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DEPARTMENT OF
ECONOMICS

Call for Papers

Child Labour in the Context of Conflict and Migration: Economic and Cultural Perspectives, 29-30 November, 2018

Istanbul Technical University (ITU), Istanbul, Turkey

Keynote Lectures:

Jane Humphries, Professor of Economic History, Oxford University

Ximena Vanessa Del Carpio, Program Leader for Social Inclusion at World Bank

Organizing Committee:

Shourjo Chakravorty (Istanbul Technical University)

Ayşegül Kayaoğlu (Istanbul Technical University)

Umut Kuruüzüm (London School of Economics)

Quentin Stoeffler (Istanbul Technical University)

The Department of Economics at Istanbul Technical University (ITU) invites you to participate in a two-day workshop on the study of child labour from economic and cultural perspectives particularly in the context of conflict and migration. The primary purpose of the workshop is to explore economic and ethnographic studies dealing with child work and migration across diverse industries and geographies. In particular, it is aimed to lead scholars and policy-makers to advance a multifaceted understanding and to develop comprehensive and multi-dimensional policy responses for the problem which was exacerbated in the Middle East by recent conflicts and displacements.

The Syria crisis, in particular, has dramatically reduced livelihood opportunities and impoverished millions of households in the region, resulting in child labour reaching critical levels in the Middle East. During crises, survivors find it harder to provide food, education and protection for their children, pushing an ever increasing number of them into exploitation in the labour market, often in extremely hazardous and unhealthy environments, as well as under conditions of worst forms of child labour. Child labour was a fact of life in the region, including Turkey, prior to the Syrian war, but conflicts in the region and the resulting humanitarian crisis has greatly exacerbated the problem. Thus, children came to be drawn into child work in order to ensure household survival, a situation which deprives them of their childhood, their potential and right to education, and exposes them to the risk of mental and physical health problems.

In Turkey, ‘The National Programme for Combating Child Labour’ covering the period 2017-2023 by the Ministry of Labour and Social Security put significant effort to eliminate child labour specifically in street work, agriculture, and industry (Çocuk İşçiliği ile Mücadele Ulusal Programı 2017: 32-34). In addition, the incidence of child labour has become one of the challenges to the fulfilment of the ‘No Lost Generation’ initiative launched in 2013, in which UNICEF, Save the Children and other partners aimed to place child protection and education at the centre of the humanitarian response to the Syria crisis. Many children in urban and rural areas of Turkey, and in the region, still remain trapped in child labour in the informal and insecure nature of the labour market, at the increased risk of economic exploitation and routine abuse, which requires a public discussion about the incidence.

The Conference, therefore, is an attempt to explore diverse methodological and theoretical approaches dealing with the issue of child labour across different industries and geographies in or near conflict zones, particularly in the Middle East, Sub-Saharan Africa, South and Southeast Asia. This requires connecting economics of child labour with larger cultural and moral cosmologies of the creation and re-creation of child labour in a given economic, legal, and social context, if we are determined to outline a different set of policy responses to the persistent puzzle of child labour.

We invite scholars and researchers to reflect on the category of child labour in relationship to conflict and migration, and to generate interdisciplinary theoretical, methodological, and empirical discussion. Research questions and topics include, but are not limited to:

- What are the new theoretical, conceptual or empirical insights gained in the study of child labour?
- Which processes, conditions and discourses generate and facilitate the incidence of child labour, and which theoretical and analytical perspectives do we need to develop in order to understand them?
- How informal economic activities around the practice of child labour are developed to meet a certain need of the formal economic activities?
- How does child labour shape local markets and informal economic activities in conflict zones?
- What are the implications of the flexible economy and precariousness on the practice of engaging in child labour?
- How legality and illegality are legally, politically and socially produced in different industries?
- How does theory of migration in different disciplines (e.g. economics, history, anthropology, sociology, geography) help to reveal understanding of the puzzle of child labour today?
- How useful is child labour as a field of study for understanding the strategies, practices and effects of migration?
- How do processes of seasonal, circular, return, and rural-urban migration are related with child labour?
- What are the moral and cultural values that legitimize and encourage the use of child labour?
- In what ways cross-cultural and economic discourses and moral understandings of gender, sexuality and embodiment shape the decision of making children work rather than educating them?
- In what types of struggles do child workers and their families engage?

- What type of challenges does child labour posit to the children themselves, their families, and nation-states in terms of welfare, economic development, education, sexuality and gender, and health?
- What are the economic impacts of child labour, in the short-term and in the long-run, on individuals, households and communities?
- What are the alternatives to child labour, in particular in a conflict or migration context? What types of policies can support the eradication of child labour the most effectively and without adverse effects on children or their households?

Submission Guidelines:

Please send your tentative paper title, a 300-word abstract, and updated C.V. by **September 1, 2018** to childlabourconf2018@gmail.com (under subject, please insert the title of the conference). The full papers have to be submitted no later than **November 1, 2018**. There is no registration fee, but registration for the conference is required.

Unfortunately, due to limited funding available, we cannot cover any travel expenses of participants. However, we are happy to be able to provide accommodation for international participants with no institutional funding.