Health Hazards among Children Labor in Car Repair Workshops in Rural Community

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Abstract

Background: Child labor is the engagement of children in prohibited work and activities. Aim: The aim of this study was to assess health hazards among children labor in car repair workshops in rural community. Design: A descriptive design was used to conduct this study. Setting: This study was conducted at 86 car repair workshops in Beni-Suef city. Sample: A convenient sample of 208 children labor in the previously mentioned setting within consecutive six months. Tools: Two tools were used for data collection, first tool structured interviewing questionnaire divided into four parts, socio- demographic data of children and their family, health needs and problems of children labor in car repair workshops, knowledge of children regarding health hazards, and personal protective equipment and the exposure to health hazards among children labor in car repair workshops, second tool observational checklist to assess using of safety measures and environmental hazards in car repair workshops. **Results:** The mean age of children was 9.3 ±4.1 years, more than four fifth of children had unsatisfactory level of knowledge regarding health hazards and safety measures, most of them had poor practices during work, physical hazards represent nearly one third and nearly most of the studied workshops had inadequate environmental safety and sanitation. Conclusion: physical and chemical hazards were seen to be the most common health hazards of labor in car repair workshops among the studied children. Physical and psychological sides were seen to be the most common health needs and problems among the studied children. Also, there was a highly statistically significant correlation between occurrence of health hazards and environment of car repair workshops. Recommendations: Health education program to raise awareness of children toward health hazards in car repair workshops in rural community.

Keywords: Child labor, Health hazards, Occupational hazards, car repair workshops, Rural community.

Introduction

Children are the ones who are very vital for deciding how the world will be after some years. Children are the wealth of tomorrow. The childhood period is vital because of socialization process by the transmission of attitude, custom, and behavior through the influence of the family and community children are vulnerable to disease, death, and disability owing to their age, sex, place of living, social economic status and a host of other variables. They need appropriate care for survival and healthy development (UNICEF, 2016).

There are many social issues that affect children, such as childhood education, bullying, child poverty, dysfunctional families, child labor, hunger, and child homelessness. Children generally have fewer rights than adults and are classed as unable to make serious decisions, and legally must always be under the care of a responsible adult or child custody, whether their parents' divorce or not. Children can be raised by parents, by fosterers, guardians or partially raised in a day care center (Yun& Seira, 2017).

Working children (children in employment) are those engaged in any economic activity for at least one hour during the reference period. Economic activity includes market production and certain types of non-market production (principally the production of goods and services for own use). The work children perform may be in the formal or informal

economy, inside or outside family settings, for pay or profit. This includes children working in domestic service outside the child's own household for an employer (paid or unpaid) (ILO& CAPMAS, 2017).

United According to **Nations** International Children's Emergency Fund (UNICEF), (2017) child labor is defined as work that exceeds a minimum number of hours, depending on the age of a child and on the type of work. Such work is considered harmful to the child and should therefore be eliminated. The standards set by the UNICEF are as follows: Ages (5-11): At least one hour of economic work or 28 hours of domestic work per week. Ages (12-14): At least 14 hours of economic work or 28 hours of domestic work per week. Ages (15-17): At least 43 hours of economic or domestic work per week.

The International Labor Office (ILO, 2015) reports that children work the longest hours and are the worst paid of all laborers. They endure work conditions which include health hazards and potential abuse. Employers capitalize on the docility of the children recognizing that these laborers cannot legally form unions to change their conditions. Such manipulation stifles the development of youths. Their working conditions do not provide the stimulation for proper physical and mental development. Finally, these children are deprived of the simple joys of childhood (ILO, 2015).

In Egypt, there are thousands of car repair workshops, where huge numbers of children work without any safety measures. A considerable number of children work in these workshops out of financial necessity because of the low socioeconomic status of their families (DHS, 2016).

Car repair workshops working children are exposed to various health hazards which result in various occupational or environmental illness including chemical, physical, biological and psychological health hazards (**Nuwayhid et al.**, 2015).

Community health nurse often has close contact with the working children and is aware of changes to the working environment. Because of the nurse's expertise in health and in the effects of work on health they are in a good position to be involved in hazard

identification. Hazards may arise due to new processes or working practices or may arise out of informal changes to existing processes and working practices that the nurse can readily identify and assess the likely risk from. This activity requires and presupposed regular and frequent workplace visits by the nurse to maintain an up-to-date knowledge and awareness of working processes and practices (Mondal, 2016).

Significance of the study

The International Labor Organization (ILO) estimates that more than 250 million children are working around the world, often in occupations that are "detrimental to their physical, mental and emotional well-being." An estimated 120 million children work full time, with no opportunities for education and the accompanying promise of a better future.

According to Egyptian Demographic and Health Survey (EDHS) from the Ministry of Health and Population in Egypt, with the record of 20,560 never-married children aged 5–17 years engaging in economic activities, in and out of their home. at least 31.6% of the children in the age group from 5–10 were working, 68.5% of children aged 11–17 years were engaged in child labor for a wage, and 44.7% of the children in the age group from 5–10 were engaged in hazardous work (**EDHS**, 2015).

The most frequent injuries among children working in car repair workshops cuts/wounds/ punctures which total close to 600,000 (or 69% of all injuries). However, there were also injuries which were serious though their occurrence were less frequent-for example, burns (57,500 equivalent to 7% of the injuries), dislocation/fracture/sprains (45,900, or 6%), crushing injuries (29,800 or 3%) and even amputation (1,100 or 1/10 of 1%)-for a total of 134,300, equivalent to more than 15% of the total injuries and about 4% of the total working children. The type of child labor is the most important determinant of the incidence of work-related injuries (Basu. 2015).

Aim of this Study

The aim of this study was to assess health hazards among children labor in car repair workshops in rural community through:

1- Assessing children labor health needs and problems in car repair workshops.

- 2- Assessing children labor knowledge about health hazards in car repair workshops.
- 3- Assessing occupational health hazards among children labor in car repair workshops.
- 4- Assessing using of safety measures among children labor in car repair workshops.
- 5- Assessing environmental safety of car repair work shops.

Research Questions:

This study was based on answering the following question:

- What are the health needs and problems of child labor in car repair workshops?
- What are the health hazards among children labor in car repair workshops in rural community?
- Is there a relation between occurrence of health hazards and using of safety measure in car repair workshops?
- Is there a relation between occurrence of health hazards and environment of car repair workshops?

Subject and Methods

Research design: A descriptive design was utilized to achieve the aim of this study.

Setting of the study: The study was conducted at 86 car repair workshops in Beni-Suef city.

Subject: A convenient sample of 208 children labor in the previously mentioned setting within consecutive six months.

Tools for data collection:

Data collected through using the following two tools:

First tool:

A structured interviewing questionnaire designed by the researcher and written in simple Arabic language to gather data which concern the aim of the study and consists of the following four parts:

Part I:

- A. Demographic data for children and their family it includes (age, educational level, and residence. parents' job, education, and crowding index) and it includes 8 closed ended questions and one open ended question.
- Part II: Health needs and problems of the children labor in car repair wok shops: It included two parts: (A)-Assess children labor health needs in car repair workshops. It includes (physical needs as number of

- meals, sleeping hours and exercise, mental needs as love, support and safety, social and educational needs).
- Scoring system: If the needs were fulfilled, it was scored one, and if not fulfilled was scored zero. for total score of health needs more than 50% considered adequate health needs and less than 50% considered inadequate health needs.
- **(B)** Assess children labor health problems in car repair workshops, health problems includes (physical, social, psychological and educational problems).
- **Scoring system:** If the child was complaining from any problems it was scored one, and if there was no complain the score was zero. For total score of health problems if more than 50% considered present health problems and less than 50% considered not present health problems.
- **Part III:** Children knowledge about health hazards and personal protective equipment, it included two parts:
- A- Assess children's knowledge about health hazards of car repair workshops. It includes (definition of health hazard, types of hazards, causes of hazard and preventive measures).
- B-Assessing knowledge of children about personnel protective measures and its importance, it includes (concept of protective measures, types, importance of protective measures).

Scoring system:

For the children's knowledge, correct answer was scored 1 and incorrect answer scored zero.

For total score of knowledge Satisfactory level if the score was (>50%)

Unsatisfactory level if the score was less than (<50%)

Part V: Assess health hazards among children working in car repair workshops as (physical hazards, chemical hazards, biological hazards and psychosocial hazards.

Scoring system:

If exposed to occupational hazards scored (1), if not exposed scored zero

For total occupational health hazards more than 50% considered exposed and less than 50% not considered to occupational health hazards.

Second Tool:

A) Observational checklist to assess using of personnel protective measures in car repair workshops, it includes (over all uniform, head cap, face glasses, eyeglasses, safety boots, respiratory mask and ear muff), it consists of 7 items.

Scoring system:

Personal protective measures was scored (two) for the "available and wear", (zero) for "not available" and (1) degree for "available and not wear", Total score =18. The total score level was divided into:

- **Sufficient PPE** (>50%).
- **Insufficient PPE** (<50%).
- B) Observational checklist to determine environmental safety and occupational hazards in car repair workshops as (work area, water supply, floor, emergency and fire protection), it consists of 9 items.

Scoring system:

Environmental safety was scored (1) for the "present", (zero) for "not present", Total score =9. The total score level was divided into:

- Adequate environmental safety (>50%).
- Not adequate environmental safety (<50%).

Content validity:

Face and content validity of the study tools was assessed by group of 5 experts in community health nursing departments at faculty of nursing, Ain-shams University for comprehensiveness, accuracy and clarity in language.

Reliability of Tool

The reliability of the tool was assessed through measuring their internal consistency by Cronbach Alpha Coefficient test and its value was (0.78): (.18) for knowledge, (.14) for practices, (.19) for health needs and problems, (.12) for health hazards and (.15) for PPE and environment.

Pilot study

A pilot study was conducted on 10% (21) of children it was done for evaluation of the applicability and clarity of the tools, assessment of feasibility of fieldwork, identification of a suitable place for interviewing children, and to detect any possible obstacles that might face the investigator and interfere with data collection.

Necessary modifications were done based on the pilot study findings. The sample of children included in the pilot study was excluded in the main study sample.

Fieldwork:

- -Data collection process spanned about 6 months during the period from beginning of February 2019 until the end of July 2019.
- -The investigator attended the car repair workshop from 11:00 am to 2:00 pm, 3 days per week (Sunday, Tuesday and Thursday) meeting average from 2-3 children per day.
- -The investigator interviewed the children outside the workshop during rest period.
- -Each child interviewed individually after oral consent for participation in the study according to ethical issues.
- -The investigator introduced himself firstly to the child in workshop and a brief explanation of the nature and aim of the study was done before each interview.
- -The investigator role in completing the questionnaire was to facilitate the understanding of any confusing or difficult question for the children.
- -The time needed for completing study tool for educated child was about 45 minutes and 55 minutes for illiterate child.

Administrative Design

An approval was obtained from the Research and Ethics committee at Faculty of Nursing Ain-shams University. Total confidentiality of any obtained information was ensured. Also, the study maneuvers couldn't harm the participants.

Ethical considerations

Each participant informed about the purpose of the study and its significance. They were informed as well, that participation in the study is completely voluntary, as well as they had the right to withdraw from the study at any point without any penalty. Additionally, all participants were assured that their anonymity and confidentiality secured through coding the data. Moreover, participants were informed that the data not reused for any research purposes without their permission.

Statistical Analysis

The collected data were collected and encoded in special format to be suitable for computer feeding. Following data entry, checking and verification process were carried out in order to avoid any errors. Data were analyzed using the statistical package for social science SPSS. The following statistical analysis measures were used.

- **Descriptive statistical measures**, which include number, percentages, and averages (Minim, Maximum, Arithmetic mean (X), Standard deviation (SD).

Statistical analysis tests, which include Chi square, T test.

- Significance at P < 0.05.
- Highly at P < 0.001.
- Insignificance at P < 0.05

Results

Table (1): Shows that mean age of the studied children was 9.3 ± 4.1 year and all of them (100%) were male. Regarding educational level 41.8% of the studied children were illiterate. 97.6% of them living inside the houses.

Table (2): Clarifies that 52.9% of the studied children fathers were technical education and 60.6% of them were working. Regarding job of the studied children mothers, 95.2% of them were housewives and 51% of them were read and write. The table also revealed that the mean number of the household members was 6 \pm 1.4 persons and the mean number of their house rooms was 5.11 \pm 1.26 rooms. The table also cleared that the crowding index mean was 2.8 \pm 1.3 persons.

Figure (1): Distribution of the studied children according to their total physical, social, educational and psychological health needs (n=208).

Figure (2): shows that totally 68.9%, of the studied children had health problems; meanwhile 31.1% of the studied children didn't had health problems.

Figure (3): Illustrates that totally 18.2% of the studied children had satisfactory total

knowledge regarding occupational health hazards; meanwhile 81.8% of them had unsatisfactory knowledge.

Figure (4): Shows that totally 89.5% of the studied children had unsatisfactory knowledge regarding standard precautions & safety measures, meanwhile 10.5% of them had satisfactory knowledge.

Figure (5): illustrates that concerning exposure to health hazards at work, totally 63.8% of the studied children exposed to health hazards, meanwhile 36.2% of the studied children not exposed to health hazards.

Figure (6): Indicates that totally 3% of the studied children wear protective equipment as it is available, 9.7% of them not wear PPE although it is available meanwhile 87.7% of them not wear personal protective equipment as it is not available.

Figure (7): Illustrates that 7% of the studied car repair workshops had adequate environmental safety and sanitation, meanwhile 93% of the workshops had inadequate environmental safety and sanitation.

Table (3): Indicates that there was a highly statistically positive correlation between total score of health hazards and total score of safety measures.

Table (4): reveals that there was a highly significant positive correlation between total level of health hazards score and total level of environmental safety and sanitation score.

Table (1): Distribution of the studied children according to their socio-demographic characteristics (n=208).

Demographic characteristics	No	%
Age		
- 5 to <10 year	77	37
- 10 to <15 years	87	41.8
- 15 to ≤18 years	44	21.2
Mean + SD : 9.3 ±4.1 years		
Educational level of the child		
- Can't read and write	87	41.8
- Primary school	47	22.6
- Preparatory school	74	35.6
Residence:		
- Inside the house with the family	203	97.6
- Inside the workshop	5	2.4

Table (2): Distribution of the studied children according to their family socio-demographic data (n=208).

Family related data	No	%
Fathers' educational level		
- Read and write	94	45.2
- Preparatory school	4	1.9
- Technical education	110	52.9
Fathers' job		
- working	126	60.6
- Not working	52	25
- Pensioner	4	1.9
- Died	26	12.5
Mothers' educational level		
- Read and write	106	51
- Technical education	102	49
Mothers' job		
- Not working	198	95.2
- Pensioner	5	2.4
- Died	5	2.4
Number of members		
- 2 -5 members	17	8.2
- More than five	191	91.8
Number of rooms		
- Less than two	8	3.8
- 2 -3 rooms	16	7.7
- More than three	184	88.5
Crowding index:	$2.8 \pm 1.3 \mathrm{p}$	ersons

According to research question no.1:

• What are the health needs and problems of child labor in car repair workshops?

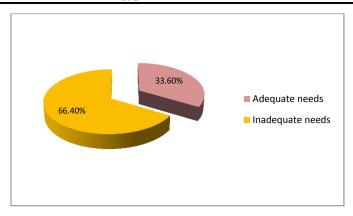


Figure (1): Illustrates that totally 33.6%, of the studied children had adequate health needs, meanwhile 66.4%, of the studied children had inadequate health needs.

According to research question no.1:

• What are the health needs and problems of child labor in car repair workshops?

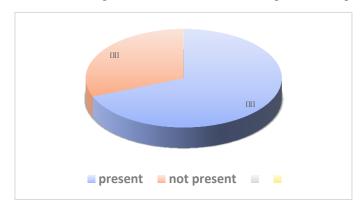


Figure (2): Distribution of the studied children according to their total stated health problems (n=208).

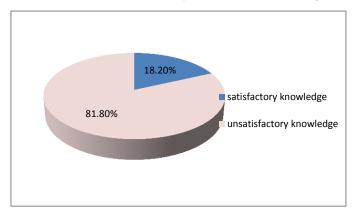


Figure (3): Distribution of the studied children according to their total knowledge regarding occupational health hazards (n=208).

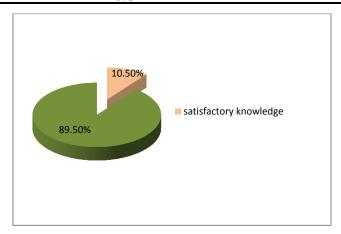


Figure (4): Distribution of the studied children according to their total knowledge regarding standard precautions and safety measures related to car repair workshops (n=208).

According to research question no.2:

• What are the health hazards among children labor in car repair workshops in rural community?

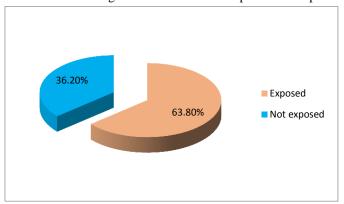


Figure (5): Distribution of the studied children according to their total exposure to health hazards at work (n=208).

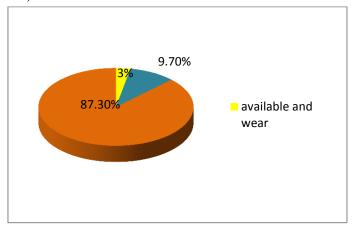


Figure (6): Distribution of the studied children according to their total use of personal protective equipment during working in car repair workshops (n=208).

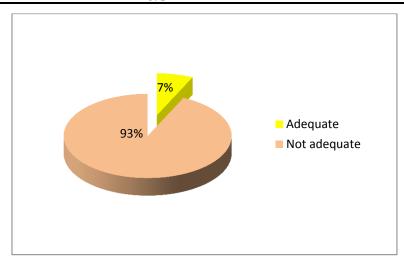


Figure (7): Distribution of the total environmental safety and sanitation of the studied car repair workshops (n=86).

According to research question no.3:

Is there a relation between occurrence of health hazards and using of safety measures in car repair workshops?

Table (3): Correlation between total score of health hazards among the studied children and their total score of using safety measures (n=208).

Correlations	Total score of health hazards		
Correlations	R	P-value	
Total score of using safety measures	0.692	**0.001	

^{**}Highly statistically significant difference p≤ 0.001

According to research question no.4:

Is there a relation between occurrence of health hazards and environment of car repair workshops?

Table (4): Correlation between total score of health hazards and total score of environmental safety and sanitation at car repair workshops (n=86).

Correlations	Total score of health hazards	
	R	P-value
Total score of environmental safety and sanitation	0.813	**0.001

^{**}Highly statistically significant difference p≤ 0.001

Discussion

The result of the current study showed that, the mean age of the studied children working in car repair workshops was 9.3 ± 4.1 years (**Table 1**). This result was in agreement with

the study carried out by **Abbas et al. (2015)** who assessed Non- Fatal Occupational Injuries and Safety Climate: A Cross-Sectional Study of Construction Building Workers in Mit-Ghamr City, Dakahlia Governorate, Egypt,

reported that the age distribution of children under the study ranged from 6 to 13 year.

Regarding gender the current study indicated that all the studied children were male (**Table 1**). The present study findings were in accordance with the study carried out by **Habil & Abdelhakim (2015)** who carried a study named: Socio-demographic characteristics and occupational health exposures among a group of child laborers in Egypt demonstrated that the entire study sample were male children.

In relation to educational level of the children the current study illustrated that more than two fifth of the studied children were illiterate (**Table 1**). The present study findings were consistent with **Jindalet et al.** (**2017**) who conducted a study about Occupational hazards, illness and injuries faced by child laborers, and found that 40% of study sample were illiterate.

Regarding residence the current study explained that nearly all of the studied children were living inside the houses (**Table 1**). These findings were also revealed by **Vyas et al.** (2015) who assessed Occupational injuries in automobile repair workers and demonstrated that the entire studied sample lived in their home.

Regarding number of household members the current study explained the number of family members was from 5 to 7 persons (**Table 2**). The present study findings were in accordance with the study conducted by **Awan et al. (2017)** in India who assessed Why Do Parents Make Their Children Work? Evidence from Multiple Indicator Cluster Survey, found that number of family members under the study was ranged from 5 to 7 members.

In relation to number of rooms in the house, the present study showed that ranged from 3 to 5 rooms (**Table 2**). These findings were also revealed by **Larsen (2015)** who assessed child

labor and education challenges in pakistan. International Program on the Elimination of Child Labour (IPEC) and illustrated that the number of rooms were ranged from 3 to 5 rooms.

In relation to crowding index the current study indicated that the mean rate of crowding index was 2.8 ± 1.3 persons (**Table 2**). This finding was in agreement with **Ahmed & Jureidini** (**2016**), who assessed An Explanatory Study on Child Domestic Workers in Egypt, reported that the crowding index ranged from 2 to 4 persons.

From the investigator point of view this findings could be due to low socio-economic status, low educational level, decrease resources and the majority of the Egyptian parents in rural areas preferred to engaged their children to work in earlier age rather than going for education.

Regarding to the total level of children physical and social. educational and psychological health needs the result of the present study revealed that physical health needs represented more than two thirds (Figure 1). However, these results were similar to those of Batty et al. (2016) Association of life course socioeconomic disadvantage with future problem drinking and heavy drinking: gender differentials in the west of Scotland, reported that children physical needs represented 34.3%.

The current study showed that more than two thirds of the studied children had health problems (**Figure 2**). This finding was congruent with the study conducted by **Fassa et al.** (2015) who assessed Child labor and health: problems and perspectives and found that 64.9% of the studied children had health problems.

The current study also illustrated that mostly of the studied children had unsatisfactory total level of knowledge regarding health hazards and Personal protective equipment (Figure 3&4). These findings were also in agreement with Itani, (2018) who assessed child Labor in Egypt. University of Southern Denmark, Faculty of Humanities, found that totally 88.3% of the study sample had unsatisfactory level of knowledge regarding health hazards and Personal protective equipment.

The current study showed that concerning exposure to health hazards at work nearly two thirds of the studied children exposed to health hazards (**Figure 5**). This finding was congruent with the study conducted by **Parker (2017b)** who assessed child labor: the impact of economic exploitation on the health and welfare of children and reported that 64.7% of the studied children suffered from health hazards during work.

From the investigator point of view this due to unsafety environment in care repair workshop and also not available of personnel protective equipment PPE that protect from exposure to health hazards.

In relation to total use of personal protective equipment during working in car repair workshops, the current study showed that more than four fifths of the children not wear personal protective equipment as it was not available (**Figure 6**). This finding was congruent with the study conducted by **Big** (2014) who assessed in workshops, fields, Egyptian children at work and found that 86.5% of the study sample didn't use PPE as it wasn't available.

From the investigator's point of view this finding could be due to unavailability of enough money and resources to buy this equipment.

The current study also revealed that the majority of the studied workshops had inadequate environmental safety and sanitation

(Figure 7). These findings were also in agreement with Habil and Abdelhakim (2015) who assessed Socio-demographic characteristics and occupational health exposures among a group of child laborers in Egypt and stated that totally 92.1% of the studied workshops had inadequate environmental safety and sanitation.

Concerning statistical relation between study variables and research questions, (Table 3) replying on research question no 3 stated that is there a relation between occurrences of health hazards and using of safety measures in car repair workshops? the present study showed that there was a highly significant positive correlation between total level of health hazards and total score level of safety measures. The previous findings congruent with study by Al-Kayyali (2016) who assessed The Health Effects on Child Labor Working in Auto Repair Aged 10-16 years, in Ein- Elbasha Region/ Balga Governorate/ Jordan and cleared that there was a highly significant positive correlation between total level of health hazards and total score level of safety measures and also Khan et al. (2017) who conducted a Study on child labor in automobile workshops of Peshawar, Pakistan and illustrated that there was a statistically significant relation between total level of health hazards and total score level of safety measures(p<0.05).

According to research question no 4 who stated that is there a relation between occurrence of health hazards and environment of car repair workshops? (Table 4), the present study showed that, there was a highly significant positive correlation between total level of health hazards score and total level of environmental safety and sanitation score. This finding agreed with Javed et al. (2016) who conducted a study on Occupational hazards, illness and injuries faced by child laborers and

reported that there was a highly significant positive correlation between total level of health hazards score and total level of environmental safety and sanitation score.

Conclusion

The current study clarified that there was a highly statistically significant relation between health hazards and using of safety measure in car repair workshops. Finally the present study concluded that there was a highly statistically significant relation between occurrence of health hazards and environmental safety and sanitation at car repair workshops.

Recommendations

- Health education program to raise awareness of children toward health hazards in car repair workshops in rural community.
- Conduct training programs to children at car repair workshops about using of personal protective equipment.
- Raise children awareness about consequences of health hazards that they exposed to during work in car repair workshops.
- Providing health needs for children working in car repair workshops.

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