CONVENTIONAL PROBLEMS AND ALTERNATIVE SOLUTIONS IN EDUCATION AND THE TRAFFICKING IN CHILDREN IN INDIA

Patricia Aliperti, Jason Aliperti
ecukraine@yahoo.com, jason.aliperti@gmail.com

Abstract: The trafficking in children for forced and bonded labor is one of the worst forms of child labor. International and national policies target its elimination but the exploitation of children continues throughout the world. Access to education is one of numerous practices that have been utilized to prevent child trafficking. But what constitutes an education? This paper takes the position that literacy by itself does not call into question unequal structural systems which are directly linked to the reasons why the trafficking of marginalized children exists. In addition, many communities are mired in a culture of silence, an environment that allows trafficking in children to persist. This paper presents a framework to prevent child trafficking through the lens of critical pedagogy applied to formal and non-formal education by analyzing the role of the teacher, classroom practices, curriculum and standardized testing, and the banking concept of education in India. Thus, critical pedagogy that leads to a critical consciousness allows for the reflection of the world and its unjust power hierarchies to create action to transform the world in any social movement.

Key Words: child trafficking, child labor, bonded labor, education, critical pedagogy, India

INTRODUCTION

Trafficking in children for forced and bonded labor (BL) is one of the worst forms of child labor (WFCL). Estimates in 2004 place the number of economically active children ages 5-17 at 317.4 million, out of which 218 million were in child labor (CL) that requires elimination (Hagemann et al. 2006). Of these, 126 million were in the WFCL, with boys outnumbering girls. ILO estimates for 2000 indicate there are 8.4 million children involved in unconditional WFCL including trafficking with 1.2 million and forced and BL with 5.7 million (ILO-IPEC 2002). According to various reports, India has the largest number of child laborers in the world (ADB 2002). The Indian government estimates 11 to 17.5 million child laborers, many highly vulnerable to trafficking (ADB 2002) while unofficial estimates range from 60 to 115 million children, the majority of whom are Dalits, mostly working in agriculture while others picking rags, polishing gemstones, rolling beedi cigarettes, making bricks, working as domestics, packaging firecrackers, and weaving carpets and silk saris (HRW 2003).

The elimination of CL and the international efforts to achieve Education for All (EFA) and Universal Primary Education (UPE) by 2015 – one of the Millennium Development Goals – are inextricably linked (ILO-IPEC 2007). On one hand, education prevents CL since children without access to quality education have few alternatives and may enter the labor market forced to work in exploitative and dangerous conditions. On the other

hand, CL is a major obstacle to achieve EFA since working children cannot go to school. Those who combine school and work may suffer in their educational achievement and may drop out to enter employment fulltime. Furthermore, illiteracy is a strong predictor of poverty, and thus, unequal access to educational opportunities is linked to income inequality (Suas Educational n.d.). Speculatory human capital assumptions for primary education insist that the basic skills gained in primary education will result in increased income for the individual and in turn support a country's economic growth.

This paper will explore conventional problems and alternative solutions in education relative to the trafficking in children. The alternative framework referred to herein is not reduced to the treatment of letters and words in a mechanical manner. Instead, education is conceptualized as, in Paolo Freire's words, "the relationship of learners to the world, mediated by the transforming practice of this world taking place in the very general milieu in which learners travel" (Freire and Macedo 1987: viii).

METHODOLOGY AND DATA COLLECTION

The research for this study was conducted through the NGO Bachpan Bachao Andolan (BBA), or Save the Childhood Movement, during two phases of field study in 2007 and 2008 at its rehabilitation centers: Bal Ashram, Mukti Ashram, and Balika Ashram. BBA's vision is "to create a child friendly society, where all children are free from exploitation and receive free and quality education" while its mission is "to identify, liberate, rehabilitate and educate children in servitude through direct intervention, child and community participation, coalition building, consumer action, promoting ethical trade practices and mass mobilization" (BBA 2007). BBA conducts raid-and-rescue operations of establishments that use CL and rehabilitates the rescued children, including trafficked and bonded child laborers as well as child laborers, child beggars, and children at risk. Ten communities were also visited to interview community members on the role of education to prevent child exploitation, of which six were BBA's Bal Mitra Gram [BMG], or child friendly villages. These villages reach BMG status after eliminating their high numbers of child laborers by mainstreaming them into formal schools. Staff from various NGOs were also interviewed.

ANALYTICAL FRAMEWORK: CRITICAL PEDAGOGY

The Freirean concept of critical pedagogy – which provides tools to better understand and combat the complex relationship between education and unequal political, cultural, and economic power (Apple 1999) – for conscientization to prevent oppression and exploitation such as child trafficking and BL are applied. Paulo Freire's book *Pedagogy of the Oppressed* is the main driver for this research at a time when UPE and EFA initiatives call for quality in education. Critical pedagogy is referred to extensively as the desired pedagogy to teach the oppressed to achieve a critical consciousness to create/demand their needed social changes and is used to examine the formal and non-formal education (NFE) presented.

BACKGROUND OF INDIA

Education in India

In 2002 the constitution was amended to guarantee free and compulsory education for children ages 6 to 14 but consequential legislation is still not established (Ministry of Human 2008). A majority of states have introduced free education in classes 1 to 12 (Guo 2005). However, Kumar (2006) argues that education is not 'free'. As Wada Na (2007) indicates, families spend as much as 350 rupees per child yearly for stationery, transportation, uniforms, and more if tuition is added.

The net primary enrollment rate is 89% (2005), females 85% with the ratio of females to males at .93 (UNDP 2008). However, *The State of the World's Children 2008* report indicates that the primary net school attendance ratio for 2000-2006 is 84% (UNICEF 2008). Only 73% of those entering primary school reach grade 5. The secondary GER (gross enrollment rate) (2000-06) is 63% for males and 50% for females. The dropout rate at primary level grades 1-5 (2003-04) was 31.47% (33.74% of boys and 28.57% of girls) while the dropout rate in grades 1-8 was 52.32% (51.85% for boys and 52.92% for girls) (Govinda 2007). The secondary school dropout rate went from 82.5% in 1980-81 to 66% in 2001-02 (Guo 2005). These changes imply significant improvement in retention rates and access to education despite continuing challenges, which includes the 13,459,734 out-of-school children (ages 6-13, 2006) representing 6.94% of all children (Govinda 2007).

Caste Discrimination in India

According to Jha and Jhingran (as cited in Sooryamoorthy 2007), Dalits, Muslims, and tribals are most affected in education with only 65% of enrolled children attending school regularly due to a plethora of factors: dysfunctional schools, high teacher absenteeism in remote schools, corporal punishment, low levels of perceived relevance of schooling among Muslims and tribals, gender differences across all social groups, children engaged in seasonal work, girls' early marriage, and ineffectiveness of many schools as educational institutions. Of child laborers, the majority are Dalit children (HRW 2007). There is lack of accountability to punish employers of child laborers because upper-caste community members dominate local political bodies, bonded labor vigilance committees, the police and judiciary, and child labor committees responsible for enforcing the laws. Corruption and apathy contribute to the denial of the problem. In schools, Dalit children face discrimination, exclusion, physical and psychological abuse, alienation, and segregation. Ninety-nine percent of Dalit students attend government schools with substandard facilities lacking basic infrastructure, teachers, classrooms, and teaching aids. Higher-caste community members discourage these children, perceiving their education as both a waste and a threat, believing Dalits, if educated, could threaten the village hierarchical power structure. Even the Mid-Day Meal (MDM) program has been opposed for Dalit children, and in many places, the meals are served in higher-caste localities, which Dalits cannot access.

Labor Exploitation

Of 27 million slaves in the world today (Bales 2004), India has the largest number of slaves – eight to ten million and most in some form of debt bondage, including children

(Bales 2007). NGO estimates of child laborers vary from 60 to 115 million (Sen and Nair 2004). Employers prefer children because they are hard-working, cost less, and are easier to cheat, exploit, and intimidate. The rights of these children may be violated without protest or accountability.

Often, in return for money advance or credit, children's labor is pledged for an indefinite time period (Sen and Nair 2004). Even though the initial loans are small, the families are illiterate and unable to understand the moneylenders' interest calculations. Thus, children become bonded and/or trafficked to pay off debts. NGOs estimate 20 to 65 million bonded laborers in India in agriculture, stone quarries, brick kilns, jewelry, beedi making, rice factories, and carpet weaving (US Department of State 2008). According to HRW (as cited in Shakti Vahini 2004), of 40 million bonded laborers, at least 15 million are children, the majority being Dalits with bondage passed from one generation to the next. Of these 15 million, 52% to 87% of bonded child laborers are in agriculture (HRW as cited in Sen and Nair 2004). Many are also in bondage as domestic workers; in industries such as silk, beedi, saris, silver jewelry, gemstones, handwoven wool carpets, and footwear/sporting goods; and in services such as restaurants, tea shops, and truck stops. They are also found in begging, drug selling, petty crimes, and prostitution.

Trafficking also includes organ trading, forced marriage, adoption, entertainment such as circus, and sports such as camel racing (Sen and Nair 2004). According to Sen and Nair, a "culture of silence" in India prevails with the family's and community's passivity and inability to respond to the situation due to a lack of public awareness and action compounded by social indifference (316). Poverty and illiteracy are major factors compelling parents to send children to work in addition to lack of awareness and educational opportunities. Despite the established laws and efforts through raid and rescue, prosecution, and repatriation, overall enforcement of CL is inadequate due to insufficient resources, poorly trained inspectors, and social acceptance of CL (US Department of Labor 2008).

ANALYSIS: PROBLEMS AND SOLUTIONS IN EDUCATION AND THE TRAFFICKING IN CHILDREN

Based on interviews and field visits, formal and NFE are explored through the lens of critical pedagogy and are analyzed focusing on the role of the teacher, classroom practices, curriculum and standardized testing, and the banking concept of education.

Formal Education

Illiteracy immobilizes people and impedes their ability to make decisions, to vote, and to participate in a political process. However, being illiterate does not necessarily obstruct one's ability to choose what is best for oneself or to choose the best leader. Freire (1985) warns against expressions such as "eradication of illiteracy" because they appear to manifest people's incapacity or lack of intelligence (7). When educators see illiteracy as something to eradicate, their solutions include mechanical reactions that reduce literacy to depositing letters and words that receivers repeat without any relationship to their world. Illiteracy is a concrete expression of an unjust social reality and as such it is not exclusively a pedagogical problem but a political one too.

By negating the political nature of pedagogy, education gives the superficial appearance that it serves everyone, thus assuring its continuing function benefiting the dominant class (Freire and Macedo 1987). According to Stanley (as cited in Breunig 2006), public schools should be intentional about their main purpose, which should be the reconstruction of society to resolve current political, social, and cultural crises and to prepare learners to think critically. Freire identifies education as the one place where societies and individuals are constructed, a social action that either domesticates or empowers learners (Shor 1993). While for Freire schools are the most important places to resist "enslavement to machineries of servitude," they are not the only places for social transformation (McLaren and da Silva 1993: 83). One should not be despaired, however, that schools are not sufficient for social change as one should focus on the possibilities associated "with a commitment to forms of social alliances and movements that can help realize the most radical dream of democracy, the dream of freedom" (83). Freire recognizes that to implement a liberating education, political power is required, which the oppressed do not have (Freire 2000).

The Teacher

Bales (2007) states that teachers hardly take advantage of the power of education to combat slavery: "How many are trained to teach the skills needed to help someone keep their freedom?…how much do we spend to educate people against slavery?…how can we help teachers spread the word in the areas most at risk of slavery?" (28). These questions pose important implications for teacher training and the moral obligation of teachers to serve students' best interests. However, in several villages visited during field research vulnerable to child trafficking and BL, teacher absenteeism was a major concern. A study on teacher absenteeism in India found that 25% of teachers were absent in government primary schools during unannounced visits, with absences considerably lower in schools with better infrastructure (Kremer et al. 2005). Of those present, only 45% of teachers were actively teaching at the time of inspection. In addition to teacher absenteeism, villagers interviewed also reported concern for the lack of MDM as they are important to reduce expenses of parents feeding children. Without meals, many children would not attend school regularly and be unmotivated to learn (Ministry of Human 2008). These issues are directly related to preventing child trafficking. They also represent deeper implications of inequality and oppression that a critical pedagogy could transform.

According to Pratham NGO staff interviewed, the MDM program functions very well in India, with teachers perhaps not teaching at all but children getting their meal. In Ghina village, the community reported large-scale corruption in the local government regarding the MDM saying that education officers, teachers, and the cook do not give them the proper 100 grams and instead receive approximately 10 grams per meal. Villagers questioned why they should send their children to school if they do not get proper food. A teacher reported that he would be able to provide a better education if he had the proper resources, a better building with facilities for its 350 students, and support from the villagers to cook the MDM. He said there are seven teachers posted there but only three teaching regularly. He reported that a formal education benefits children not just to have a better future employment in the government or private sector but also to develop their mental knowledge capabilities and help their country by being good civilians aware

of their rights. This particular teacher appears aware of the positive effects of a critical education but needs support to clarify his political views to pursue all the possibilities to benefit the village not only by demanding the proper schemes for education but also by expanding his own critical consciousness so he can apply a critical pedagogy to not create just "good civilians" but "critical civilians."

According to Govinda (2007), Bihar, West Bengal, Uttar Pradesh, Assam, Orissa, and others still require more teachers at lower and upper primary levels. Many teachers do not have professional training and more teachers are recruited on a contract basis to reduce expenses. The Diocesan Development and Welfare Society staff interviewed reported that quality of education differs in NFE run by NGOs. Although educated with a Bachelor of education, government teachers are mostly interested in the job security teaching provides even if they teach or not, and thus do not teach with dedication. On the other hand, although lacking degrees, NGO teachers are given capacity-building training and are liable for quality in education. A boy from the Bal Vikas Ashram rehabilitation NGO reported that the NFE from the ashram is better than in formal schools because his village teacher was always sleeping at school, and they lacked proper facilities. Another 14-year-old said the quality of his village education was not good because the teacher was often absent and children were disruptive. The boy added, "No one is able to learn with a teacher who cannot teach."

The director of Udayan NGO reported that government schools have vacancies but people do not want them because teaching is a low-status position. "NFE is just the basics, so they do not need better quality. Some teachers have a 7th or 10th grade education and become NFE teachers with training. In government schools, the government has specifications. They must be better educated." However, a 17-year-old child from Bal Ashram believes that "non-government educators should help children since the government rule is that teachers only teach, and also help change government schools so teachers come regularly…NGO teachers may not have a master's degree but should to teach properly."

Freire (2001) states that it is only by following what is considered one's vocation that educators persist with great devotion and love despite low salaries and lack of resources. Freire (2004) reprimands teachers who fail to take their practice seriously by not studying – which makes their teaching poor – by teaching something they know poorly, or by not demanding to have the material conditions necessary to teach. These teachers disqualify themselves by failing to cooperate in forming the indispensable intellectual discipline of their students. Hinchey (1998) believes such teachers do not model dignity and respect for others, contributing to the impression that teaching takes little or no skill, that one does not need to be very bright to become a teacher, and that teachers are incompetent and lazy.

According to Freire, teachers must remain consistent and rigorous in their teaching practice and understand that "teaching is not the lever for changing or transforming society, but…that social transformation is made by lots of small and great and big and humble tasks! [Teachers] have one of these tasks" (Shor and Freire 1987: 46). Education's political nature is independent of educators' subjectivity (Freire 1985). An

educator must question the political options disguised as pedagogical to accommodate them in the existing structure:

> The more conscious and committed they are, the more they understand that their role as educators requires them to take risks….Educators who do their job uncritically, just to preserve their jobs, have not yet grasped the political nature of education. (180)

Teacher preparation must go beyond technical preparation and develop an ethical formation of self and history, not an "ethics of the market" that obeys the law of profit but a universal human ethic not afraid to condemn hegemonic ideological discourses that include the exploitation of labor and "the manipulation that makes a rumor into truth and truth into a mere rumor" (Freire 2001: 23). To transform society, teachers must not wait for the establishment's professional training but must form themselves, studying books, newspapers, the news, radio or television, and/or listening to everyday people in the streets (Shor and Freire 1987).

The Classroom

It is through putting ideas into words that learners transform their vague ideas into specific and coherent statements of meaning (Hinchey 1998). Dialogue, writing, and projects involving personal interaction can achieve this. However, when visiting village schools, the children were often corrected when they said something. Because students are corrected time and time again, Hinchey says that children soon learn to remain silent as the best strategy to avoid this humiliating judgmental process since the teacher is not listening to their ideas anyway.

These hidden messages that maintain oppression is what Giroux (1988) calls the "hidden curriculum" in education (4). The hidden curriculum includes norms, values, beliefs, and messages conveyed silently to students through selecting specific forms of knowledge, using specific classroom and social relations, and the characteristics that define the school's organizational structure. What students learn may be shaped more by the hidden curriculum than by the formal curriculum. The mechanisms of domination are thus mediated between the larger society and the schools, "particularly as they manifest themselves in the material practices of classroom social relationships, in the ideological practices of teachers, in the attitudes and behavior of students, and the classroom materials themselves" (201).

Bernstein (as cited in Giroux 1988) highlights the features of the political nature of schooling in its ideological assumptions embedded in the three message systems in schools: the curriculum, the classroom pedagogical styles, and evaluation. Students learn norms and values "that would produce 'good' industrial workers. Students internalize values which stress a respect for authority, punctuality, cleanliness, docility, and conformity" (29).

According to Jackson (as cited in Giroux 1988), the hidden curriculum is shaped by three key concepts: crowds, praise, and power. By working in classrooms, children learn to live in crowds meaning learning to constantly wait to use resources, how to be quiet, and how to be isolated in crowds. They must learn the virtue of patience – rooted in

submission to authority – and to suffer in silence by denying and delaying their personal wishes and desires. Through praise by evaluation, children learn how to be evaluated as well as how to evaluate themselves and others. Praise and power are inextricably connected as exemplified by the positive and negative sanctions teachers impose as their symbol of power, evaluating not only the academic but also institutional adjustment and personal qualities. Thus, in these contexts, schools act more as agents of social control that socialize students to conform to the status quo than places where students are prepared to think critically about and intervene in the world where they live.

Trafficked children socialized under such hidden curricula in Indian schools are the docile, obedient, and trouble-free workers that all traffickers and managers desire, otherwise they must be molded to be so through physical violence or psychological coercion. According to the MSEMVS NGO director, when one teacher must teach 200 children, parents and students realize that their education will be bad and prefer to drop out. These large classes negatively affect children who become bored and may prefer to work than to study, increasing their vulnerability to trafficking. Despite pedagogical methods used, if teachers in India taught smaller classes, dropouts could be decreased while performance increased. Still, for teachers to fulfill their duty to educate, certain conditions are necessary: proper physical space, hygiene, aesthetic environment, etc., without which it is pedagogically impossible to operate (Freire 2001). These pedagogical spaces were largely lacking in numerous schools visited that lacked blackboards, toilets, and classrooms.

In the Dalit village of Mai, a girl reported that only until she started leaving her village to go to upper primary school in a nearby village did she realize she was "different" from the other children. She said the teacher treated all children from her village differently, placing them in the back of the room and ignoring them as subjects in the class while she paid attention to those from higher castes. Compounded to the children's caste is the children's gender, with boys receiving more attention than girls. According to the report *Hidden Apartheid* (HRW 2007), teachers impart and maintain discriminatory attitudes in classrooms segregating Dalit children from non-Dalits during lunch, forbidding non-Dalits to sit next to Dalits or touching their plates, and forcing them to sit in the back of the room. They also limit Dalit children's class participation, requiring them to undertake custodial duties, grading them unjustifiably low, and subjecting them to verbal abuse and corporal punishment because "they cannot learn unless they are beaten" (96). Segregation encourages high dropout rates in the Dalit population and perpetuates "untouchability" by teaching non-Dalit children that it is an acceptable and necessary practice.

The Curriculum and Standardized Testing

Children also face discrimination at school in the admissions and evaluations process and encounter adverse teaching and learning conditions in the classroom (Govinda 2007). Many children remain excluded as little or no learning takes place. In a 2006 survey, it was found that approximately 40% of students could not read level I and II texts and could not do simple math of levels I and II or III-V. In addition, 70% could not recognize alphabets.

The blanket curriculum exemplified by a minimum level of learning established by the Department of Education (Guo 2005) may actually hinder children's education in a country as diverse as India. According to Sarangapani (2003), schools created for tribes in remote areas of India may ignore the children's culture and native forms of knowledge formation. For example, the Baiga, categorized by the government as a primitive tribe, have access to an increasing number of government schools in the area through the Education Guarantee Scheme. However, mainstream books use a language and present scenarios, objects, and values that are alien to the Baiga and their children. Thus, parents do not compel their children to go to school since children do not like the monotony and harsh comments of teachers who consider them culturally inferior as their culture is marked by non-hierarchical relationships between adults and children and by young learners' autonomy and initiative-taking. The formal curriculum may actually endanger and contradict indigenous forms of learning. Indeed, tribal children are at an increased risk of trafficking for forced and BL. Nomad children used to autonomy also find a teacher-centered classroom unappealing as teachers resort to corporal punishment for what they consider undisciplined behavior and erratic attendance (Dyer 2001). This approach does not encourage the higher order cognitive skills associated with pastoralists, de-skilling them and contributing to ecological decline by not using their traditional knowledge. The Baiga's case study is not uncommon. Many other groups share similar experiences that make their children more vulnerable to the WFCL.

According to HRW (2007), a Mumbai NGO found that progressive curricula exclude mentioning caste discrimination or discuss the caste system suggesting that caste discrimination and inequities no longer exist. Even school textbooks may fail to mention caste discrimination, attempt to justify its origins or attribute Dalits' unequal situation to their "ignorance, illiteracy and blind faith…because they still fail to realise [the] importance of education in life" (110).

Kumar (n.d.) states that centralized examinations in India evaluate students to select those who can proceed further in their education. The examinations at the end of 10th and 12th grades are known for their high failure rates, seen as a sign of quality and rigor. The national success rates are less than 50% for 10th grade and less than 60% for 12th grade. Children in 5th and 8th grades also take district-level centralized examinations in some states, but there is no national database with results. By keeping a large proportion of children out of the educational process, these examinations force many to undertake job opportunities that may increase their risks of trafficking.

MSEMVS NGO provides an innovative example of combining human rights education with NFE. Although teachers use the government's formal curriculum, the NGO developed its own human rights curriculum to teach first graders about self-esteem, love, communication, how to talk to police and elders; second graders about the general function of the police, banks, and the government; third graders about children's rights such as food, education, love, following the Convention on the Rights of the Child (CRC); and fourth and fifth graders about CL and BL laws, constitutional rights such as freedom and equality to all castes free from exploitation, talking to elders and villagers, performing duties honestly, hygienic practices for better health such as water storage, community vigilance committees, and social movement campaigns for freedom such as farmers' and the Dalit movements. This curriculum demonstrates innovativeness that

identifies children not as passive recipients of letters and numbers but as active participants to perceive their environment as one needing change but full of possibilities. Learning their human rights in NFE, children learn to be active participants, and when they enter formal schools, they can continue to exercise their social agency to demand quality of education.

With the growing impact of globalization and an economic system that perpetuates the economic exploitation and domination of millions, it is essential that the curriculum of NFE and/or human rights education include a critique through the lens of children's lived experiences as rescued trafficked children from forced and BL so their critical consciousness is awakened to struggle against their own exploitation.

Banking Concept of Education

In mainstream schools, a good student is not one who is intractable or restless, or one who breaks with pre-established models, or one who reveals doubts and wants to know the reasons behind facts, or one who refuses to be an object, or one who denounces a mediocre bureaucracy (Freire 1985). Instead, a good student is one who renounces critical thinking, who repeats and adjusts to models. This type of positivist education is "predictable, orderly, sequential, and managed by the teacher, who is the most important and knowledgeable person in the room" (Hinchey 1998: 50). For example, an interviewed boy from Bal Ashram, when he was 13, represented a challenge to the dominant power. When his village government school decided to charge students fees, he remembered reading that education should be free. He protested to the sub-divisional magistrate, a petition was filed, and the Jaipur Court ordered all money taken from parents to be returned by the school. Subsequently, the Rajasthan State Human Rights Commission ordered schools in the state to not charge fees. This child's consciousness of the injustices committed led him to challenge the established power, benefiting all children in his state. He is not the desirable student for the status quo in India.

While visiting a fourth grade class in a NFE school in Varanasi during field research, children were asked if they knew some of the rights to which children are entitled. One girl immediately recited children's rights that included the right to play, food, love, and education. When I asked what she meant by the right to food, she was unable to reply. Most of the children also were silent when asked for their opinions, perhaps because they are not given many opportunities to speak out in class. These cases are exemplified by Freire when he states that mechanically memorizing descriptions does not constitute knowing the object (Freire and Macedo 1987). Therefore, reading texts as pure descriptions and memorizing them is "neither real reading nor does it result in knowledge of the object to which the text refers" (33). John Dewey considers education as miseducation when students must memorize and regurgitate meaningless information:

> How many students…were rendered callous to ideas, and how many lost the impetus to learn because of the way in which learning was experienced by them? How many acquired special skills by means of automatic drill so that their power of judgment and capacity to act intelligently in new situations was limited? How many came to associate the learning process with ennui and boredom? How many found what they did learn so foreign to the situations of

life outside the school as to give them no power of control over the latter? (Dewey as cited in Hinchey 1998: 74)

According to Clarke (2003), teacher training in India attempts to transform pedagogy that consists of children listening, watching, reading aloud, copying, and memorizing textbook information to alter the Freirean concept of a banking education. These activities are based on hierarchical relationships between teachers and students, characterized by deference and fear and discouraging peer interaction. In a study following teacher in-service training from the District Primary Education Program that observed 234 teachers and more than 8,000 students, Clarke states that the Indian hierarchical social framework restricts teachers from internalizing the concept of going down to the child's level, their interests, needs, and prior knowledge. Teachers were the ones asking questions, implying the importance of their authority and command over valid knowledge, but rarely asked "why" nor encouraged students to say why they think something should be done in a certain way and not another. Teachers also mainly responded to students by saying if the answer was correct or not, rarely used cooperative group learning, and did not appropriate students' knowledge as part of instruction – making knowledge and experience learned outside school irrelevant while treating what is learned in school as separate from students' realities. Even after teacher training to incorporate activity and demonstration and not just repetition, teachers remained the primary players in the classroom. This hierarchical framework could be partly deconstructed by providing the opportunities for observation of new teaching styles imparted by NGOs applying a critical pedagogy.

One of the most important tasks for a critical education is to enable conditions so learners partake in the "experience of assuming themselves as social, historical, thinking, communicating, transformative, creative persons; dreamers of possible utopias, capable of being angry because of a capacity to love…assuming themselves as 'subject' because of the capacity to recognize themselves as 'object'" (Freire 2001: 45-46). A 13-year-old interviewed from Bal Ashram said, "In India no child should be working. That is my dream. Then everyone should be educated. If I reach an authority position, I will help Bal Ashram rescue…children in child labor to exit this evil." At a young age, this child has the dream of a just world for children to enjoy their rights to receive an education. He already acted on this dream by conducting a rally for the school, motivating and helping 60 children from Bihar enroll in school. This is the power of a transformative education encouraged by dialogue.

While students must be the subjects of their own learning by questioning and creating, the fact that they need the teachers' help does not imply that the teacher nullifies the students' responsibility and creativity for constructing their own knowledge (Freire and Macedo 1987). Teachers must not permit the repression of subjectivity and creativity in schools and should instead stimulate risk-taking so there is creativity, stimulating the possibilities for expression. Instead of reinforcing the mechanical repetition of material, educators should encourage students to doubt. What is pursued is not to profoundly comprehend the reality being analyzed but developing a curious attitude so learners' critical capacity as subjects of knowledge is stimulated, subjects challenged by the object to be known.

Freire realizes that when a liberating teacher asks students to engage in dialogue and negotiate the class together, students may resist because they doubt that this is real education (Shor 1993). Likewise, when engaging in a democratic process and critical problem-posing, students' internalized authoritarian, dominant values are challenged, and they reject the attraction to question official knowledge, mainstream politics of their society, and their ideas of the world as they know it. As observed during the first fieldwork in a cultural show of plays depicting CL issues by World Vision activists invited to Bal Ashram to learn from BBA's practices, many students may still sit passively without challenging activists' misinterpretations of the acceptance of CL and laws. However, the children living at Bal Ashram long-term are actively engaged to question any acceptance of exploitative CL. One boy stood up and pointed out to the activists their mistake in saying that children can work for an income after school hours, referring to the Child Labor Act that clearly states the minimum age for work to be 14. This empowering action is possible through the nature of Bal Ashram's social class that allows for a dialectical method encouraging dialogue and critical consciousness.

A liberatory education does not necessarily mean that teachers should not lecture (Shor and Freire 1987). The difference between a traditional and a critical educator lies in the way a banking lecture sedates students versus a lecture illuminating reality through its content and dynamism, the way objects are approached to critically reorient students to society and to animate their critical thinking. After a lecture, the speech should be taken as an oral codification of a problem to be decodified by the teacher and students. The lecture must be a challenge to be unveiled and never a channel to simply transfer knowledge. For example, a lecture may be combined with writing one's thinking on the theme that then is discussed in groups that will in turn select the group's theme to present to class. Through this simple activity, teachers listen to the students' knowledge that teaches teachers how their students see the world through their experiences and perspectives. In Bal Ashram's social classes, the lectures provided serve the purpose to reorient children's worldviews away from the general acceptance of CL and exploitation of children's rights. The issues presented are undertaken as a challenge to the children that they may act upon when they return to their communities.

Although a radical classroom praxis may be understood theoretically, it may not be easy to implement in practice (Breunig 2006). It is a demanding way to teach and to learn, having to listen carefully to students and requiring different evaluations away from standardized testing, but the results are revolutionary and worthy of educators' dedication.

CONCLUSION

It is essential to investigate through dialogue the structural, socioeconomic, and geo-political inequalities that create vulnerability and characterize large numbers of trafficked children for forced and BL. Awareness-raising alone may not reach those children and communities at most risk of trafficking. As a Romanian trafficked girl said about an anti-trafficking poster, "This poster looks very nice, but it wouldn't have made any difference to me" (Save the Children 2004: 54). Actively engaging children and communities in dialogue to ask questions and express their opinions aids the educator to understand their worldviews to then present the contradictions that could empower them

to undertake changes for their communities. Providing children and communities with the tools and information to build their capacity to defend their rights is necessary not only for the anti-trafficking movement but also for sustainable lifelong change. A critical education gives access to ways of thinking about the world and the tools to understand why it is the way it is and how it should be and the means to act to transform it.

Trafficking in children for forced and BL is not an inevitability. It is the result of myriad factors including economic globalization and technological/scientific advances that lack ethics to serve the interests of all human beings. Freire sees a vital role for subjectivity and consciousness in the making of history. Therefore, in transforming society, "the important task is not to take power but to reinvent power. Without falling into an idealistic view or a mechanical explanation of history…education…has a lot to do with the reinvention of power" (Freire 1985: 179). Not only can thinkers, educators, and scholars lead in this reinvention but also civil society and NGO activists by rising people's voices from below.

History is not deterministic, but it is made by individuals. It has demonstrated how education is instrumental in combating CL, establishing a skilled workforce, and in promoting development based on social justice (Matsuno and Blagbrough 2006). An adequate education is a prerequisite for earning a livelihood to break the cycle of poverty worldwide. However, education is only one piece of prevention. First, it must be a critical education. Second, effective legislature, law enforcement, livelihood options, implementation of schemes, and collaboration and participation of all stakeholders to prevent child trafficking are also essential – that could be demanded through conscientization.

Critical pedagogy can help people understand the structural oppression that keeps them subjugated in the social system that exploits them economically. It can empower the oppressed to challenge the status quo as they realize the historicity of knowledge to replace their passivity with self-agency to create a better world. Decision-making for change must rest in the hands of the oppressed in the societies concerned. Only then can transcendent changes occur within structures that presently perpetuate inequalities and injustice that create and recreate the problem of child trafficking for forced and BL.

BIBLIOGRAPHY

[1] ADB. (2002) "Combating trafficking of women and children in South Asia". Country paper: India. ADB. http://www.adb.org/gender/final_india.pdf (accessed July 20, 2007).

[2] Apple, M. W. (1999) *Power, Meaning, and Identity: Essays in Critical Educational Studies*. New York: Peter Lang Publishing, Inc.

[3] BBA. (2007) "About us". BBA. http://www.bba.org.in/aboutus/index.php (accessed October 1, 2008).

[4] Bales, K. (2004) *Disposable People. New Slavery in the Global Economy*. Berkeley: University of California Press.

[5] Bales, K. (2007) *Ending Slavery: How We Free Today's Slaves*. Berkeley: University of California Press.

[6] Breunig, M.C. (2006) "Radical Pedagogy as Praxis". *Radical Pedagogy,* 8(1) (Spring), http://radicalpedagogy.icaap.org/content/issue8_1/breunig.html (accessed October 13, 2008).

[7] Clarke, P. (2003) "Culture and Classroom Reform: The Case of the District Primary Education Project, India". *Comparative Education,* 39(1): 27-44.

[8] Dyer, C. (2001) "Nomads and Education for All: Education for Development or Domestication?" *Comparative Education,* 37(3): 315-327.

[9] Freire, P. (1985) *The Politics of Education: Culture, Power, and Liberation*. Massachusetts: Bergin & Garvey Publishers, Inc.

[10] Freire, P. (2000) *Pedagogy of the Oppressed*. New York: Continuum.

[11] Freire, P. (2001) *Pedagogy of Freedom: Ethics, Democracy, and Civic Courage*. New York: Rowman & Littlefield Publishers, Inc.

[12] Freire, P. (2004) *Pedagogy of Hope*. London: Continuum.

[13] Freire, P. & Macedo, D. (1987) *Literacy. Reading the Word and the World*. Massachusetts: Bergin & Garvey Publishers, Inc.

[14] Giroux, H.A. (1988) *Teachers as Intellectuals: Toward a Critical Pedagogy of Learning*. New York: Bergin & Garvey.

[15] Govinda, R. (2007) "India Country Case Study. Country Profile Prepared for the Education for All Global Monitoring Report 2008. Education for All by 2015: Will We Make It?" UNESCO. http://unesdoc.unesco.org/images/0015/001555/155523e.pdf (accessed June 21, 2008).

[16] Guo, Y. (2005) *Asia's Educational Edge: Current Achievements in Japan, Korea, Taiwan, China, and India*. New York: Lexington Books.

[17] HRW. (2003) "Small Change: Bonded Child Labor in India's Silk Industry". *Human Rights Watch,* 15(2c). HRW. http://www.hrw.org/reports/2003/india/ (accessed August 9, 2007).

[18] HRW. (2007) "Hidden Apartheid". *Human Rights Watch,* 19(3c). HRW. http://www.chrgj.org/docs/IndiaCERDShadowReport.pdf (accessed November 10, 2008).

[19] Hagemann, F., Diallo, Y., Etienne, A., & Mehran, F. (2006) "Global Child Labor Trends 2000 to 2004". ILO. http://www.ilo.org/ipecinfo/product/viewProduct.do?productId=2299 (accessed July 20, 2007).

[20] Hinchey, P.H. (1998) *Finding Freedom in the Classroom: A Practical Introduction to Critical Theory*. New York: Peter Lang Publishing, Inc.

[21] ILO-IPEC. (2002) "Every Child Counts. New Global Estimates on Child Labor". ILO. http://www.ilo.org/ipecinfo/product/viewProduct.do?productId=742 (accessed December 2, 2008).

[22] ILO-IPEC. (2007) "Education as an Intervention Strategy to Eliminate and Prevent Child Labor. Consolidated Good Practices of the International Program on the Elimination of Child Labor (IPEC)". ILO. http://www.ilo.org/public/english/region/asro/bangkok/apec/download/edu_strat.pdf (accessed December 3, 2008).

[23] Kremer, M., Chaudhury, N., Rogers, F.H., Muralidharan, K., & Hammer, J. (2005, April-May) "Teacher Absence in India: A Snapshot". *Journal of the European Economic Association,* 3(2-3): 658-667.

[24] Kumar, K. (n.d.) "Quality of Education at the Beginning of the 21st Century. Lessons from India". UNESCO. http://portal.unesco.org/education/en/ev.php-URL_ID=37798&URL_DO=DO_TOPIC&URL_SECTION=201.html (accessed November 16, 2008).

[25] Kumar, R. (2006) "State, Class and Critical Framework of Praxis: The Missing Link in Indian Educational Debates". *Journal for Critical Education Policy Studies,* 4(2) (November). http://www.jceps.com/?pageID=article&articleID=68 (accessed June 2, 2008).

[26] McLaren, P. & da Silva, T.T. (1993) "Decentering pedagogy: Critical literacy, resistance, and the politics of memory". In P. McLaren and P. Leonard (eds.) *Paulo Freire: A Critical Encounter.* London: Routledge, 47-89.

[27] Matsuno, A. & Blagbrough, J. (2006) "Child Domestic Labour in South East and East Asia: Emerging Good Practices to Combat It". ILO.

http://www.ilo.org/public/english/region/asro/bangkok/child/trafficking/ downloads/cdw.pdf (accessed July 20, 2007).

[28] Ministry of Human Resource Development. (2008) "Annual Report 2007-08".
http://education.nic.in/AR/AR2007-08.pdf (accessed November 16, 2008).

[29] Sarangapani, P.M. (2003) "Indigenising Curriculum: Questions Posed by Baigga *Vidya*". *Comparative Education* 39(2): 199-209.

[30] Save the Children. (2004) "Responding to Child Trafficking: An Introductory Handbook to Child Rights-Based Interventions Drawn from Save the Children's Experience in Southeast Europe". Save the Children. http://www.no-trafficking.org/content/web/07publication/072Training_Manual/responding_to_child_trafficking_in_se_europe_save_the_childr.pdf (accessed July 20, 2007).

[31] Sen, S. & Nair, P.M. (2004) "A Report on Trafficking in Women and Children in India 2002-2003 (Vol. 1)". New Delhi: NHRC, UNIFEM, ISS. http://nhrc.nic.in/Documents/ReportonTrafficking.pdf (accessed October 15, 2007).

[32] Shakti Vahini. (2004) "Trafficking in India Report-2004". Shakti Vahini. http://www.shaktivahini.org/assets/templates/default/images/traffickingreport.pdf (accessed October 15, 2007).

[33] Shor, I. (1993) "Education is politics: Paulo Freire's critical pedagogy". In P. McLaren and P. Leonard (eds.) *Paulo Freire: A Critical Encounter*. London: Routledge, 25-35.

[34] Shor, I. & Freire, P. (1987*) A Pedagogy for Liberation: Dialogues on Transforming Education*. Massachusetts: Bergin & Garvey Publishers, Inc.

[35] Sooryamoorthy, R. (2007, Summer) "Elementary Education for the Poorest and Other Deprived Groups: The Real Challenge of Universalization". Review of *Elementary Education for the Poorest and Other Deprived Groups: The Real Challenge of Universalization. Pacific Affairs*. BNET. http://findarticles.com/p/articles/mi_6992/is_/ai_n28463439.

[36] Suas Educational Development. (n.d.) "Why Education?" Suas Educational Development. http://www.suas.ie/99.html (accessed June 1, 2008).

[37] UNDP. (2008) "Indicators-2007/2008 Report". UNDP. http://hdrstats.undp.org/indicators/ (accessed June 21, 2008).

[38] UNICEF. (2008) "The State of the World's Children 2008. Child Survival". UNICEF. http://www.unicef.org/sowc08/docs/sowc08.pdf (accessed June 21, 2008).

[39] US Department of Labor. (2008) "The U.S. Department of Labor's 2007 Findings on the Worst Forms of Child Labor". US Department of Labor. http://www.dol.gov/ilab/programs/ocft/PDF/2007OCFTreport.pdf (accessed October 30, 2008).

[40] US Department of State. (2008) "India: Country Reports on Human Rights Practices-2007". US Department of State. http://www.state.gov/g/drl/rls/hrrpt/2007/100614.htm (accessed November 12, 2008).

[41] Wada Na Todo Abhiyan. (2007) "Ensuring Universal Access to Health and Education in India-A Status Report". Wada Na Todo Abhiyan. http://www.wadanatodo.net/reports/2007/Health&Education.Nov07.pdf (accessed June 12, 2008).