larger presence of this age group in the population but also highlights potential shifts in priorities or resources allocated to older children as they approach adolescence (Table-4.1).

In analyzing this dataset, several key observations arise. Firstly, the gender imbalance across all age groups could be indicative of cultural norms or systemic challenges that lead to fewer female children in the sample. Additionally, the sharp increase in the 12-14 age groups raises questions about educational outreach and resources directed towards this demographic. Policymakers and educators in Goalpara District should leverage such data to address educational inequalities, health services, and community support systems aimed at enhancing the wellbeing of children, particularly focusing on balancing gender representation and ensuring all children receive equitable access to opportunities. Ultimately, understanding these population dynamics is vital for fostering a healthier, more inclusive community in Goalpara District, Assam.

**Table 4:2**  
**Language Wise No of Children**

Sl.No	Mother tongue	No. of children				Total	%
		Male	%	Female	%		
1	Assamese	92	37.39	12	22.22	104	34.67

2.	Bengali	66	26.82	13	24.07	79	26.33
3.	Hajong	30	12.19	12	22.22	42	14.00
4.	Hindi	27	10.97	4	7.40	31	10.33
5.	Rabha	12	4.87	7	12.96	19	6.33
6.	Boro	10	4.06	2	3.70	12	4.00
7	Tea-Garden	7	2.84	4	7.40	11	3.66
8.	Nepali	2	0.81		-	2	0.66
<b>Total</b>		<b>246</b>	<b>100</b>	<b>54</b>	<b>100</b>	<b>300</b>	<b>100</b>

**Table 4.2(A)****Religion Wise No of children**

<b>Religion</b>					
<b>Hindu</b>	<b>%</b>	<b>Muslim</b>	<b>%</b>	<b>Christan</b>	<b>%</b>
64	33.33	40	39.60		
29	15.10	50	49.50		
42	21.87	0	0		
20	10.41	11	10.89		
19	9.89				
9	4.68			3	42.85
7	3.64			4	57.14
2	0.10				
192	100	101	100	7	100

The population diversity of Goalpara District in Assam reflects a rich tapestry of ethnicities, languages and religions. This demographic landscape is essential for understanding the region's cultural dynamics and social fabric. A recent population sample elucidated various aspects of this diversity, presenting data that includes the distribution of children across different maternal linguistic groups, along with their associated religious affiliations. By studying the demographics in Goalpara, we gain insight into not just the numbers but also the potential social and cultural interactions that shape the community.

According to the sample data, Assamese-speaking mothers constitute the largest cohort, with a total of 104 children (34.67% of the sample). Among these, there are 64 males and 40 females, indicating a relatively balanced gender ratio, albeit with a slight male predominance. The Assamese community, being one of the

predominant ethnic groups in Assam, not only contributes significantly to the population demographics but also plays a pivotal role in preserving the linguistic and cultural heritage of the region. Their religious affiliation predominantly leans towards Hinduism, exemplifying the cultural roots that deeply entwine Hindu traditions and Assamese identity (Table-4.2).

Following the Assamese, the Bengali-speaking mothers account for the second-largest group with 79 children (26.33%), comprising 29 males and 50 females. This demographic split is notable for the significantly higher number of female children, which may reflect varying socio-cultural factors unique to Bengali families in the area. With a majority of Muslim families within this group, the Bengali community's religious composition adds another layer to Goalpara's cultural landscape, showcasing the coexistence of Hindu and Muslim populations that have historically inhabited the region together (Table-4.2).

The Hajong community, though smaller, also significantly contributes to the sample with 42 children (14.00%). This group stands out for having only male children (42), which raises questions about the cultural norms surrounding family size and gender in the Hajong community. The Hajongs are traditionally agrarian and have a distinct cultural heritage that influences their family structures and child-rearing practices. Understanding these dynamics is essential for fostering inclusivity in social policies and community programs that cater to their specific needs (Table-4.2).

Hindi-speaking mothers represent a smaller demographic with 31 children (10.33%), which include 20 males and 11 females. This group reflects the migration of Hindi speakers to Assam and highlights the changing linguistic landscape of the region. With their families largely practicing Hinduism, the Hindi-speaking community illustrates how migration patterns can influence local demographics and contribute to the regional cultural amalgamation (Table-4.2).

Other ethnic communities, such as the Rabhas, Bodos, Nepalis, and those from tea gardens, showcase even smaller numbers within the population sample. The Rabha community has 19 children (6.33%), predominantly comprising 19 Hindus, while the Bodo community contributes 12 children (4.00%) with a mix of Hindu and Christian affiliations. The tea gardeners, predominantly migrants from different parts of India, have 11 children (3.66%) represented in this sample, further emphasizing the diversity present in Goalpara (Table-4.2).

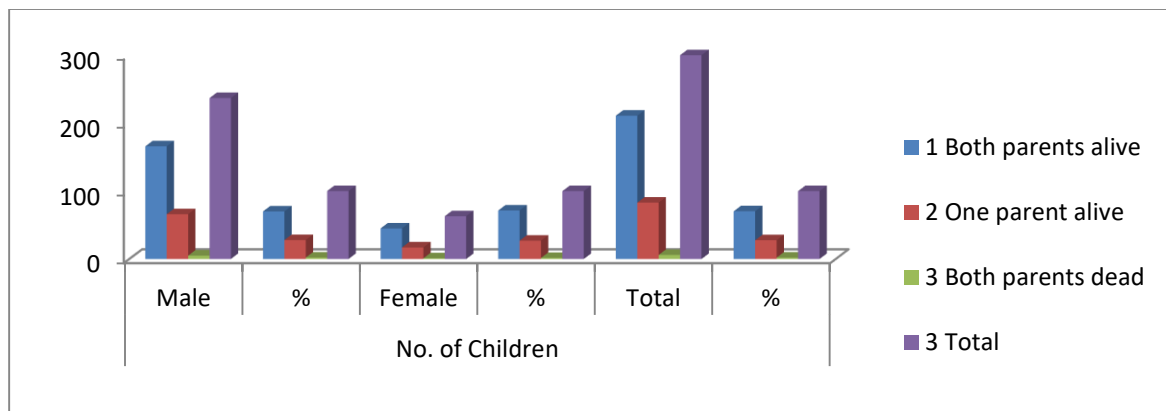
The inclusion of Nepali-speaking mothers, although with only 2 children (0.66%), displays the extent of ethnic diversity in Goalpara, highlighting a segment of the population that may often be overlooked in broader demographic analyses. Despite their small number, the presence of the Nepali community adds nuance to the region's ethnic complexity, suggesting a potential for unique cultural exchanges and interactions with other ethnic groups present in Goalpara (Table-4.2).

Overall, the population sample from Goalpara District, Assam, not only provides a numerical overview of the children's demographics across different maternal tongues and religions but also underscores the multifaceted social fabric that characterizes the district. The significant representation of various ethnic groups and their associated religious affiliations illustrates the coexistence and intermingling of cultures, a dynamic that is vital for social cohesion and community development.

Understanding the demographic distribution offers policymakers and social planners a foundation for implementing targeted interventions that address the unique needs of each ethnic group. It also fosters an appreciation for the cultural diversity present in Assam and highlights the importance of inclusive strategies that promote harmony among various communities. In a time when cultural identities are often oversimplified, recognizing and valuing the rich diversity within the Goalpara District can pave the way for a more inclusive society where every community can thrive and contribute to the overall development of the region.

**Table-4.3 Number of parents alive or dead**

Sl. No.	Status	No. of Children				Total	Percent
		Male	%	Female	%		
1.	Both parents alive	166	70.04	45	71.42	211	70.33
2.	One parent alive	66	27.84	17	26.98	83	27.67
3.	Both parents dead	5	2.10	1	1.58	6	2.00
<b>Total</b>		<b>237</b>	<b>100</b>	<b>63</b>	<b>100</b>	<b>300</b>	<b>100</b>



The data presented in this analysis provides a nuanced look at the living status of children, categorizing them based on their parental situations. A remarkably significant majority, representing 70.33% of the total sample, reside in households where both parents are alive and actively engaged in their lives. This statistic emphasizes the crucial role that dual parental support plays in the development and overall well-being of children. In absolute numbers, this group encompasses a total of 211 children, with a breakdown that reveals a predominance of males; specifically, 166 boys compared to 45 girls. According to this gender gap, households with both parents present often have more male offspring (Table 4.3).

In stark contrast, the data indicates that 27.67% of the children surveyed, amounting to 83 individuals, are living in situations where only one parent is alive. Analyzing this category further reveals that it includes 66 males and 17 females, illustrating that single-parent household may encounter distinct challenges. These challenges can significantly impact the emotional, psychological, and social development of the children living in these environments. These children may experience a wide range of situations, and research on the impacts of growing up in a single-parent home is crucial to comprehending the development and wellbeing of children (Table 4.3).

Additionally, it is imperative to note that a small yet significant fraction of the population surveyed—comprising only 2% or 6 children—are in the heart-wrenching situation of having both parents deceased. This group, which includes 5 males and 1 female, highlights the rare but profoundly impactful circumstances that some children must navigate in their formative years. These children may experience unique emotional challenges and a need for greater support systems to help them cope with their loss (Table-4.3).

Overall, the data conveys a clear message: while the vast majority of children benefit from the presence of both parents, there exists a pressing need to acknowledge and provide support for those living in less

traditional family structures. A total of 300 children were polled, which not only gives a thorough picture of the different parental statuses but also sheds light on the wider effects that these living arrangements have on young people's lives. Fostering a more egalitarian environment for all children, regardless of their familial circumstances, requires more awareness and focused support for children living with a single parent and those who have lost both parents.

### **Population Sample from Goalpara District, Assam:**

In the diverse landscape of Goalpara District, Assam, the population exhibits a rich tapestry of age groups and occupations that contribute to the socio-economic fabric of the region. The population sample reflects varying demographics, shedding light on the roles individuals play within their families and the community at large. This analysis categorizes individuals into distinct age groups and their corresponding occupations, revealing insights into the economic activities prevalent in this vibrant district.

**Table-4.4 Occupation of Family Members**

Sl. No	Age Group	Occupation of Family						
		Housewife	Idle	Students	Daily Wage earner	Service	Self employed	Helper
1.	0-6 Years		110					
2.	6-15 Years		117	69	29	34	59	53
3.	15-24 Years	15	27	5	13	216	34	1
4.	24-40 Years	98	3		31	72	40	
5.	40 & above	44	19		66	76	121	
Total		157	336	74	139	398	254	54

### **Age Group 0-6 Years**

The youngest segment of the population, aged 0-6 years, encompasses 110 individuals. This age group is predominantly characterized by a dependency profile, as they are not actively engaged in the workforce. Their families likely comprise parents or guardians who are responsible for their upbringing, setting the stage for educational and developmental opportunities. The focus for this group is predominantly on early childhood education and nutrition, essential for fostering healthy growth and development (Table-4.4).

***Age Group 6-15 Years***

As children transition into the age group of 6-15 years, the dynamics of their occupation begin to diversify. This age group comprises 347 individuals contributing variously as housewives (117), students (69), daily wage earners (34), and self-employed individuals (53). A significant number, 59, are engaged in service roles, while 29 are identified as idle. The prevalence of students indicates a commitment to education, which is crucial for the socio-economic progression of the region. However, the presence of idle individuals and daily wage earners also highlights the socio-economic challenges faced by families in this age bracket, suggesting that not all children have equal access to educational opportunities or parental support (Table-4.4).

***Age Group 15-24 Years***

In the transition to young adulthood, the age group of 15-24 years consists of 284 individuals. Within this group, several occupations surface, reflecting the varied aspirations of youth in Goalpara. A notable number are engaged in self-employment (34), while significant majorities are involved in service jobs (216). This distribution illustrates a trend towards gaining financial independence and contributing to household incomes, although there remains a small contingent of individuals who fall outside the workforce designation, identified as idle (27) or daily wage earners (13). This age group represents a critical phase in individuals' lives where trajectories are often set based on educational attainment and available economic opportunities (Table-4.4).

***Age Group 24-40 Years***

The age group of 24-40 years includes individuals who are often at the peak of their professional lives, comprising 320 people. The distribution of occupations reveals a shift towards more stable and potentially permanent employment. Among them, a significant number are in service roles (72) and self-employment (40), leaving a smaller fraction involved in daily wage labor (31) and other identified professions. The data illustrates an evolving occupational landscape, suggesting that individuals are increasingly seeking roles that provide stable incomes, which is crucial for family welfare and socio-economic development. The low number of housewives (3) in this age group may reflect societal shifts towards dual-income households as economic pressures mount (Table-4.4).

**Age Group 40 and Above**

The final age group, comprising individuals aged 40 years and above, exhibits diverse occupational engagement with a significant presence in service (121) and self-employment (76). This cohort comprises 305 individuals, and the data indicate that many continue to be crucial providers within their families. The distribution of occupations demonstrates a shift towards seasoned professionals and experienced individuals who contribute not only economically but also socially, often guiding younger generations. The presence of daily wage earners (66) further underscores persistent economic challenges that potentially necessitate ongoing participation in the labor market even at older ages (Table-4.4).

The population sample from Goalpara District reveals a microcosm of socio-economic interactions influenced by age and occupation. With 157 housewives, 336 idle individuals, and a spectrum of students and wage earners, the data lays bare the complexities of daily life in an Assamese district. As members navigate the transition through age groups, there are clear indicators of shifting responsibilities, aspirations, and economic engagement patterns.

Education emerges as a critical factor influencing opportunities, particularly for the youth. However, the instances of idleness and reliance on daily wages in some sectors paint a complex picture of economic health, revealing both progress toward independence and ongoing struggles for many families. As policy makers and community leaders consider strategies for development, understanding these demographic dynamics will be crucial for effectively addressing the needs and aspirations of Goalpara's diverse population.

The workforce landscape in Goalpara is evolving, shaped by factors such as economic necessity, educational access, and the changing social fabric. Addressing these dynamics through targeted interventions will be essential for fostering sustainable growth and improving the quality of life for all residents in the district.

**Residence of Children from Goalpara District, Assam**

**Table 4.5 Residence of Children District, Assam**

Sl.No.	Residence	No. of Children					
		Male	%	Female	%	Total	%
1.	Living with parents	175	73.83	52	82.53	227	75.67
2.	Living with Guardians	12	5.06	00	00	12	4.00

3.	Living with employers	50	21.09	11	17.46	61	20.33
<b>Total</b>		<b>237</b>	<b>100</b>	<b>63</b>	<b>100</b>	<b>300</b>	<b>100</b>

The demographic landscape of children residing in Goalpara District, Assam, provides significant insights into their living arrangements, which play a pivotal role in their overall development and well-being. Based on the available data, the children in this district predominantly live with their parents, reflecting strong familial ties and highlighting the importance of parental presence in early childhood development. According to the statistics, out of 300 children surveyed, a remarkable 227 children, who constitutes approximately 75.67%, live with both parents. This is a strong indicator of the social fabric of the region, where family units remain intact despite the various socio-economic challenges that may exist (Table-4.5).

In stark contrast, a smaller fraction of children, 12 in total or about 4%, live with guardians (Table-4.5). This situation suggests that a limited number of children may be under alternative care arrangements, which could be due to various factors such as parental employment outside the district, health issues, or other social circumstances leading to the absence of parents. While living with guardians can provide a stable environment, it is essential to consider the emotional and psychological implications for children, who may feel detached from their immediate family support systems. Thus, efforts to support these guardians in their care giving roles can be crucial in ensuring the well-being of these children.

Another notable segment of the population consists of children living with employers, totaling 61 children or 20.33% of the surveyed group (Table-4.5). The presence of these children in employer households raises pressing concerns regarding their rights, education, and overall development. Child labor remains a critical issue in many regions, and while some children may be engaged in work out of necessity, it is vital to address the broader socio-economic context that leads to such arrangements. Ensuring that these children have access to education and social services are imperative in breaking the cycle of poverty and promoting future opportunities for them. Furthermore, community awareness and intervention are necessary to protect the rights and welfare of these vulnerable children.

The residence patterns of children in Goalpara District reveal a mix of traditional family structures and alternative living arrangements, each carrying its unique set of challenges and opportunities. The predominant number of children living with parents reinforces the value of family support in nurturing and guiding children toward successful futures. Meanwhile, the smaller groups living with guardians and

employers require focused attention to mitigate the risks they face and to promote their well-being. It is essential for local authorities, NGOs, and community organizations to collaborate and create a supportive environment for all children in the district, ensuring that every child has the chance to thrive, irrespective of their living arrangement. The hope is that with concerted efforts, Goalpara District can foster a landscape in which children are empowered to realize their full potential, supported by the structures and resources available to them.

**Table 4.6 Educational Status of the children**

Sl.No.	Educational Status	No. of Children					
		Male	%	Female	%	Total	%
1.	Never attended school	92	38.81	39	61.90	131	43.67
2.	Dropout school	145	61.18	24	38.09	169	56.33
<b>Total</b>		<b>237</b>	<b>100</b>	<b>100</b>	<b>63</b>	<b>300</b>	<b>100</b>

The educational status of children in Goalpara District, Assam reflects significant challenges that are prevalent in many rural areas of India. According to the presented data, a total of 300 children were surveyed, revealing stark figures concerning their educational attendance. Out of the total, 43.67% of the children have never attended school, which amounts to 131 children, including 92 boys and 39 girls (Table-4.6). This statistic highlights a critical issue related to access and availability of educational resources, as well as socio-economic factors that prevent children, particularly in rural regions, from attending school.

Furthermore, the data indicates a concerning dropout rate, with 169 children accounted as school dropouts, representing 56.33% of the surveyed population. Among these dropouts, there are 145 boys and 24 girls, suggesting a significant gender disparity in both attendance and dropout rates (Table-4.6). The high dropout rate is alarming and can be attributed to various factors, including financial constraints, lack of parental support, cultural practices and inadequate infrastructure within educational institutions. To guarantee that children in Goalpara District enjoy the inalienable right to an education, this concerning trend demands prompt attention and intervention techniques. The gender disparity in the data is another important factor pertaining to the district's educational standing.

The fact that a considerable number of girls have never attended school or have dropped out points to the socio-cultural dynamics that may prioritize male education over female education. In Goalpara, as in many other regions, girls often bear the brunt of traditional beliefs that can hinder their educational pursuits.

Addressing these disparities is vital not only for fostering equality but also for empowering communities as a whole, as educated women can contribute significantly to economic stability and societal development.

Addressing these educational challenges requires a multi-faceted approach. Stakeholders, including government agencies, non-profit organizations, and local communities, must work collaboratively to develop strategies that focus on improving access, attendance, and retention of children in schools. This could involve programs like giving low-income families financial aid or scholarships, launching awareness campaigns about the value of education, particularly for girls, and fostering a positive learning environment in schools to support and foster kids' academic development. Schools should concentrate on developing interesting curriculum that spark students' interest and inspire them to pursue further education in order to lower dropout rates.

Moreover, enhancing the quality of education by training teachers and providing adequate teaching materials is crucial. The establishment of community learning centers can help bridge gaps in education for those who have missed formal schooling opportunities. In order to address the unique needs of both dropouts and people who have never attended formal schooling, these institutions can provide remedial instruction and flexible learning schedules. Such programs have the potential to greatly influence Goalpara District's educational environment and provide a solid basis for long-term growth.

The educational status of children in Goalpara District, Assam, is characterized by concerning statistics that showcase significant challenges, including high rates of never attended and dropouts, particularly for girls. In order to address these problems, different stakeholders must work together—a convergence of resources and dedication—to advance accessible, equitable, and high-quality education for all children in the area. By prioritizing education, not only does the potential of individual children get unlocked, but entire communities can thrive, leading to lasting positive change within the fabric of society. Therefore, comprehensive and inclusive educational strategies are essential in transforming the educational status in Goalpara District, ultimately helping to pave the way for a better future for its youth.

### **Reasons for Never Attending School among Children in Goalpara District, Assam**

Education is a fundamental right, yet children in many regions worldwide are deprived of this essential opportunity. Goalpara District in Assam, India, is one such area where a significant number of children do not attend school. Analyzing the socio-economic fabric and cultural nuances of this district reveals several

reasons why some children never step inside a classroom. According to recent data, 131 (43.67%) children in this region reported never attending school, and a closer examination of their circumstances uncovers various interconnected factors (Table-4.7).

**Table 4.7 Reasons for never attending school**

Sl. No.	Reasons for never Attending school	No. of Children					
		Male	%	Female	%	Total	Percentage
1.	Didn't consider it necessary	09	9.78	01	2.56	10	7.63
2.	Due to financial condition	60	65.22	29	74.36	89	67.94
3.	Change of residence	2	2.17	-	-	2	1.53
4.	Parents didn't think it necessary	17	18.48	9	23.08	26	19.85
5.	Did not like school	3	3.26	-	-	3	2.29
6.	Could not get age	1	1.09	-	-	1	0.76
<b>Total</b>		<b>92</b>	<b>100</b>	<b>39</b>	<b>100</b>	<b>131</b>	<b>100</b>

One of the predominant reasons for the lack of school attendance among children in Goalpara is the financial condition of their families. A striking 67.94% of the children, accounting for 89 out of 131, cited financial difficulties as the key barrier to education. In impoverished households, children are often considered economic assets (Table-4.7). Families, struggling to make ends meet, view child labor as a necessary means for survival. Instead of sending their children to school, they opt to have them work to contribute financially. This pattern perpetuates a cycle of poverty, where lack of education further limits job opportunities, keeping families entrenched in their socio-economic conditions.

In addition to financial constraints, parents' perceptions of education play a critical role in shaping children's schooling experiences. A notable 19.85% of the children reported that their parents did not deem education necessary. Cultural attitudes towards education can vary significantly, impacting children's enrollment in schools. In some instances, parents may prioritize traditional roles and occupations over formal education, particularly in rural settings. Additionally, some families may have limited understanding of the long-term benefits of education, resulting in a lack of motivation to invest time and resources in schooling.

Another significant factor affecting school attendance is the lack of recognition of education's necessity. About 7.63% of children, totaling 10, reported not considering education necessary for their personal development or future prospects (Table-4.7). This viewpoint often mirrors the mindset of their parents, who may lack a progressive outlook on education. For children who have grown up in environments where education is not valued, the idea of attending school may seem foreign or irrelevant.

Moreover, the demographic dynamics, such as relocation, contribute to educational discontinuity. A small percentage—1.53%, equivalent to two children—reported having to change their residence, which can disrupt their schooling (Table-4.7). This situation is particularly common in rural areas where job opportunities may necessitate moving. Families may find it challenging to remain in one location long enough for their children to complete a regular education due to the ephemeral nature of some forms of employment.

Interestingly, a few children (2.29%) also expressed a dislike for school itself (Table-4.7). Although this percentage is relatively small, it highlights a critical aspect of the educational environment. Negative experiences, such as bullying, poor teaching quality, or even cultural barriers, can deter children from attending school. When children do not feel safe, valued, or engaged in their educational environment, their propensity to attend diminishes sharply. Teachers and educational planners must address these concerns to foster a more inclusive and welcoming atmosphere for all students.

Moreover, there are instances where children may not attend school due to age-related restrictions, with 0.76% (one child) reporting this specific reason (Table-4.7). In some cases, families might delay a child's education until they reach a certain age, believing they will be better prepared to handle the challenges of schooling. However, this perspective can often result in children missing critical foundational learning periods, which can impact their long-term academic achievement. It is crucial to remember that the combined impact of these elements is a serious obstacle for Goalpara's community leaders and education policymakers. Addressing the problem of school attendance necessitates a multidimensional strategy that takes into account both cultural beliefs and financial constraints.

Strengthening local economies could provide families with better financial stability, thus alleviating their reliance on child labor. Additionally, community awareness initiatives can be extremely helpful in educating families about the value of education for both individual and communal development. Education officials also need to make sure that schools are culturally sensitive in addition to being physically accessible.

Educational programs can be adapted to the particular requirements of the populace by interacting with local groups and learning about their viewpoints. To increase school attendance, programs that offer flexible learning schedules, resources for low-income families, and a nurturing learning atmosphere are crucial.

The reasons for children in Goalpara District of Assam not attending school are complex and interwoven with socio-economic challenges, cultural beliefs, and negative perceptions of education. Addressing these issues requires communal efforts to shift mindsets and enhance local economic conditions, ensuring that education is viewed as a vital pathway toward a brighter future. Encouraging an educational environment where all children are encouraged to pursue their right to learn will require the participation of stakeholders, including parents, teachers, and local authorities. The community can endeavor to end the cycle of poverty by working together and being dedicated, laying the groundwork for future generations to prosper through education.

**Table 4.8 Attitude of the children towards school**

*Note: No Child said that they did not think it necessary to continue school as a reason for dropping out.*

Sl. No.	Attitude towards school	No. of Children					
		Male	%	Female	%	Total	Percentage
1.	Given a chance to go To school	130	54.85	47	74.60	177	59
2.	Would not go to school even if given an opportunity	107	45.14	16	25.39	123	41.00
Total		237	100	63	100	300	100

educational experience and future opportunities. In the context of Goalpara District in Assam, a region known for its unique cultural and socio-economic backdrop, understanding these attitudes provides insight into the challenges and motivations that influence educational participation. A recent survey conducted in this district highlights the varying perceptions children have regarding schooling, revealing a significant divide in enthusiasm and willingness to attend school.

According to the findings, 177 children, representing 59% of the surveyed population, indicated a positive attitude when given the chance to go to school. This group consisted of 130 males and 47 females, suggesting a higher inclination among boys to embrace educational opportunities (Table-4.8). This overwhelming majority underscores the importance that many children in Goalpara District place on education as a vehicle for personal growth and societal contribution. For these children, school is not merely a place for academic

learning but also a space for social interaction, self-discovery, and the cultivation of talents and skills. Their eagerness to attend school reflects an understanding of the long-term benefits that education can yield, such as better job prospects, enhanced social standing, and the ability to contribute positively to their families and communities.

Conversely, the data also reveals a troubling statistic: 123 children or 41% of the total surveyed, expressed that they would not attend school even if given the opportunity. This group comprises 107 males and only 16 females, which highlights a significant gender disparity, with girls showing markedly lower rates of refusal to attend school (Table-4.8). The reasons behind this unwillingness can be multifaceted, ranging from socio-economic barriers and cultural attitudes to personal experiences or lack of perceived relevance of schooling to their lives. For many children, especially in rural areas like Goalpara, education may be viewed as a privilege rather than a right, often overshadowed by the immediate pressures of family responsibilities or work.

A significant factor that might contribute to the reluctance among some children to attend school is the socio-economic conditions in Goalpara District. Many families might prioritize immediate earning over long-term educational investment, leading children to forgo schooling in favor of working in fields or engaging in household chores. Children may be conditioned by this economic reality to see education as a secondary endeavor at best, which will reduce their desire to take advantage of the educational options that are available to them. Furthermore, opinions regarding education can also be influenced by the cultural context. In certain homes, especially those with long-standing customs, family responsibilities may take precedence over academic success. Given their imagined future roles as caregivers, girls may be even less encouraged to pursue education in these situations, whereas boys may be expected to assume various tasks and responsibilities. Given its long-term effects on societal advancement and gender equality, closing the gender gap in educational goals is imperative.

Educational infrastructure and quality can also play a pivotal role in shaping children's attitudes toward school. If schools are perceived as inadequate or if the quality of education is lacking, students may develop a negative attitude instead of feeling inspired to learn. Moreover, a lack of trained teachers, poor facilities, or insufficient educational resources can discourage children from attending or fully engaging in school. For children within Goalpara District, the experience of attending classes that fail to meet their needs might cultivate a sense of disillusionment.

Furthermore, it is impossible to undervalue the impact of peers. The views of their peers and friends toward schooling are also likely to have an impact on kids. A peer group may become disengaged from the educational process as a whole if there is a general attitude of indifference or disdain toward education. On the other hand, peer groups that create a supportive learning atmosphere might inspire kids to work harder at their studies.

It's essential to acknowledge that the prevailing attitudes toward education are not set in stone and can be reshaped. Community initiatives, government programs, and parental involvement can play a significant role in altering perceptions of schooling. By raising awareness about the benefits of education, providing incentives for school attendance, and creating supportive environments, both within schools and at home, it is possible to change children's mindsets toward learning and schooling.

Moreover, eradicating stereotypes and misconceptions surrounding gender roles in education is crucial for fostering an inclusive educational environment. Programs that specifically target the empowerment of girls, alongside awareness campaigns that promote the value of education for all children regardless of their gender, can lead to transformative changes in attitudes. Education, after all, is a powerful tool for change, and when children understand its significance, they are more likely to embrace it wholeheartedly.

The attitudes of children in Goalpara District towards school reflect a complex interplay of socio-economic, cultural, and individual factors. While a significant portion of children expresses a strong desire to attend school, a considerable number remain skeptical or outright resistant to the idea. Addressing these disparities calls for a multifaceted approach that acknowledges the various challenges at play and actively seeks to create an educational environment that is accessible, relevant, and engaging. Through community efforts and policy changes focused on inclusivity and educational quality, we can hope to transform the landscape of education in Goalpara District, ultimately equipping its children with the tools they need to thrive in a constantly evolving world.

**Table 4.9 Attitude of the children towards school**

Sl. No.	Attitude towards school	No. of Children					
		Male	%	Female	%	Total	%

1.	Would continue studying in spare time	164	69.20	50	79.39	214	71.33
2.	Would not like to Studying spare time	73	30.80	13	20.63	86	28.67
Total		237	100	63	100	300	100

The attitude of children towards school can significantly influence their academic performance, social interactions and overall development. In the Goalpara District of Assam, recent statistics reveal dynamic insights into how children perceive their schooling and educational environments. With a total of 300 surveyed children, the data unveils a promising trend indicating a generally positive attitude towards education. This positive outlook is not just a reflection of personal ambition but is influenced by various social, cultural, and educational factors in the region.

According to the data, a notable 71.33% of children expressed a desire to continue studying during their spare time. Among these, 164 were males and 50 were females, indicating that a substantial number of children prioritize their education even during leisure hours (Table-4.9). This enthusiasm for learning demonstrates an intrinsic motivation among students to advance their knowledge and skills outside of the formal classroom setting. Such an attitude may stem from various sources, including encouragement from parents, inspirational teachers, and a community emphasis on the value of education. The cultural context in Assam, especially in rural regions like Goalpara, often illustrates a deep respect for educational attainment, which likely contributes to this positive attitude among children.

Conversely, 28.67% of the surveyed children indicated that they would not like to engage in studying during their spare time, comprising 73 males and 13 females (Table-4.9). While this group is significantly smaller compared to those who are keen on pursuing further studies, it raises critical questions about the barriers these children face regarding academic motivation. Factors contributing to this reluctance may include a lack of resources, a challenging home environment, or minimal support from adult figures in their lives. Additionally, some children may find studying outside of school to be burdensome, especially if they feel overwhelmed by their current academic workload. Addressing the needs and concerns of these students is essential for fostering an inclusive educational environment where every child feels empowered to learn and grow.

The contrasting attitudes observed among the children also underscore the need for tailored educational strategies that recognize individual preferences and challenges. Schools in Goalpara District can play a vital role in cultivating a culture of learning that resonates with each child's unique perspective towards education. For instance, integrating creative and interactive teaching methods can make studying more enjoyable and less of a chore. These could include hands-on projects, group discussions, or the incorporation of technology in the learning process, which can capture students' interests and promote a more engaging academic experience.

Moreover, the role of parents and guardians cannot be overstated when it comes to shaping children's attitudes towards school. In many households, education may be viewed as a means to an end—a pathway to better job opportunities and economic stability. Thus, proactive engagement from parents and family members who share the importance of education can instill a sense of duty and motivation within the children. Initiatives that encourage parents to participate in their children's education, such as workshops or community programs can foster a communal support network that bolsters academic success.

Teacher engagement also plays a critical role in shaping positive attitudes towards education among students. Passionate and dedicated educators can inspire a love for learning by making lessons relevant and relatable to students' lives. By incorporating local cultural narratives or real-world applications into the curriculum, teachers in Goalpara can create a more meaningful connection between education and students' personal experiences. Moreover, recognizing and celebrating academic achievements, no matter how small, can motivate students to strive for excellence and foster a supportive school community.

An examination of the gender disparity in attitudes toward education also reveals interesting dynamics. While the data indicates a higher number of males interested in studying during their spare time, the significant number of females, although fewer, also shows that education is valued among girls in Goalpara. This reflects a gradual shift in perceptions regarding female education, which historically faced numerous challenges. As more families and communities embrace the importance of girls' education, this could lead to further empowering female students to pursue their academic interests vigorously.

In order to harness the potential evident in the positive attitudes of a majority of children toward school, targeted interventions are necessary. The local government and educational authorities in Assam can enhance infrastructure, provide better resources, and fund programs aimed at keeping children engaged academically.

Additionally, mentoring programs pairing older students or educators with younger children can help bridge the gap for those less inclined to study during their free time, nurturing a growth mindset and resilience.

Ultimately, the attitudes of children towards school in the Goalpara District of Assam highlight both the strengths and challenges within the educational landscape. By recognizing the positivity reflected in the majority's eagerness to learn, as well as addressing the hesitancies of the minority, stakeholders can work towards fostering a more inclusive, engaging, and supportive educational atmosphere. With collaborative efforts from parents, teachers, and community leaders, the Goalpara District can pave the way for a generation that not only values education but actively seeks to improve and uplift their futures through learning. The data presented thus serves as a springboard for discussions on how best to nurture these attitudes and break down barriers, ensuring that every child can flourish within the educational sphere.

Understanding and improving children's attitudes towards school in Goalpara is not merely an academic exercise but a crucial aspect of social development. Education holds the key to empowerment and transformation, and cultivating a positive attitude towards learning will ultimately strengthen the community as a whole. It is imperative that all stakeholders come together to celebrate the love of education and address the challenges faced, thereby ensuring that each child's potential is realized in the blossoming educational landscape of Assam.

**Table-4.10 Adolescent worker (15-19) Population (In Million): Census 2011**

Area	Location	2001			2011		
		Person	Male	Female	Person	Male	Female
India	Rural	30.62	1903	11.58	29.91	18.81	11.10
	Urban	5.64	4.50	1.15	6.81	5.06	1.75
	Total	36.26	23.53	12.73	36.72	23.86	12.85

When looking at India's socioeconomic situation, it is important to pay close attention to the country's adolescent workers, especially those between the ages of 15 and 19. In India, there were about 36.72 million teenage workers in 2011, up slightly from 36.26 million in 2001, according to Census 2011 data. This population is split between rural and urban sectors, and knowledge of the differences between these groups

can help one better appreciate the opportunities and problems that young workers in the nation face (Table 4.10).

In rural areas, the adolescent worker population saw a slight decline, from 30.62 million in 2001 to 29.91 million in 2011. This reduction indicates a shifting demographic as younger individuals either pursue educational opportunities or migrate to urban areas in search of better employment prospects. The gender breakdown in rural regions reveals that male workers dominated these figures, with 18.81 million males compared to 11.10 million females in 2011. This disparity showcases deep-rooted gender norms and societal expectations that often prioritize male employment over female participation in the workforce (Table-4.10).

Conversely, the urban adolescent worker population has shown an increase, growing from 5.64 million in 2001 to 6.81 million in 2011. This growth reflects the burgeoning urban economy and the increasing availability of jobs that attract young workers. In urban settings, the gender gap narrows slightly, with 5.06 million males and 1.75 million females participating in the workforce. While this represents an improvement for female labor participation, the numbers still highlight significant barriers that young women face in accessing work opportunities. Cultural, social, and safety concerns continue to hinder many girls from fully engaging in the labor market, even in urban environments where opportunities are theoretically more accessible (Table-4.10).

Subtle changes in the overall number of adolescent workers may indicate broader patterns impacting young people in India. The rise in the number of adolescent workers from 36.26 million in 2001 to 36.72 million in 2011 must be acknowledged since it shows how resilient and adaptable young people are generally to changing economic conditions. This growth should, however, also raise questions about the type of work these teenagers are doing, including whether they are working in official or informal sectors or in dangerous jobs. Policymakers and advocates who strive to improve conditions for young workers are particularly concerned with the quality of jobs rather than merely the quantity (Table 4.10).

Moreover, the implications of these figures extend beyond the immediate economic context. Adolescents in the workforce are often trying to balance work with education, and the pressures of financial necessity can compel many to prioritize employment over schooling. This trend can have long-term repercussions on their future economic prospects, skills development, and overall life trajectories. Education is a crucial tool for social mobility, and any compromise on this front leads to a cyclical pattern of poverty and limited opportunities.

A socio-economic analysis of adolescent workers in India must also consider regional variations. Certain states may exhibit higher concentrations of young workers due to factors such as industrial development, agrarian economies, and differing cultural attitudes towards education and employment. For example, states with significant agricultural reliance may see higher rates of adolescent labor in farming activities, whereas urbanized states may have a more diverse range of jobs available for youth. These distinctions underscore the need for targeted policies that address specific regional needs and work to promote sustainable employment options for adolescents.

In summary, although the Census 2011 data shows a little increase in the number of adolescent laborers in India, the underlying facts show intricate societal relationships and financial difficulties. An examination of the quality of education, employment, and gender inequality in this group is essential. In order to empower teenage workers and provide them with the necessary resources, chances, and skills to effectively transition into adulthood, policymakers, educators, and civil society organizations must work together. By doing this, India can capitalize on the potential of its youthful labor population, propelling its economic expansion while safeguarding the rights and welfare of teenagers.

According to the Census data from 2011, Assam ranks 12<sup>th</sup> among states and Union Territories in India concerning the prevalence of child labor. The state is home to a staggering 347,353 children aged between 5 and 14 years who are engaged in labor. This statistic underscores a significant issue within Assam, pointing to a concerning trend where young children are compelled to enter the workforce at an early age, often sacrificing their education and childhood in the process.

Child labor is a complex issue with roots in a number of socioeconomic issues, such as poverty, restricted adult employment possibilities, and lack of access to high-quality education. Many families in areas like Assam depend on their children's earnings to make ends meet. These youngsters are consequently employed in a variety of fields, ranging from local businesses to agriculture, frequently in demanding and dangerous jobs that may be detrimental to their health and general well-being. Although there are laws and policies in place to address child labor, the situation in Assam is representative of a larger national problem in India. Given the prevalence of working children, concerns are raised over the efficacy of these policies and the need for stronger interventions. To lessen the dependency on child labor, for example, more needs to be done to improve family economic conditions, raise knowledge of children's rights, and offer access to education. Addressing the issue of child labor requires a comprehensive approach that includes government

intervention, community engagement, and support from non-governmental organizations. It is crucial to empower families through alternative livelihood opportunities and ensure that children have access to quality education, allowing them to thrive in a safe environment rather than being forced into labor at such a young age. By tackling these root causes, Assam can hope to create a future where children can enjoy their rights and reach their full potential.

### Assam's child labor situation:

**Table-4.11**

**Data on Child Labour Based on Survey during NSSO 66th Round (2009-10)**

State	Age Group (5-14)Years			
Assam	Rural		Urban	
	Male	Female	Male	Female
	88156	110191	20767	15548

*Source: Lok Sabha Secretariatreference Note No.10/RN/Ref./2023*

There are 347,353 children in Assam between the ages of 5 and 14 who are either actively looking for work or are working in some capacity, whether it be main or secondary, according to the 2011 Census. Compared to the 2001 Census, which showed that 381,337 children in the same age range were engaged in labor activities, this number shows a minor decrease of 33,984 children. According to the breakdown of this number, there are 135,805 girls and 211,548 boys among the working children in Assam (Table 4.11).

When examining the trends in child labor across different areas, it is noted that there has been a decrease in child labor in rural regions of Assam since 2001. However, there has been a small uptick in child labor within urban areas during the same period. Analyzing the data at the district level is crucial, as it reveals important trends regarding the prevalence of child labor across the various districts in Assam. Understanding these district-specific figures can shed light on the specific challenges and conditions that foster child labor in different regions of the state.

Overall, the percentage of children aged 5 to 14 engaged in some form of child labor in Assam stands at 4.9%. This figure is slightly higher than the national average for India, which is recorded at 4.5%. It is

noteworthy that 13 districts in Assam report child labor rates that exceed the state average. Among these districts, Dhemaji has the highest rate at 7.9%, followed closely by Jorhat at 7.3% and Dhubri at 6.6%. These higher rates in specific districts may indicate the presence of underlying socio-economic factors that contribute to child labor, such as poverty, lack of educational opportunities, or insufficient enforcement of child labor laws (Table-4.11).

Addressing the situation of child labor in Assam requires a multifaceted approach. Efforts must be made to not only monitor and report on the prevalence of child labor but also to implement policies and programs aimed at reducing it. This includes providing access to quality education, creating vocational training for adolescents, and ensuring that families have the financial support they need, which can help to alleviate the pressures that lead to child labor.

The government and other stakeholders must work together to increase public understanding of the value of education and the detrimental effects of child labor. In order to address cultural norms that can support the continued acceptability of child labor as a survival strategy, community engagement is essential.

**In conclusion**, while there has been a slight decline in the overall number of children engaged in labor in Assam since 2001, the situation remains concerning, particularly in specific districts where rates are alarmingly high. The need for continued efforts to address the root causes of child labor is critical for the well-being and future of children in Assam. By fostering better educational opportunities, increasing economic support for families, and engaging with communities, it is possible to make significant strides towards reducing child labor in the state and ensuring that every child has the opportunity to reach their full potential.

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