CHAPTER - 1
INTRODUCTION AND REVIEW OF LITERATURE
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Introduction

Human Capital (education, health and motivation) has always been an extremely important determinant of individual and social progress, but is even more important in an increasingly competitive and knowledge-intensive global economy (Marshall, 2005). Thus, from this point of view, the rate of economic growth crucially depends on the stock of human capital in a country (Romer 1987; Lucas 1988; Barro 1991; Mankiw et al. 1992, Todaro and Smith, 2009). A low level of human capital development has long been identified as a major impediment to economic growth and the elimination of poverty in developing countries (Ersado, 2002), and also give rise to other socio-economic problems. In this context, low level of human capital development directly or indirectly affects children’s future. Because children are an asset for a nation (Tripathy, 1994; Mehta, 2008) thus it is the nation’s responsibility to nurture them through various stages of their development to enable them to realize their full human potential. However, every child who is out of school or participating in labour force for the sake of family support conflicts directly or indirectly with its natural growth and education which in turn prevent him/her from attaining proper adulthood and training (Chander, 2004). So, if we take human capital or human capability perspectives (as given by Sen, 2000), the incidence of working children in any society leads to lower human capital and human capability which means enormous loss to the economy. Similarly as Sugawara (2008) said “in
an economy with a low level of human capital, the worst form of child labour emerges, the incidence of child labour is high and the level of schooling is low. On the other hand, in an economy with a sufficient high level of human capital, the worst form of child labour vanishes, the incidence of child labour is low and level of education is high”.

Today, the era of globalization is witnessing a reinvigorated focus on many social concerns wherein the issue of child labour has roofed up at the surface. Child labour is present in different human societies at different stages of their history and continues to flourish in almost all parts of the globe (Currie, 1997; Newman, 2000; Seabrook, 2001). Child labour constitutes the most deprived section of population forced to earn a pittance or to contribute to family work sacrificing personal development of prime age for want of opportunity (Shandilya et. al. 2006).

Actually, the prevalence of child labour is not a recent phenomenon. Even in ancient times agriculture and other manual workers of servile status formed bulk of the population everywhere and their children were put to arduous labour in houses and in field at an early age (Senon, 1998) and there were no social taboo against children working along with their parents. But the problematic aspect of child labour became more pronounced with the advent of industrial era. It is problematic because, it interferes, obstructs and clashes with the fulfillment of the basic needs of working children’s material, social and culture life and development of their basic skills and capabilities (ibid). In this sense, still a large number of children are involved in economic activities and remain in conditions that are inappropriate for their development. It is, however, encouraging that, now a days, there is far greater recognition and concern for addressing this social ill (Sachdeva et. al. 2001). Thus, there are hundreds of millions of children and young people around the world who
are imprisoned, not in physical jails, but in a state of bondage more permanent than locks or bars alone could create. These are children who labour at tasks that harm their bodies and minds, their spirits and future UNICEF (2001).

India is one of the main users of child labour in the Asian regions (Singh, 2003). A high incidence of child labour and a very low school enrollment of children continue to pose serious problem for the country (Kurosaki et. al. 2006). Actually, in a country like India with its multicultural, multi-ethnic and multi-religious population, the problems of socially marginalized and economically backward groups are immense. Within such groups the most vulnerable section is always the children. Mostly, in India, parents depend upon their children. Children not only perform important work in house or outside it but in many cases they are the main or the only source of support for parents in their old age. The level of family income may be affected by the roles of children in productive activities, also the level of income of a family determines the role of children in the economic activities. In case of wealthy families it is expected that their children are likely to work less than the children in poor families (Enid, 1979).

In the context of economic role of children, major chunk of child workers are found engaged in informal sector. The informal economy provides an environment that allows child labour to thrive. Child labour is a key component of the informal economy. As per ILO “Informal Sector is a sector which is characterized by (a) low level of organization & small in scale (b) Heterogeneity in activities. (c) easier entry and exit than in the formal sector (d) usually minimal capital investment, little or no division between capital and labour (e) mostly labour intensive work, requiring low level of skill, there is usually no formal training as workers learn on the job (f) labour relations based on casual employment and opposed to formal
contracts, employer and employee relationship is often unwritten and informal with little or no rights (g) due to their isolation and invisibility, workers in the informal sector are often largely unaware of their rights, cannot organize themselves and have little negotiating power with their employers and intermediaries (ILO, 2001). On the other hand, in India the term used to denote the informal sector is unorganized sector and informal workers are referred to as unorganized workers. NCEUS (2006) has defined unorganized sector as “Informal sector consist of all incorporated private enterprises owned by individuals or household engaged in the sale & production of goods & services operated on a proprietary basis with less than ten total workers”. Actually, the workers associated with the informal sector are mainly unskilled and are poor as on an average they earn a wage rate that is close to their subsistence level. As a result of this the workers of this sector are compelled to send their children to the job market (Marjit and Gupta, 2008). In other words, we can say that, the informal sector acts as reservoir of child labour. This has been empirically supported by Grootaert (1998) and Ray (1999). So in this sense, though the activities in the informal sector go unregulated, yet the informal sector is an important part of the economy and certainly of the labour market in many countries especially developing countries like India, and thus play a major role in employment creation, production and income generation. Moreover, with the high rates of population growth and/or urbanization, the informal sector tends to absorb most of the growing labour force in the urban areas (Kumar, 2004).

In India, the necessity of the children to go to work can be seen as a symptom of the larger phenomenon of social disadvantage. Social disadvantage (low education, low income, low employment levels or unemployment) is additionally associated with lack of opportunity for developing effective social skills and parenting skills, which also serve as a negative mediator (Alaraudanjoki, 2001). In Indian reference, there
are many studies (at micro levels or macro levels) which shows that poverty is a main factor behind child work (e.g. Bequele and Boyden, 1988; CACL, 1993; Jain 1994; Grootaert and Kanbur, 1995). Poverty compels millions of children to sell their labour at an age at which they should have gone to school. Children work even in unjust conditions when the income of their family is not sufficient to meet the basic requirement of the family (Fors, 2008). Though child labour and poverty are intimately linked but, the complexity of the problem increases more when it is coupled with adult unemployment and underemployment, inadequate and intermittent nature of income, low standard of living and stagnation in agriculture (Patil, 1988). Apart from these factors, lack of educational facilities is another important factor for the higher incidence of child labour in India. Poor households, which struggle to make ends meet, have no money to invest in education of children. Borrowing money for such an investment is often not an option for them (Rao, 1985; Tilak, 1987; Jafarey and Lahiri, 1999). Even, the cost of education consists of direct costs such as textbooks, stationary and uniform, and indirect or opportunity costs that parents forgo by sending their children to school is usually very high (Lloyd and Blanc, 1996).

It has been assumed that starting to work at an early age has detrimental effects on children’s development (Aptekar, 1988; Fyfe, 1989; Jansen et. al. 1990; Myers, 1991; Marcus and Harper, 1996; Noto et. al. 1997). On the other hand, as regards to the work environment this has been identified that the risk factors not only affecting the physical but psychological and social development of child workers (Boidin, 1995). Furthermore, employed children are not only physically punished for their minor mistakes but also abused emotionally by their employers. They have to face too much of hardship while rendering services to their employer since most of them are engaged in job works and paid poorly and even not paid on one pretext or the
other. In many cases they are denied the minimal liberties and are usually treated as sub bonded labourers (Tripathy, 1996). Therefore, we can say that the work participation of children adversely affects their health and education, partially or fully, depending upon the degree of their participation in work.

Thus, India is one of those where a large number of children are made to work under adverse working conditions. Therefore, the attack on child labour, if not simultaneously supported by the better educational system and greater economic security for the poor families – the potential source of child labour, is going to be ineffective.

**Defining Child and Child Labour**

The conceptualization of the child states leads to ambiguity, as it is guided by individual consideration. Therefore, a standard has to be accepted to determine an age range for defining a child. So as per ILO “*Child means a person who has not completed his or her 15 years of age*,”, so, in this regard, under article 2(3) of International Labour Organization (ILO) 138 Convention, ‘Minimum Age for Admission to Employment’, the minimum age of admission into employment or work in any occupation “shall not be less than the age of completion of compulsory schooling and, in any case, shall not be less than 15” (ILO, 1973). On the other hand, UNICEF (1994) considers a child as, “*A child is an individual under the age of 18 years based on the UN Conventions 1989 on the rights of the child, including the right to be protected from economic exploitation*”. Thus, as per the definition of child, UNICEF defined child labour in the reference of minimum age as “*Child Labour conventionally referred to children working before they reached the lawful minimum age for employment in their country, often the same as the cut-off age for compulsory attendance at school*” (UNICEF, 2003).
Similarly, ILO explains child labour not only with minimum age perspective but also considered child’s overall development which can be damaged due to work. Therefore, as per ILO, a child is a person who is aged less than 15 years, engaged in any work or activity which deprives them from basic education, playful activities and their childhood is defined as child labour. In other words, the international labour organization and UNICEF defines, “Child labour as work that deprives children of their childhood and their dignity which hampers their access to education and the acquisition of skills and which is performed under deplorable conditions harmful to their health and their development” (ILO/UNICEF, 1997).

With reference to the rights of the child and child labour in India, a child may be defined as one who is in the age group between 0-14 years. Different acts and institutions have, however, defined child and child labour in their own ways. In case of child definitions, The Factories Act, 1948 specifies that “A person below the age of 15 years is to be regarded as a child” (Government of India, 1948a). Similarly, the Central Children Act has defined child as “a boy who has not attained the sixteen years or a girl who has not attained the age of eighteen years” (Government of India, 1960) and according to the recent The Juvenile Justice Act, 2000 A “Juvenile” or “Child” means “A person who has not completed eighteen years of age” (Government of India, 2000).

After taking note of these definitions relating to child, it is felt that no uniformity exists regarding the age limit of child. It differs from act to act. As far as the matter of child labour, age limit also varies in different occupation. But as per Government norms, the minimum age for the employment of child should be above fourteen years. According to the Constitution of India, “No child below the age of fourteen years shall be employed to work in any factory or mine or engaged in any other
hazardous employment” (www.constitution.org/cons/india, cited on October 6, 2009) and The Child Labour (Prohibition and Regulation) Act, 1986 defines “child as labour who has not completed his fourteen years of age. Whether part – time/full time in any occupation, engagement of child in the labour force simply mean a complete or partial denial of childhood to him” (Government of India, 1986). On the other hand, some definitions directly deal with the negative impact of child labour and are concerned with the development and growth of child which can be damaged due to hazardous work. As The Encyclopedia of Social Sciences (1959), states that “when the business of wage earnings or of participation in self or family support conflicts directly or indirectly with the business of growth and education, the result is child labour” (Cited in Misra, 2003). Similarly Government of India (1979) stated that “Child labour may be defined as employment of children in gainful occupation which are detrimental to their health and deprive them the chances of development”. Thus child labour assumes the character of a social problem in as much as it hinders arrest and distorts the natural growth process and prevents the total personality development of the child.

**Reasons for the Variations in Definitions**

For comprehensive enumeration of child labour in the country, the first challenge is to define child labour in a clear and unambiguous way. However, there is absence of clarity in the definition of age of child labour. India is a signatory to the UN Convention on the Rights of Child (UNCRC), 1989. The UNCRC defines child as anyone below the age of 18 years, unless, under the law applicable to the child, majority is attained earlier (UNICEF, 1989). Indian law continues to be ambiguous on this point, although the ‘age of majority’, is generally held to be 18 years. The government of India’s Convention on the Rights of the Child (CRC) first periodic
The report does not define the age of childhood. The International Labour Organization (ILO) calls upon member countries to progressively augment the minimum age for admission to employment or work to a level consistent with the fullest physical and mental development of young persons. Certain ILO conventions like those dealing with night work and hazardous work set 18 years as the minimum age for admission to employment.

In India there are anomalies in the different child related legislations with regard to the definition of age (Deshta and Deshta, 2000). Article 24 of the constitution prohibits employment of children below the age of 14 years in factories and hazardous occupations and processes. But only a person aged 18 and above is considered a major under the Indian Majority Act 1875. Further, the minimum age is different for day work and night work, over ground work and underground work, in mines and work in factories. With the object of removing this anomaly, Child Labour (Prohibition and Regulation) Act, 1986 reduced the minimum age from 15 to 14 years in respect of other child labour related law such as the Minimum Wage Act 1948, the Merchant Shipping Act 1956, and the Motor and Transport Workers Act 1961. Such variations in the definitions of age hinder a realistic estimation of child labour.

Apart from the age variations, differences are even found in the meaning of workers. As a consequence of differences in meaning of the worker, estimates of number of child workers keep changing. Two variables lead to this difference, viz, type and amount of work they do and nature of wages they receive. Even the same agents keep changing or refining it (Jaiswal, 2000). Here, the case of Indian census may be noted. The 1971 Census defines ‘worker’ as “a person whose main activity is participation in any economically productive work by physical and mental
involvement”. Coming to the child labourer, it excludes children working for only few hours a day before or after school. The Census, 1981 introduced refinement in definition by making a distinction between main and marginal activities. As “Main workers are those who work for whole day, for the major part of the year preceding date of enumeration and whose main activity is in cultivation, agriculture labour, household industry or any other work. Marginal workers, on the other hand, are those who do some but have not been involved in it on full time basis” (Census, 1981). This makes a comparison between the two censuses difficult. Thus, the search for the correct definition has become practical need in the context of efforts of the government to regularize or wipe off child labour.

**Magnitude of the Problem**

Child labour is major problem in the world today (ILO, 1993; ILO, 1996; Bequele and Myers, 1995). One in seven children around the world is a child labourer. According to the ILO (2006) estimates, in 2004 there were 218 million children trapped in child labour, of which 126 million were in hazardous work. Most children work in the informal sector, without legal or regulatory protection. There are 70 per cent working children in agriculture production, commercial hunting and fishing or forestry, there are 8 per cent in manufacturing and 7 per cent in community, social and personal service such as domestic work (ILO – IPEC, 2004). Although the participation of girls in child labour and hazardous work is on a par with that of boys in the youngest age groups (5-11 years), boys predominate considerably at older ages in both categories. In case of child labour, India has got the dubious distinction of employing the largest number of children in the world. According to the census 2001, the total number of child workers declined from 11 million in 1991 to 3.6 million in 2001. This accounts for 1.23 per cent of the total
population and, 3.15 per cent of total working population and 5 per cent of the total child population of the country. Similarly, as per NSSO 61st round and 64th round, the number of working children declined from 8.6 million in 2004-05 to 4.98 millions in 2009-10. They constituted about 3.4 per cent of children in the age group of 5-14 years in 2004-05 and 2.3 per cent in 2009-10. Children working in agriculture sector constitute two – third of all child labour in India and their percentage in rural child labour force is more than 70 per cent (NSSO 66th round, 2010). A World Bank Report (2000) on the other hand, estimates child labour in India to be 60 million. 11th Plan Report on Child Labour has mentioned that “India is a home of the largest number of child labourer in the world”. In response to a query The Ministry of Labour and Employment (2005) quoted that in India one child out of every four, begins working at a tender age to support his family, all at the cost of his education and childhood. So, child labour has become a common aspect of any third world countries to which India is not an exception and despite adequate efforts in the direction of relief and rehabilitation, the problem continues to grow in an alarming proportion.

**Different Forms of Child Labour**

Child labour has been categories into forms. However, regardless of where and how children work, all forms of child labour are unacceptable. But before attempting to know the various forms of child labour, distinction between ‘child work’ and ‘child labour’ needs to be understood. Traditionally *child work includes all paid and unpaid work for the household or for the market, whether it is full time or part time* (UNICEF, 2005). Participation in household activities on a regular basis and for several hours in a day to relieve adults for wage employment is also included in this definition. In other words we can say that work which does not distract the other
essential for a child namely leisure, play and education is not child labour (World Vision, 2009).

Child Labour, on the other hand considered as any work by children that interferes with their full physical and mental developments, their opportunities for a desirable minimum of education or their needed recreation (Kulshreshtha, 1978; Tripathy, 1989). International Labour Organization (ILO) report on child labour has used the term ‘economically active children’ in the age group five to fourteen year to define child labour. Conventionally, a person is treated as economically active or gainfully employed if he/she does work on a regular basis and receive remuneration for it (ILO, 2002). Child labour is opposite child work or we can say that child work become child labour when it threatens the health and development of the children. So children are involved in work which hampers not only their physical but mental development also. Some of the major and important forms of child labour are given below:

(i). **Hazardous Form of Child Labour:** According to the Article 3(d) of ILO convention 182, hazardous work referred as “work that, by its nature or the circumstances in which it is carried out, is likely to harm the health, safety and morals of children” (ILO, 2011). It is the worst form of child labour where children perform heavy work in utmost unhygienic, uncongenial working conditions. Such work includes working in mines; crackers making industry, heavy metal industry, glass industry etc. This form also involve children being enslaved, forcibly recruited, prostituted, trafficked, and forced into illegal activities (UNICEF, 2006). Besides, many children work as domestic servants and as scavengers. Although domestic services are not considered as hazardous but as they have to work for long hours under abusive conditions, they are not able to obtain the education necessary
to improve their lives. Furthermore, their health is often severely damaged through years and years of exposure to hazardous material and substances. Many if they survive, are crippled, mangled, and deformed before they mature (Zutshi, 2001; Crowley and Johnson, 2004).

(ii) Non-Hazardous Form of Child Labour: This form of child labour comprises of light natured work which does not affect the child. Actually, all forms of child labour are no longer seen as bad for children (Dessy and Pallage (2003). Some help build “character” by teaching punctuality, discipline and rigour which are socially valuable qualities, for example – Newspaper delivery, baby sitting and farm work etc. (Ray, 2000a), some other may even provide valuable learning-by-doing (Boyden et. al., 1998; Beegle et. al., 2003). This set of facts has led to the admission that child labour should be tolerated in poor countries, at least in its non-hazardous forms.

(iii) Debt Bondage: Forced and bonded labour, which are considered to be the most exploitative and egregious form of child labour (ILO, 1992). As a matter of fact, there are no specific international standards on “forced child labour” but ILO convention 29 defined forced labour as “all work or service which is exacted from any person under the menace of any penalty and for which they said person has not offered himself voluntarily” (ILO, 1992a). So in case of debt bondage, children become a commodity in this process. Parents have absolute power over their children, making it possible for children to be pledged to pay off debts (Fyfe, 1989). A combination of low wages and usurious interest rates make it impossible to repay the initial debt (ILO, 1993a). Thus, these children are usually forced to work beyond their physical capacity and under conditions that seriously threaten their health, safety and development.
(iv) Child Trafficking: As per UNICEF (2006a) child trafficking means “any act or transaction whereby a child is transferred by any person or group of persons to another for remuneration or any other consideration”. It is the extended form of bonded labour. Thus, it is clear that children must be regarded as being trafficked, even if they have consented to it, as soon as they are recruited or transported with a view to their exploitation (RWG-CL, 2002). The victims of trafficking are forced to work in various illegal activities such as begging, robbery, prostitution etc. Although, it is illegal but is carried out in huge numbers in developing and underdeveloped economies (Anand, 2009).

These worst forms of child labour are so fundamentally at odds with children’s rights and involve such a heightened degree of risk that they must be addressed as a matter of urgency for effective elimination. However, eliminating all forms of child labour remains the ultimate goal, which is likely to require a longer term of action (ILO, 2010).

**Reasons for the Existence of Child Labour**

Child labour is usually considered as a socio-economic problem (Government of India, 1993) and several factors are expected to be the causes of the participation of children in economic activities like, poverty, adult unemployment, large size of the family, neighborhood effects etc. Basically these factors are interlinked and exert their influence directly and/or indirectly on the work participation of children (Dinesh, 1988). The problem has two sides; the supply side and the demand side. Actually, the demand side is exploring the problem from the point of view of the users of the child labour while the supply side is the manifestation of the desperation of families and households which is forcing them to send their children
for labour (Siddiqi, 2009). Here, some causes are explained both from demand and supply side.

**Supply Side: what pushes children into work?**

Among various other factors, poverty is overwhelmingly accepted as the root cause of child labour (Mendelievich, 1979; Ota, 2001; Schmitz et. al. 2004; Gupta, 2009). Poverty argument endorses that children need to work in order to prevent their families from suffering due to hunger and starvation (Sinha, 2001). Misra (2000) has given a reason for the existence of child labour that poor households tend to send their children to work in order to supplement family income, which is uncertain due to natural calamity, prolong illness, among other factors. On the other hand, Patil (1991) stated that this is a logical consequence of the rampant unemployment and underemployment of parents who force their wards to do some odd jobs to supplement the meager family income. Thus, as long as the wages earned by the parents are below the poverty line, their children go to work to augment family income. Further to the assertion that poverty leads to child labour, Wahba (2001) looked at the impact of child labour on poverty transmission and found that having a parent who had been a child labourer increases the probability of a child working. At the same time, having a parent who worked as a child labourer, does not affect significantly the likelihood of a child going to school. Related to this is the work by Emerson and Souza (2003, 2007). Empirically, there have been a number of studies on the positive relationship between poverty and child labour (see Canagarajah and Coulombe, 1997; Sasaki and Temesgen, 1999; Baland and Robinson, 2000; Blunch and Verner, 2000; Bellettini et. al. 2005; Okupkpara and Odurukwe, 2006; Edmonds, 2008; Akarro and Mtweve, 2011). But, the relationship between poverty and child labour may not be as simple. Issues such as income distribution, fertility, education, malnutrition, status of women together
with the structure and framework of the economy can all affect the likely incidence of child labour.

Lack of educational facilities is another very important characteristic of supplying child labour. In developing countries, a significant proportion of children are denied of their education due to the inadequacy and the inaccessibility of schooling facilities (Dinesh, 1988). In case of India, although the education is free and compulsory for all children up to 14 years of age, not all enrolled students graduate from primary schools (Chang et. al., 2007). One of many reasons for the high school dropout in India is the poor quality of education. For households rationally maximizing their welfare, low demand for schooling might arise because of low quality or excessive costs. Inaccessibility of schools or their poor quality thus may spur parents to engage their children in more immediate and profitable pursuits (Grootaert and Patrinos 1999). Government itself admits that in most places, the school presents a drab and dismal picture and holds little attraction for the child (Government of India, 1979). Dreze and Sen (2002) and Espinola et. al. (1988) has given a strong argument that the idea of compulsory education was too impractical in countries facing the problem of widespread poverty. This would only penalize poor parents who were not necessarily to be blamed for keeping their children out of schools because schools were simply not available. The quality of education provided by the schooling system was so appalling that even those children who went to school did not learn anything. In this situation compulsion would only lead to harassment of the poor and the vulnerable. On the other hand, Cost of schooling enhances the supply of child labour (Abdalla, 1988). Cost of schooling both direct (e.g. User fees, uniforms, transport) and indirect (e.g. Child work-related), are among the factors that influence parental decision about child education (Bustillo, 1989; Bredie and Beeharry, 1998; Kattan and Burnett, 2004; World Bank, 2004).
Moreover one more thing affects the parental decision about child education is the proximity of school. As Tilak (1989), has stated that if a school is close to child’s home, the likelihood of enrollment is higher for both girls and boys. With an increase in physical distance, especially girls’ participation in schooling is lower due to logistical problems and associated safety risks. So, indeed, good quality of primary education influences inversely the occurrence of child labour (Jafarey & Lahiri, 2005).

The illiteracy among parents also may lead to lack of demand for education of their own children (Weiner, 1991; Bhalla, 1995; Burra, 1995; GOI, 1998). There is almost a consensus that adult literacy has a positive impact on children’s schooling (Rosenzweig and Evensong, 1977; Kanbargi and Kalkani, 1991). Mainly the education status of head of the family is closely linked to the decision whether or not the child works (Burra, 1989). This illiteracy argument revealed that those who have no experience of schooling do not know the value of education, so they do not send their children to school, which they take as unnecessary wastage of time and money (ibid). Thus, the low rate of school attendance of children compels them to go to the work place and earn. Social, culture and traditional factors are equally responsible for the plight of children in developing countries like India (Reddy, 2007). The age, in which a child of a well off family from the higher castes starts reading, a poor child of the same age from disadvantaged social groups is forced to work as labour or help in parental occupation (Siddiqui, 2003).

Another factor that prompted the children to work is the large family size (Kifle et. al. 2005). Patrinos and Psacharopoulos (1997) stated that children from larger household are more likely to work, as a consequence of resources as per person being smaller in larger households. Many studies show that children are more likely
to work as family size increases (Cochrane and Alderman, 1990; Jomo, 1992; Lloyd, 1993). As Lloyd (1994) suggested that a larger household size reduces the investment of parents in education of children and therefore increases the likelihood that children will engage in market work. So, in large families, parents are forced to send their children to work, for, the available resources do not allow them to send all their children to school. Only a few children (generally male) of these families attend schools and other work either to support the expenses of their school going siblings or to keep away from idleness (Dinesh, 1988).

Children may also be seeking work either because adult wage earner in the family are unemployed or physically not capable of working or unable to earn enough to make both ends meet. Thus, leaving the children no option but to work and fend for themselves as well as the family (Sharma and Patnaik, 2001). On the other hand, Basu (2000) and Bhargava (2003) considered the impact of minimum wage legislation on child labour. The minimum wage causes adult unemployment to which parents may respond by sending children to work. Even employers also take the benefits of this weakness by providing work to their children on low wages in spite of the various protective laws (ibid).

Debt bondage may also be an important cause of child labour. Debt bondage is a form of forced labour in which children enter into servitude as a result of some initial financial transactions (U. S. Department of Labour, 1995). This most frequently occurs when, having no other security to offer, parents pledge their children’s labour in return for a money in advance or credit (ibid). Thus, children are bound to their employers in exchange for a loan to their families, they are unable to leave while in debt and earn so little they may never be free (Human Rights Watch, 2003).
Rapid rural-urban migration and urbanization may also be the causes for increasing rate of child labour in urban areas of developing countries. Many families migrate to urban areas due to rural push and urban pull factors. Due to frequent migration of the parents, the children often remain unenrolled in the schools and initially occasional, then prolonged absence from the schools finally lead to their dropout which pushes them to labour market. Child migrants looking for economic opportunities that often do not exist contribute to the large increase in number of child labourers in the menial jobs in the cities of developing countries (Salazar, 1988; Jillani, 1997). Although rural urban migration reduces population pressure in rural areas but the socio-economic problems could not be minimized due to shifting the problems from rural to urban areas because after migration mostly migrant children employed in hazardous occupations (Tripathy, 1997).

**Demand Side: why employers want children?**

Child labour also persists because of their high demand. Employers prefer children to adults for various reasons. A common justification for the use of child labour is that children provide irreplaceable skills. In particular, children are said to have special physical dexterity (often ‘nimble fingers’) not possessed by adults (Vishwanathan, 1981; Anker et. al, 1998). Some employers claim that only children with small fingers have the ability to make fine hand-knotted carpets, pick delicate jasmine flowers, or scramble through narrow tunnels (Brown, 2001). So the justification for child labour used here, then, is that industries which require children’s ‘nimble fingers’ will disappear if child labour is eliminated, and with the demise of such industries, there will be a loss of adult jobs and income as well as possible loss of foreign exchange and tax revenue (Anker et. al, 1998).
The demand for child labour is also very high due to scarcity of labour. According to Myrdal (1986) agricultural activities are characterized by two seasons viz. busy season and off season. During busy season, there is labour scarcity in the agriculture labour market, because the demand of labour is more than its supply. Thus seasonality in agriculture causes seasonal disequilibrium between demand and supply which is resorted by the children and the women (Mellor, 1976). Accordingly, seasonal variations in child labour are the result of labour scarcity during busy season. So to fulfill the demand of labour during busy season employers entertain children to work and the poor households, in an effort to restore the economic balance of the family, send their children to work for small pittance (Nadkarni 1976; Khuda 1991). Moreover, as per Assefa (2000), in informal sector where firms operate under stiff competition, employing child labour has advantages than adults. Children are better suited to fluctuating demand of labour because they can be laid off when business is slack as they do not have rights as workers.

One of the major reasons for businesses in the informal sector to hire children is because they are cheaper than adults. Firms are motivated to hire child labourers if the marginal product of child labour is greater than that of adult workers (ILO, 1996a). Actually, In the face of strong competition to earn at least a minimum level of profit and thus to survive in the industry, they have to cut down cost by any means. When they are not able to adopt modern and sophisticated technology which requires huge investment, the only option open to them is to employ cheap labour for reducing cost which is often done through employing a child labour which costs more or less one third of the wage of an adult labour (Vishwanathan, 1981; George 1990). Moreover, employers prefer children for work because they perform the same task on less wages than adults, apart from being more compliant, honest and disciplined in the work place (Nardinelli, 1982; Jawa, 2000). They can easily force
children to do any work even risky ones, such as working with chemicals, because they have no power to challenge and even they may not join trade unions (Zebenay, 1998). Kanbargi (1988) also explain that the children can sit in same posture for hours at a time and, all they have very little bargaining power. They can be easily punished for mistakes by beating or wage cut. On the other hand, children have not developed much ego and status consciousness and do any demeaning jobs (Dak, 2002).

**The Effects of Child Labour on Child**

The curse of child labour is problematic on a number of counts, ranging from the welfare, health and physical integrity of the affected children to downward pressure on adult wages (Arat, 2002). Actually, children are very sensitive to work hazards than adults. They are not only more susceptible to hazards than adults but also more strongly affected by work hazards (Felleke, 2007). The effects of child labour are gradual and they not only affect individuals who are the core victims but also affect the community, nations, and the whole world in terms of socio-economic development (Margaret, 2009). Some of the effects of child labour can be instant whereas others are long term and can only be realized on the next generation (*ibid*).

When children work both their physical and mental development suffers. Child labour not only disfavors general physical growth but also leads to defects and ailments. Different kinds of ill effects are produced by different types of labour. The working condition of child labour is very unsatisfactory especially in the unorganized factories, where in they work under ill ventilated, ill lighted, congested and dirty environment (Saxena, 1981; Kassouf and Doreman, 2005; Weiner et. al., 2006). ILO (1998) indicates that, worldwide children are being exposed to hazards in their work environment, such as coming into contact with toxic pesticides, lifting
heavy loads, operating machinery without appropriate training, being exposed to strong sunlight, dealing with lack of water and sanitation facilities etc. Similarly Sinha (1991) reveal that children employed in tea-shops and Dhabas are exposed to vagaries of weather like rains, scorching sun as they have to work mostly in the open without adequate clothing and food. Child workers are more vulnerable to occupational injuries. The injuries include burns, cuts, electric shocks and even loss of limbs. The other factor which contributes to accident is the competition among children to retain job (Basu, 1999). Even working children are not only abused but at many times beaten by their employers when they do not oblige them. On the other hand, Satyanarayanan et al. (1986); Guiffrida et al. (2001); Kassouf et al. (2001); and Rosati and Straub (2006) have found that child labour has negative effects on child labourers when they grow through adulthood due to injuries and adulthood.

Many psychologists believed that childhood is the critical period for later development of personality and the exploitative situations of child labour exert strong influence on the child’s self-concept and self-esteem (Maqil, 1996). Children who are in risky job fields have no opportunity to build their natural psychological health. Long working hours breed their feeling of frustration and inadequacy. Their involvement in risky work resists eventually in building their emotional cognitive skills and they become withdrawn, introvert and uncommunicative (Uddin et. al. 2009). Children also suffer negative psycho-social effects of work including physical abuse, sexual abuse, emotional abuse, verbal abuse etc. which also include restriction of movement, patterns of belittling, denigrating making a scapegoat out of the child, threatening, scaring, discriminating, ridiculing or other non-physical forms of hostile or rejecting treatment (ISCA, 2003; Lahiri, 2007). Thus, the physical and emotional stress of work, combine with denial of opportunities to play
or interact fully socially with peers and to explore the world, could doom a child to a personality and behavioral maladjustment (Aike and Twumasi-Ankrah, 1999).

When children work, besides health, their education also suffers. The future of a working child is endangered, as he cannot go to school, or is bound to leave school prematurely, or is unable to coordinate the two activities. He lacks fundamental general and professional knowledge, which is required for normal mental and intellectual development and for making the child into a skilled worker and enabling him to prosper in social and occupational fields (ILO, 1979). Hence children’s intellectual growth is hampered by depriving them of educational opportunities minimizing their chances for vocational training and condemning them to low wage for whole of their life as unskilled labours (Subramanian, 1990). Even when children are forced to work long hours in the field, their ability to attend school or skill training is limited, preventing them from gaining education that could help lift them out of poverty in the future (ILO, 2007). Children thus find themselves locked in unskilled, low paying, unpleasant and unsafe working situations and so become permanently disadvantaged in the labour market. In future as adult they would not only be unemployed but also unemployable (Ennew, 1986).

In short, we can say that child labour is an important global issue associated with poverty, inadequate educational opportunities, gender inequality and a range of health risks. Actually, the problem of child labour is intertwine with the basic survival issues of their families so, its elimination cannot be thought of without considering a comprehensive welfare measures for their families as a whole.
Review of Literature

Studies on child labour cover reports of various types prepared by various governmental, semi-governmental or voluntary agencies of national and international statuses. These studies are conducted to look into the working conditions of child labour and to determine the causes which compel the various households to send their children to work. Since child labour is a socio-economic problem, the main emphasis of the researchers has been applied one, in that most of them have tried to suggest ways to solve this problem or to lessen its intensity. The extent studies on child labour reveals that the emphasis has been more on the aspects like theoretical and conceptual framework of child labour, Antecedents of child labour like poverty, adult unemployment, education, gender discrimination etc., their working conditions with an emphasis on varying problem arising from different sectors of economy, consequences of child labour for children in terms of their physical and psychological health and on social and economic conditions of the family etc. These studies revealed a general analytical prospective and provided a focused and rational attitude for the present study.

Conceptual and Definitional Framework

The phrase ‘Child Labour’ today is a pejorative term that differs from the broader and less value-laden ‘child work’. Definitions of child labour vary. In general ‘Child Labour’ refers to children under 14 years (in India) old who work in both the formal and informal sectors, in conditions that are harmful or potentially harmful to the child. The term child labour is conceptually and operationally restricted to mean the employment of children in gainful occupations who are the age group of five to fourteen and who are also working either exclusively or in combination with studies. This includes the children working either in agriculture or in industries or
also as domestic workers, the significant aspects being the impact of labour on the development of the child (Sudha and Tewari, 1985).

Pointing to the close links between child labour and education, the proponents of the viewpoint argues that all children who are out of school should be considered as child labourers. An out-of-school child is inevitably drawn into supplementing family labour, either on a full time basis, to help in family occupation or manage family assets or simply engage in different ‘adult-releasing’ activities. Burra (1995) and the UNDP (2004) also define Child Labourer as “basically, a child who is deprived of the rights of education and childhood”. The most suitable definition of child labour is given by Stein and Davis (1940) “any work by children that interferes with their full physical development, the opportunities for a desirable minimum of education and of their needed recreation”. On the other hand, Folks (1946) defined child labour as “any work by children that interfere with their full physical development and their opportunities for desirable minimum level of education or the needed recreation.

The World Bank (1998), on a similar vein, argues that ‘child work’ that does not involve an exploitative relationship should be distinguished from child labour. It further argues that in some instances, work done by children within the family may even contribute to the development of the child. “Not all child labour is harmful. Many working children are within a stable and nurturing environment with their parents or work under protection of a guardian can benefits in terms of socialization and from informal education and training” (cited in Sharma, 2006). Any more precise definition of child labour must be specific to local circumstances, involving “a comparison between the conditions of work on the one hand and age, gender and ability (of the child) on the other” (Reddy, 1999). Thus, the child labour
is to be defined neither by the form of the labour relationship nor by the activity, but by effect the activity has on the child.

According to Bachman (2000), underpayment of children for their work and other forms of exploitation, are also included in child labour. Generally child Labour is perceived to be an economic necessity of poor households and the exploitative aspect in children’s work is associated with the profit maximizing motive of commercial enterprises, wherein children are made to work long hours, paid low wages and denied opportunities for education (Study Group, 2001).

It is unambiguously clear that all out-of-school children are working children in one form or another which is not captured by the National Census as economic activity (Lieten, 2005). Nowhere children are vulnerable to the demands of the labour market. The nowhere children are also stated to be ‘potential’ child labourers and are assumed to be staying home from school so that they can take over tasks at home to relieve the adults to join the workforce (Duraisamy, 2000). Therefore, it is imperative to treat all working children as out-of-school children and child labourers. Ray (2000a) included the domestic work in child labour and termed it as ‘relaxed treatment of child labour’.

A number of studies (for instance Chaudhri et al., 1999; Blunch and Verner, 2000; Illahi, 2001) have argued for the merger of economic activity and home care activity of children and making the definition of child labour broader and it is argued by the Study Group (2001) that restricting the concept of child labour to wage employment is particularly detrimental to the interests of the girl child. “first, it takes little or no cognizance of work done by the girl child (for it is normally the girl children who work at home assisting their mothers with household tasks such as cooking, washing and cleaning and looking after elderly and younger siblings) and
hence her contribution to the economy”. Such a narrow interpretation of the concept will result in fewer efforts by all concerned to get girls out of work and into school (Study Group, 2001).

Cigno and Rosati (2002) found that the effect of child’s sex, age, household composition, and mother’s education on child labourers is of the same kind for home care children so the two groups may be the same thing.

In this view Khan and Ali (2005) also establishes the broader definition of child labour which tends to include time spent on home-care (non-monetized work inside or outside the home other than household enterprises, for example, household chores like water fetching, caring for younger siblings) in addition to economic activity of children (both work for wages and in household enterprises). The presumption here is that home-care can be as hard as economic activity. It detracts the children from earning and skill acquirement along with school deportation. However, it is widely known that home-care constitutes a large part of children’s work especially that of girls (Grootaert and Patrinos, 1999; Biggeri et al., 2003). In India, 34.25 per cent of girls in the age group of 5-14 years are neither attending school nor going for paid work but are involved in home care activity (Census 2001). In a number of countries, including India, home care children outnumber the economically active children (Biggeri et al., 2003).

**Antecedents of Child Labour**

**Poverty**

There are two contrary views with regards to the effect of poverty on the participation rate of children in work activities. The first argument attributes that poverty is the main cause of child labour while the second argument denies its role in the existence of child labour.
According to the first concept most of the child labourers are compelled to join the labour market due to acute poverty. There is no consensus in the literature on the role of poverty in forcing households to put its children into employment. The M. S. Gurupadaswamy Committee, (1979a) cited that chronic poverty is the strongest factor for the prevalence and perpetuation of child labour. Similarly, Singh et al (1980), Hussain (1988) Singh (1990), Sinha (1991), Usha (1991), Sekar (1998), Sharma (2001) and Ghosh & Sekar (2002) has also found a strong correlation between child labour and poverty.

Nadkarni (1976) study on ‘over population and rural poor’ revealed that poverty compels million of rural families to sell the labour of their children along adults to eke out a bare subsistence. Among small land owners, children are the main source of support for their family agriculture operations because some agricultural operations can be performed by them. Similar study is also remarked by Nag et. al. (1978). Similarly, a study conducted by Mendelievich (1980) showed that the driving force behind every case of child labour is generally poverty but the basic cause is the interplay of some of the above factors. A child goes to work in order to contribute to the family income. Broadly speaking, child labour persists in inverse relation to the degree of economic advancement of a society or country. The exploitation of children is one of the consequences of complex situation of insufficient progress. In case of India most of the families are poor and their economic conditions are such that they have relied upon the earnings of children to help provide food and other necessities (Levison et al, 1998). Another study conducted by Edmonds (2002) on child labour revealed that the connection between child labour and poverty is empirically well documented. In his study of Vietnamese agriculturalists, he found that in the poorest households, child labour is fairly inelastic with respect to per capita expenditure. He finds a flat or increasing
relationship with per capita expenditure. This is consistent with the significance of child labour income to the survival of households for households below the poverty line. Once a threshold level standard of living of around 2100 calories per day is obtained, child labour begins to decline with expenditure. Poverty proxied by per capita household income impacts the economic activity and home-care activity of the children positively (Khan and Ali, 2005), i.e. children from lower per capita household income are more likely to be economically active and do home-care. The possible explanation may be that poor households send their children to work to support the family income.

Parents of the child labourers also attribute poverty as the main reason for sending their children to work rather than to school (Murthy, 1990). Desai and Raj (2001) also attribute that it is poverty which compels the child members of the households to discontinue education and join labour force. As per Kanan (2001), poverty variable is one of important determinant for supplying child labour. It is not, however clear which is cause and which is effect between poverty and child labour. It is possible that child labour can perpetuate poverty. The combination of poverty and the lack of a social network forms the basis of even harsher type of child labour – bonded child labour, a cycle of poverty informed and the need for child labour is reborn after every generation. Similar study is also remarked by Reddy (2007).

Some of the industry specific studies also attribute poverty as the main cause for the participation of children (97 per cent) in carpet Weaving Industry (Pandit, 1991), (47.1 per cent) in the gem stone Industry (Lal, 1998) as well as in brassware (91.2 per cent), and in lock Industry (86 per cent) (Kumar, 2000) and Mathew (2006) revealed that children do work because they are poor. Poor parents need their children’s income or services. Large number of working children has illiterate and
unemployed parents. They may realize the worth of education but cannot cope with
the immediate loss of a child’s wages. They do so as there is no option or
alternative to ensure their survival. Deeply entrenched patriarchal biases, poverty,
lack of proper schools and unemployed parents – all combine to push children into
work. There are also a host of other social, economic and cultural factors
responsible for the creation, continuance and perpetuation of the system of child
labour. Basu and Van (1999) study showed how this ‘added worker effect’ was
stronger than the ‘discouragement effect’ for low-income households. If the primary
breadwinner had little possibility of finding work (income), a low-income
household will send other members of the household to seek work also. These
secondary members may be children or adults for whom the children must assume
some of the domestic duties. Bringing the children along with themselves to the
labour market may also increase the adults’ opportunities for work. This is
particularly true in agricultural work and in other types of piece-rate employment,
such as brick kilns or garment subcontracting.

and Kabeer (2003), among others, argue that poverty has a limited role in
explaining child labour. Leiten (2000), observes that ‘the correlation between
regional poverty and child labour indeed is inconclusive’ and explains the lack of
strong correlation by the fact that poor regions are characterized by high fertility
rates and low labour opportunities. Leiten’s view is supported by the Pakistani
evidence of Addison et. al. (1997) who observed that ‘low incomes do not increase
child labour’. Bhatt (1998) cites a variety of studies on Indian child labour in
support of the view that ‘income and related variables do not seem to have any
direct significant effect on children’s work input… children are often put to work as
a deterrent to idling rather than as an economic necessity. Ray (2000b) also
provides evidence that shows that household poverty has an insignificant impact on the child’s labour market participation in Peru and Pakistan. Swaminathan (1998) explains the observed weak relation between incidence of child labour and incidence of poverty by suggesting that at ‘the micro-level, poverty ensures a supply of child labour… it is the structure of demand, however, that determines the use of child labour’. Chandrasekhar’s (1997) Study in Indian context also finds no correlation between Poverty and child labour stated that five states i.e. Andhra Pradesh, Rajasthan, Tamil Nadu, Karnataka, Maharashtra have more number of child labour in comparison to poor states like Uttar Pradesh, Bihar and Orissa. Similarly the study on working children in Malaysia infers that the family income affects neither child labour nor working hours for any age group of children. It also proves, in the context of Malaysia, that Putting Children to Work in order to make ends meet does not hold for Malaysia (Dennis, 1983).

Besides economic reasons, the issue of child labour has a strong correlation to social, culture, educational, attitudinal health related and infrastructural issues, including opportunities available to the labouring families (John and Ghosh, 2002). Poverty, thus, while not the proximate cause of the phenomenon of child labour, is the seedbed in which it thrives, which forces the parents to send their children to work (ibid). It allows the pull of demand to automatically generate a corresponding supply (Vidyasagar and Kumarbabu, 2001).

**Education**

Many studies have been conducted on impact of education and child labour. Lack of proper education facilities, poor schooling system compel the parents to send their children to work rather than school. These studies revealed that working children and out-of-school children have a strong association. As rightly pointed out by
Nangia (1981) that child work force is highly correlated ($r = -0.76$) to literacy rate, negative association between the two variables was found to be significant at 99 per cent level of confidence. Hirway (1991) also pointed out that the correlation between the incidence of child labour and illiteracy was highly positive ($r = 0.78$), indicating that lower the literacy, higher the incidence of child labour. Similarly, Cavalieri (2002) also found a significant negative effect of child labour on educational performance.

Psacharopoulos (1997) using household survey data from Bolivia and Venezuela shows in his study that, though working children contribute substantially to household incomes, the educational attainment of children who work is significantly lower than that of non-working children. Basu (1999) argues that “…. not only are these not mutually exclusive activities but there may be important complementarities between them”.

Moock and Leslie (1985) and Walters and Briggs (1993), revealed in their study that the probability of a child bring enrolled in school is influenced by household assets endowment, but the relationship is neither linear nor fully predictable. Studies in Asia by Burney (1995) and in Africa by Canagarajah and Nielsen (1999) showed controversial or mixed effects of farm ownership on the probability of child schooling. For example, a higher endowment of small livestock showed negative effects on enrolment in Botswana (Chernichovsky, 1981, cited in Moock and Leslie, 1985), while Walters and Briggs (1993) found a higher probability of school enrolment for children from households who own their own home. Another study conducted by Sekar and Mohammad (2001) shows that Children are generally pulled out of school because their parents cannot afford education to their children. Low income household face economic constraints at present time, which makes it
difficult for them to afford education as well as making them short-sighted in not investing in future returns (Ota, 2001). Similar study is also remarked by Acharji (1986).

Child’s education decision is also influenced by parental occupation, as the chances of school enrolment were greater for children from households headed by civil servants and, particularly in the case of girls, increased in accordance with the status of parental occupations in Asia (Tilak, 1989). The relationship between education and ownership of family-owned businesses (usually in urban areas), however, appears mixed. While Appleton (1991) and Bredie and Beeharry (1998) found that children were less likely to go to school if parents valued their current contribution more than the potential benefits from schooling, other studies found increased school attendance in households with non-farm businesses (Canagarajah and Coulombe, 1997; Canagarajah and Nielsen, 1999). The impact of parental education on child enrolment has been much studied and has also been used as an indicator of the intergenerational multiplier effect of schooling (World Bank, 2004). Overall, higher parental education levels have a strong positive impact on school enrolment (Handa, 1999; Ravallion and Wodon, 2000; Ray, 2003), but the significance of the impact may vary depending on the way the variable is defined, the gender and age of the parent and child, and other conditioning factors. School factors were cited in many studies as constituting more important determinants of educational enrolment than the socio-economic status of the home environment. A study conducted by Acharaya (1982) on child labour showed that limited numbers of schools, their absence in several interior villages, the clash of school timings and agricultural operations, and the cost of schooling as well as its restricted nature of providing job opportunities facilitates the path of children of underprivileged classes to enter into the labour market. As such, the phenomenon of child labour is the product of such
indifference to education. Another study conducted by Khatu et. al. (1983) on ‘working children in India’ showed that the working children are also affected by the rigidity and inflexibility of the schooling system. The schooling schedule does not allow children to take time off during sowing and harvesting seasons nor does it allow children to re-enter the school system at times convenient to them and their families. The subsistence economy of rural India forces poorer households to utilize the labour of their children whether it is for agricultural operations or for household chores, which releases adults for a more directly productive activity. Similar study is also remarked by Kelly (1998). Moreover, Punecha (2006) study on child labour revealed that many of the parents, especially that of the rural and slum areas, cannot afford the prescribed minima of uniforms, books and stationary etc. even though education is free up to primary level.

Similarly, Weiner (1991) also noted that education should not be regarded as merely as a right granted by the state, but as a duty, imposed by the state. When education is made a duty, parents, irrespective of their economic circumstances and beliefs, are required by law to send their children to school. It is the legal obligations of the state to provide an adequate number of schools, appropriately situated, and to ensure that no child fails to attend school. Some studies established that besides the necessity of work, inadequate expenditure on elementary education, inadequate or absence of educational infrastructure, and low quality, irrelevant and inaccessible education also play important role behind sending children to work (Reddy and Ramesh, 2002).

On the other hand, the illiteracy argument is also augmented by the caste system in the case of India. Higher caste people do not think that lower caste children avail of education and lower caste people tend to think that education is unimportant or
unsuitable for them (Dreze and Sharma, 1998; The PROBE Team, 1999). Throat and Sadana (2001) found that high school attendance and literacy rate have helped to reduce the participation of children in economic activities.

**Gender Discrimination**

Girl child labour is a daughter of denial in traditional cultures (Narayana, 1993) it looks true when we go through the various studies. Dixit (1997) stated that the causes of girl child labour are unemployment among the parents, poverty, inadequate distribution of land and assets, inadequate income of adults, migration of labour, social and culture factors, etc. Similarly, Mahanti (1997) also observed that the girl child in India requires special mention in the context of child labour as she is a child, a girl and a labourer and faces discrimination in all counts. The situation of girl child is made worse by economic disadvantages. The process of socialization isolates the girl child from education, health care, and adequate nutrition (*ibid*) and she is denied even those rights which are available to her brother (Aidoo, 1991). In most economically disadvantaged families, the greater the poverty, the worse is the situation of the girl child (Muthuraja, 2000).

On the other hand, Burra (2001) study seeks to draw attention to the issue of child labour and education with a special focus on girl’s education and observed that the majority of children out of schools are girls. Edmonds and Pavcnik (2005), Allais (2009) and IPEC (2009) found the same aspect in their studies that the incidence of child labour for girls in much higher compared to boys. Similarly, Lloyd, et. al. (2005) and World Bank 2009 also observed that there is substantial evidence that girls in developing countries have significantly less accessibility to schools compared to boys.
On the other hand, Shah (1997) and Social Welfare (1990) indicated that the burden of household duties fall largely upon the female child. There are jobs that may jeopardize a child’s psychological and social growth more than physical growth. In rural areas girls are responsible for looking after younger siblings, cooking, cleaning, fetching, and carrying, which releases adults for productive work. Though a domestic job can involve relatively ‘light’ work. However, long hours of work, and the physical, psychological and sexual abuse to which the child domestic labourers are exposed make the work hazardous. Studies show that several domestic servants in India on an average work for twenty hours a day with small intervals. So, due to social factors of keeping the females at homes, many parents did not like to send their female children to work outside their homes (Devi, 1998) and household work is found to be the most common type of female child work (Leclercq, 2002).

Pande (1980)’s study among child workers in the beedi sector in Nizamabad district of Andhra Pradesh revealed that girls in the age group of 12-14 who had reached puberty and where either dropout or not going to school, spent more time in beedi rolling. The study also indicated that the number of female children at the primary school level was more, but kept on reducing later with the boys continuing their studies and girl being made to sit at home after puberty or primary education. A crucial finding of the study was that among the children interviewed, 75 percent were girls and 25 percent were boys and hence beedi making was a ‘gendered’ industry giving more representation to the female workers. Kanugo (1991)’s study has separated male child labour and girl child labour. The study showed that the girl child labour doing domestic work and helping us in our household chores. This study was conducted at Bhubaneswar (Orissa). The result showed that the family of these girl children was mainly illiterate. These girls are mainly between 12 to 14
years of age. The 48 percent of these girls were recruited into the labour force by parents and 40 percent by middleman and rest seek work independently. The hours of work performed by these child labourers had a wide range from 5 to 10 hours or even more at times. The wide range was due to type of employment as part time workers or full time workers. They earned an average income of Rs. 60 per month. The girls working as full time workers are mainly harassed and get humiliated because they compare the masters children with themselves. They are scolded, beaten by employers at times and exploited also.

Another study on gender discrimination conducted by Anandalakshmi (1991) analyzed the data accumulated from traditional craftsmen’s families. According to her, the practice of socialization begins early in a child’s life. The girl child is at a disadvantage as the tradition of India is to over indulge the male at the cost of the female. It was found that around the age of six, the girl child is engaged in various works in the households. Some of the female children were found employed for wages. The study conducted in the Muslim households of Varanasi depicts the discrimination among boys and girls, while the boys are constantly playing on the streets or watching the activities associated with weaving, young girls are deprived of the equal opportunity of playing in the downstairs. The girls’ activities are stereotyped and experiences are monotonous. Thus, as expected, gender difference emerges as an important reality in the child labour households.

**Adults Unemployment and Underemployment**

An another reason for children being in labour force is low level of income of adult members of the family members of the child labour household, Chandra (1961) revealed that ‘effect of low income on the size of labour force and unemployment in India’ showed that the child labour increases adult unemployment and reduces their
wages as a result they face poverty. It has been estimated that if the children who are engaged in gainful occupations are ejected totally then it will be a fine cure of the problem of unemployment in the country to a great extent by causing at least 15 million vacancies for the adult unemployed persons. Rao (1998) also found that child labour supplements the income of the family and this is essential because the earnings of the adult workers are extremely low.

Unemployment and under employment of the adults, unstable occupation and wages as well as the engagement of parents in non-wage based occupation like farming and self employment also influence the work participation of children (Rosenzweig and Evenson, 1977; Rodgers and Standing, 1981). Another study conducted by Iyengar (1986) on match industry in Sivakasi. It is one of the most hazardous industries in the country where children work. This study interviewed both parents and children. The study shows that the children in match industry work for ten to fourteen hours a day for Rs. 4 to 5 and after returning from the factory they falls asleep without being able to eat any dinner. Their legs ache after working full day in the factory. They have to work because of unemployment of adults in the family; this is very important cause of child labour. Similar study conducted on carpet industry in Mirzapur – Bhadohi by Juyal (1987) found that child labour leads to enhancing unemployment and underemployment of the adults. Within the industry, they not only seem to displace adult workers but also depress the income of adults doing similar work.

On the other hand, a study conducted by World Bank (1991) on child labour revealed that large private entrepreneurs with automatic machines render a large number of workers jobless. There is major expansion of the unprotected, unorganized labour force. Unemployment among men, together with increased
migration or desertion and alcoholism among men, has led to an increasing number of women and children joining the labour force. Basu (2000)’s study tracks the impact of rising and falling adult wages in poor and developing countries, where poverty and labour exploitation are the norms on child labour. One argument made is that if an increase in wages is achieved by means of a minimum wage law, it can cause some adults to be unemployed and compel them to send their children to work, which in turn displaces more adult labour and sends more children to work. Another study conducted by Murty (2003) on child labour in India revealed that the state of the unemployment is even worse than that of the poor. Low wages make a man poorer but unemployment makes him absolutely poor. Unemployment of adult members in the family compels the women and the children to go for earning. The incidence of child labour in India is high due to the unemployment of adult members of the family. Thus unemployment indirectly initiates child labour.

A study conducted by Singh and Singh (1993) on child labour showed that the economic cause of the child labour in our social set up is unemployment of adult workers. Unemployment cannot be treated as a mere economic problem. It is complicated psycho – social problem affecting every aspect of human life. The state of unemployment is more than that of the poor and turns the weak into a crippled. Poverty may deepen one’s spirit but unemployment can kill mercilessly. Child labour is high due to the unemployment of adult members of the family. Unemployment may force the adults to send their children to work. Another study on child labour by Nangia (1987) revealed that certain social implications follow from the economic effects of child labour. The adult unemployment leads to iniquitous distribution of income, which in turn leads to labour displacement, migration, the break-up of family and kinship bonds and competition for survival.
Fertility

Another important feature is the fertility decision. Poor men and women may prefer to have more children because of the economic gains children provide to their parents. Caldwell (1976) in a study on demographic transition establishes a close association between fertility and child labour. The general opinion according to parents is that many children mean many more hands and earn (Mustafa and Sharma, 1996; Leiten, 2001) and to be assumed of a source of support in old age (Leiten, 2001). The study supports that high fertility exists in such economic structure where child labour plays an important role in wealth generation in the family. Anker and Melkas (1996) revealed in the study that since parents’ lack of education is one of the most important determinants of high fertility, large families needing the income from child labour perpetuate over time. Ray (2000) concludes that “there is now widespread appreciation that decision on fertility, child labour and child schooling are interdependent”.

Boyden (1994) also establishes that the more children a poor family has, the more child workers there will be. Clark (1968), Cain (1977), McIntosh (1983), Mishra and Pande (1992) reveal that in the poverty stricken families, utility of children is high. Children work for the survival of the family. Thus high fertility is both a cause and effect of child labour. It is argued that fertility has the close association with child labour. It follows the way that when the balance shifts from the regime of net flows of wealth from children to parents to net flows of wealth from parents to children, decline in fertility becomes economically rational. Similarly Levy (1985), Basu (1993), Bardhan and Udry (1999), Chaudhuri (2000), Brown et. al. (2002), Fan (2002) also shows the interconnection between child labour and fertility. Some studies also revealed that reason for the high fertility in the developing countries may be due to high demand of child labour. Thus these studies associate the close
relationship between child labour and fertility with the demand of child labour (Kasarda, 1971; Ajami, 1976; Cain, 1977; Aghajanian, 1978; Nag et. al. 1978; Vlassoff, 1979; Lindert, 1983). Similarly, Mamdani (1972) vigorously adopted the view that high fertility makes good economic sense. He stated that “an overwhelming majority of the people... have a large number of children not because they overestimate their infant mortality rates, but because they want larger families. More important they want them because they need them”. Thus, for the majority of the population, a larger family means a greater income during the busy season and higher savings for the lean season.

Other Reasons

Some of the other important reasons cited by the authors are caste, migration, tradition, death/disease of their parents, young siblings, and greed of employers etc.

Caste system is one of the several forms of stratification of the society (Harper, 1970). It is generally found that women and children work participation rates are high among those sections of the people who rank low in the caste hierarchy (Arles, 1971; Myrdal 1986). Chatterjee & Nandi (2001)’s study revealed that the exploitation of children as labourers is the consequences of social inequality and attitude of the privileged class of the society. In fact, these socially deprived communities are the victims of a long standing caste system. The fate of many child workers is sealed by social forces such as their low birth. The schedule castes, schedule tribes and other backward classes are the main victims of the child labour problem. In a study of Surat Textile industry, Sahoo (1990) noted that 86 per cent of child workers belong to backward castes while it was negligible for the upper caste group. There is also family tradition which forces the children into labour market
as study by Jain (1990) points out that culture and heritage factors influence the working of child labour.

The type of neighbourhood also influences the extent of child labour. It is a group of people experiencing social interaction within a localized area with one or two social institutions as the focal point or means by which the area can be identified physically (Bertrand, 1958). The neighbourhood is ordinarily viewed as a smaller version of a local community (Sills, 1972). This type of get together of neighbours is of great importance as their attitudes and behaviour influences the attitudes and behaviour of a family. If neighbouring household send their children to work, that might positively influence the attitudes of the parents towards child labour.

However, according to Kitchlu (1987), it is not only the economic compulsion of families but need to learn the tricks of the trade are the most important reason for the children being in labour market. Indeed, it is striking that virtually all of the work performed by children is unskilled, and child labourers do not need a special physical dexterity that is not also possessed by adults (Anker, 1998).

City-ward migration is yet another factor of prevalence of child labour. Migrant children account for around 20 per cent in urban areas (Kasbekar, 1993). They come to urban areas to avoid economic helplessness and poverty at their villages. The progressive mechanization of agriculture has lead to the squeezing of farms lands out of this sector, thus forcing people to migrate to cities (Devi, 1998).

Jain (1994) highlights one more cause for child labour as expansion of urban sector, change in favour of urban informal sector and high growth of population below poverty line. Drenovsky (1992) investigated the economic role of children in developed and developing countries by reviewing mid 1970s children’s labour force
for 70 developed and undeveloped countries established a positive and significant relation between urban growth and child labour, female labour and child labour.

**Working Conditions of Child Labour**

Apart from the causes of child labour, several studies have revealed the working condition of children who toil for long hours at lower wages in the worst conditions to meet their survival. The work participation of children adversely affects their health and education. The lack of literacy is equivalent to the lack of nutrition in early child development which causes fatal damage or retardation in brain development and physical growth (Dinesh, 1988).

The review of working conditions has been divided into the following sub points:

- Long working hours
- Low wages
- Health hazardous conditions

**Long Working Hours**

The main problem of working children is hours of work. A study conducted by Singh (1980) in Bombay city presents the working conditions of both self employed and employed children. The child workers found to be working for 10 hours a day who earned around Rs. 82 per month on an average. The children engaged in construction work, arts and crafts and production received higher wages than those in households and restaurants. The study further showed that out of the total sample, 5.10 percent working children had no fixed rest interval. Similarly, 35 percent of the children did not get an off-day during the week. Nearly 33 percent of the parents did not visit the work places of their children.

Sharma (1982)’s study on the working children to examine the extent of exploitation and socio-economic background of child labour found that 56 percent
respondents had to work for 15 to 18 hours per day for earnings their livelihood and 44 percent for 10-15 hours per day. The average daily working hours were 16 hours. Maximum child workers responded that they are working to support their families to augment family income. According to Ashraf (2001), in India, some 20,000 children work 16-hour days in match factories. Similarly, in Bahawalpur, Pakistan children are forced to work 18 hours at a stretch for carpet weaving (SPARC 2005). A study conducted on match industry in Sivakasi in Tamil Nadu by Kothari (1983) revealed that about 50000 child labourers are employed in this industry. The entire production of the matches in this area is non- mechanized. Children between 5-14 years of age, mostly belonging to the neighboring villages, either work in small cottage units in their own villages or are brought by organized transport to the small scale factories scattered in the neighboring villages or in Sivakasi town. Children have to work for 8 to 10 hours a day. The younger children between 4 and 10 years earn an average of Rs. 2 a day. The children between 11 to 15 years old earn Rs. 6-7 per day. They are neither paid over time nor given any benefits other than a yearly bonus in low recognized units.

Another study conducted by Prembhai (1984) on carpet industry of Mirzapur Bhadosh Varanasi revealed that these export oriented industries are largely dependent upon the labour of approximately 75000 child workers. The government in order to promote exports of carpets, generally extends annual subsidies to order of Rs. 20-25 crore to some three hundred and odd manufacturers and exporters but the children between 8 to 10 years of age, work for more than 8 hours for which they are paid an average of Rs. 80 per month. The working children being quite unhealthy and suffer from many hazardous diseases.
Not much different is the case in diamond polishing, match making and other unregulated sectors. The prevalence of massive exploitation of child labour is distressing. These young children have got no opportunity for schooling or skill training in any other field. Their lives are tied up to 12 hours a day, six days in a week (the factory is open every day except on Fridays) in order to help their family to survive. They work in a poor light, ventilation, congested and dirty environment. Therefore, children in this industry suffer from kidney dysfunction, tuberculosis, lung disease and pain in their joints and eyesores (Costa, 1989).

Karunanithi (1990)’s study among beedi rolling children in Melapalayam town, Tirunelveli district of Tamil Nadu revealed that when the children complete eight years of age, they are compelled by their parents to do work. The compulsion of the parents forced the children to dropout from school. Children are compelled to work for 10 to 12 hours per day to complete more or less than 500 beedis. The contractors and employers exploit children working within the premises of beedi companies and they are put to work from dawn to dusk on a low wage. Another study by Singh (1990) conducted on carpet industries of Varanasi district of U. P. was based on the sample of 300 child labourers showed that most of the children worked for more than 11 hours per day and their average earning were only Rs. 145 per month. The author concluded that abolition of child labour was not favored by employer or parents due to economic reasons.

A study conducted by Thijs (1997) on child labour revealed that waged child labour in manufacturing and services is generally more rigid and harsh. Hours of work are longer and inflexible and so, children are mostly out of school. The study showed that the working hours of the child workers are more than 12 hours a day. The working hours are even longer in the informal enterprises (Pande, 1993).
Jayachandran (2001) showed that on brick kiln industry of Thane district the children have to get started even before sunrise, have to stand for hours in knee deep water, mud and straw to prepare dough for the bricks, work very close to the fire whilst making the kiln, and their work hours could range from 10 to 14 hours every day.

Similarly, Venkateshwarulu and Corta, (2001) revealed that in hybrid cotton seed industry in Andhra Pradesh mostly girls are employed where they work for about 9-10 hours a day in normal season and 10-13 hours in peak season for only Rs. 20 per day (for 12 to 13 hours of work per day).

**Low Wages**

Working children are paid very low wages. In this regard many studies have been conducted. A study conducted in the Ujjain city of Madhya Pradesh by Murthy (1970) reported the sex discrimination in wages of children. As regards the earnings, the girls were earning between Rs. 200 to 300 per month whereas most of the boys were earning between Rs. 400 to Rs. 500 per month. Another study conducted by Mehta (1983) on mortgaged child labour of Vellore showed that almost working children in this industry are bonded labour and they became bonded over very small sums of money. They have to roll about 1000 beedis a day and they paid only Rs. 2.50 a day. Most of the children in this industry are very young when mortgaged.

A study conducted on knitting industries in Amritsar by Sharanjit and Arora (2001) revealed that the children have to work for long hours at a very low wages. They are paid between Rs. 900-1100 per month. A Study conducted by Burra (1988) on gem industry of Jaipur showed that children are engaged in the cutting of the stones faceting and polishing the semi precious stones. Children are apparently engaged as
apprentices, but in reality prove to be cheap labour. The apprentice period is usually for five to seven years. They are not paid any regular wages during this period, but are occasionally given a few rupees so that they continue to be interested in the work, once the child has spent three or four years he is worth at least Rs. 300-400 to the contractor but it paid just 100 per month and old clothes, tea and food. By the time the child is 14 or 15 years old and learnt most of the polishing techniques, he is given Rs. 150- Rs. 200 a month whereas an adult would get Rs. 500-600 for the same job.

The study conducted in the city of Punjab by Sharma and Mittar (1990) showed that the mean earning of the working children was Rs. 168.18 per month. The mean earnings of the migrant children were much higher at Rs. 225.10 per month than that of non migrant children. The mean earnings of the children working as own account workers were much higher Rs. 202.06 per month than that of those working as wage labourers Rs. 163.20 per month. Actually, the difference in wages can be noticed by type of work they do and the sphere in which they work. In trade, wages paid to the children were high as compared to other industrial categories. A study conducted Pandit (1991) on handicraft industry in Jammu and Kashmir shows that 34.47 percent of the working children in this profession were employed in a daily wage rate between Rs. 2 to Rs. 2.50. Another 16.92 percent workers were earning between Rs. 1 and Rs. 1.99 per, 20.44 percent earned between Rs. 2.50 and Rs. 5.00 per day and 12.54 percent earned less than a rupee per day. None of the children was found to be getting a wage more than Rs. 5 a day. Some 12.63 percent of the children were not paid at all because they work as apprentices.

A study conducted by Srinivasan and Gandotra (1993) on child labour’s multi dimension problems revealed the exploitation of child workers in terms of
remuneration. Study showed that children in many cases received no pay. Such is the case of many so called apprenticeship schemes found in small enterprises and informal sector such as automobile workshops, repair shops, tailoring, carpentry etc. where they are paid, they almost invariably receive low wages. This appears to be one of the reason for the wide spread use of child labour. Children are also subjected to methods of remuneration such as piece rates that place undue strains upon them and are vulnerable to abuse, such as unjustified deductions or third party payments, etc.

One another study conducted by Gupta (1994) on children in bonds of labour revealed that fireworks and match making is another industry which has earned notoriety for employing children under hazardous conditions. These children literally play with fire every minute. They have to work 10-12 hours for just Rs. 5-7 per day. They inhale toxic fumes and suffer from intense heat. Rao (1998) studied the general profile of the female workers in beedi industry in India. The children employed in this industry work on piece rate basis and for Rs. 40 for 1000 beedis rolled. These child workers are exposed to dust, nicotine causing respiratory diseases and infertility in girls.

Laskar (2000) conducted in his study on child labour in Aligarh lock industry revealed that the household economic pressure compel children to enter into low wage, hazardous work environment that proves detrimental to their education and health prospects. He has cited that the wage structure in the lock industry varies from unit to unit and also according to the nature of work, age and skill. It is observed that wages vary from Rs. 100 to Rs. 800 per month for the children of 6 to 14 years working 10 to 14 hours a day. Children who work in cottage units along with parents received nothing other than food and shelter.
Jayaranjan (2002) in a study inferred that child workers in diamond industry are paid just half of the adult wages on even lower than that. He further revealed that the most of the households, engaged in leather manufacturing, crucially depend on the wage income of their children which is very low.

**Health Hazardous Conditions**

Majority of child labour are found to be working in completely unhygienic conditions, inimical to their health and longevity. In a study by Yagi (1921), it was found that the height and weight up to 12 years of age were almost same in the girls employed in factories and school attending pupils, but, he found that the physical development in the working girls was definitely affected by work in the later years of life. Another study by Menon (1985) conducted on balloon factories of Dahanu in Maharashtra shows that children’s work includes mixing rubber with chemicals, colouring balloons and testing each balloon with gas. A thick pall of dust of chemicals pervades the rooms which are small, cramped and ill-ventilated. Children in these factories work nine hours a day, six days a week, ‘medical reports state that inhalation of such acids continuously over a period of time can burn respiratory lining and cause pneumonia, bronchopneumonia, cough, breathlessness and even heart failure’.

A study conducted on beedi industry in Samserganj by Hossain (1987) pinpointed that the children work in dark, dingy places for long hours resulting bad health and under nourishment. The study further indicated that each woman and child labourer is supposed to make a fixed quantum of beedi daily, so they work on and on, from dawn to midnight in the flickering light of the kerosene lamp which is very harmful to their eyes. An important finding of the study was that women and child workers engaged in beedi rolling live in the shadow of low wages, reduced wages, fear of
retrenchment, rejection of their jobs, long hours of work etc. The study unequivocally indicated that illiteracy and ignorance of these workers is a boom to the exploitative contractors and beedi manufacturing.

A study conducted by Iyengar (1987) on match industry of Sivakasi showed that the working conditions are very harmful in this industry. Children reported about the strain of heat and the heavy frames which make them feel dizzy and faint. The children have to be very alert or else there is a danger that they will set fire to themselves. Fire accident occurs when the match heads rub against the frictional surface in the course of putting the box together too quickly. A wide variety of chemicals used in this industry which harms the health of children.

Arya and Sonawat (1993) conducted a study on 300 children working in organized and unorganized sectors of Indore city. They found child labourers working in unorganized sector were suffering from more psychological problems because they had to work in ill-ventilated, ill-lighted, unhygienic, dingy and dirty atmosphere. On the other hand, in the organized sector the working hours were not so long and they got favorable wages as compared to unorganized sector. This study also observed that the working children had no time for recreational activities because of long working hours. They were spending less time with their parents, friends as they had less time left after work. Their emotional requirements are not fulfilled and which leads to emotional problems.

Haitain Psychologists (1997) who have worked with child domestic workers, describe conditions of depression, passivity, sleep and eating disorders, as well as chronic fear and anxiety. Among the most common adjectives used to describe child domestic workers are ‘timid’ and ‘listless’. Childhood has been stolen from these children. The child domestic workers suffer severe damage in terms of their
psychological and social development. They are very often cut off from the community, denied rest and play. A study conducted by Tiwari et al (2004) on child labour in Gem Polishing industry in Jaipur revealed that this is one such industry which exposes the workers to such frequent minor injuries. About 200,000 people are employed in this industry and out which about 150000 workers are children. These children being immature do not really understand the safety practices, thereby frequently getting injuries. The majority of children responded that they frequently suffer from injury. Sometimes these injuries are inflicted by rapidly revolving sharp cutting wheel, or by small pieces of cut stones flying out at high speed. Whereas the wheel causes injuries to the fingers, flying stones mainly injure the eyes.

Another study conducted by Weiner (2006) on pottery industry of Khurja in Bhulandshahr district of Uttar Pradesh. Many of the children working in the potteries of Khurja are the children of local workers. These children earn up to Rs. 150 a month for an eight hours day, while unskilled adult workers are paid Rs. 200 a month and skilled workers Rs. 400. In this industry most workers suffer from asthmatic bronchitis and pulmonary tuberculosis. This is because silica is one of the raw materials used in the clay. Besides, pulmonary fibrosis is caused by the inhalation of dust.

Dabir and Nigudkar (2007) highlight the issue of rising child abuse and neglect in our society. Child abuse and neglect is an issue that demands an urgent response from society and the state. According to WHO (1987) child abuse and maltreatment is ‘all forms of physical or emotional ill treatment, sexual abuse, neglect or negligent treatment or other exploitation, resulting in actual or potential harm to the child health, survival, development or dignity in the context of a relationship of
responsibility, trust or power’. Globally child abuse constitutes four types of maltreatment, physical abuse, sexual abuse, emotional abuse and psychological abuse. This study indicates a phenomenal percentage of abuse experienced by Indian children.

A study conducted by Bhat and Rather (2009) on child labour in handicraft home industry in Kashmir revealed that the working conditions of child labour in this industry are very harmful. Children said that they are ill-treated, humiliated and even beaten during work time. Most of the work, the children do is monotonous, repetitive and dull and is often not suited to their physical and mental capabilities. This adversely affects their health and well being. Due to work children complained of backache, headache, eye irritation and joints pain, although space for work was sufficient. There is complete absence of medical care at the work places. Observation also revealed that the employer is not concerned about the health problems and safety measures from injuries and accidents of children.

**Bonded Child Labour**

The most inhuman and onerous form of child exploitation is the age old practice of bonded labour. The child is sold to the loaner like a commodity for a certain period of time. His labour is treated as security or collateral for small sums of loans at exorbitant interest rates. Many studies have been conducted on this type of child labour.

A study conducted on carpet industry of Rajasthan by Gupta (1987) has shown that in case of working children wages are paid to the parents by contractors, who used to take a part as his commission. Often large advances and loans are taken by the parents and the child becomes almost a bonded labourer, never able to break away from the clutches of the contractors. The study further reported that the children live in the awe
of the contractors. They are punished while doing any mistake and they have to produce given amount of work every day and if they weave less their wages are cut. Another study conducted by Nair (1990) among pledged beedi rolling children of migrant workers in Katpadi block of Vellore district indicated that most of the pledged children’s monthly income was less than Rs. 200 and only a few had an income ranging between Rs. 200 and Rs. 400. The children work from 7 a.m. to 10 p.m. when the children are pledged they are subjected to all kinds of ill treatment and abuse. They work like cattle and any resistance on their part would meet with harsh punishment.

Varandani (1994)’s study estimated that there were nearly 55 million children in India working as bonded labourers in agriculture, mining, brick-kilns, construction work, fishing activities, carpet weaving, fireworks, matches, glass moulding, beedi-making (cigarettes), gem-cutting and polishing work, electroplating, dyeing, washing and domestic work. About 20 percent of these bonded child labourers were sold to cover some small debts obtained by their parents, usually for some social celebration like a wedding in the family.

A study conducted by Shankar (1996) on bonded labour in Halia Block of Mirzapur district of Southern Uttar Pradesh found that a number of tribals were indebted to the land lord, in some cases for more than one generation. The initial loans (taken for marriage or for some other purpose) were relatively small, but the tribals were unable to repay them because of their meager wages and because eventual ‘freedom’ required repayment at high compound interest (60 percent annually). The bonded labourers could also be sold to other employers and the debt obligation was transferred. These labourers were paid a daily wage rate of about 2 kg of coarse grain and were given a tiny plot of land – about one seventh of an acre to meet their subsistence requirements.
ILO (2002a) in its study on ‘decent work and informal economy showed that debt bondage to a landlord is a particular kind of forced labour that can entrap children from poor families in agriculture without land or with too little of it to meet their subsistence needs. If the parents become indebted, they may have little choice but to bond their children into agriculture or domestic labour to repay the debt. Debt bondage replaces children ultimately at the mercy of the landowner, where they suffer economic hardship and are deprived of an education.

A study Conducted by Kayange (2004) on domestic child labour revealed that debt bondage is a system whereby children work in order to pay off a debt, which has been incurred by their parents, relatives or guardians. Employers and creditors offer these loans to destitute parents in a conscious attempt to secure the cheap labour of their children. The debt binds the child to their employer until it is paid in full. This is an especially common problem in India where it has been reported that children are often sent away from their villages to work as domestics in order to clear a family debt. The child is either sent to a household to pay off the debt by providing domestic assistance or the wages they earn are sent directly to their parents, who then gradually pay the debt. These loans have immensely high rates of interest and, due to the profoundly low wages the children earn; it is very hard for any child to pay off the debt in their lifetime. In many cases, the debt is passed on to a younger sibling or onto their own children.

Ghosh (2004)’s study on brick kiln industry showed that the pattern of labour recruitment in the brick kilns, and the mechanisms of deployment, payment of advances and wages bear a striking similarity across the country. Recruitment is almost entirely through middlemen (known as Jamadars or Sirdars in the brick kilns around Delhi), based on a system of advances. There are distinct processes within
the brick kilns, giving rise to a segmented workforce including moulders, loaders, stackers, firers and removers. The wage payment systems are different for different processes and the labour contractors are usually paid a commission through an informal deduction from the labourers’ wages. Workers are paid a part of their wages during the employment period on a weekly basis, with the remainder being adjusted at the end of the season. This binds the worker (and her/his family) to the kiln during the season, whereas the carry-over of advances from one season to the next ensures their availability for the next season. The work usually entails long working hours and very low payment. In a number of cases, a high degree of coercion is used to discipline the workers and to curb protests against breach of contract, which are very common. Similar study is also remarked by Gupta (2003).

A study by Srivastva (2005) on bonded child labour in India revealed that the employment and livelihood potential of agriculture in such areas is extremely low and is subject to large seasonal fluctuations. Therefore, loans have to be taken by the poor labourers to tide over seasonal shortages or contingent expenditure. The labourers are generally caught in a vicious cycle of debt as they repay the older debt with newer ones. The older a debt becomes the chances of sending their children to pay off the debt increase.

**The Urban Informal Sector**

In developing countries, the informal sector survives in a big way, with a considerable proportion of the labour force consisting of children. Since child labour is prohibited by law, it finds an easy entry in the unregulated activities of the informal sector. According to the Society for the Promotion of Area Resource Centre (SPARC), almost 27 per cent of Bombay’s child labour force is employed in roughly 12,000 eateries (Prabhu, 1994). Over 40 per cent of the child labourers
were under 12 years of age. In 77 per cent of the cases, children live on their work premises; earn a meager Rs. 50 a month and work more hours than legally allowed. Children participating in various capacities throughout the informal sector, involve five major types (Mendelievich, 1979):

1. Children who are self employed;
2. Wages earner paid by the hours or for piece rate;
3. Apprentices employed in order that a skill will eventually be mastered;
4. Children who assist an adult who is accountable to an employer;
5. Children who work with their family without any direct remuneration.

Thus, the fact cannot be denied that informal sector provides shelter to child labour. Their percentage may differ from one town to the other, from one country to the other depending on factors like the minimum age of employment, system of compulsory education, socio-economic conditions of the people, availability of educational and training facilities and the policy of the state on employment of children. But the fact remains that informal sectors provides possibilities or employment to children who are badly looking for a living.

Review of the above studies clearly shows that the condition of working children is very pitiful. They have to work for long hours with fewer wages. They are exploited from their masters. Most of the working children are illiterate or drop out early from schools. Many children who are working in urban informal sector are migrant workers. Poverty, unemployment of adults, bigger family size etc. may have circular relation with the incidence of child labour.

**Rationale of the Study**

Thus, we have observed that child labour is the product of the socio-economic conditions prevailing in the society. The economic exploitation of children in India
appears to have increased over the years and therefore extensive. In India, in many spheres of economic activity, children are employed even though there are laws existing against such employment. The poor enforcement of these laws has emboldened unscrupulous employers to take full advantage of the cheap labour (Kumar and Prasanna, 1999).

As the Review of Literature reflects most of the studies have been done for the children working in informal sector and like, home based industries, bangle industries, beedi making industries, brass-ware industries, diamond cutting, gem polishing, lock industries have been projected. But little work has been done on child labour as domestic servants. Hence the present study tries to focus on child labour as domestic servants with special reference to Bathinda District. Actually with the increase in size of middle income group, the demand for child domestic servants is also increasing, especially for the girl children. Child domestic work has been recognized as one of the intolerable forms of child work. Children who work as domestics outside the family home are amongst the most vulnerable and exploited. What perhaps distinguishes child domestic work from other forms of child labour is that even as it is extremely exploitative, it is among the most difficult to protect (Lahiri, 2007).

As per Voll (1999), child domestic work is one of the most common and traditional in the case of girls. The exact number of children in domestic work is not known mainly because of the hidden nature of their work. According to him the physical health of child domestic workers is also affected primarily because of poor nutrition and poor or even an absence of proper medical care. Internal migrant domestic workers are bound by the vulnerability of their age and gender. Most of them are young girls, who come to the cities to work at an early age of 12 to 14 years. Their
isolation in the houses of their employers, their lack of knowledge about the city they are in, debt incurred in coming to the cities, loans taken from employers by the parents and the dependency on the job to support the family back home further compounds their vulnerable situation.

**Objectives of the Study**

This study is an attempt to know the causes and implications of child domestic servants in Bathinda district, covering various socio economic aspects of this particular segment of child labour. In brief this study has the following objectives:

1. To examine the extent of child labour in Punjab
2. To examine the socio – economic conditions of family of child labour as domestic servants in Bathinda District
3. To examine the causes, behind their employment as a child labour
4. To examine the working conditions of the child labour as domestic servants.

**Hypotheses of the Study**

The study has following hypotheses:

1. The extent of child labour is very high in Punjab.
2. Most of the children as domestic servants belong to the socially backward classes.
3. Poverty and child labour are positively related.
4. Majority of children as domestic servants are paid below the stipulated minimum wages.
5. The children as domestic servants work for long hours without any rest during the day.
Methodology of the Study

The present study intends to analyze the socio economic conditions of child labour as domestic servants in urban areas of Bathinda district. This study is broadly based upon primary data and for this initially a total sample of 400 child domestic workers was taken. But due to non-cooperative attitude of a few children and their parents or due to faulty/incomplete information provided by a few respondents, some of the respondents have been dropped out in final analysis. So, the final sample size comes out to be that of 388 respondents. Random sampling method has been used to collect data and the sample size from each city/town of Bathinda district has been taken proportionately (according to its population). The data has been collected through a comprehensive schedule. Apart from the primary data, secondary data has also been used wherever necessary. To analyze the data, simple averages, percentages and correlation coefficients have been calculated wherever necessary.

Sources of the secondary data used in the study:
To study the trend of child labour at global level the data from the global reports of ILO have been used. For analyzing the extent and determinants of child labour in India, Punjab and Bathinda district, the sources of the data is Census (1961 to 2001), NSSO (various rounds) and Statistical Abstracts of Punjab (various years).

Limitations of the Study

In case of Child Domestic Workers in Bathinda District of Punjab, some limitations of the study are pointed out. These are:

1) As expected of invisible working situations, the greatest challenge that the study faced was gaining entry into private homes to locate child workers.

2) Child workers were sometimes not willing to talk in the presence of employers, the best responses were obtained from those whose employers were absent at the interview time.
3) The children being immature sometimes it was difficult to get adequate answers from them. Even, sometimes children could not follow the questions.

4) Parents were also difficult to be located for the survey because they were usually found at their workplace during work time.

5) Low level of education of the respondent (parents as well as children) was another impediment that sometimes restricted the field work.

6) Sometimes the parents as well as children had difficulty in specifying the total family income and their monthly expenditures.

7) Due to the self ego, shy or threats sometimes children did not report their abusement by their employers.

8) Entry was secured by assuring employers that this was an academic study, that their identities were confidential and that the interviews were anonymous.

**Chapter Scheme**

The study is divided into the following chapters:

Chapter 1: Introduction and Review of Literature

Chapter 2: Government Approach towards Child Labour in India since Independence

Chapter 3: Size and Distribution of Child Labour in India and Punjab

Chapter 4: The Socio – Economic Features of the Family of Child Labour as Domestic Servants in Bathinda District

Chapter 5: The Working Conditions of Child Labour as Domestic Servants in Bathinda District

Chapter 6: Summary, Conclusions and Suggestions