

Background

- Child labor historically has been defined as “work that deprives children of their childhood, their potential, and their dignity, and that is harmful to physical and mental development.” –Social Welfare History Project.
- The COVID-19 Pandemic and economic difficulties brought a threat of progress on child labor. Significant progress has been made on child labor over the last two decades. However, the COVID-19 Pandemic brought a 160 million increased in cases of child labor.
- The International Labor Organization and UNICEF have warned that an additional 9 million children will be at risk in 2022 due to the aftermath of the COVID-19 Pandemic.

Method

- A systematic review of literature was conducted using Google Scholar, Albizu Database, PubMed, and Psycnet.
- The following keywords were used “modern slavery,” “children of immigrants,” and “COVID-19 pandemic.”
- The inclusion criteria were articles published between 2019-2022, peer reviewed articles, and articles in English.
- A total of 403 articles were returned, and 4 articles were retained. These articles included children of immigrants facing modern slavery during the COVID-19 pandemic.

Aim

- The purpose of this systematic literature review is to investigate modern enslavement of immigrant children during the COVID-19 Pandemic.

Main Point

- **Results demonstrated an increase in child labor due to school closures, law enforcement burnout, and economic burden.**

Results

(Akpomera, 2022)	The research demonstrated the COVID-19 Pandemic and economic burnout increased migrant child labor and migrant labor exploitation.
(Barlow, Kidd, Green, & Darby, 2021)	The research revealed a correlation was noted between the COVID-19 Pandemic and the exploitation of children via an increase of child labor victims. The increase was mainly due to lockdowns, and economic burnout.
(Kechagia, & Metaxas, 2021)	The research displayed the COVID-19 Pandemic and economic crisis disproportionately affected women, youth, informal workers, and migrant workers making them more susceptible to child trafficking, domestic abuse, and child abuse.
(Washburn, Diener, Curtis, & Wright, 2022)	The research demonstrated an increase in child trafficking especially in child labor during the COVID-19 pandemic. The population most impacted by child trafficking were migrant females. This increase in child trafficking were due to the following factors: school closures, exhausted/understaffed law enforcement, and economic burden such as unemployment.

Conclusions

- It is imperative that researchers and practitioners fully understand the factors that cause and lead to labor exploitation so effective preventions can be put into place.
- Children and vulnerable populations (e.g., females, individuals with lower levels of education, migrants) suffer the most during the times of crisis.
- Though limited research has been conducted, a correlation was found between increasing child labor, increasing dropout rates, abusing human rights, increased trafficking, and social inequalities.
- More research is needed to examine the psychosocial and mental health difficulties vulnerable populations experience due to school closures, child labor, child exploitation, and child abuse.
- Overall, all research concludes that we must protect our children, implement preventions, guidelines, and awareness for future crisis.
- Most importantly, we should continue to fight against the child exploitation, and child abuse that occurs day to day worldwide predominantly in developing countries.