

The role of economic and legal factors in the emergence of the street children phenomenon in Khorram Abad, Lorestan province: survey in 2015

Mohsenzadeh, Rasoul; Momeni, Javad; Zarchini, Rasoul; Mohsenzadeh, Tahereh

Veröffentlichungsversion / Published Version

Zeitschriftenartikel / journal article

Empfohlene Zitierung / Suggested Citation:

Mohsenzadeh, R., Momeni, J., Zarchini, R., & Mohsenzadeh, T. (2017). The role of economic and legal factors in the emergence of the street children phenomenon in Khorram Abad, Lorestan province: survey in 2015. *International Letters of Social and Humanistic Sciences*, 77, 56-65. <https://doi.org/10.18052/www.scipress.com/ILSHS.77.56>

Nutzungsbedingungen:

Dieser Text wird unter einer CC BY Lizenz (Namensnennung) zur Verfügung gestellt. Nähere Auskünfte zu den CC-Lizenzen finden Sie hier: <https://creativecommons.org/licenses/by/4.0/deed.de>

Terms of use:

This document is made available under a CC BY Licence (Attribution). For more information see: <https://creativecommons.org/licenses/by/4.0>

The Role of Economic and Legal Factors in the Emergence of the Street Children Phenomenon in Khorram Abad, Lorestan Province - Survey in 2015

Javad Momeni^{1,a*}, Rasoul Mohsenzadeh^{1,b}, Tahereh Mohsenzadeh^{2,c}
and Rasoul Zarchini^{1,d}

¹University of Tehran, Iran

²Islamic Azad University, Central Tehran Branch, Iran

^aj.momeni364@yahoo.com, ^bpapi.rasoul@yahoo.com, ^ct.mohsenzadeh@yahoo.com,
^dZarchini1990@gmail.com

Keywords: Street Children, Child Labor, Economic Problems, Lorestan

Abstract. In this research, we have studied the population of street children in Khorram Abad in Iran, in 2015, with the emphasis on the role of economic and legal factors forcing children to work on the streets. The results of this research show that the issue of child labor is the consequence of both global and local matters. These children are the products of the urban society, poverty, and cultural, legal, and local factors. The research method is a survey, and the statistical population is the street children, aged between 7 to 18 living in Khorram Abad, in 2015. The sample population chosen randomly includes 242 people, and the required information was gathered using the questionnaire and interview technique. In Khorram Abad, Lorestan, economic crisis and parents' misdemeanor are the two main factors that force the children to fill their fathers' missing place by working in the streets. But, gender factors such as being a boy, and cultural factors such as belonging to a specific tribe are influential in the howness of this phenomenon. In this article, we have attempted to use native sources for a better understanding of the local situation of the phenomenon, and have proposed a few solutions to alter the current situation.

Introduction

Street children and child laborers are gradually turning out to be political issues in Iran. As big cities in Iran become the home for the most luxurious cars of the biggest companies in the world, unwanted guests are appearing here and there in the streets, selling flowers, cleaning car windows, street vending, fortune-telling, and beggary. Child laborers are one group of these guests. Another guest is the societies supporting these children, such as the Society of Imam Ali, which tries to introduce happiness into the Iranian society, while not bothering to understand or deal with the causes of this phenomenon.

Generally, in poor Iranian families, due to the imbalance between the income and costs of living, and the lack of job opportunities for all citizens, especially women, all members of the family are susceptible to the difficulties and hardship of life. Occasionally, the effects of poverty on the structure of the family is so severe that by the unemployment of the father all members of the family will be forced to work, and children are not excluded here. This situation forces some children of poor families to start child labor, beggary or misdemeanor in order to earn a living for their families; some other children prefer running away from home and living in the streets to living at home. "All over the world, the street children phenomenon is one of the most notable outcomes of misdemeanor, of the lack of a safe social position and of not considering or fulfilling children's basic needs." [1]

Being a street child is an issue in itself. "They face lots of dangers such as harassment, STDs, addiction, and ultimately, death. On the other hand, they have much less opportunities for emotional, social, educational, and financial development." [2] Abandoning Children and teens in the streets, squares, etc., for any cause or reason, can start a chain of bad outcomes and consequences for the children themselves and the society. For one thing, they are prone to improper

diet, delayed growth, and diseases. Moreover, their mental health will be damaged, and their behavioral issues will aggregate. [3] These children, abandoned in the streets, are exposed to violence from different aspects, especially in their relations with the street children who are raised in slum areas with different disparate social issues and problems. That they always have to protect themselves from others leads us to attach more importance to their abysmal conditions.” [4] Due to the huge negative effects of living in the streets on the children's sociability process, and its deep and long-term effects on the children's personal and social life, identifying and addressing the street children's situation require special attention. [3]

According to what we have mentioned so far, we are aiming to study the influence of economic poverty on the street children phenomenon with a special focus on Iran's legal system and also the outcomes of this phenomenon. In general, “the street child phenomenon refers to the children under the age of 18 who are forced to work or live on the streets, parks, and squares, in order to survive.” [5] Based on researches conducted by the International Labor Organization (ILO), poverty is the most important factor that forces children to work, since the income made by children's work is crucial for them and their family. [6, 7]

Considering the above-mentioned subject, the important question is: what is the role of family's economic status in pushing children to work in the streets? Can we consider the economic status as the sole factor? Doesn't reforming the legal and social security systems reduce the number of these children? This research is carried out in Khorram Abad in 2015, by performing documental studies, using a standard questionnaire and interviewing children aged between 7 and 18 who live in this city. And, we aim to, by considering the importance of studying the causes of this social harm, to achieve useful and acceptable results so as to reconsider, prevent, or reduce this issue.

Khorram Abad is the biggest Lur-populated city in Iran, with a population of 348 thousand in year 2011. The Lur people dwell in the mountainous regions of the west of Iran. This people has been much less involved in cultural amalgamation and interaction than other populations in Iran, and as such, is considered as an original subject for social sciences research. On the other hand, Khorram Abad is declared as an outstanding tourist city in Iran by the United Nations Office, and is also the capital of a province (Lorestan) with one of the highest levels of poverty, unemployment, and suicide between the provinces of Iran. [8, 9] Based on the official data of the Statistical Centre of Iran in 2014, the average unemployment rate was 11% in Iran, and 14.9% in Lorestan province [10], which is indicative of the unpleasant situation of this province, compared with other provinces of the country.

As it is inferred from the research title, we aim to study one of the social issues of the city, which is the street children. Two researchers of this article are the natives of the city; this fact, in a research with a sociological and anthropological approach, is considered as a special privilege. This city is one of the rare cities in Iran in which the entrance of emigrants from Afghanistan and other countries is banned, and therefore, all child laborers in Khorram Abad are Iranians.

“Poverty in Iran's literature and culture means indigence, penury, mendicancy, lack of stuff, and need. And the word 'poor' means indigent and lacking facilities.” [11] on the whole, poverty is an economic-social phenomenon, and exists in all societies to some extent, but its extent and spread vary in different societies. “However, on the aggregate, economic poverty can be recognized by various signs such as low income, incomplete education, the percentage of people with no job skills, living in inappropriate houses, and the percentage of children in dysfunctional families.” [12]

With regard to poverty, what is referred to as absolute poverty indicates the lowest level of life in which the family or people are deprived of the most basic and crucial needs of life. In other words, the definition of absolute poverty indicates a situation in which a person is exposed to the lack of resources. In this situation, without comparing the person or family with others, we conclude that the person does not have even the lowest income required for his survival. In contrast, in the second type of poverty, named as relative poverty, the person or family's income, compared to other people or families' income, is so much that they are regarded as poor. “Relative poverty refers to the lack of resources for a person or group, when compared to other members of that society, or, in other words, compared with the relative life standard of the members of the society. In fact, in relative poverty, the person is poor in comparison with others.” [13]

The street children phenomenon is a social reality that cannot be denied. This term has its own specific term in many countries. For example, in South Africa, it's called "Malapipe" which means the people that sleep in the sewage; In Tanzania, "Changudoa" which means the fish that are useless due to their very small size, and are thrown back into the sea by the fishermen. Until 1980s, terms such as "foundling" or "street arabs", which were common since the beginning of the 20th century, and even terms such as "runaway children" or "left children" were much more common than "street children". [3] In Khorram Abad, after the end of the Iran-Iraq war (1989), the sudden rise in population, and lack of facilities in the 90s, the streets and alleys of the city became the home for a large population of boys that were learning socialization on the streets. However, with the beginning of 21st century, factors such as drastic reduction in population growth rate in Iran, increased level of welfare, the development of mass communication tools, and ultimately, virtual connections, cleared the streets and alleys from the children. Those who were not affected by such ambiance were the children who, in Lorestan culture, are called as "stray", "loose", or ultimately, "beggar". So, it can be said that this term (street children) aims to cover all the children pushed to the margins. Despite the differences in the definition of street children around the world, we can refer to the more general definitions that describe the qualities and features similar among them: "Based on the definition of article 1 of the Convention on the Rights of the Child, street child refers to the people that are under age of 18, live and work on the streets, have no family or for some of whom there is no access to the family ... and also the children whose families don't expect them." [5].

In this article, we have endeavored to use native sources for a better understanding of the local situation of the phenomenon, and have proposed a few solutions to alter the current situation. The research method is a survey, and the statistical population is the street children, aged between 7 to 18, living in Khorram Abad in 2015. The sample population chosen randomly includes 242 people, and the required information was gathered using the questionnaire and interview technique. The goal of this research is, firstly, to study the economic factor and assess such indicators as unemployment, illiteracy, parents' addiction in their effect on the child laborers' life. Moreover, we plan to present a critique of the current Iranian judicial system and challenge the gender order in Iran through analyzing the conditions of Iranian street children.

Literature Review

J. Hezar Jaribi, P. Astin-Afshan performed a descriptive and analytical research in 2006 [1], with the purpose of identifying and analyzing the most important factors influential in becoming a street child and child laborer. The statistical population of the research included the children who were present in temporary centers under the support of Behzisti (welfare) Institute and also the children who worked in Tehran's bus terminal. 301 people were chosen as the sample population based on Cochran's formula. The required information in this study was gathered through a survey method and by using the technique of gathering data through preparing a questionnaire.

Based on the findings of the mentioned research, only 15.9 % of the children were girls. Thus, the descriptive statistical results of this sample show that street child labor in Iran is also based on the gender order governing the society. Another hypothesis in the article involves the economic-social position of the children and its relation with becoming street children and child laborer; that is, the lower the economic-social position of the child's family is (this position is measured based on the three factors of job, income, and parents' education), the more prone the children of these families are to become street children.

A. Afshani et al. in [14] have studied the general situation of street children and child laborers, and their living conditions in 2011. In this study, through a survey method with a questionnaire and an interview tool, a 122-person sample of the children, aged between 6 to 14 and working in the streets of Isfahan, was studied. Based on the outcomes of the above-mentioned research, there is a correlation between the factors such as addiction, divorce, child abuse, economic problems, a missing parent, and parents forcing the children to leave the house, and the children's turning to the streets and child labor. A research by M. Niazi [3] is one of the research surveys

related to street children, performed in Kashan in 2008. In this research, the information was gathered by distributing a questionnaire between 129 street children. Based on the findings of this study, child laborers are mostly boys, Afghan and living with their impoverished families.

S. Jamal Panah performed a research [15]. The statistical population of the study was the street children under the custody of the Behzisti Organization and included 35 people. In this research, the gender of the sample population was specified as boys, and their nationality was described as Iranian. The findings of the study show that child laborers are mostly from crowd families, have unemployed fathers and live in suburbs. According to the report of the Organization of Welfare, Social Services and Public Partnership (2011), the descriptive statistics of child laborers in Tehran indicate that 92/1 percent of these children have illiterate fathers and 80/9 percent of these children's families earn an income of less than 100000 tomans. [16]

A. Milani and E. Abdi indicates, in a survey conducted on 70 Tehrani Child Laborers in 2014, the low income of their families and their life costs such as house rent, parents' addiction, the number of family members and etc. increase the family's reliance on these child laborers. [17] Using such indicators as the high level of children's employment, the high number of family members, the considerable prevalence of unemployment, Fathers' low-income jobs, parents' low income, the low level of parents' education and the children's relationship with their family, Vameghi and Et Al., in an article published in 2011, show the correlation between the poverty of family and the possibility of children's entrance into street for work. [7]

Methodology

The method used in this research is a survey with a quantitative approach, and the required information is gathered by using a questionnaire technique. Our statistical population was the street children aged from 7 to 18 in Khorram Abad, and the main hypothesis of the research is the existence of a positive relation between the socioeconomic situation and the emergence of street children.

In this research, 650 street children whose information was obtained from the Behzisti Office of Khorram Abad were chosen in our random selection list in order to make our sample. The children were arrested at least once by municipal officers, and transferred to the Behzisti Office of Khorram Abad, and the aforementioned office has created a case for them. The addresses of the children were obtained legally by the researchers of this study, and despite the fact the addresses were not totally correct, we tried our hardest to gain access to the intended people based on the standards of research.

To select the sample size of this research, that is, to determine the number of people to study, the Cochran formula for selecting sample size was applied. By replacing the intended data, the appropriate sample size can be determined as follows:

$$n = \frac{t^2 pq}{d^2} \bigg/ 1 + \frac{1}{N} \left(\frac{t^2 pq}{d^2} - 1 \right),$$

where N is the Statistical population equal to 650, i.e. the population of street children, based on the official statistics of the Behzisti Organization of Khorram Abad; n is equal to the sample size; d is equal to the error probability, which is assumed as 5%; q is equal to the probability of lack of attribute, which is assumed as 50%; p is equal to 50%; t is equal to 1.96 for the acceptable confidence level 95%.

$$n = \frac{(1.96)^2 0.5 \times 0.5}{(0.05)^2} \bigg/ 1 + \frac{1}{650} \left(\frac{(1.96)^2 0.5 \times 0.5}{(0.05)^2} - 1 \right) = 242.$$

In this research, background variables, independent variable and dependent variable are evaluated. Background variables include questions about the attributes such as age, education level, physical status, domestic status, and social and economic class, which have been asked directly by using a single question in the questionnaire. The most important independent variables which have

been analyzed in this research as the variables influencing the dependent variable (street children) include: cultural poverty, economic and social poverty, living in suburbs, and the gender of the street children.

The last and important note about the arrangements needed for us to be confident about the validity and reliability of this research is attention to the necessary requirements for obtaining reliable information from the children. That two of the researchers of this study are familiar with the two main and common languages of Khorram Abad, which are Luri and Laki, greatly helps to conduct the interviews and fill up the questionnaire for the children who weren't educated enough to deal with our questions, and at the same time, makes the obtained opinions more realistic.

Results and Discussion

The descriptive results of the research can be viewed in the following tables.

Table 1. Education of Street Children.

| Level | Frequency | Percentage |
|----------------|-----------|------------|
| High school | 92 | 38% |
| middle school | 126 | 52% |
| Primary school | 24 | 10% |

Table 2. Education of Full-Street Children.

| Level | Frequency | Percentage |
|----------------|-----------|------------|
| High school | 126 | 52% |
| middle school | 102 | 42% |
| Primary school | 14 | 6% |

Table 3. Education of Children Working Only on Summers.

| Level | Frequency | Percentage |
|----------------|-----------|------------|
| High school | 56 | 23% |
| middle school | 155 | 64% |
| Primary school | 31 | 13% |

Based on the information in the tables, 10% of the child laborer of Khorram Abad is students of primary school, 52% are students of middle school, and 38% are high school students. Child laborers have the highest rate in middle school, and by growing up and moving towards maturity and youth, their number decreases. More than half of the children who work during the whole year are high school students, and the statistics show that, as time passes and the children grow up, their tendency towards street work decreases, and they will be attracted to other jobs, whose, based on the children's family, education, and social status, probability to be a criminal job is very high. On the other hand, in case the people continue the street work, their tendency towards working in the whole year as a permanent job increases. The gradual decrease of tendency towards street work in high school shows that this kind of work in that age span convinces children and parents that these kinds of work are ineffective, at least as a part-time job.

Table 4. Reasons for Working on the Street.

| Reasons | Frequency | Percentage |
|-------------------|-----------|------------|
| Personal interest | 60 | 25% |
| Family force | 10 | 3% |
| Family poverty | 174 | 72% |

Based on the findings, with regard to the reason for their presence on the street and working there, 72% of the children mentioned their families' economic poverty as the main reason. Therefore, keeping in mind the main hypothesis of the research, it can be said that in Lorestan, the

families' lack of economic power is the main reason for the children to work outside the house. 25% of the participants also talked of their personal interest as their main reason, and 3% said they were forced by their family to start street work.

Table 5. Income of the Parents Declared by Their Street Children.

| Income (Million Rials) | Father's Income | Mother's Income |
|------------------------|-----------------|-----------------|
| 1 – 4 | 31.7% | 2.5% |
| 4 – 8 | 50.8% | 0.7% |
| 8 – 12 | 0.8% | 0% |
| Not Answered | 16.7% | 96.8% |

Analyzing the condition of participants in terms of their parents' income shows that around 32% of the participants declared the income of their parents as ranging from 1 to 4 million Rials (from 30 to 100 dollars)¹, and this represents the weak economic position of their family, and their life under the poverty line. Less than 1% of the participants in this survey declared their parents' income as higher than 8 million Rials per month, while the average cost of urban life in the province of Lorestan, based on the official national statistics, is around 15.5 million Rials per month, which proves the claim that almost all these people spend their life below the poverty line.

Table 6. Job Distribution of Caretakers of Street Children.

| Father's Job | Frequency | Mother's Job | Frequency, % |
|---------------------|-----------|---------------|--------------|
| Construction Worker | 16.6% | Housewife | 74.2% |
| Unemployed | 24% | Self-Employed | 4.3% |
| Dead | 10% | Not Answered | 21.5% |
| Prisoned | 33% | - | |
| Official Job | 9% | - | |
| Not Answered | 7.4% | - | |
| Total | 100% | Total | 100% |

As we see in the above tables, the findings of the research about the jobs of street children's fathers show that around 40.6% of the children declare their father's job as construction worker (which is a seasonal and part-time job in Lorestan) or unemployed. In terms of the job of the participants' mothers, the results of the research show that more than 80.0% of the children's mothers were housewives or were unemployed. These statistical data show that more than 90% of the children have an unemployed, dead, or imprisoned father or their fathers are construction workers. Therefore, we can conclude that the fathers' unemployment or lack of a fixed income is the most basic and relevant factor that forces the children to start street work.

Table 7. Gender Ratio of Street Children.

| Gender | Frequency | Percentage |
|--------|-----------|------------|
| Man | 223 | 92% |
| Women | 19 | 8% |

Before displaying the above table, while discussing the issue of parents' unemployment and their income, we indicated that the issue of child labor was gender-based. Table 7 clearly shows that around 92% of these children are boys, and the lower classes of the Lorestan society, even faced with poverty, still have a gender-based interpretation of the issue of economic weakness, and don't allow their daughters to get engaged in such work on the streets. It's interesting to note that these girls' jobs are mostly beggary, and the boys are mostly street vendors. It should also be said that more than 40% of these children come from a specific tribe called the "Lootis", which are considered as an outcast, and even untouchable, tribe in the Lorestan society. They live in ghetto-

¹ Some of the participants mentioned government subsidies as their family's only source of income, which for a 4-member family is equal to around 1.8 million Rials per month.

like areas such as Gel-Sefid or Kourosh. These people have traditionally been engaged in specific jobs such as singing as a minstrel, carpentry, peddling, etc., whose abjection most people refuse to tolerate. Marrying or even socializing with this tribe has been a very strict taboo of the people of Lorestan. This fact shows despite our emphasis on the economic factor, this factor cannot explain and justify the phenomenon of child labor by itself; therefore, the gender and tribal status are also influential factors in children's working on the streets. On the whole, we should say that the child labor in Lorestan is the result of the fathers' unemployment, their low income, the family's living in the suburbs, the low level of the parents' education, gender, tribe, and a lot of other factors.

Based on the statistics, 11.7% of the child laborers live in the city center, and 87.5% live in the suburbs. In terms of house ownership, 30.8% own a personal house, and 66.7% live in rented houses. The majority of families who own a personal house live in the suburbs², and occasionally own only a single room, or a ruined or half-built house. So far, we have shown the correlation between child labor and poverty, the father's job and income and also living in the suburbs, but apparently, for a child to end up working on the streets, the economic factor is by no means the only decisive factor. The social and symbolic capitals, in Bourdieu's terminology, such as parents' education and social credit, can also be analyzed as two indices related to child labor. Also, we concluded that these children's parents, along with low income, lack of appropriate jobs, and living in suburb areas, also have a low level of education. From all the participants, almost 57% of the children had a father with a primary school education or lower, and only the father of one participant had a master degree or higher; mothers have a worse situation in this index, similar to other ones. These economic, social and symbolic capitals are in complete harmony with each other, and the economic poverty is not necessarily the only factor for the emergence of the child labor, but we believe that the economic capital is still the main factor pushing children to start street work.

Finally, by using the data gathered from the questionnaire, we attempt to analyze the correlation between socioeconomic position of the family and the children's chance to become a street worker.

Table 8. Correlation between Socioeconomic Position of the Family and the Children's Chance to Become a Street Worker.

| Variable | | Dependent | | |
|-------------|-----|--------------------------|-----|-------|
| | | Becoming a Street Worker | | |
| Independent | SES | Value | Sig | N |
| | | | | 0.539 |

Based on the findings of our research, we can conclude that there is a significant and negative correlation between the family's economic position and the children's street work ($r=0.539$, $sig=0.000$), in a way that the lower the socioeconomic position of the family is, the more the probability of the children's street work is. This result is significant with a 99.0% confidence level.

Conclusion

1 - Children's street work has a direct relation with the father's lack of income and his unemployment, and also with the family's economic poverty. We also showed that the fathers of more than 90% of these children were unemployed, prisoners or seasonal workers, etc. Furthermore, the parents of 99% of these people had an income less than 800,000 Tomans per month which for a family dwelling in a province capital meant living below the poverty line. The financial power of the family institution is one of the decisive variables in the children's spending their childhood period, but it is ultimately just one factor among multiple factors, on which if we only relied on, we would not capture the local attributes of the situation of street children in Lorestan. We've showed in this article that family members are a group that should survive, and all

² Most of these children live in areas such as Posht-Bazaar, Kourosh, Poshte, Masoor, and other very poor and at the same time crime-ful areas of city of Khorram Abad.

these members, as a single living whole, make efforts to continue to live, but every member doesn't have the same duty for survival. This means that the family is not a group of equal members in terms of the responsibilities its members have to take, but, based on the society's view on this institution, each member has his own specific duty. In the Lorestan society, family is a patriarchal whole, and with the lack of appropriate job for the father, not all other members, but only the son has to go to work instead of his father, and the mother and daughters of the family don't have much economic responsibility for keeping this whole alive. The children's answering "I don't know" to the question of their mother's job shows the lack of importance of mothers' work in Lorestan. Although this situation is more severe in Lorestan, but it should be viewed as a general condition which governs the whole Iranian society. Women in Iranian society are bound to housekeeping and child-bearing, and even in the event of their husband's death or loss, they are not expected to make living. This view of women is also evident in official and government documents; for example, in the annual statistical calendar of Iran, and in the official definition of a working person according to the Statistics Organization of the Islamic Republic of Iran, a person who works for other members of his family, even without receiving a payment, is considered as employed. That is, women's job is institutionally identified with housekeeping. Thus, the gender order governing the Iranian society is one of the main factors in the increase of the number of street children in Iran. Providing the environment, skills, tools, and the social acceptability for women's working can be definitely a good substitute for child labor in case of losing the father as the main breadwinner of the family, which, consequently, may result in a decrease in the number child laborers.

2 - Child laborers are not norm-breakers; instead. The society has accepted the legitimation of their work, and treat them as a part of the traditional market. Therefore, they are, in Robert K. Merton's terminology, in conformity with socially accepted attitudes to goals and means, but we find it suitable to develop the notion of "temporary conformity" for these children, since it's highly probable that these children, except for a few ones who keep on street vending, will join criminal groups and gangs sooner or later. We have shown this issue in the gradual decrease of the number of child laborers as time passes and they grow up. Although the decrease in the number of child laborers along with the increase in their age, doesn't necessarily mean that they have joined criminal groups, but by analyzing the facilities and opportunities in front of them, we may make some dismal conclusions. It seems that the reason for a person's conformity with the society during the childhood is the physical weaknesses and their family pressure, however, the child will soon, by considering the items such as his financial independence, lack of appropriate family upbringing, lack of proper education, and his constant presence in the street with all its harms, turn into the modes of "rebellion" or "retreatism", and probably, become a criminal. Child laborers in a lot of the cases displayed in the above tables, avoided answering questions such as parents' income and their jobs. Almost 90% of the children lived in the worst areas of the city, and spent their free time on the streets. Accordingly, such a child will, to run away from the family and find another shelter, identify himself with other available criminal people who are usually living in the same areas, and thus, the probability of their joining criminal groups will increase.

Children's street work isn't the result of personal interests, but the result of constraints such as low family income, living in suburban areas, belonging to a notorious and untouchable tribe, and the unemployment and misdemeanor of the father. About the reasons for the emergence of street children, it can be said that 87.5% of the child labors in Khorram Abad come from the impoverished and slum areas, such as Posht Bazaar, Kourosh, and Poshte, which shows the relation between suburban life and child labor and also the uncertain future of these children. Street children entity might be the result of marginalizing children from marginalized families. In other words, child laborers are family outcasts of the ostracized families of the city.

3 - The findings of this study show that in Lorestan's society, disruption in the father's work entails the destruction of the foundation of the family. From 84 children who are working all the year, 80 children didn't, in practice, have a family caretaker with an income, and the fathers of these children were dead, unemployed, or imprisoned. Many of these unemployed fathers are, also, recently released from prison, and may constantly be detained or freed again. Therefore, the street

children phenomenon can be realized within the context of legal attitudes governing the Iranian society. To understand this situation, we refer to the Iranian criminal law. Looking at these laws shows that a lot of the common crimes in the suburban areas, such as drug selling and theft, have the punishment of jail, without considering the environmental and social conditions. For example, in the 8th section of the Islamic Penal Code³, in a section called Hadd⁴ of Theft, in article 197, theft is defined as stealing another person's property secretly. In the next article, the conditions for performing the Hadd are mentioned. The punishment for theft, Hadd, based on the Islamic laws, is to cut hand, and the way of performing it is explained in articles 200 to 203 in the Islamic Penal Code. Based on legal article 203 in the Islamic Penal Code of the Islamic Republic of Iran, thefts who don't meet the conditions of Hadd, for example, a hungry defendant in difficult financial conditions, etc., are sentenced to jail imprisonment from 1 to 5 years. Accordingly, the accused person may be sentenced to least 1 year imprisonment just for stealing the smallest objects such as shoes. If he has a child or children, he will put his family in a difficult financial situation that most probably lead his children to start street work. Such a forceful treatment is also true for other crimes such as drug selling. These laws are too rigid and rarely consider the social realities of the defendant and specially the course of crime in the above cases. If the goal of the punishment is to improve the society and the existing situation, based on the results of this research, we can declare its failure to reach the mentioned goal. Regarding the issue of the street children of Khorram Abad, the fact that the fathers of more than 33% of the children are serving time in jail indicates that imprisonment and forceful treatment with their accused fathers don't have any outcome but to force their children to work in the streets at best or to make them commit any criminal wrongdoing at worst.

References

- [1] J. Hezar Jaribi, P. Astin-Afshan, Economic, Social, and cultural factors influential in becoming a child laborer working on the streets, Nardis Publications, Tehran, Iran, 2006, p. 157.
- [2] S.A. Marjaini, A Detailed plan for descriptive the study of street children and factors influential in becoming a street child, UNICEF Agency in Iran, Tehran, Iran, 2002, p. 13.
- [3] M. Niazi, Street Children, science and knowledge publications, Tehran, Iran, 2008.
- [4] H. Hosseini, Child laborers and street children, an analysis of social harms in Iran, Salman Publications, Tehran, Iran, 2006, p. 128.
- [5] G. Maleki, Street children and teens, Ayeezh Publications, Tehran, Iran, 2006.
- [6] H. Toolaie, H. Rafiei, A. Biglarian, Relation between child labor and social welfare, Scientific and Research Periodical of Social Welfare. 35 (2010) 299-312.
- [7] M. Vameghi et al., A systematic review studies in the last decade in Iran, Scientific and Research Periodical of Social Welfare. 35 (2010) 232-241.
- [8] Information on <http://www.entekhab.ir/fa/news/154743>.
- [9] Information on <http://www.ireconomy.ir/fa/page/3445/>.
- [10] Information on <http://www.amar.org.ir/english/Iran-at-a-glance/Lorestan>.
- [11] H. Amid, Persian Culture, Second ed., Ashjae Publications, Tehran, Iran, 2011, p. 139.
- [12] M.H. Farjad, Study of social issues in Iran: Official Corruption, Addiction, and Divorce, Second ed., Asaatir Publications, Tehran, Iran, 2009, p. 148.
- [13] M. Zahedi Asl, M. Basaatian, Issues and problems of poverty in Iran, Periodical of Welfare Programming and Social Development. 7 (2011) 1-26.

³ Guardian Council of Islamic Republic of Iran: 2013 May 14

⁴ Hadd refers to punishments which their type, and amount, and quality is defined in the Sharia.

-
- [14] A. Afshani e al., An analysis of the situation of street children and labor in Isfahan, *Journal of Applied Sociology*. 23 (2011) 85-102.
- [15] S. Jamal Panah, Analysis of the status of street children in Khorram Abad, MA. Thesis, Dept. Humanities, Welfare University of Applied Sciences and Technology, Khorram Abad, Iran, 2012.
- [16] The Organization of Welfare, Social Services and Public Partnerships, the Report of 6-Year Condition of social Harms, 2011.
- [17] A. Milani, E. Abdi, The influence of child labor on children's delinquency, *Quarterly of Social Sciences Studies*. 1 (2016) 23-40.