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The Abuse of Child Domestic Workers: Petites Bonnes in Morocco

Abstract

The International Labor Organization (ILO) classifies child domestic labor as a “worst form of child labor” for a very good reason. Driven by dire poverty and lack of access to education, children are sent away from their homes, often moving to large and unfamiliar cities to work for wealthier families. Morocco has one of the worst child domestic labor problems in Northern Africa with an ILO estimated 66,000-88,000 children between the ages of 7 and 15, 70% of whom are under age 12, working in Morocco today (Rinehart 2007). Many of these child laborers are young girls working as maids, or petites bonnes as they are known in Morocco. These girls are extremely vulnerable to physical, emotional and sexual abuse. Petites bonnes work over 12 hours per day, are forbidden from attending school and perform dangerous work. They have little recourse to legal and social programs to assist them.

Keywords

Human rights, Morocco, Children's rights, Child labor, Petites bonnes, Forced labor

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The Abuse of Child Domestic Workers: *Petites Bonnes* in Morocco

By Joanna Miller

“Latifa started working at the age of 8. Her father became ill, and could no longer work, and had no pension or other source of income. Latifa agreed to work as a means to help her father and family . . . Soon, she was washing clothes, doing the dishes, running errands, and several other duties. The wife soon started to beat her.” (Sommerfelt, 2001)

The International Labor Organization (ILO) classifies child domestic labor as a “worst form of child labor” for a very good reason. Driven by dire poverty and lack of access to education, children are sent away from their homes, often moving to large and unfamiliar cities to work for wealthier families. Morocco has one of the worst child domestic labor problems in Northern Africa with an ILO estimated 66,000-88,000 children between the ages of 7 and 15, 70% of whom are under age 12, working in Morocco today (Rinehart 2007). Many of these child laborers are young girls working as maids, or *petites bonnes* as they are known in Morocco. These girls are extremely vulnerable to physical, emotional and sexual abuse. *Petites bonnes* work over 12 hours per day, are forbidden from attending school and perform dangerous work. They have little recourse to legal and social programs to assist them.

Harmful Work or “Helping Hand”?

In Morocco, children are important contributors to the household and community. Children work for family farms and businesses and complete household chores. This work can become abusive, however, when it prevents children from enjoying the rights entitled to them in the UN Convention on the Rights of the Child, which includes the right to an education. Often, child domestic workers in Morocco are not providing a “helping hand” with chores or at family businesses. They are sent to the home of a third party, are dependent on that employer, hidden from public view, and denied their basic rights as children. Many, like 8-year-old Latifa from the story above, are beaten. Domestic labor should not be considered acceptable work for children. Recognition is needed of the vulnerabilities domestic workers—children and adults—face in their daily activities.

Why Children Work

The main factors that contribute to the child domestic labor problem are poverty, education and gender inequality.

Young girls are forced to work so they can contribute to the family income. Parental income and level of education are important factors in explaining why children seek out work. Increasing poverty—particularly in rural areas—has exacerbated the child labor problem. Many states, including Morocco, centralize government services and development programs in urban areas, creating a major divide between rural and urban standards of living. Girls are moved to cities to become *petite bonnes* because their communities are impoverished and it is felt that the city provides greater

opportunities for employment and education. Yet upon arriving to their place of employment, the girls are often forbidden from attending school or even leaving the household.

Lack of access to rural education is another reason children become domestic workers. Factors such as the distance between home and school and the costs associated with school (supplies, uniforms, etc) make education a luxury in rural Morocco. If a family is able to send any of their children to school, boys are given priority over girls, so girls are sent to work as *petites bonnes*. Even if young girls do have access to education, they may choose work instead. Education is not necessarily viewed as a worthwhile investment in a child's future, and families are unwilling to lose a child's potential income if they do not see the benefits of education.

The education of girls is not highly valued in Morocco. A widespread social perception is that women who are too educated will not make suitable wives and mothers. These ideas of gender norms play important roles in the child domestic labor problem. Domestic labor is seen as a safe form of work for young girls, where they will be under the watchful eye of their employer. A primary concern of parents is that their child not engage in premarital sex and they trust the employer to guarantee this. In reality domestic work places girls at a higher risk: several studies have found that most unwed young mothers in shelters in Morocco were *petites bonnes* when they became pregnant. Additionally, there is a view that domestic work is useful preparation for young girls, and they will gain useful domestic skills that will make them better future wives.

Fighting Child Domestic Labor

Child labor in general is a very difficult problem to address. Advocates for eradicating child labor are accused of ignoring the harsh reality that in some areas of the world, children must work in order to survive. Removing children from work may have negative consequences, both for families and for the children. There have been numerous cases, including the Pyjama Trail Affair, in which the children who were "rescued" from their exploitative conditions become worse off than before, even resorting to prostitution (Badry 2009). The families lose an important income contribution and become even more impoverished, making children vulnerable to more dangerous forms of employment and trafficking.

Child domestic labor is a more complex issue than child labor. First, differentiating acceptable child domestic work from harmful child domestic labor may be difficult. In most developing states, children are expected to work in agriculture and provide a "helping hand" with chores at home and in their communities. This makes arguments for the eradication of child labor seem unrealistic and out-of-touch with the economic reality of many developing nations. Second, child domestic labor does not occur in a factory or on a farm, but in the privacy of the home. Law enforcement officials are unwilling to venture into the private realm to ensure child workers are treated appropriately, particularly in traditional societies such as Morocco.

Another reason that child domestic labor is more difficult to address is that there is no product that concerned citizens can boycott and no corporation to pressure into reforming its labor practices. Governments and private citizens can regulate the treatment of children in domestic work, but laws regulating domestic work are rare and very difficult to enforce. In addition, there is little

recognition that the practice is inherently abusive. Domestic work is widely accepted and social perceptions of women make domestic work preferable to education. To address this problem, the supply of available child laborers must be decreased. This can only be done with the expansion of rural education and increased employment opportunities for adults in rural communities, so that a child's income is not essential to household income.

Children as Social Agents

Children's rights in international law are a contentious issue. Rights are linked closely to autonomy and agency and a legitimate rights-holder cannot be under the tutelage of another individual. Under international law children are treated as "incomplete adults," and do not have the ability to make claims to their rights (Brysk 2005). They are treated as passive victims who must be spoken for and protected. Although children are not entirely capable of protecting their own rights or being responsible for improving their circumstances, this view of children's rights ignores the reasons children work, the social factors that account for this, and how they negotiate their circumstances once they are engaged in work. Children should have a voice in campaigns and strategies that address domestic child labor if such attempts are to have any results. Movements, such as the African Movement of Working Children and Youth, which encourage children to be active social participants and utilize their voices in social reforms have proven to be very effective in alleviating child abuse and poverty (Terenzio, 2007). When children actively choose to work because their social circumstances require it, they are best able to explain their needs and what is necessary to protect them.

Conclusion

Child domestic labor places children at an extreme risk of physical, sexual and emotional abuse that impedes their development into adulthood. However, it is a necessary evil that will be resorted to as long as children have no other viable alternatives, such as access to quality education. Simply removing children from the abusive work is not enough and leaves them more vulnerable to other dangerous forms of work and human trafficking. The human rights of children, their needs and their voices should be an important aspect of development policies that seek to decrease the supply of available working children.

Annotations

Anderson, Bridget. 2000. *Doing the Dirty Work? The Global Politics of Domestic Labour*. London: Zed Books, Ltd.

Annotation: This book explains that domestic labor is the most undervalued labor practice. The author approaches issues such as the social organization of labor, the conditions of migrant domestic workers in Europe, and both paid and unpaid domestic workers from a feminist

perspective. She gathered research from domestic workers in five European cities. The book includes chapters on the legacy of slavery and how racism, sexism, power and class are all factors in the employment of domestic workers. Anderson briefly touches on the issue of child domestic work and explains the extreme dangers that young girls face, including physical, emotional and sexual abuse. The organization of these children into domestic work is, Anderson argues, based on race, sex, power and class arrangements.

Badry, Fatima. 2009. "The Pyjama Trail Affair: A Case Study in Child Labor." In Hugh D. Hindman (ed.), The World of Child Labor: An Historic and Regional Survey. New York: M.E. Sharpe, Inc.

Annotation: This case study describes the effects of a 1995 factory closure in Menkes, Morocco, after a British television program discovered that the workers were under age. The study found that the 100 girls employed were often exploited yet happy to have jobs at all. Gender norms help to explain this phenomenon; women have lower levels of education and lower literacy rates than men. Traditional alternatives, such as formal education and marriage, were not mentioned by any of the girls in this study. The girls saw the work as a form of liberation in which they could become independent, receive a useful skill and socialize with other girls. All of them were negatively affected by the closure and were forced to find employment elsewhere- including domestic service- and one entered into prostitution. This incident conveys the complexity of this issue and the harm that can come to children who are "rescued."

Bhukuth, Augendra. 2008. "Defining Child Labour: A Controversial Debate." *Development in Practice* 18 (3): 385-94.

Annotation: This article addresses the difficulties and controversies associated with defining child labor. Bhukuth studies the evolution of child labor laws and ILO Conventions to analyze how the fight against child labor is approached by various NGOs. The author finds that defining child labor is difficult because working children are placed into different categories, which are defined by economics. Therefore, children performing unpaid domestic work are counted as "nowhere children" (children who neither work nor attend school) and not included in the official ILO statistics of child labor. The strictly economic definition of child labor makes it difficult to encompass all forms of child labor, including domestic work, into actual child labor estimates. The article points out the difficulties in abolishing child labor, which is unfeasible in most developing countries, but argues that hazardous work must be eliminated. However, no actual suggestions are provided by the author.

Blagbrough, Jonathan. 2008. "Child Domestic Labour: A Modern Form of Slavery." *Children & Society* 22 (3): 179-90.

Annotation: In this article the author blatantly refers to child domestic labor as slavery, and analyzes the consequences of domestic work on this particularly vulnerable group of children. Blagbrough uses accounts from 400 child domestic workers in eight countries to analyze the

reasons children become domestic workers, paying close attention to the social, cultural and gender norms of each country. The author seeks to dispel the myth that domestic work is a safe and viable economic alternative for children, particularly girls. He considers child domestic labor to be the most exploitative form of child labor and the most difficult to address. The author argues that in order to improve the lives of child domestic workers, children must be considered agents for social change. Advocates should learn from the techniques that children themselves have employed in overcoming abusive situations.

———. 2009. "Worst Forms of Child Labor: Child Domestic Labor." In Hugh D. Hindman (ed.), The World of Child Labor: An Historical and Regional Survey, . New York: M.E. Sharpe, Inc.

Annotation: Blagbrough is the Forced Labor Program Coordinator at Anti-Slavery International, the oldest nongovernmental organization dealing with modern slavery and child labor. In this chapter, he dispels some of the myths surrounding child domestic work, including the ideas that it is a safe form of employment and young girls will be protected in their employer's home. He refers to a study of 450 children in domestic service and explained the reasons children were pushed or pulled into domestic work and the psychosocial effects the work had on them, even into adulthood. The majority of these children had been emotionally and physically abused, and girls had been subjected to sexual harassment and even rape. He also explains that employers often dismiss children when they reach a certain age and replace them with younger children, since they are believed to be easier to control and less likely to complain about their treatment.

Blagbrough, Jonathan, and Edmund Glynn. 1999. "Child Domestic Workers: Characteristics of the Modern Slave and Approaches to Ending Such Exploitation." *Childhood* 6 (1): 51-56.

Annotation: Blagbrough argues that advocates have failed to adequately address child domestic work because they have ignored societal perceptions of such work. Domestic work is most common in societies where it is expected that one social group (ethnic, religious, cultural or class group) should serve another. In addition, domestic labor is seen as a safe form of work, an alternative to "real" child labor, or factory work. Advocates need to address these issues and start a "transformation of the relevant social perspectives" in order to make any headway. He also argues that international laws have failed because they set too high standards. Instead of banning all forms of domestic work, laws should set achievable standards. The practice should be regulated, setting strict laws on education, working hours and holidays for children. However, Blagbrough ignores the fact that many countries lack the infrastructure to enforce such regulation and in most nations, laws regulating child labor have been ignored.

Bourdillon, M. 2009. "Children as Domestic Employees: Problems and Promises." *Journal of Children and Poverty* 15 (1): 1-18.

Annotation: In this article, Bourdillon explores the possible benefits and harms that could come to children if child labor is banned. He explains that removing children from domestic service is

not necessarily the best way to protect them, and enforcing a ban on child labor places children and their families at a greater risk for exploitation as families depend on the child's income to survive. Through interviews with children in domestic service, he outlines the many negative impacts domestic work has on children, including lack of education and health problems. However, through his interviews he found that many children choose—even actively arrange—their domestic employment, and therefore the potential benefits of child labor must be taken into consideration. His article displays the complexity of child domestic labor. Although children may be vulnerable and exploited, domestic service may also be their only means of survival.

Brysk, Alison. 2005. *Human Rights and Private Wrongs: Constructing Global Civil Society*. New York: Routledge.

Annotation: Brysk's book examines the effect of globalization on human rights violations. She focuses on three particular issues: children's rights, global financial flows and genetic research. Her central thesis is that globalization has created an entirely new form of actors as capable of violating human rights as governments: private actors. Businesses, corporations, journalists, doctors and other private citizens are increasingly guilty of human rights violations due to the spread of globalization and the rise of transnational corporations. Her chapter on children's rights is especially important to this research topic since the international migration of children spurred by globalization has brought into question the legal status of children under international law. Brysk argues that in order for the rights of children to be assured when they migrate across borders, children must be thought of as legitimate rights-holders.

Dorman, Peter. 2007. "Worker Rights and Economic Development: The Cases of Occupational Safety and Health and Child Labor." In Shareen Hertel and Lanse Minkler (eds.), *Economic Rights: Conceptual, Measurement, and Policy Issues*, . New York: Cambridge University Press, 2007.

Annotation: The main questions in this article are should we apply pressure to poor countries to respect worker rights and would premature adherence to worker rights impede development? Dorman approaches the issue of child labor and worker rights from an economic perspective. He argues that unsafe working conditions and child labor practices impede long term economic development. However, he acknowledges that prohibiting child labor leaves families worse off than before and, by banning child labor, children may be diverted to even more dangerous and exploitative work. Therefore, Dorman argues, the most effective way to end child labor is through poverty alleviation. He does not excuse governments in developing nations from their responsibilities however. He weighs the costs and benefits of prohibiting child labor and finds that ending child labor is easily within the fiscal resources of nearly every country and could be financed by a moderate degree of debt relief. Dorman adamantly believes that worker rights—including child worker rights—are inherently developmental.

Edmonds, Eric, and Mageshwor Shrestha. 2009. "Children's Work and Independent Child Migration: A Critical Review." *Innocenti Working Paper*, no. 2009-19. Florence: UNICEF.

Annotation: This study draws on previous child labor research to understand the factors that influence independent child migration. The authors explain that independent child migrants are very vulnerable to abuse and many have been trafficked. They also address child domestic labor, the vulnerabilities of domestic workers and the social factors that push children to seek domestic work. Many domestic workers are migrants since they are sent away from their home communities into urban areas, sometimes to different countries. An important contribution of this report is its argument that children should be considered social agents who have some degree of social autonomy. Although most work is arranged by parents, employers and recruiters, some child domestic workers seek out domestic work themselves in order to escape poverty, problems in their homes or in the hopes of receiving an education. The question as to whether or not children are social agents is important—especially in Morocco—where domestic workers may seek other employers or choose work over education.

Edmonds, Eric V., and Nina Pavcnik. 2005. "Child Labor in the Global Economy." *The Journal of Economic Perspectives* 19 (1): 199-220.

Annotation: Edmonds and Pavcnik discuss how popular opinion in developed nations is that child labor in developing nations is always a form of child abuse. However, the issue is far more complicated since the phrase "child labor" is very broad and it is used to describe many different activities in which children participate. The research, taken from ILO survey data, finds that most working children are at home, assisting in the family business or farm. The authors consider how poverty, economic and political policies, and globalization affect the demand for child labor. They find that economic development and school infrastructure improvement are the most effective ways to eliminate child labor, and laws to ban child labor and implement compulsory education are difficult to enforce and unlikely to have an impact.

Hindman, Hugh D, ed. 2009. *The World of Child Labor: An Historical and Regional Survey*. New York: M.E. Sharpe, Inc.

Annotation: This book covers nearly every aspect of child labor, including the history of child labor; its relationship to economics and global trade, education, development and the role of nongovernmental organizations in addressing child labor. It includes chapters on nearly every nation that has or has had a child labor problem, with over 190 contributors and 220 chapters, including four chapters on Morocco. For each nation, chapters address the historical foundations of child labor, the government's economic and social policy and case studies. Its chapters on Morocco are especially helpful and examine domestic service, textile and factory work, and agricultural work. For each nation the editor provides an extensive list of sources. While the source is very lengthy (nearly 1000 pages), it is essential reading for anyone interested in child labor in any region of the world.

Human Rights Watch. 2005. "Inside the Home, Outside the Law: Abuse of Child Domestic Workers in Morocco." *Human Rights Watch* 17, 12(E). Available online: <http://www.hrw.org/en/reports/2005/12/19/inside-home-outside-law-0>.

Annotation: This report focuses on child domestic workers under the age of fifteen. The report considers the role of "brokers" in arranging child domestic labor, a topic that is often ignored. It also examines the barriers to education that push children into work, and explains that most working children are never sent to school. It makes recommendations to the Moroccan government to address the problem, which include enforcing the minimum age requirement, regulating the conditions of domestic work and creating a complaint mechanism for child workers to utilize. It mentions that although the Moroccan government has devoted significant resources to combating child labor since 2000, domestic workers are excluded from these reforms. Courts rarely prosecute individuals for abusing domestic workers due to unwillingness to venture into the private realm, gender norms and the widespread social acceptance of domestic work for girls. Though they interview a small sample, the researchers provide a thorough assessment of child domestic labor and its consequences on the workers.

———. 2006. "Swept under the Rug: Abuses against Domestic Workers around the World." *Human Rights Watch* 18, 7(C). Available online: <http://www.hrw.org/en/reports/2006/07/27/swept-under-rug-0>.

Annotation: This report addresses domestic workers worldwide—including adult domestic workers—and its consequences on their health and well-being. Children are more vulnerable to abuse than adult domestic workers. The demand for children is high because they can be paid less (if at all), are less easier to control, and are less likely to report abuses or escape. HRW considers domestic labor a "worst form of child labor," given that children engage in heavy lifting, are exposed to harsh household chemicals and are at risk of severe injuries from activities such as food preparation. Education is a main motivation for child domestic service. Children are sent to work because school fees are too expensive, or actively seek work so that they may attend an urban school. Often, the fortunate few that attend school are too exhausted to complete homework or study and frequently miss classes.

International Labor Organization. 2006. "The End of Child Labor: Within Reach." *International Labor Conference, 95th Session, Report I(B)*. Geneva: ILO. Available online: http://www.ilo.org/public/english/region/ampro/cinterfor/news/rep_ib.pdf.

Annotation: This is the second global report on child labor from the ILO, and traces changes in child labor trends since 2004. Overall, the report finds that progress has been made: the number of children employed decreased by 11 percent and the number of children employed in hazardous work decreased by 26 percent. The report outlines the historical experiences of the first nations to industrialize and how child labor was abolished. It then analyzes the work of the International Program on the Elimination of Child Labor (IPEC), and lastly, how to eliminate

child labor using development and human rights frameworks. Although some progress has been made in the fight against child labor, child domestic labor has been the most difficult to tackle and little progress has been made in addressing this problem. While this report provides helpful information, it is meant to promote the work of the ILO and one of its offices, the IPEC.

Kane, June. 2004. "Helping Hands or Shackled Lives? Understanding Child Domestic Labour and Responses to It." Geneva: International Programme on the Elimination of Child Labour, International Labour Organisation. Available online:
<http://www.ilo.org/ipec/areas/Childdomesticlabour/Keydocuments/lang--en/index.htm>.

Annotation: This report provides excellent data and research on the nature of domestic work and the conditions of child workers around the world. It differentiates between children's work that can be considered providing a "helping hand" to family income and actual child labor. It then defines the "worst form of child domestic labor" as hazardous work under physically, emotionally and sexually abusive conditions, in which a child may have been trafficked into the domestic labor situation. This report then analyzes the "push-pull" factors of child labor and seeks to explain why some girls actively search for domestic work. The report analyzes programs in some nations, such as Tanzania and the Philippines, to address the problem and assesses the effectiveness of those programs. Finally, it provides guidelines for eliminating the problem and suggests strategies that activists and NGOs may implement.

Kielland, Anne, and Mauriza Tovo. 2006. Children at Work: Child Labor Practices in Africa. Boulder, CO: Lynne Rienner Publishers, Inc.

Annotation: This book is a useful overview of child labor practices in Africa, the main causes of child labor and the nature of children's work. The book also examines the consequences of child labor on the health and well-being of children, as well as on society in general. It is especially valuable in explaining the complexities of estimating the actual extent of child labor. For example, many surveys on child labor only count children out of school as working children, thereby ignoring children who combine work and school. The book also takes into account domestic labor, children working as apprentices, the worst forms of child labor and child labor in the commercial labor market. Both authors have researched child labor and included accounts from their interaction with working children in Africa. This book is very accessible for a wide audience and helpful for both scholars in the field and those with little exposure to child labor issues.

Krug, Nicole J. 198. "Exploiting Child Labor: Corporate Responsibility and the Role of Corporate Codes of Conduct." *New York Law School Journal of Human Rights* 14 (651).

Annotation: Krug's article explores the history of child labor, the reasons that employers use child labor and the conditions of such labor. Her central thesis is that if one alleviates poverty in a developing nation, one removes the need for child labor. Children suffer when they are

employed in harsh conditions, but can suffer even more severely when they are removed from labor and their families become even more desperate as a result. She also argues for corporate responsibility and feels that if corporations profit from this particular human rights violation, they should become responsible for alleviating poverty in the nation where their goods are manufactured. Some models are provided for how corporations can review the labor conditions in the nations where their goods are produced, such as Levi Strauss. While she makes a convincing argument, her models are somewhat unfeasible, and she does not explain the possible role of the government when corporations become responsible for economic development.

Lahlou, Mehdi. 2009. "Child Labour in Morocco: the Socio-Economic Background of the "Little Maids" Phenomenon." *Ministry of Planning, Morocco*. Available online: <http://www.araburban.org/childcity/Papers/English/Lahlou%20Morocco.pdf>.

Annotation: This report seeks to increase the understanding and extent of child domestic labor in Morocco. Lahlou tries to provide a reliable count of *petites bonnes* using census data. This report also outlines the reasons that so many rural parents choose to send their children into domestic service. The findings include that parental poverty, the number of children in the household, the lack of legal protections for the young girls, and the culture and social environment are the most influential factors in the *petites bonnes* practice. The author also links child labor to education, explaining that insufficient rural education is a main cause of the practice and calling for a nationalized education system that requires compulsory education to age 16. The expansion of rural education would make a significant impact of the child domestic labor problem.

Morrison, Heidi. 2009. "History of Child Labor in Morocco." In Hugh D. Hindman (ed.), *The World of Child Labor: An Historical and Regional Survey*. New York: M.E. Sharpe, Inc.

Annotation: This chapter provides a very succinct history of the origins of child labor in Morocco. Children have been working in numerous labor sectors since the 1920s, but work was subject to labor inspections. After independence the number of inspectors decreased with the departure of the French and government restructuring. The author argues that child labor has increased due to a struggling economy and governments that have not shown a respect for human rights. The debate about child labor became more socially acceptable after 1991, when a new king came to power; the minimum working age was raised from twelve to fifteen, and children under age sixteen were prohibited from working more than ten hours per day. However, low primary school attendance rates and rural poverty force children to work in domestic service (which is more difficult to regulate), agriculture, or textiles. This chapter, though not extremely detailed, provides a useful and brief explanation of the historical foundations of the child labor problem in Morocco.

Munene, Ishmael I., and Sara J. Ruto. 2010. "The Right to Education for Children in Domestic Labour: Empirical Evidence from Kenya." *International Review of Education* 56(1): 127-47.

Annotation: The purpose of this study is to understand the barriers to education faced by children in domestic labor by focusing specifically on child workers in Kenya. The authors examine the factors leading to child domestic labor and labor conditions. Domestic labor is the largest impediment to education and is one of the fastest growing forms of child labor worldwide. The authors completed interviews with children working in domestic service while they were working, attending school (for those who were allowed to attend school), or walking to or from their workplaces. Even if a nation does provide free universal education, poverty forces families to send children into domestic service, which explains why parents and children actively seek domestic employment. Child domestic workers are the least likely of all child laborers to attend school. This implied that governments need to do more than provide universal free primary education, since impoverished families rely on the child's income.

Polakoff, Erica G. 2007. "Globalization and Child Labor." *Journal of Developing Societies* 23 (1/2): 259-83.

Annotation: The relationship between globalization, child labor and poverty are explored in this article. Polakoff argues that neoliberal policies of free trade and globalization have increased the number of families living in abject poverty, causing families to become more reliant on the income of their children. Due to the increase in the supply of working children, employment conditions have worsened and children are more vulnerable. She also addresses international and national laws and conventions prohibiting child labor and how global trade policies force nations to ignore these protective laws in favor of free trade and economic globalization. Polakoff provides an excellent explanation of how free trade and structural adjustment policies influence child labor practices and increase global poverty. Her article is accessible for individuals who may not have experience in economics or child labor issues.

Rinehart, Richard. 2007. "Hazardous Child Domestic Work: A Briefing Sheet." International Labour Office, Available online:
<http://www.ilo.org/ippec/areas/Childdomesticlabour/Keydocuments/lang--en/index.htm>.

Annotation: The negative physical and psychological effects of domestic labor on children are the focus of this report. It differentiates between acceptable child domestic work, which is performed in the child's own home and can also be classified as chores as long as it does not expose the child to harm. Child domestic labor, as defined in the report, is occurring when a child below the minimum working age, or above the minimum age but under age 18, is exposed to hazardous work and exploitative conditions. A thorough list of possible tasks child domestic workers are expected to carry out and the harm each of these tasks carries is helpful in understanding why child domestic labor is considered a "worst form of child labor" in many cases. This report is geared towards policymakers, trade unions and other activists on strategies

to identify child domestic laborers. It also provides guidelines policymakers can use to create risk reduction measures for child domestic workers.

Ronald, HSK. 2005. "Child Survival, Poverty, and Labor in Africa." *Journal of Children and Poverty* 11 (1): 19-42.

Annotation: This paper analyzes how political and socioeconomic conditions in Africa have worsened the plight of children and how this forces them to engage in economic activities that leave them vulnerable to physical and sexual exploitation. Increasing poverty and a lack of adult employment opportunities have forced children to find work outside of the home in order to survive. The authors predict that the incidence of child labor is likely to increase in the next decade because children are important financial contributors to the household. This paper also touches on child soldiers, child trafficking, HIV/AIDS orphans and street children in a general discussion of how poverty affects children in Africa and how they become especially vulnerable to exploitation and violence. The paper briefly analyzes how national laws and actions have affected the situation of children in Africa and the costs and benefits of abolishing child labor in Africa.

Schlemmer, Bernard. 2009. "Morocco: Why Children Go to Work Instead of School." In Hugh D. Hindman (ed.), *The World of Child Labor: An Historic and Regional Survey*. New York: M.E. Sharpe, Inc, 2009.

Annotation: Schlemmer traces child labor to three key issues in Morocco: gender, the rural-urban divide, and education. It explains how unreliable current statistics on child labor are and that these numbers underestimate the true count of working children. Schlemmer mainly examines the educational system and how it influences child labor because even those children with access to school sometimes choose to work instead. The fact is that education does not necessarily guarantee a better life. Rural parents are not willing to risk losing out on their child's potential income in the vague hopes the child may receive higher pay in the long-term. He advocates for an increase in non-formal education, which requires the state at least acknowledges that child labor is a problem and that, in reality, traditional education does not guarantee work. Yet he does not dismiss formal education and calls on the state to improve conditions in schools and the quality of education.

Seabrook, Jeremy. 2009. "Why Children Work." *The New Internationalist*: 34-35.

Annotation: This brief article describes a garment factory in Dhaka, Bangladesh, where the author witnessed children as young as ten years old working twelve hour days. Seabrook explains that most Bangladeshis have little or no land at all and move to over-crowded slums in search of low-paid work, a condition that parallels child factory workers in Morocco. He also discusses how abolitionists working to alleviate the plight of these children ignore their economic reality and the fact that if children are taken out of factories, their lives will only become more difficult.

He provides evidence of how government subsidies, on items such as rice, often remove the incentive for employers to raise wages to subsistence levels. Most importantly, Seabrook, like many authors, finds that these children do not consider themselves exploited given the lack of alternatives available to them.

Sommerfelt, Tone (ed.). 2003. "Domestic Child Labour in Morocco: An Analysis of the Parties Involved in Relationships To "Petites Bonnes"." Save the Children, FAFO Institute for Applied Social Science. Norway: Centraltrykkeriet AS. Available online: <http://www.faf.no/pub/rapp/370/370.pdf>.

Annotation: This report attempts to estimate the number of *petites bonnes* and analyze the roles of the different actors involved in sending them into domestic service. The report includes data from census and government surveys, as well as interviews with *petites bonnes*, their parents, and employers. The interviews and activities with *petites bonnes* were conducted while the girls were attending night school or visiting their parents in the countryside. A problem with this methodology is that only girls in the best situations are allowed to attend school or visit parents, meaning the study was biased. However, the article did analyze the complex nature of the practice. They found many girls were actively seeking employment, would negotiate the conditions of their employment, and would find employment elsewhere if their conditions were not met. This report also analyzes the effectiveness of laws that address domestic workers in eliminating the abusive elements of the practice.

———. 2009. "Small Maids in Morocco." In Hugh D. Hindman (ed.), The World of Child Labor: An Historic and Regional Survey. New York: M.E. Sharpe, Inc.

Annotation: Sommerfelt is a Research Fellow at the University of Oslo and has written extensively on this subject. This brief chapter provides readers with a quick explanation of the work that child domestic workers perform and the arrangements between workers and employers. Parents expect the employer to refrain from beating the child and to prevent her from "running around," or engaging in premarital sex. Sommerfelt argues that gender is an important issue as the home is viewed as a woman's domain and boys are given priority in education. She also considers the role of recruiters and how they play a large role in how the girls are treated. If they receive a portion of the girl's income, it is in the recruiter's best interest that the girl remains at work. This recruiter will do whatever necessary to prevent the parents from learning of potential abuse by preventing parents and children from meeting. This is a very helpful introductory piece on *petites bonnes*.

Terenzio, Fabrizio. 2007. "The African Movement of Working Children and Youth." *Development* 50 (1): 68-71.

Annotation: Given the difficult context of children's lives in parts of Africa, they have become influential social, economic and political actors. This article analyzes the African Movement of

Working Children and Youth (AMWCY), which bridges the gap between laws meant to protect children and practice. Since its inception the AMWCY has pushed for children's rights to be seen as developmental. Children choose to work, the author explains, because they are contributing to their families and their communities, and they feel they are helping to alleviate poverty. The author argues that development policies ignore children's creativity and energy, and with programs designed to increase access to quality of education, the contributions of children cannot be ignored in international development programs. This article forces the reader to think of children as active participants in society and the economy and not just passive victims of abusive labor practices.

Understanding Children's Work Project. 2003. "Understanding Children's Work in Morocco." International Labor Organization, UNICEF, World Bank. Available online: http://www.ucw-project.org/pdf/publications/report_morocco_draft.pdf.

Annotation: This report comes from the Understanding Children's Work Project funded by the ILO, UNICEF and the World Bank. It provides an overview of the work done by children in Morocco; the nature of the work, its extent, determinants, and consequences on health and education are all explored. The study found that nearly all children in domestic service are girls and that these children are working in the most hazardous conditions and are the most vulnerable to sexual and physical abuse. It also found that these girls rarely attend school. Although rape is underreported due to the sensitivity of the subject and cultural norms, several departments in the Moroccan government confirm that there is a high incidence of rape of girl domestic workers. The findings are similar to those of other NGO studies, and the authors conclude that poverty alleviation and increased access to education would have the greatest impact on the problem of child labor.

Weston, Burns H., ed. 2005. Child Labor and Human Rights: Making Children Matter. Boulder, CO: Lynne Rienner Publishers, Inc.

Annotation: The purpose of this book is to advocate for the elimination of child labor through the use of human rights language and laws. The editor's central claim is that child labor is rarely addressed as a human rights problem, which has hindered advocates' ability to adequately address it. The authors in this work argue that child labor is a human rights problem and the fight to abolish it should include reference to human rights "doctrines, principles, and rules." The topics covered in this edition include: tracing the evolution of child labor and international legal standards, how these standards influence practice (enforcement in individual nations), the relationship between poverty and underdevelopment to child labor, and strategies for using human rights language and mechanisms to address child labor.