



The United Nations International Children's Emergency Fund

Juan Pio Escobar and Daniela Mesías

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Contents

1. Presidents' Letter

2. Topic 1: *Child addiction to social media*

- I. History/Context
- II. Current Situation
- III. Key Points of the Debate
- IV. Guiding Questions
- V. Bibliography

3. Topic 2: *Child slavery in Ethiopia*

- I. History/Context
- II. Current Situation
- III. Key Points of the Debate
- IV. Guiding Questions
- V. Bibliography

1. Presidents' Letter

Dear Delegates,

We extend you a convivial welcome to the United Nations Children's Emergency Fund (UNICEF) in the twenty-second edition of the CCBMUN. Our names are Juan Pio Escobar and Daniela Mesías, 11th and 12th graders students at the New Cambridge School Cali, and we are glad to be your presidents. First of all, we would like to congratulate and thank you for being part of this committee, as you are here for an enriching purpose, which is to be citizens and leaders of this changing world. Throughout our experience, we have realised that these spaces are extremely important and will lead you to develop friendships, diverse skills, and unforgettable experiences, exponentially optimising your speaking skills.

As presidents it is an honour to be able to guide you on this path and to help you in whatever you need. Get informed, read, grow, and think about the role you play; do not limit yourselves to anything, and above all trust in your abilities and skills. So our message is to keep calm and not stress; let us make this committee a safe and fun place, so that it can leave us many happy memories and be for all the best models of our lives.

We know what pressure an activity like this can be, and we are aware that this committee is a challenge for us as well as for you; the previous work, the grades, the model's days, and the ambition to win a prize. But we invite you to see it as an opportunity to grow, perform, meet people, learn new things, expand your lexicon, have an open mind, create, and have fun. Through debate and reflection, you will be able to develop critical skills and learn to take informed positions on relevant issues that affect the world; this will help you significantly to achieve an incredible academic level and critical thinking. Additionally, we highly recommend that you never regard any performance as a failure. Nothing in life is a failure unless you do not take action and reflect on it, learn, or improve. For us, the most important thing is that this is a huge learning experience, so have fun, enjoy, and learn!



Our experience has shown us that debating is a skill that can provide very important qualities both in academics and in daily life. For this version, our main purpose is that you all have an unforgettable experience, without neglecting the different global themes proposed in the committee. Therefore, we are very excited to listen to you and, as your presidents, we hope that you will exploit your full potential and that we will have a beneficial and fruitful debate, in order to find early solutions for a better future in each nation.

Finally, we want you to know that we are here for whatever you need, to support you until the last moment. If you have any doubts, do not be afraid to ask, we will do everything possible to help you and support you whenever you need it. Once again we welcome you to UNICEF and hope you have an enriching experience. Without further ado, we wish you the best of luck and success.

Your presidents,

Juan Pio and Daniela
UNICEF Chair
unicef@ccbcali.edu.co



Topic 1: *Child addiction to social media*

I. History/Context

The human race has witnessed many revolutions throughout history, which have often impacted different areas such as politics, science, economy and technology, completely changing the roots of civilization and the established schemes. However, according to experts, the most profound and significant revolution humanity is experiencing today is the digital revolution, an era characterised by the extraordinary rate at which technology is evolving and integrating into every aspect of society. The people who are most affected by this digital revolution are the younger generations, especially the late “Generation Z” (1997-2010) and the “Generation Alpha” (2010-2024).



Figure 1: Generation Alpha has never lived without social media (Marketing Hustle)

The term “Generation Alpha” was first used by the social analyst and demographer Mark McCrindle in his book, “Generation Alpha: Understanding our children and helping them thrive”, co-authored with Ashley Fell and Sam Bucketfield. He projects

these young people to become the largest generation in history, estimating that it will comprise more than 2 billion young people (McCrindle 2022). This generation will be the first to be born and raised in a completely digital world and, as a consequence, they are being exposed to all the risks associated with the internet, social media and the use of electronic devices.

The Cambridge Dictionary defines social media as, “Websites and computer programs that allow people to communicate and share information, opinions, pictures, videos, etc. on the internet, especially social networking websites.” (Cambridge Dictionary, n.d). Social media platforms first emerged in the early

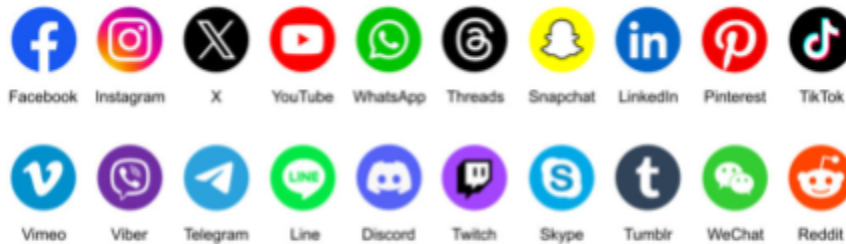


Figure 2: Social media platforms 2024 (St)

2000s. MySpace became the first social media platform, launched in 2003 and reaching one million active monthly users during 2004. It

allowed users to connect, share interests, being a hub to discover music and create personalised profiles. Facebook was founded by Mark Zuckerberg in 2004. This social media transformed communication, becoming a global way to communicate with other people. A year later, YouTube was created, as a platform to upload and share videos. With the introduction of Twitter in 2006 a new concept was created, which was microblogging; by limiting posts to 140 characters and being able to create threads, users could share ideas and opinions with many people very quickly. Currently, Instagram, which was created in 2010 as a photo-sharing app (Ospina, 2010) is extremely popular amongst your people. Other social networks frequently used by children include Snapchat, which in 2011 introduced the idea of stories for the first time, and TikTok, in 2016, which became popular due to its characteristic format of short video clips.

As seen in Figure 3, smartphone use in the USA had a significant rise over the last decade, with an increase from 20.2% in 2010 to 72.7% in 2021, an increase of 52.5%. This data highlights the rising significance of mobile technology in daily life, which ends up impacting children's screen time and interaction with digital platforms.

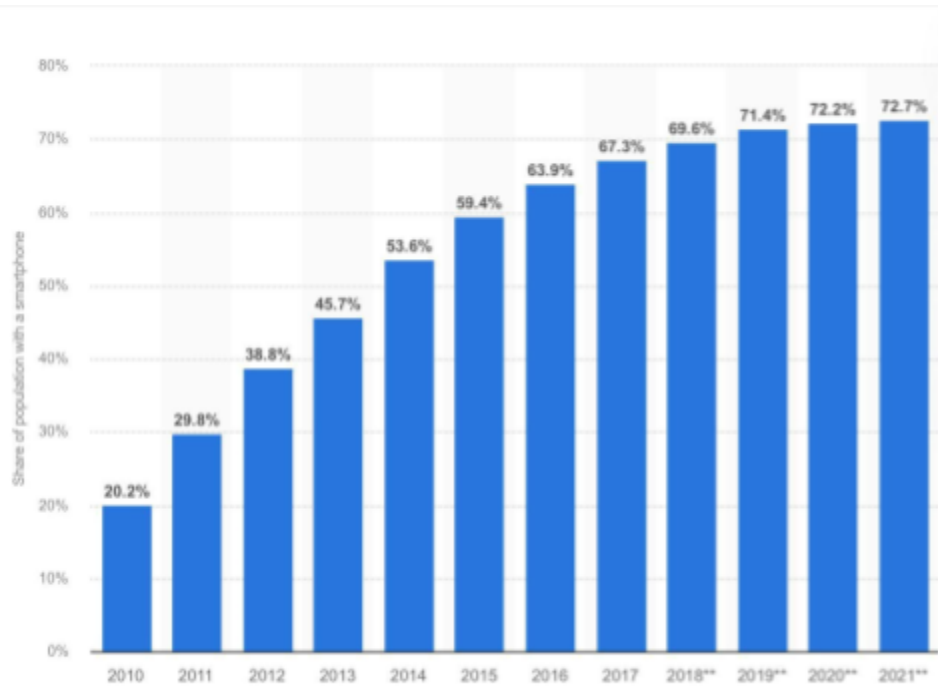


Figure 3: Smartphone penetration rate in the United States from 2010 to 2021 (Statista)

Positive aspects of Social Media

Social media can be a useful and beneficial tool for children, as it enables them to stay connected with friends and family, especially during times of physical separation. Social media also allows children to learn, with various learning opportunities on platforms like YouTube and educational apps. It also stimulates their creativity, as it allows children to explore and express creatively through different formats, such as posts, photos, videos, and others. Social media serves as a platform for showcasing talents and interests. Children gain digital literacy and learn to evaluate online information, navigating responsibly through digital platforms. They are exposed to different perspectives and global issues, broadening their understanding of the world, cultures, and current events. Social media, when used appropriately and under parental direction, offers youngsters an excellent opportunity to develop, establish connections, and acquire knowledge in beneficial ways.

However, many issues arise from over-exposure to social media, so when does this exposure become an addiction? According to the Merriam-Webster dictionary definition, addiction is *“a compulsive, chronic, physiological or psychological need for a habit-forming substance, behaviour, or activity having harmful physical, psychological, or social effects and typically causing well-defined symptoms upon withdrawal or abstinence”* (Merriam-Webster, n.d.). There is a growing recognition that social media may cause behavioural addiction, similar to gambling or substance abuse.

The symptoms of social media addiction include: the compulsive checking of social media; neglecting offline relationships and responsibilities; and showing distress when unable to access social media.

An article by the American Psychological Association discusses

how young brains are especially vulnerable to social media, *“Starting around age 10, children’s brains undergo a fundamental shift that spurs them to seek social rewards, including attention and approval from their peers.”* (Abrams, 2023). A child develops a dependence, both psychological and behavioural, on the activity of accessing social media. This dependence is characterised by compulsive use, the inability to control it, and the prioritisation over other much more important activities, significantly impacting many aspects of their lives.



Figure 4: Signs of social media addiction (SCB)

Psychological and Emotional Health

First, due to the highly engaging nature of social media, young people are more likely to develop an addiction, which can bring significant problems in their physical, emotional, and mental health, as well as other aspects of their personal lives. During prolonged cell phone usage, their dopamine receptors and other related neurotransmitters are saturated, which is a key issue in development, mental health, cognition, and overall well-being. Dopamine is a neurotransmitter

that has a key role in the reward system. According to Health Direct, *“Dopamine acts on areas of the brain to give you feelings of pleasure, satisfaction and motivation. Dopamine also has a role to play in controlling memory, mood, sleep, learning, concentration, movement and other body functions.”* (Health Direct, 2019) When young people use social media, getting likes, comments and messages, or even just scrolling for hours, can trigger the release of dopamine. This results in a sensation that motivates them to continually return, forming a pattern of reinforcement and potential addiction. With long exposure to these intense stimuli, the brain adapts therefore leading to an increased interaction to maintain the same level of satisfaction (Goldman, 2021). This could result in a variety of challenges such as a reduced attention span and impaired cognitive development (of skills like problem-solving, memory and critical thinking).

In 2019, a research paper in JAMA Psychiatry found that teenagers who devoted over three hours a day to social media were more prone to experiencing mental health issues linked to behaviour. Examples of this type of behaviour are social withdrawal and struggles with anxiety or depression. These teenagers also tend to internalise their problems rather than looking for help, which leads to higher rates of suicide. (Riehm et al., 2019).



Figure 5: Social Media and Cyberbullying Statistics (Gitnux)

Every social media platform is specifically programmed to generate addiction through the use of algorithms designed to maximise user engagement. For this reason, they pose a significant risk to children’s well-being. The fast-paced, highly stimulating nature of social media can impair children’s attention spans and cognitive development.



Figure 6: Algorithms cause children to become addicted to social media (CNA)

When used excessively, it can also lead to sleep disruption, especially when used before bedtime. This occurs because of the blue light, which is a type of artificial light emitted from screens that affects melatonin production (a hormone the body

produces which helps in sleep regulation), leading to sleep disturbances and deprivation, and possibly further exacerbating mental health problems.

A recent study made by BMC Public Health (2024), found that 21% of children have early exposure to YouTube; some children as young as 4 regularly watch YouTube, with the most typical starting age being 8-9 years old. It has been found that the younger a child is when exposed to YouTube, the more frequent the negative effects on emotional and behavioural development.

Moreover, research indicates that constant comparison with others and the exposure to the unrealistic portrayals of life displayed in social media can lead to mental health issues, such as anxiety, low self-esteem, and even depression (Habibi et al., 2023). Social media has a great impact on the psychological and emotional health of children; being exposed to it at an early age could lead to many issues in the development of personality and character.

Social and Behavioural Problems

Paradoxically, while social media was created to connect people, it has increasingly become a cause of social isolation in children. This is crucial, because the development of social skills and emotional intelligence may be obstructed due to the fact that young people may spend more time interacting online than

engaging in real-life, face-to-face interactions. The more time spent online, the more susceptible children are to cyberbullying. Cyberbullying, or bullying online, is often used by children due to the fact that it can be done anonymously and reach a large audience. A recent research presented on Gitnux shows that about 37% of young people between the ages of 12 and 17 have been bullied online. The study also notes that 30% have experienced it more than once, and the most common platforms for cyberbullying are Instagram, Facebook, and Snapchat (Linder, 2024).

Cyberbullying victims may experience psychological distress, and with the lack of maturity, this problem exacerbates, possibly leading in the worst cases to self-harm, severe trauma, or suicidal thoughts. Ultimately, the lack of maturity exposes them to exploitation and abuse by making them more susceptible to online predators, misleading information, and manipulative content, involving inappropriate content and peer pressure in risky activities, such as sexting (sending sexual messages, photos, or videos online) or dangerous challenges such as the Blue Whale challenge. The more time children spend on social media, the more likely they are to come across these dangers.

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Percent of UK Teens Depressed as a Function of Hours per Weekday on Social Media

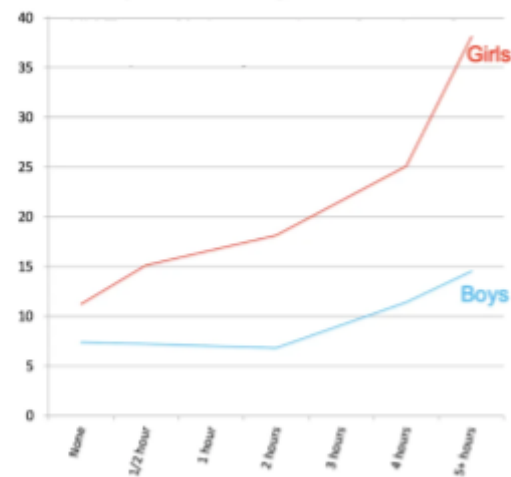


Figure 7: Correlation between depression and social media use (After Babel)

Academic and Developmental Issues

Social media addiction causes children to have a higher chance of failing at school. It causes a lack of self-control and organisation to properly fulfil their academic duties, leading to lower grades and learning. Additionally, distractions and psychological issues caused by social media can affect concentration, both during class and study sessions. Physical health is also affected, with high screen time leading to sedentary behaviour, bad posture, headaches, and eye problems. This, in turn, contributes to obesity and related health issues, impacting negatively on the children's health and development.

Family and Community Dynamics

The addiction to social media, due to the issues mentioned before, can strain family relationships. There may be a lack of communication and family bonding as a consequence of parents' struggle to manage and monitor effectively their children's screen time. In some cases, parents' own addiction to social media may mean that they are not properly bonding with their children, whilst other parents use social media as a distraction for children, allowing them to spend hours online in order to leave them in peace. At a broader level, communities face the challenge of addressing these problems, requiring efforts by those who are able to do so, such as schools, healthcare providers, and community organisations to help families and educate them.

Regulatory and Ethical Challenges

One of the biggest concerns regarding children's use of social media is data privacy and security. These platforms collect vast amounts of personal data, which must be protected. The Data Protection Act (DPA) 2018 in the United Kingdom, for example, *"provides the legal precautions necessary to prevent social media networks from exploiting personal data."* (VinciWorks Group, 2022). Other countries have similar laws, however, breaches still exist, leading data to be misused, and leaving children vulnerable to exploitation and harm.

Policies, regulations, and procedures must be ensured to protect children’s data. Children’s addiction to social media intensifies these privacy and security issues. As they spend more time online, they inadvertently share more personal information, interacting and sharing content with others without fully understanding the implications. Thus, ensuring data privacy and security is crucial in combating the problem of children's addiction to social media. Protecting their information can reduce some of the dangers linked to their frequent use of these platforms.

II. Current Situation

Nowadays, social media has become a part of everyday life for young children and teenagers all over the world. Research indicates that a large majority of individuals are active on various social platforms. According to Common Sense Media in 2021, 84% of teens in the US used media, many of whom spent hours each day on these sites (Rideout, Peebles, Mann, & Robb, 2022). The same research found out that children aged 8 to 12 receive an average of 4 hours and 44 minutes of screen time each day, while teenagers average 7 hours and 22 minutes. With the rise of the COVID-19 pandemic and as a result of remote learning and social distancing protocols, children have been spending an increasing amount of time in front of screens, which has restricted their face-to-face interactions. Plus, the

popularisation of viral trends like the Blackout Challenge (a trend where participants hold their breath until passing out) has even led to deaths in children and has generated doubts about the correct



Figure 8: Signs of social media addiction (Sandstone Care)

regulations used by social media companies, raising even more concerns regarding the addiction to social media.

In response to the deaths, injuries and addiction caused by social media, governments and regulatory bodies worldwide are increasingly implementing measures to address this and other concerns. For example, the Online Safety Act in the UK aims to enhance internet safety by holding platforms for harmful content and enforcing stricter age verification procedures. The Office of Communications (Ofcom) has informed that they contain more than 40 practical measures to enforce new and stricter rules, including a function in search engines to restrict inappropriate material. (Singleton, Rahman-Jones, 2024). Similarly, the General Data Protection Regulation (GDPR) in the European Union includes measures to safeguard children's privacy.

Most social media platforms have a minimum joining age of 13 years, but little is done to check the age or identity of the people who join. In a study in the UK, it was found that 2 out of 5 children between the ages of 8 and 12 have a social media profile of 16+ years. This means that they will be receiving age-inappropriate content. Up to half of the children had set up social media profiles by themselves, whilst up to two-thirds had help from parents. (Ofcom, 2024). This shows that parents must play a more effective role in stopping social media addiction by not allowing them to sign up to these sites.

A study by the University of Amsterdam found that about 5% of teenagers suffer from social media addiction, whilst another study showed that 80% of social media posts are about the person who is posting rather than interactions about what has been posted. (Teentor, n.d.) This means that although it might appear that a child has a lot of friends, there is actually little interaction between the

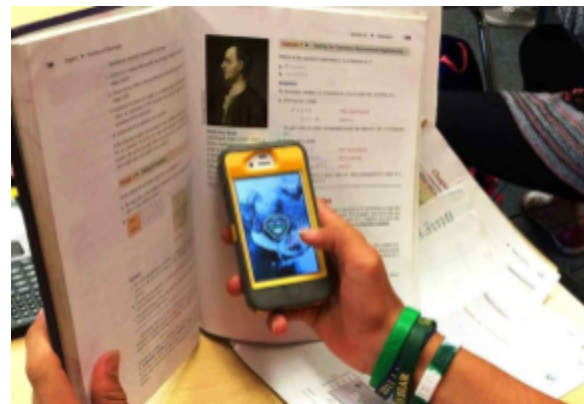


Figure 9: More schools are banning cell phones in class (Educhatter)

child and these “friends.” The more a child becomes addicted to social media, the less chance there is of forming true and lasting friendships. Children are also more likely to look for help online when they have problems, further affecting their offline relationships with family and friends.

Schools worldwide are beginning to implement initiatives to promote healthy online habits, digital literacy and a better social environment. Measures include talks and workshops about online health and safety, and many schools are now banning the use of cellphones in school, as well as cutting down on the amount of time that students spend on devices in general.

Tech companies like Google, Bark, Qustodio and FamilyTime are also coming forward by offering tools that enable parents to monitor and regulate their children's social media activities (Ziegler & Morin, 2020). For example, platforms such as Instagram and TikTok have introduced features that allow parents to set usage limits, track activity and restrict access to content. Similarly, the World Health Organization (WHO) recommends the following points in order to combat social media addiction:

- Invest in creating a school environment and evidence-based programmes that promote mental health integrated with instruction in digital literacy, covering responsible use of social media, safe internet use and healthy habits.
- Improve the services provided for mental health: Making sure that everyone has the opportunity to look for confidential and accessible therapies that can help with problems brought on by excessive use of digital devices.
- Promote open dialogue to lessen stigma and raise awareness, encourage discussions on digital well-being in families, schools, and communities.
- Educate teachers and medical professionals. To offer inclusive and successful digital literacy instruction and assistance, give specialised training.

- Ensure platform accountability: Make sure age limitations are enforced by social media companies, and establish laws that promote the responsible development of digital devices for minors.

Case study: The digital detox

A group of 10 students of Media City's University Technical College in Salford participated in a BBC project analysing smartphone habits and addiction. To make the detox, they exchanged their smartphones for basic Nokia 'dumbphones', only capable of making calls and sending texts. The participants have different profiles, aged between 14 years and 16 years, however, all of them had one thing in common: the addiction to smartphones. Will (age 15), admitted to spending over eight hours a day on his phone, primarily on Tiktok, however with this detox, he rediscovered his passion for cycling. Grace (age 15), was really surprised by how liberating was the experience and how she felt more present, engaging, and learning more. She spent her time doing things she used to enjoy, such as drawing and painting.

Several participants noticed improvements in their sleeping habits, communicating more with family members, and feeling more productive, creative and liberated. On the other hand, there were many challenges in this digital detox. Anxiety, particularly, the fear of missing out social media interactions was the reason why Charlie (age 14), dropped out of the detox after 27 hours, not being able to bear the absence of her phone and missing messages. Besides, most of the participants acknowledged that their smartphone usage was unhealthy and expressed a desire to reduce their screen time in the future. Will, for instance, planned to cut back his screen time, considering 8 hours as something "crazy".

The digital detox experiment revealed both the dependence on smartphones in teenagers and the potential benefits of reducing screen time. It demonstrated that productivity, creativity, and meaningful social contacts may all increase when one breaks away from continual digital connectedness. The overall experience

highlighted how crucial it is to strike a balance between virtual and physical activity, even while challenges may present.

Conclusion

Social media has become a part of everyday life, it has even made children famous and has changed the way the relationships are formed. The potential and opportunities behind social media are proportional to the way they are used. Social media can have positive effects on young people's development if used effectively. However, poor use may lead to addiction and bullying.

Solutions to social media addiction in children involve various procedures and participants. The intervention of parents, schools, government and social media companies are necessary to tackle the problem. Psychological help is important for children who are suffering from addiction. It is in the hands of each country to promote the use of social media as a necessary and useful tool for learning in a safe and effective way.

III. Key points of the debate

- Implementing and discussing the need for regulatory measures for preventing social media addiction and cyberbullying among children.
- Examine the psychological and physical affections of social media addiction.
- Benefits and risks of social media for children
- Potential dangers and risks of excessive social media use
- Effects of social media addiction on cognitive development and attention span in young children
- Strategies to effectively mitigate social media addiction
- The role of social media companies in mitigating the risks and implementing features to reduce child addiction

- Data privacy for children using social media
- Role of parents and caregivers in monitoring and preventing social media addiction
- Viability of the government legislation to combat social media addiction in children

IV. Guiding questions

- 1.** What measures and initiatives does your country have in place to prevent children from getting addicted to media?
- 2.** How are national laws and regulations used to oversee children's use of networking and address addiction issues?
- 3.** In what ways do schools and local communities contribute to educating children about social media addiction prevention?
- 4.** What responsibilities should social media platforms take on to safeguard children from addiction and what steps can they take in this regard?
- 5.** What support systems and psychological assistance are accessible for children displaying signs of social media addiction in your country?
- 6.** Are there tools and parental control apps that parents can utilise to regulate their children's usage of social networks effectively?
- 7.** How is research data on children's social media addiction utilised in formulating policies and programmes, within your nation?

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Topic 2: *Child slavery in Ethiopia*

I. History/Context

Ethiopia was one of the last nations in which slavery existed. In Ethiopia, slavery was an everyday part of life to the extent that the Fetha Nagast, which is considered Ethiopia's traditional legal code, officially recognized slavery as part of the Ethiopian social structure. This practice remained until the mid-20th century when it was abolished.

At the beginning of the 20th century, the total population of Ethiopia was almost 11 million people, and it is estimated that between 2 and 4 million of these people were slaves, who were considered the property of their owners. Ethiopia was never colonised by European countries, but was involved in a number of wars throughout the century, which prolonged the slave trade. The emperor Minelik II, who ruled from 1889 to 1913, took a large number of prisoners of war who were used as slaves.

During the 1920s, a lot of pressure was put on Ethiopia to end slavery. Laws were made to abolish slavery so that European powers would not have an excuse to invade the country. Significant change was made when Ethiopia sought to join the League of Nations in 1923, which required it to abolish slavery over the following 10 years. The Ethiopian regent, Haile Selessi, brought in gradual changes, which finally led to Penal Code 158 of 1957 which made slavery



© Liberating enslaved people in Ethiopia, circa 1930-1940. Photograph: Keystone-France/Gamma-Keystone/Getty Images

Figure 1: Liberating slaves in Ethiopia (Guardian)

and slave-owning a criminal offence. This law was later updated in 2004 under the criminal code.

Over thousands of years, children were often slaves in Ethiopia, and although slavery has been abolished in the country, many children still live under conditions that are known as modern-day slavery. According to Anti-Slavery International, nearly 50 million people live in modern slavery around the world, and about a quarter of all victims of modern slavery are children. (Anti-Slavery International, 2024).



Figure 2: Many children in Ethiopia must work every day (Humanium)

Modern slavery may include forced labour and forced marriage. Two out of five victims of forced marriage are children.

Children in Ethiopia have been subjected to the worst forms of child labour, which include forced labour in the domestic area, sexual exploitation, and heavy labour. According to some data from 2015, which the Ethiopia National Child Labour Survey published in 2018, approximately 16 million children from the age of 5 to 17 were engaged in child labour.

II. Current Situation

Currently, in Ethiopia, many children especially in rural areas and the ones who migrate to cities are more likely to be exposed to harsh working conditions, which includes; carrying heavy loads, working extended hours and exposure to dangerous materials, in addition to the repeated physical, verbal, and sexual abuse. Most children living in a situation of precariousness, misery and poverty are very likely to be pushed into labour because of the economic hardship, family disintegration, and peer influence.

These types of forced labour, physical and sexual exploitation have a significant impact on children's development. On the physical effects, children tend to suffer from fatigue, injuries, and in most cases, long term health issues, which is caused by the excessive workload and deteriorating working conditions. On the psychological part, children in labour can face severe mental traumas, which can include; low self-esteem, anxiety, depression, etc. These psychological impacts can also include trauma from the abuse, lack of sleep and stress for having to handle so much workload at that age. Finally, on the educational part, children tend to miss education opportunities which would lead to a decrease in the school attendance, on the literacy rates and on the development of a better future. This relates because of the significant increase in the working hours leaving the children without the possibility to attend school.

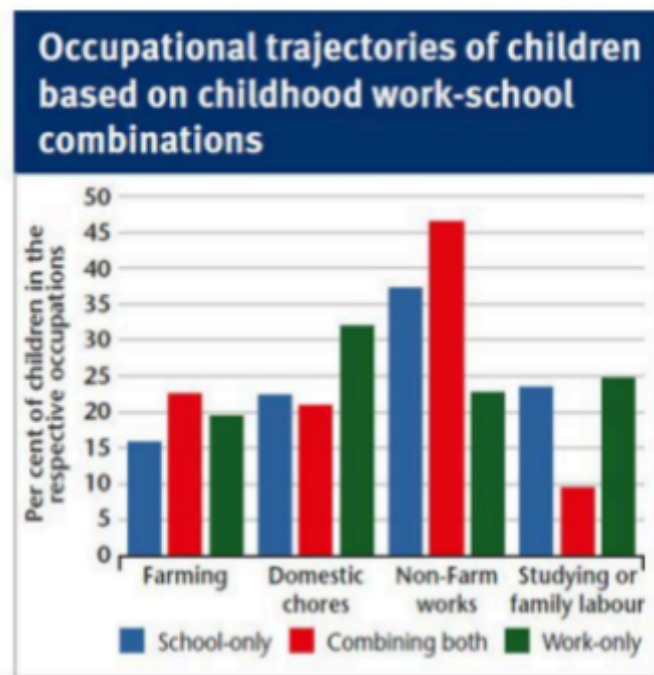


Figure 3 Occupational trajectories of children based on work-school combinations (Mussa, 2017)

As mentioned previously, according to data from 2015 published by the Ethiopia National Child Labor Survey in 2018, approximately 16 million children from the age of 5 to 17 were engaged in child labour. In 2021, it was estimated that about 6.3 people per 1000 citizens live in a form of modern slavery, either through forced labour or forced marriage. (Walk Free, 2023). Many children are sent by families to the big cities, where it is thought that they will have better opportunities, but this is often not the case, and they get trapped in abusive domestic work, begging and other forms of child labour.

Case Studies

- In an interview, a 13 years old ragpicker, said he works from dawn to dusk to support his family and sick mother. “In most cases, I earn around \$2 in a week, and if I ask for a fair price, the buyers abuse me and at times beat me”, he said.



Figure 4: Ethiopian children begging in Addis Ababa (Abebe, 2018)

- Anemawu Besufekad, a 12 year old child, who has been selling lottery tickets on the streets for the last two years, was forced to work by his father to support the family. “I make a living and support my poor family, but selling lottery tickets in Addis Ababa is a risky job,” he said. “On many occasions, I and several friends have been robbed and abused.” (Tessema, 2022)

The graph in Figure 4 shows that if the head of the household was younger when they started to work, there is

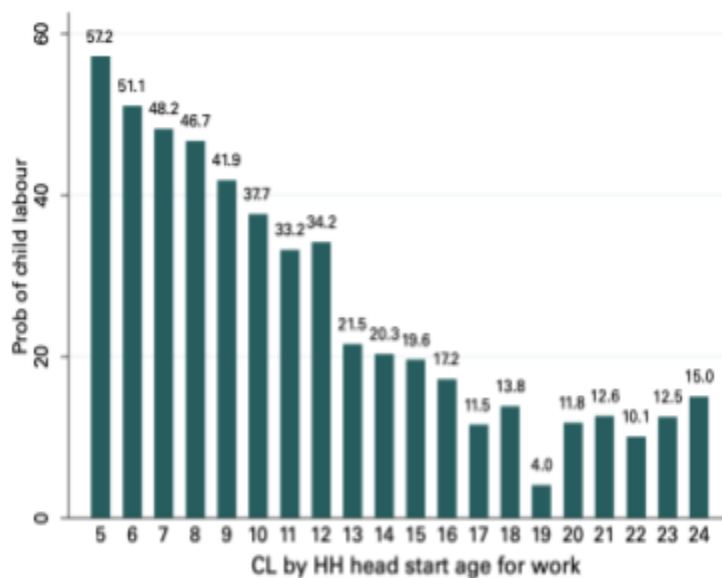


Figure 5: Child labour by age of HH head when started to work UNICEF 2020)

more chance that their children will be working from a young age, as this is just seen as the normal way that families operate. This shows how important it is to keep children in school for as long as possible in order to break the cycle of child labour and poverty.

Ethiopia is considered a source and destination country for child trafficking, which is considered one of the modern forms of slavery, both transnational and domestic. Ethiopian children voluntarily travel to Amhara, a region bordering a key regular migration route to Europe, to harvest sesame. This sector is allegedly linked to the Overland Smuggling Network; children can earn enough money to pay for a passage to Europe via North Africa. Some families send them specifically for the purpose of reaching Europe. Many of these children are under the age of 13 and are trying to get to the Middle East. Often the children who travel voluntarily to the region end up being exploited, and then they have no means of returning to their families. Some even work in harvesting khat, which releases an addictive stimulant that can cause them neurological problems in the children.

According to the US Department of State report, “Trafficking in Persons Report 2023: Ethiopia”, the government of Ethiopia does not fully accomplish the minimum standards for the elimination of human trafficking. Young children have been trafficked to Saudi Arabia, for example, where they are forced to work under conditions of slavery, *“Traffickers exploit Ethiopian girls in domestic servitude and sex trafficking, sometimes using substances as a means of control, in neighboring African countries, particularly Djibouti and Sudan. Traffickers exploit Ethiopian boys in labor trafficking in forced begging, domestic servitude, and shopkeeping in Djibouti.”* (US Department of State, 2024).

Despite ongoing problems, including civil conflict within the country, the Ethiopian government has demonstrated an increasing effort to tackle the problem compared with previous reporting periods, putting in place different mechanisms to try to combat people trafficking. The administration launched its first trafficking-specific hotline, regularly sought input from survivors and developed new anti-trafficking activities. However, this did not meet the minimum standards to eliminate trafficking. For example, in 2021, Somaliland reported that it was sending 50 to 100 children back to Ethiopia per week.

Conclusion

Ethiopian children face many difficulties due to internal conflict and high levels of poverty in the country. They are often forced into work from a young age. This may be when they are living at home or when they are sent to the cities to work. Their education is cut short, leaving them with fewer opportunities to escape the trap of poverty, which creates a cycle of poverty for future generations. Many children are trafficked to other countries, where they are exploited and have little chance of returning safely to their homes. Although the government has made advances in tackling the problem, there is still much that needs to be done, especially in cooperation with the countries that are receiving these illegal immigrants.

III. Key points of the debate

- Reasons for child slavery in Ethiopia
- Cultural attitudes to slavery in Ethiopia
- Types of child slavery happening in Ethiopia
- Child trafficking within and out of Ethiopia
- Short and long-term impacts child slavery has on children's physical, emotional, and psychological health
- Main obstacles to ending child slavery
- Effectiveness of government policies and legal frameworks designed to combat child slavery

IV. Guiding questions

1. What sort of child slavery or child labour occurs in your country, if any?
2. What laws and regulations does your country have to combat child slavery/labour, and how well are they being enforced?

3. What measures and educational initiatives are currently being implemented in your country to increase awareness and prevention of child slavery?
4. What kind of assistance and support do victims of child slavery receive in your country, particularly concerning rehabilitation and reintegration into society?
5. How are international organisations and NGOs involved in combating child slavery in Ethiopia, and what steps can they take to enhance their effectiveness?
6. In what ways can your country enhance collaboration with Ethiopia to address the issue of child slavery?

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