CHAPTER II
Review of Literature

For the purpose of this research, the researcher had the opportunity to go through a large number of studies and surveys undertaken by the Government of India, Population and Census Department and Ministries of Labour, Education, Women and Child Development, Health and Family Welfare. The Research and Project Reports of the International Labour Organization, United Nations International Children’s Emergency Fund and World Health Organization; reports of studies conducted by voluntary organisations and several books and numerous articles from journals, magazines and newspapers relating to the employment of children in different occupations were also referred. These provided an excellent base for the study.

The literature available on child labour is quite extensive and provides comprehensive data on the magnitude, causes and consequences of child labour in India. The authors of these publications seem to have made a strong effort to acquire and report as much information as possible.

Most of the studies focus on the appalling working and living conditions of child labourers in different industries and regions in India and the health hazards they face at their work place.

An endeavor has been made in this chapter, to present a review of the available literature relating to child labour. The chapter has been divided into three parts. Part I reviews the literature regarding child labour in India in general; part II examines the literature dealing with working conditions of children and the health hazards they face in different industries and part III summarizes various studies undertaken on child labour in the city of Mumbai.
2.1 Child Labour in India

As mentioned above, this part deals with literature regarding child labour in India. There is a lot of literature available on this subject, and an attempt has been made to review this literature in a summarised form.

2.1.1 The book edited by Mendelievich Elias (1979) examines the problem of child labour in various parts of the world. The book deals with international legislation on the subject, furnishes statistical data about the children and describes the sectors in which children commonly work. It also puts forward several suggestions for future action to improve the conditions of work of child workers in the short term and to eliminate child labour progressively in the long run. Suggestions include compulsory schooling for all children, organising nation-wide information campaigns, involvement of trade unions to take up the cause of child workers and creating an economic environment in which there is no necessity for the child's income. The problem of child labour in India was seen as the result of traditional attitudes, urbanisation, industrialisation, migration, lack of schools and the reluctance of parents to send their children to school. In the ultimate analysis, it emerges that extreme poverty of the people is the main cause of child labour.

2.1.2 A study was conducted by Gopujkar & Dhole (1980) on the working children in the tribal areas of Maharashtra with a view to prepare an assessment on the different types of work performed by children. The study reveals that children participated in any job available to them, in the activities of their home and in family occupations and kept themselves engaged throughout the year. The children started working from around five to six years of age. Wages were governed to some extent by the Minimum
Wages Act of 1948, but in many cases, labourers were paid less than what was due to them.

2.1.3 The report by the Ministry of Labour (1981) outlines the findings of the Committee on Child Labour. This committee was set up under the chairmanship of Shri M.S. Gurupadaswamy in February 1979 by the Government of India, through the Ministry of Labour. Its objective was to look into the causes leading to and the problems arising out of the employment of children. The Committee made a detailed study of child labour and gave a complete picture of the child labour problem in India. After studying the extent of the problem, it put forward a number of suggestions about employment, welfare measures, training and other facilities to benefit children. It recommended setting up of Child Labour Advisory Boards, both at the Centre and State levels to keep a constant surveillance of the conditions of working children. It also recommended the fixation of minimum age of entry to any establishment at 15 years; removal of poverty and unemployment; ensuring minimum wages; strengthening the existing legislative and law-enforcement machinery and the formation of a meaningful and effective education policy for children.

2.1.4 According to Francis Blanchard, the Director General of the International Labour Office (1983), the fundamental explanation for child labour lay in the poverty of the family. He forcefully argued that to accept the rationale of poverty in justification of what prevails is to ignore universally accepted values and allow the continuation of universally condemned abuses. He pointed out the need for protecting the ‘inherent dignity’ of children through elimination of child labour by gradually raising the minimum age to enter the work force. In his view, laws to secure children their basic rights should be formulated and implemented irrespective of the level of development of any particular country. At the very least, the problem of hazardous working conditions and the worst kind of exploitation must be urgently tackled.
2.1.5 The book edited by Naidu & Kapadia (1985) is a collection of papers presented at a seminar on 'Child Labour in India', held in Mumbai in April 1982. One of the major aspects of the child labour problem is health. The book discusses the physical and psychological damage inflicted on the working children by their work situations. Manual work coupled with poor nutrition affect the children’s growth and makes them susceptible to communicable diseases, infections and physical deformities. A large section of children working in the beedi industry in Madhya Pradesh are known to suffer from a very high incidence of anaemia and chronic bronchitis. The children working in the bangle industry of Firozabad suffer from bronchitis, asthma, tuberculosis and eye diseases. About 10,000 children weaving carpets in Kashmir are prone to respiratory infections, poisoning from the colouring dyes they use and deformities of hands. Young girls working in houses are often subject to assault and rape by their male employers. Young workers working in eating-houses are victims of sexual abuse that leaves a traumatic trace on their future psychological development.

2.1.6 Gupta & Voll (1987) edited book is a collection of the papers with revealing case studies of children working in different industries in India. One of the case studies presented by a trade unionist draws attention to the need for the national trade union organisations to take up the issue of child labour. The plentiful, ready and cheap supply of child labourers is taken advantage of by the employers to counter adult workers demands for higher wages and threatens the workers’ economic livelihood.

2.1.7 The book compiled by Bequele & Boyden (1988) seeks to present the problem of child labour along with a summary of Governmental and non-Governmental efforts undertaken in different parts of the world to improve the children’s working conditions. Part I of the book concentrates on child labour in the Third World countries. The data and the case studies relating to Egypt (leather tanning industry), Colombia (quarries and brickyards),
Peru (gold mining), Philippines (clothing industry) and other developing nations are valuable indicators about the exploitation of children in these countries.

2.1.8 Weiner Myron's (1991) book focuses on the particular problem of child labour and compulsory education policies in India. India has one of the highest rates of child labour in the world, one of the lowest rates of school attendance and a literacy rate below that of most of the Third World countries. Primary education is not compulsory in India, and the result is that more than 50% of children aged 6-14 years are not enrolled in schools. He firmly believes that introduction of compulsory primary education will help in abolishing child labour.

2.1.9 Kanbargi Ramesh (ed.) (1991) mentions that the twin problems of higher fertility and tardy progress in the field of primary education is because of the employment of children in gainful activities in India. Children in the rural areas begin to perform several activities useful to their families from a very young age. Agriculture is the predominant industry and employs most of the child labour force in the rural areas. It is precisely in this sector that there are no legislation prohibiting the employment of children.

2.1.10 The book by Bose (1992) provides a detailed analysis of specific categories of children-at-risk, which includes working children, street children and other disadvantaged children in need of care and protection. Of the 71 million children less than 14 years of age, an overwhelming 15 to 18 million live in slums. The objective of the book is to give a better understanding of the difficult and deprived environment in which children live and how this affects their physical, mental and social well-being as well as their future development.
2.1.11 Shah N. A. (1992) highlights the problems of children working in some selected avocations in Kashmir. In all, 200 children working in different occupations like the carpet weaving (100 children), papier-mâché (70 children), hotels and dhabas (20 children) and domestic services (10 children) were interviewed. Although the coverage of the book is limited to four activities, the study unfolds many a hidden aspects of child labour and reveals some distinguishing features of exploitation. The important findings were that the children were forced to work because of inadequate income of parents (around 40% had an income ranging from Rs. 300/- to Rs. 500/- per month); illiteracy (80% of the parents were illiterate); large family size (more than 50% of the families had 8-10 members); tradition to engage children in family occupation so that trade secrets are not lost; desire to satisfy personal needs; and a defective educational system. The ill effects of work were lower wages, long hours of work, promotion of illiteracy, reduction in bargaining power of adult workers, orthopedic disorders and respiratory problems.

2.1.12 Operation Research Group (1993), a voluntary organisation working for child welfare, compiled numerous papers presented at various seminars on child labour in India. What became evident from the discussions is that the damage inflicted on the working children by their work situations is both physical and psychological.

2.1.13 The book edited by Srinivasan & Gandotra (1993) is a collection of papers presented at the National Seminar organised by the department of Home Management, Maharaja Sayaji Rao University, Baroda from 19-21 January 1986. The book discusses the nature and extent of exploitation of working children, physical and emotional stress faced by child labourers which develops from overwork, poor working conditions accompanied by poor nutrition, and above all, the threat, fear and punishment they undergo at work place. One of the papers discusses the role of voluntary agencies and trade unions together with the employers and parents of working
children in achieving the goal of abolition of child labour. The suggestions include provision of free education, waiving rural debt, short working hours, provision of snack at work place and social activity club for literate child labourers.

2.1.14 *Sumangla & Nagarajan (1993)* provide a detailed social profile of child labour of Tamil Nadu vis-a-vis the country as a whole. The study is based on a micro level survey of sample households having child labour and their respective parents who are alive and in the reproductive age group. They are drawn from five villages of three different regions. These regions were selected at random from the Kamarajar, Madurai, Anna and Thanjavur districts.

2.1.15 *Singh & Shukla (1993)* edited book gives a comprehensive account of the problem of child labour in India. They discuss the magnitude, causes and educational levels of child workers in general and female child workers in particular. Due to gender discrimination, female child workers get less food and are deprived of health care and education. Case studies of a hundred child workers (50 boys and 50 girls working in unorganised sector including agriculture) of Ujjain city in Madhya Pradesh and 105 children working in 13 different occupations including cycle and motor repair works, rickshaw pulling, tailoring, construction work and in printing press in Cuttack city in Orissa are discussed. The book also highlights the sad plight of children working in carpet weaving industry of Mirzapur in Uttar Pradesh.

2.1.16 *United Nations International Children's Emergency Fund (1994 b)* compiled together a series of papers that were presented at the International Conference on ‘Shaping the Future by Law: Children, Environment and Human Health’, organised by the Indian Law Institute and UNICEF- India, which was held in New Delhi from March 21 to 25, 1994. The papers were presented by Indian and international professionals with
expertise in health, environment, law, child rights and developmental issues. One paper argues that the issues of illiteracy and child labour cannot be resolved on a mutually exclusive basis and that primary education is potentially a critical means of eradicating the economic exploitation of children. One paper maintains that today in India, we have 55 million children in servitude on one hand and an equal number of unemployed adults, on the other. No Government can scale down adult unemployment without curbing child labour.

2.1.17 According to the Report of the Ministry of Labour (1995 a) Government of India, the National Authority for the Elimination of Child Labour (NAECL) was constituted on September 26, 1994 under the chairmanship of the Labour Minister Mr. P.A. Sangma. Secretaries to the Government in the Ministries of Labour, Education, Women and Child Development, Welfare, Health and Family Welfare, Rural Development, Textiles and Finance (Expenditure) are its members. NAECL has adopted a Plan of Action titled "Identification, Release and Rehabilitation of Child Labour" to tackle the problem of child labour. Under this plan, Rs. 850 crore (US$ 270 million) were earmarked for the schemes to free an estimated two million child labourers working in hazardous industries and to rehabilitate them in a five year period (1994-99) through special schools having facilities such as non-formal education, vocational training, stipend, nutrition and health checks.

The Rs. 850 crore National Child Labour Programme has been facing a severe resource crunch. Under the Programme, child labour projects were to be set up in all the districts in the country. However, so far such projects have been set up in 76 districts in 11 states covering 1.5 lakh children. While these projects would continue till they complete their term uncertainty hangs over the launch of new projects to cover the stipulated two million children working in hazardous units. Since the programme was launch, the Labour Ministry which was entrusted with the work of its
implementation, has received Rs. 91 crore (Rs. 33 crore in 1995-96, Rs. 40 crore in 1996-97 and Rs. 18 crore in 1997-98) in place of Rs. 850 crore (Campaign Against Child Labour, 1998).

2.1.18 **Burra Neera (1995)** in her book provides evidence of widespread abuse and exploitation of children working in the pottery industry in Khurja, lock-making industry in Aligarh, brass-ware industry in Moradabad, gem polishing units in Jaipur and glass factories in Firozabad. The study points out that a large number of children as young as five or six years work under great health and safety hazards which stunts their growth, both physically and mentally. Early entrance into the labour force shortens the working lives of many young people who find themselves too weak to remain in the labour force. The children's wage in any industry is a third to half that of an adult for the same output, with the children working for as many hours as the adults. These appalling conditions are rampant in India and Government's policies aimed at protecting children are badly enforced. Businesspersons are now trying to acquire new technologies that may be capital-intensive, since they can then employ children at low wages.

2.1.19 **Moghe Kiran (1995)** prepared a Report for Action for the Rights of the Child (ARC), a voluntary organisation in Pune and UNICEF, Mumbai. UNICEF approached some of the Non Government Organisations working in different parts of Maharashtra to conduct a series of micro studies to examine and analyse the incidence of child labour in their own areas so as to evolve a concrete strategy and to arrive at a practical plan of action for the eradication of child labour. Eight studies were undertaken by ARC and Government institutions working on child related issues. The studies indicate that there is a large proportion of illiteracy amongst the child labourers. Even if the parents desire that their children should go to school, economic compulsions force children to drop out at a later stage. A strategy for tackling the problem of child labour must therefore include a very strong intervention to ensure 100% enrollment and continuation of children
in school. The strategy for the elimination of child labour cannot be isolated from the overall strategy for poverty alleviation.

2.1.20 The Draft Report of the Government of Maharashtra (1995 a) recognises that the State has a duty to guarantee the Rights of the Child as enshrined in the Constitution of India. A State Programme of Action for Children was developed in 1995 to define measurable and time bound goals for children to be achieved by mid and/or end of the decade and to elaborate the strategies and action to be followed for their realization.

2.1.21 The National Resource Center on Child Labour (1996) summarises the proceedings of the national level workshop organised on September 13 - 14, 1995 at New Delhi in which about 100 functionaries of Central and State Governments including Deputy Chairman of Planning Commission Shri Pranab Mukerjee; Union Minister for Industry Shri K. Karunakaran; Union minister for Textiles Shri G. Venkat Swamy and Union Minister for Labour Shri P. A. Sangma together with Collectors/Deputy Commissioners of 62 districts participated. A distinguishing feature of this workshop was the presence of the Prime Minister Shri P. V. Narashima Rao who interacted with the District Collectors on various aspects of child labour and suggested measures for tackling it. The measures included monitoring the progress of the projects for eliminating child labour from hazardous units on a time-bound manner and directing the efforts at the twin task of phasing out child labour already employed and preventing fresh recruits from entering them. Shri Sangma stressed the importance of education as an inevitable step in tackling the problem of child labour; calling universalisation of elementary education and the elimination of child labour “two sides of the same coin”.

2.1.22 Chaudhri’s study (1996) was the result of an International Labour Organization’s initiative to assist the Government of India in its efforts to tackle the problem of child labour. He studied the trends of child labour in
different states of India. Among other things he notes that child labour is decreasing or will decrease in the state of Kerala, Punjab, Tamil Nadu, Gujarat and Maharashtra while it is increasing in the states of Bihar, Rajasthan, Madhya Pradesh and Uttar Pradesh.

2.1.23 *Mehta & Jaswal (1996)* have used first-hand information collected from fieldwork after interviewing 80 children working in tea stalls, sweet shops and dhabas in Shimla. Of the 80 children interviewed, 15 got wages below Rs. 150/- per month, 14 children were less than nine years of age, 36 had not acquired any education and 10 children worked for more than 15 hours without any rest interval. The study is comprehensive and examines various Acts relating to child labour. The book laments that inspite of 300 Central and State Governments statutes concerning the interest of the children, the truth remains that they have badly failed to cherish the goal of child welfare in its true perspective.

2.1.24 *Sekar H. (1997)* focuses on the magnitude and the problem of child labour in India. She also throws light on various laws relating to the employment of children in India right from The Indian Factories Act, 1881 to *Child Labour (Prohibition & Regulation) Act, 1986* and the implementation of these laws. The book discusses in detail the number of inspections, violations, prosecutions and convictions on child labour under the Factories Act, 1948 and *Child Labour (Prohibition & Regulation) Act, 1986* in India from the year 1992 to 1997. The number of Inspections, Violations, Prosecutions and Convictions carried out during 1992-97, on child labour under the two above mentioned Acts are 122127, 6877, 4345 and 451 respectively.

2.1.25 According to the *Royal Norwegian Embassy (1997)* child labour can be looked at from a variety of perspectives: as a matter of labour law, as a question of compulsory education and as a developmental issue associated with poverty. It can be profitably understood from each and all of these
perspectives. Yet it goes beyond all of them and in its most fundamental sense, child labour must be looked at as a question of human rights. Children have rights - the right to live, the right to education, the right to childhood. The manual highlight case studies of children working in glass factories of Firozabad, slate industry of Mandsaur and match and firework industry of Sivakasi. It illustrates success stories of three NGOs working in three different types of situations namely the M.V. Foundation started in 1981 in the rural area of Ranga Reddy District of A.P., CREDA started in 1989 and which is based in the Mirzapur district of U.P. where child labour working in carpet industry is rampant and CINI - ASHA which works around Sealdah in Calcutta. The main objective of these NGOs is the abolition of child labour by getting children into schools. The manual points out how various projects like providing vocational training and flexible school timings have helped children get out of work and into schools. Their experiment shows that if properly motivated children are willing to go to and stay in schools.

2.1.26 The Report by the Ministry of Labour (1998) highlights the contribution of the Indian delegation to the 86th Session of the International Labour Conference held from June 2 to June 18, 1998 at Geneva, led by Union Labour Minister Dr. S. N. Jatiya. The delegation included representatives of the employers and the employees. The Session considered several important questions on child labour, contract labour and creation of employment through small and medium-sized enterprises. The Minister in his address emphasised that the policy of the Government of India was to balance the GDP rate of growth with social justice and equality. He also stressed that since 1987-88, India has been committed to the abolition of all forms of child labour in the country.

2.1.27 Rustomfram H. (1997) quotes the Chairperson of the Government appointed Commission on Labour Standards and International Trade, Subramaniam Swamy that 'child labour is growing at the rate of 4% p.a. as
opposed to the population growth rate of 2% p.a.’. The Commission in September 1995 estimated that to meet the target of eliminating child labour from hazardous industries by the year 2010 would cost a whopping Rs. 15,000 crore. If a shorter target was to be met i.e. by the year 2004 then the bill would rise to Rs. 45,000 crore.

What becomes evident from the discussion is that the system of child labour is a cruel system in which the workers are the ones worst off. They lack rights, dignity and individuality and are cruelly oppressed by their employers.

PART II

2.2 Working Conditions of Children in Different Industries

This part of the chapter seeks to draw attention to the working conditions of children and the health hazards faced by them in different industries e.g. glass and bangle making, carpet weaving, brassware manufacturing, lock making, slate making, match and firework manufacturing, balloon making, powerloom, gem polishing, chikan and zari embroidery, and also children working in brick kilns and as domestic servants.

Children are exposed to all sorts of occupational health hazards without any consideration for their tender age. They work for very long hours in the most unhygienic conditions and in some industries they come directly in contact with chemicals, fire, cotton fluff & dust which makes them highly susceptible to chronic diseases like tuberculosis, bronchitis and asthma that shorten their life span. Fire accidents in the match and fireworks industry, death by silicosis in the slate factories, burn marks in the glass factories, byssinosis in the powerloom industry, pneumoconiosis in the lock industry are some of the examples of the health hazards faced by children working in these industries.
2.2.1 Thanga Raju (1977) points out that children, in the age group of five to fourteen years, comprised about 4.5% of the total labour force in the mining and quarrying industry in Rajasthan. Children work in mines of private companies, in trenches ninety-centimeter wide and one meter high, where adults could only ‘crawl’. As soon as their size is no longer profitable, they are thrown on to the streets.

2.2.2 Banerjee Sumanta (1979) in her report deals with the children working in the brick making industry at Satwarigaon, about 20 km. from Delhi and the zari embroidery industry at Kucha Chalan, a lane behind old Delhi’s famous Jama Masjid. The book sheds light on the historical background and the socio-economic factors that are responsible for the existence of child labour.

In the brick making industry the workers were mostly migrants from Uttar Pradesh, Haryana and Rajasthan. Wages were paid, not to individual workers, but to families with whom seasonal contracts were made. The wage rates were Rs.17/- per thousand bricks moulded. On an average, the daily production of moulded bricks per family was 2,000-3,000 bricks. Children working in the brick kilns suffer from silicosis, a disease caused by inhaling dust, tuberculosis and injuries to the eyes and fingers.

In case of the zari embroidery industry, the houses where the children worked were dark and unlit. The work affected their eyes, because of insufficient light and the intense concentration demanded by their work. Many suffer from spondylites because of the fixed position in which they sit for long hours. Almost all case studies indicate that poverty is the main force that drives children to work and whatever the child earns is not spent on his welfare but is taken away by his parents.
2.2.3 Mhetras & Kulkarni (1980) studied child labour at Ichalkaranji in Maharashtra. 70 children, including eight girls between nine and fifteen years of age, working in the powerloom sector (46), hotels (8) and self-employed children working as shoe shiners and domestic servants (16) were interviewed. The authors also interviewed 40 persons including powerloom owners, trade union workers, social and political leaders, educationists, Government and municipal officers, agents, doctors, lawyers and journalists. It was observed that children working and living in the hotels were available for work any time their employers wanted. They were prone to skin diseases due to constant use of water and detergents while washing and cleaning utensils and sweeping the floor and furniture. However, children working in hotels appeared better in health than children working elsewhere. This was mainly because they could get enough food at the hotels.

2.2.4 Rao Amiya (1980) observes that out of the total 12,000 workers employed in the slate industry of Mandsaur in Madhya Pradesh approximately 1,000 (8.3%) are children. Children are made to cut plates of shale into small pieces with electrically operated saws, a process which emits dense clouds of a fine, light dust that they constantly inhale. The result is silicosis, a lung disease similar to but much deadlier than tuberculosis. In this disease, lungs are gradually eaten away, patients suffer respiratory trouble, begin to spit blood and then die a painful death.

2.2.5 Bouhdiba Abdelwahab (1982) describes the plight of children who work as domestic servants. Young boys of seven and eight work right from dawn up to late at night - cooking, cleaning, washing and running errands. They are often not given adequate food and are often accused of theft when the employer merely misplaces his belongings.

2.2.6 Kothari Smitu (1983) refers to the match and fireworks industry and writes that 45,000 children work in these factories mostly situated in
and around Sivakasi, Tamil Nadu. The ages of these children range from three and a half to fifteen years. In many factories, some activities are fully undertaken by children below seven years of age. Children between four and ten years earn an average of Rs. 2/- a day. The older children earn a maximum of Rs. 6/- to Rs. 7/- per day. Children are herded into factory buses at 2 a.m. and return from work after dusk. They are away from home almost 15 hours a day, of which 12 are spent working in cramped environments with hazardous chemicals and inadequate ventilation which proves to be detrimental to their health. They work beyond their physical capacity for low wages and are not allowed sufficient rest or recreation.

2.2.7 Menon Geeta (1985) focuses on the children working in three different industries namely the balloon industry of Dahanu in Maharashtra, the carpet industry in Kashmir and the glass industry of Firozabad in Uttar Pradesh.

In the balloon factories of Dahanu, children work for more than nine hours a day and six days a week for a pittance of Rs. 4/- to Rs. 6.50 a day. Some of them are barely eight years old. Their work includes mixing rubber with chemicals, colouration of balloons and testing each balloon with gas. A thick pall of dust and chemicals pervades the rooms that are small, cramped and ill ventilated. The children who work there have to inhale ammonia, acetic acid fumes and french chalk. Medical reports state that inhalation of such acids continuously over a period of time can burn respiratory lining and cause pneumonia, broncho-pneumonia, cough, breathlessness and even heart failure. When visitors visit the balloon factories, they are told not to enter for fear of choking on the ammonia fumes.

In the carpet industry in Kashmir, about 10,000 children, eight to ten years of age work for about eight hours a day for Rs. 80/- per month weaving carpets. The rooms in which they work are full of unhealthy air laden with
dust and the fluff of wool. On each carpet made by the child the trader makes a profit of nearly 200% to 300%.

In the glass industry in Firozabad, approximately 50,000 children over 10 years of age work for eight hours to earn Rs. 7/- a day. They are engaged in carrying molten glasses from the furnaces where the temperatures range from 700°C to 1800°C.

2.2.8 Juyal B.N. et al (1985) refer to the health hazards in the zari and silk textile industry of Varanasi. The delicate nature of the job and the long hours of work have a highly damaging effect on the eyesight of young children. The posture in which they sit for long hours causes postural deformities and spinal problems.

2.2.9 Barse Sheela (1985) observes that out of the 300,000 total workers working in the powerloom industry of Bhiwandi in Maharashtra 15,000 (5%) are children. These workers suffer from byssinosis; a disease caused by cotton dust and fiber that is embedded in the lining of the lungs and cause fibrosis of the tissue. A patient of byssinosis is highly susceptible to bronchitis and tuberculosis.

2.2.10 Singhvi K. K. (1985) claims that about 10,000 children, weaving carpets in Kashmir, are prone to respiratory infections, poisoning from the colouring dyes which they use and deformities of hand. In addition to the daily pittance that they are paid, they also take home a sample of a few pounds of fiber all lodged in their lungs, due to being forced to work in conditions that bring on fatal diseases in a couple of years.

2.2.11 A Report by the Government of Uttar Pradesh (1986) attributed the rapid expansion of the carpet weaving industry to the 600 carpet weaving training centers that were set up by the Government of India and which annually trained about 30,000 child weavers. The Government of
Uttar Pradesh contended that carpets woven by the nimble fingers of children were of superior quality to those woven by adults.

2.2.12 **Iyengar Vishwapriya (1986)** writes about the health hazards faced by children working in the **match and firework industry** of Sivakasi, Tamil Nadu. There are 45,000 children working here. Children mixing chemicals in the boiler room get their lungs full of toxic fumes, suffer high degrees of intense heat and run the risk of being badly injured in fire accidents. A delay of a second can cause the entire frame to go up in roaring flames that can cause instant death. The children have to be very alert or else there is a danger that they will set fire to themselves. Fire accidents occur when the match heads rub against the frictional surface in the course of putting the box together too quickly.

2.2.13 **Gupta & Voll (1987)** describe the working condition of children in the **carpet industry** of Rajasthan. There are 30,000 workers employed in this industry of which 12,000 (40%) are children. The children are made to work from 8 a.m. to 5 p.m. with just an hour’s break for lunch. Government-run training centers provide training programs for children from eight to fifteen years of age in the carpet weaving work in Rajasthan.

2.2.14 **Kamath V. (1987)** reports that children are employed in manufacturing handicraft items in Kashmir, coir industry in Kerala, chikan industry in Lucknow, wood carving operations in Shaharanpur, zari embroidery in Lucknow, fish freezing and processing in Kerala and beedi making in Uttar Pradesh, Tamil Nadu, Karnataka, Kerala and Bihar. He estimates that the carpet weaving industries at Mirzapur, Bhadohi, Palamau, Varanasi and Allahabad employ 75,000 children as they require the nimble fingers of children. The posture in which they sit for long hours while weaving carpets causes postural deformities and spinal problems. The diamond industry of Surat employs 15,000 children. They are engaged in diamond cutting operations, which have very harmful effects on their eyes.
5,000 children work in the silk weaving industry in Varanasi. About 24,000 children work in the brassware industry of Muradabad. Their job is to remove the earthenware crucible full of molten brass from the underground furnace. They work in polishing units inhaling huge quantities of metal dust.

2.2.15 Juyal B.N. (1987) presents case study of children working in the carpet weaving industry of Mirzapur-Bhadohi in Uttar Pradesh. There are 1,50,000 child labourers (of a total of 2,00,000 workers i.e. 75%) in this industry. He studied their mode of entry into the work force, working conditions, wage and literacy levels. He points out that the inhuman conditions under which they work, as well as the profit margin of carpet exporters resulting from their labour, clearly indicate that there is a vested interest in their employment.

2.2.16 Burra Neera (1987) in an article writes about the lock industry of Aligarh, where almost 10,000 children work for 10 to 14 hours at a stretch to earn Rs.5/- to Rs.10/- a day. They work on hand presses, on buffing machines polishing rusted metal pieces, in electroplating workshops and in spray painting units inhaling vast quantities of metal dust and emery powder due to which most of them suffer from tuberculosis, breathlessness, asthma and acute headaches.

2.2.17 Burra Neera (1987) describes the working conditions of 200,000 workers in the glass industry of Firozabad of which 50,000 (i.e. 25%) are children. They are engaged in carrying molten glasses from the furnaces. These furnaces are coal based which emit fumes, which are detrimental to health of the workers. The life span of the worker is reduced by a third because of the intense heat and dust. 90% of the workers contract pneumoconiosis, a condition that leads to tuberculosis. In fact, Firozabad has the highest incidence of tuberculosis in the state.
2.2.18 Burra Neera (1988), observes that there are about 13,600 children (22.6% of the total work force of 60,000) working in Jaipur's gem industry. They are engaged in the making of ghats, faceting and polishing of the semi precious stones. In the final polishing of gems with oxides, the entire labour force consists of children below 14 years of age. Children from six to ten years work for almost ten hours from eight a.m. to six p.m. They are not paid wages for the first one and a half years, and after that, they receive Rs. 50/- per month for the work of Rs. 250/- to Rs. 300/-. They work in insufficiently lit rooms and the job requires intense visual effort and precision that puts immense strain on their eyes. They suffer from body ache, skin diseases and lump-like knots at the base of their fingers. About 30% of working children suffer from tuberculosis because of unhygienic conditions, overcrowding and malnutrition.

2.2.19 Burra Neera (1989) in her book points out that there are about 40,000-45,000 (approx. 26-30% of the total work force) children working in the brassware industry of Muradabad. The age group of the child workers is between eight to 12 years. Children work 10-12 hours a day with one day off per week (usually Friday). The average income per child is Rs. 174.22 per month. About 10.56% of children are unpaid workers, 21.62% of the workers’ monthly income is less than Rs 100/-, 37.62% earn between Rs.100/- to Rs.200/- per month and 15.51% earn between Rs.200/- to Rs.300/-. The two most hazardous processes in the brassware industry are moulding and polishing and it is in these two processes that child labour is all-pervasive. The job of the moulder is a very delicate operation and with a slight mistake or accident, the child may lose his limbs. He wears no protective gear and stands barefoot on top of the underground furnace to either put in the crucible or to remove it which is full of molten brass. If, even one drop of molten brass falls on his foot, there would be a hole in it. They also work in polishing units, inhaling huge quantities of metal dust and toxic fumes. Due to poor nutrition and bad working conditions almost all moulders develop tuberculosis and only a few are able to live beyond the
age of 35 years. Around 75% to 80% of these children are Muslims and the other 20% to 25% are Hindus, usually belonging to the scheduled castes.

2.2.20 Singh A.N. (1990) focuses on the pre-work life and the situational factors that compel children to take up work; the prevailing working conditions; their relationship with their employers and the legal protection and welfare provisions relating to child labourers working in different occupations with special reference to child workers employed in the carpet weaving units in Varanasi in Uttar Pradesh. About 309 child workers along with 100 parents and 100 employers were interviewed. Average income of the children was found to be Rs. 145/- per month. Only 55.3% got their salaries in time. The average daily work was 12 hours though it varied between eight to 14 hours. Majority of them were forced to work at night, 62.1% had no schooling at all and 85% had met with minor or major accidents. More than 90% parents observed negative effects of carpet work on the health of child workers.

2.2.21 The main objective of the study undertaken by the National Labour Institute (1992) was to understand the nature of the work in the lock industry in Aligarh and the kinds of hazards faced by children working in it. According to the study, lock industry of Aligarh employs about 7,000 to 10,000 children out of the total 55,000 workers in the industry and a substantial number are engaged in hazardous functions. Out of 683 units surveyed having 6,936 workers, 2,475 (35.68%) were found to be children under the age of 14 years. Children were employed to work on hand presses which cuts out the different components of the locks, electroplating, polishing pieces on the buffing machine, in spraying and painting units and in the assembling and packing of locks. Working on hand presses, polishing on buffing machines, electroplating and spray painting are considered injurious to the health of children. Electroplating work involves use of dangerous chemicals like potassium cyanide, trisodium phosphate, sodium silicate, hydrochloric acid, sulphuric acid, sodium hydroxide and chromium.
acid. The diseases resulting from these jobs are breathlessness, fever, tuberculosis, bronchitis, asthma and lung cancer. In addition, the electric current passing through the chemical tanks can cause the children to suffer from electric shocks. The report gives various suggestions like every unit should be registered even if it is not getting any aid from the Government; children should be given work in the jobs of filing, assembling and packing that are not hazardous and they should be provided with medical and non-formal education facilities.

2.2.22 Sekar H. (1993) throws light on the sad plight of 115 child workers, especially girls, in the match and firework industry of Sivakasi. It was found that a good proportion of children aged around three years were helping their mothers in the match factories. The study is based on the data collected by unstructured interviews of child workers and their parents besides the attitude of employers, doctors, politicians, teachers, advocates, village leaders and Government officials. The study provides information on the family background of working children, their educational status, contribution to family income, mode of employment, nature of work, wages, etc. Girl child workers form 90% of the total child labour force of 50,000 employed in this industry. Of the boys in the age group of 10-14, 71.4% were sent to school and only 17.8% were working. Whereas among girls of the same age group, 65.9% were working while only 11.3% were in school. Children contributed about 40% of the household income.

2.2.23 Vijayagopalan S. (1993) compiled a Report for National Council of Applied Economic Research (NCAER) based on a survey of 500 children working in the carpet industry in the Mirzapur-Bhadohi belt of Uttar Pradesh. Some of the interesting findings of this survey are that children constitute eight percent of the total working force in the hand knotted carpet weaving industry. Of the eight percent of the children working, 4.4% were found to be a part of family labour and 3.6% were hired labourers. There was serious exploitation of the children who were hired labourers. Migrant
labourers come from impoverished rural areas of Bihar, eastern Uttar Pradesh and Madhya Pradesh. These children suffer from poor health and are badly paid. 15.4% of them have tuberculosis. Bonded child labourers’ parents are given a lump sum payment of Rs.2,300/- to Rs.2,800/- per child. 33% parents were found to be lacking in concern for their wards. As many as 67% of the working children complained that their parents never visited or corresponded with them.

2.2.24 According to Harvey & Riggin (1994) India manufactures marvelous works of art and craft including intricate hand-knotted carpets, gracefully etched brassware vases, beautiful Kanjivaram silk sarees, sparkling gems and fragrant incense and sandalwood carvings. These products also convey a message of great cruelty and hardship. Woven into their fabric, poured into their moulds and reflected in their highly polished facets are the blood, sweat and tears of small children, whose labour is exploited in their manufacture.

2.2.25 Mittal Mukta (1994) explores the incidence of child labour in chikan (embroidery) industry. Fifty children, forty-eight girls and two boys, engaged in chikan industry in their own household at Daligunj in Lucknow were interviewed. The study revealed that in the majority of cases, the families of child workers were living below the poverty line and 3/4 of the members of the family were non-earning dependents. Children started working from the age of six to seven years. They worked from one to ten hours per day. The nature of work was repetitive and monotonous. They worked in cramped rooms with poor ventilation and inadequate lighting. They had to sit in a particular position continuously for six to seven hours. Consequently, they complained of persistent pain in their legs. They were not paid any fixed wages but were paid on piece-rate basis.

2.2.26 Singh & Verma (1994) studied the incidence and working condition of children in agriculture in the Nainital district. 500 children working in
the agricultural sector were selected for the study. Their average monthly income was Rs. 60/-, which came to about Rs. 2/- per day, which was far below the prescribed minimum wages of Rs. 5.33 per day in the hills. Average age of starting work was 8.57 years. They were compelled to take up work at an early age due to poor economic conditions of the families whose average monthly income was Rs. 200/- to Rs. 400/-.

2.2.27 The book by Mishra & Pandey (1996) focuses on the child labour in the glass industry in Firozabad. It discusses the socio-economic conditions of the working children, the physical development of these children and the health hazards faced by them. It concludes with a few suggestions which includes mobilisation of resources and public opinion and sincere efforts on the part of the Government, NGOs, parents, employers and the public to move towards the goal of abolishing child labour.

2.2.28 Rustomfram H. (1997) quotes the Chairperson of the Government appointed Commission on Labour Standards and International Trade, Subramanium Swamy that ‘child labour is growing at the rate of 4% p.a. as opposed to the population growth rate of 2% p.a.’. The Commission in September 1995 estimated that to meet the target of eliminating child labour from hazardous industries by the year 2010 would cost a whopping Rs. 15,000 crore. If a shorter target was to be met i.e. by the year 2004 then the bill would rise to Rs. 45,000 crore.

Whether children are earning separately, assisting their family in part time or seasonal work, doing household chores or caring for younger siblings so that adults are free to work, the fact remains that the number of working children is large enough to be a cause for national concern. They are engaged in roles that occupy them for long hours and deny them education, training, leisure and recreation. Rigorous measures are, therefore, needed to eliminate the practice of child labour in India.
PART III

2.3 Child labour in Mumbai

This part of the chapter reviews various studies undertaken on child labour in the city of Mumbai. The problem of child labour manifests itself in its most acute form in this city. Mumbai is believed to have the largest number of working children amongst all the metropolitan cities in the country. This is because it is highly industrialised and offers job opportunities to the children who come to the city looking for jobs.

Mumbai has 75,000 child labourers according to the Government of Maharashtra Draft Report on State Programme of Action on Children (1995). Children can be seen carrying loads at railway stations, polishing shoes, washing vessels at wedding parties and cleaning fish at the docks. They also work as rag pickers, domestic servants, vendors and helpers in hotels, tea stalls, shops, garages, ice factories, slaughter-houses and in the construction industry. They are used as aids to mechanics, weavers and traditional artisans. They also assist their parents in making beedis, baskets, kites, diyas and bangles at home.

2.3.1 In 1978, the National Institute of Public Cooperation and Child Development (NIPCCD) conducted a survey of 300 working children in Mumbai. Only a few of the children surveyed enjoyed facilities like separate resting places, medical and recreational facilities, protection against health and other job hazards, etc. Many children found their jobs tiring but a large majority was satisfied with the treatment they received at the hands of the employers. The survey did not go into the socio-economic conditions of the families in detail but elicited the attitudes of parents towards their children being employed. Most had reconciled themselves to the need for their children to work but wished instead that they could have provided them with some occupational training before they took up their
jobs. Almost all of them agreed on the importance of both formal and informal education. Very few employers had any knowledge of the laws relating to working children and their knowledge did not go beyond a dim awareness that certain legislation prohibiting or laying down conditions for child labour did exist.

2.3.2 In 1980, Singh Musafir et al conducted a survey of working children in Mumbai. They highlighted the various facets of their work and uncovered the socio-economic factors that compelled children to join the labour force. 300 children, comprising 203 boys and 97 girls, were selected for the study. 211 were wage earners while 89 were self-employed. The majority was employed in the areas of production units, sales, arts and crafts, service, repairs, construction work and hotels and restaurants. The study revealed that 24.7% of the children surveyed had started work between the ages of six and nine, 48.4% between ten and twelve years and 26.9% between thirteen and fifteen years. The average age at which children began working was 10 years. Almost 50% of them had a total income falling in the range of Rs. 251/- to Rs.500/-. On an average, their earnings were Rs. 86/- per month. As many as 100 of them had never attended schools, 158 had schooling upto primary standard and 42 beyond primary level. None of them had received any formal career training before their being employed. Though the maximum that one child worked was 14 hours per day, the average number of hours that children worked was 8.8. A few of these children did not get any rest interval while a few others had regular rest intervals varying from between 30 minutes to 2 hours. The family size of the workers studied was found to vary between five and eight members.

2.3.3 The main objective of the study undertaken by the Ambekar Institute of Labour Studies (1985) was to obtain detailed information on the working and living conditions of children working in the construction industry in Mumbai and to come out with suggestions in order to improve
their lot. Children were interviewed and discussions were arranged with employers, Government officials and trade unionists. It was realised that the main reason for the present pitiable condition of these workers was that the labour protective provisions were widely violated by the contractors. The children were found to be working for 10 hours or more. A male gets Rs.5/- while a female and child workers get Rs.4/- per day. They move from site to site with their parents depending on where they get the work. They were found digging earth, preparing the mortar, carrying head-loads of mud and mortar, removing the debris and strengthening, cutting, bending and shouldering iron rods. Among all the occupations that child workers are engaged in, construction work perhaps is the hardest, most tiresome and hazardous.

2.3.4 Mehta Meenakshi et al (1985) carried out a survey in Matunga Labour Camp, a portion of Dharavi. The area was selected for the study because of the presence of varied occupations and industries employing children. Initially, they conducted health checkups for all local children. Gradually they focused only on the working children and later interviewed and examined them. It was revealed that of the 73 working children 74% were between the age of 10-15 years, 4% were less than 10 years, while the youngest was just six years old. 48% were school dropouts while only 16.4% were attending school. About half of the children were earning less than Rs.100/- per month on a temporary basis and a similar percentage were residing at the working place away from their families.

2.3.5 Singhvi K.K. (1985) tries to focus the attention of the public on the working conditions of child labourers in hotels and canteens of Greater Mumbai in his study. Greater Mumbai has the largest number of working children among all the metropolitan cities in the country. A maximum number of these children are employed as domestic help by affluent families and in hotels, canteens, restaurants and teashops. In Mumbai, according to a Union estimate, nearly 20,000 minors work in tiffin-rooms.
and canteens. Another 20,000 work in small and medium sized eating establishments. In hotels, children are engaged in almost all activities including serving tea and water, cleaning tables, taking tea out of the hotels to neighbouring offices and establishments, washing utensils, assisting the cooks, cleaning up at the end of the day and helping with the through cleaning and washing of the premises every week. They are made to work for 14-16 hours, with just an hour’s interval for meals. They are paid Rs.80/- to Rs.90/- per month along with food. They have never heard of benefits like dearness allowance, bonus, leave facilities, provident fund etc. The management never provides recreational facilities. Medical treatment is provided to some extent in certain cases. Many boys try to study and after completing some course or training, aspire to improve their job prospects. However, due to the long working hours and poor living conditions the percentage of boys attending night schools is low. About 80% of the boys are from backward rural areas, having left their homes due to their inability to eke out a living there. Thus, the problem of child labour in Mumbai is closely linked to the problem faced by these people in their original inhabitation.

2.3.6 In 1986-87, Mirapgar & Batulkar conducted a survey of children working in hotels and uphaar grahas (eating-houses) in Mumbai. The official estimate places the total number of employees in hotels in Mumbai until 31st December 1985 as 90,492, of which 22,000 i.e. about 25% belong to the under-14 age group. The number of hotels/restaurants in Mumbai upto 31st December 1985 was 12,608 of which 94 establishments were surveyed. The total number of workers interviewed was 920 of which 184 were children. Of these 184 children, 73 belonged to the 9-12 year age group, with the remaining 111 in the 12-14 year group. 55 were illiterates while 129 had attended primary school. Only 48 were studying at present and 129 of the 184 children were migrants. In 12 of the 94 establishments, they were forced to work for more than 12 hours. The main points which were highlighted by the study were that poverty was the main reason which
drove the children to work; most worked for more than 10 hours and had neither weekly off nor any leave facilities; most of them were staying in the hotels itself and their jobs were either temporary or casual.

2.3.7 According to Dingwaney Manjari et al (1988) thousands of children in Mumbai work as domestic workers, helpers in wayside shops, canteens, hotels or as hawkers, vendors, potters, shoeshine boys, sweepers and scavengers. They are engaged in small workshops and in loading and unloading goods. The unorganized sector is the greatest employer of child labour in the city.

2.3.8 The Society for the Promotion of Area Resource Centers (SPARC) (1990) carried out a survey on four groups of rural migrant children in the city of Mumbai. 1,000 children in each of the four categories were selected and interviewed. They were children of pavement dwellers, children of construction workers, street children who lived by themselves on the streets and children working in hotels. The main objective of this survey was to present comprehensive information to facilitate the development of services that may be necessary to assist these children and to permit involvement of individuals, groups and organisations in such services. These children were vulnerable, as they had remained outside the purview of a host of institutional and non-institutional services and programs.

2.3.9 D'Lima & Gosalia (1992) draw the attention of the people on the sad plight of the children living on the streets of Mumbai. It was disclosed from the analysis that most of them have migrated to Mumbai with their families, although some have come alone to earn money to support their impoverished families at home. They preferred the current status with all its insecurity because of the escape it provided from oppressive or traumatic circumstances like poverty, neglect, maltreatment and harsh living and working conditions in their native place.
2.3.10 Soman Archana (1992) in her study of sixty boys working in zari industry at Jogeshwari, a suburb in Mumbai emphasises that while apprentices formerly learnt the skill under the fatherly care and guidance of ustads, the system has now become commercialized and exploitative. The migrant children are reduced to slaves since they are brought to Mumbai on two-year contracts. The survey showed that 75% of the child workers put in between ten to 15 hours of work everyday, while 15% worked for more than 15 hours. The working hours grow longer when demand increases around the festival and marriage seasons. The workers are subject to great health risks: most of them almost become sightless by the time they reach the age of 45 years and backaches and finger strains as a result of working long hours hunched over the low wooden frame.

2.3.11 Mankekar Kamla (1993) reports that Mumbai has more than 10 lakh street children. Almost 95% of them earn their livelihood through hard work.

2.3.12 According to Fernandes Naresh (1993) there are estimated 1,200 boys sweating their childhood away in Jogeshwari's 400-odd zari workshops. They receive a wage of Rs. 10/- for their eight hours of labour. These workshops are ill ventilated and dirty.

2.3.13 Smith P. (1994) reports that according to the Society for Promotion of Area Resource Centres (SPARC) about 12,000 boys working as rag pickers wander the streets of Mumbai, alone or in groups, taking more than a passing interest in the city's garbage heaps. They are the lowest in the hierarchy of working street children. They work for six to twelve hours searching through garbage heaps and bins for waste paper, plastic, metal and glass and in the process cut their hands and run the risk of contracting tetanus and skin diseases. Scabies is a common affliction thanks to the practice of taking a regular bath not being high on their priority. They have
to carry 15 to 20 kilograms of back-loads. Their passion for brothels makes them one of the most high-risk categories prone to the HIV virus. Two rag pickers died of AIDS last year at Churchgate.

2.3.14 Kumar B.N. (1995) mentions that according to Navi Mumbai Manav Sena Sangh, a voluntary organisation in New Mumbai, children are increasingly used in makeshift unauthorised restaurants and roadside juice stalls in slum colonies of Navi Mumbai like Indira Nagar, Shanti Nagar, Hanuman Nagar and Turbhe Store. These children mostly belong to the poor families of Rajasthan, Bihar and Uttar Pradesh and are bought at a sum ranging from Rs.1,000/- to Rs. 2,000/-. Their daily grind begins at 4 a.m. They work well beyond midnight- serving customers, cleaning the dishes and sweeping floors. They have no holidays or health facilities. They receive not more than Rs. 200/- a month. They are not allowed to leave their jobs even if they get a better offer. They bathe, eat and sleep in the same premises. They use dirty water not only for themselves but for customers too. They are illiterate and are blissfully ignorant of their rights.

2.3.15 According to the Campaign Against Child Labour (1996), a voluntary organisation young child workers in Mumbai are engaged in chappal making units in Kurla, zari embroidery units in Jogeshwari and Govandi and leather accessories’ units in Dharavi. The children are brought by intermediaries to Mumbai for a price and kept in bondage by their employers. For instance, the children in chappal making units come from Rajasthan, in the zari units from Uttar Pradesh and Bihar, in construction industry from Andhra Pradesh and in the prawn culture sites in Navi Mumbai they hail from Kerala.

2.3.16 Bunsha Dionne (1996, a) reports that thousands of bonded child labourers work over 12 hours a day in the dark filthy 500-odd chappal-making workshops in Kurla’s Thakkar Bappa colony. Most of them are brought from villages in Rajasthan. Mumbai-based employers (who
originate from Rajasthan) pay their parents amounts ranging from Rs. 500/- to Rs. 3,000/- at the end of the year. They work from 7 a.m. to 10 p.m. everyday. In the same colony, there are a large number of carpentry workshops where wooden shoe heels are made. Children work on sawing machines in dark, cramped rooms filled with sawdust. They know little of the health risks the job involves. The risk of injuries due to accidents on the sawing machines is high, especially because the units are dimly lit. There is also a high incidence of cancer of the nose and paranasal sinuses in these workers.

2.3.17 Rahatekar Vrunda (1996) opines that children constitute a major chunk of the work force in Dharavi, India’s largest industrial center set in a slum agglomeration. Unofficial estimates place Dharavi’s turnover from various small scale activities at Rs.1,000 crore. Children are engaged in making chapplas, flower pots, matkas, designer diyas, rakhis, kites, brooms, chalks, agarbattis, rolling papads, working on dupattas and sarees, manufacturing edible items like biscuits, chips, and farsan. In areas like Kumbharwada, Zadugalli, Dhorwadi, Social Nagar and Shastri Nagar there are as many children working as adults.

2.3.18 Kokje M (1996) estimates that over 25,000 children toil in the brick kilns of Thane. In spite of this, the state Government refuses to acknowledge the incidence of child labour at brick kilns.

2.3.19 According to Chakravorty A. (1996), minors are being used regularly in the cleaning and desilting of both open and closed drains in the city. Though the Bombay Municipal Corporation (BMC) has declared that children would not be used in such hazardous work, there is little supervision on contractors to prevent them from doing so. The BMC lacks the resources to deploy supervisors at every work site, perpetuating the problem. Children enter drains without any safety equipment and are only provided with soaps for bathing purpose. Boils, itches, scars and skin
infections are common. Work begins at 9 a.m. and goes on till 4 p.m. The kids who slid into the manholes are made to swim in the filthy water to reach the floating material collected in between the manhole chambers. It is difficult for adults to enter the manholes, that is why children are employed. Adults are paid Rs. 60/- while children are paid a measly Rs. 25/- for the same work.

2.3.20 Joshi S. (1997) estimates that Charkop, a suburb in Mumbai, has 10,000 child labourers. The garage owners employ large numbers of children between eight and sixteen to work in their garages from 7 a.m. to 8 p.m. daily. In Gautam Nagar there are about 300 huts where almost 1,200 people live without electricity, sanitation and water supply. They are the poorest of the poor and work mostly as rag pickers or construction workers.

2.3.21 Joshi S. (1998, a) estimates that there are 4,00,000 domestic workers in Mumbai, of which 40% are girls under the age of 15. Sadly, girls are usually seen as natural domestic workers trained for household work from an early age. Domestic workers are not trusted. Often they are not even treated like human beings. Malnutrition, hard work and poor access to medical facilities result in several illnesses, anaemia, fever, skin infection and stomach cramps.

2.3.22 Joshi S. (1998, b) opines that the 200-hector ground in Deonar receives 4,000 tons of the 5,500 tons of garbage that Mumbai produces every day. Innumerable people, most of them children, depend on this dumping ground for survival - collecting from it glass, tin, paper, aluminum, and plastic which would be sold to scrap traders for recycling. They work at the dump for eight hours every day, earning Rs.25/- to Rs. 40/- per day for their labour. At garbage bins and markets in the city, boys often start at midnight to get at the ‘good’ items. They have to pay the guard about Rs. 50/- a week to enter the ground. Rag picking, which is
clearly hazardous, finds no mention in the Child Labour (Prohibition &

2.3.23 Joshi S. (1998, c) expresses concern about the children who work
for as many as 10 to 14 hours a day in brick kilns. They sieve coal dust,
work near fires and spend hours standing in knee deep mud squelching
under foot to prepare the brick dough. They are exposed to all kinds of
hazards and they suffer from diseases of the skin, stomach and lungs;
malnutrition and exhaustion; neck, back and head injuries and pains.
Molestation of girls at the kilns is common, but such incidents are not
reported because the justice system usually favours the perpetrator traders.
The Child Labour (Prohibition and Regulation) Act 1986 does lists
construction work as hazardous but ignores brick kilns and the children
working there.

2.3.24 According to a news-item in Mid-day (1998), the number of
domestic workers was given as five lakh. Nobody knows how many girl
domestic workers there are, part time or full time, in Mumbai. Domestic
work by children is not even regarded as child labour by the Child Labour
(Prohibition & Regulation) Act, 1986.

Conclusion

After reviewing the various studies relating to child labour, some general
conclusions may be stated. Most of the researchers have been forced to rely
on the 1971 and 1981 census data as a comparative base for their studies
since the 1991 Census data on the incidence of child labour was not
available.

Research methodology was practically identical for each study and
consisted of surveying a sample of child labourers numbering anywhere
from 100 to 1,000. Data was collected through informal interviews, taken at
random, with working children, their parents, employers and, in some cases, Government officials. Available data was presented in the form of tables.

The surveys on child labour in most cases were carried out at the place of work. This enabled the authors to access the conditions experienced by the children but the disadvantage was that the children could not speak freely for fear of their employers regarding exploitation, treatment and abuse by their employers.

Occupational and health risks were covered by several studies but, again, the findings were based primarily on responses from children who were in no position to determine the physical and mental harm inflicted on them by their work. Most children were unable to express health problems beyond complaints such as aches and pains in their joints, breathing difficulties, fever, coughing, cuts and burns. Not surprisingly, almost all studies tended to identify the same complaints regardless of region and sector differences. Very few health professionals were interviewed to get authentic information about the health situation of working children.

Only a few industry-specific case studies have been made predominantly the carpet, match and fireworks, gemstones, glass and bangle, brassware and silk and handloom industries. Large number of children working in other occupations like construction work, brick kilns, domestic services, garages and home-based industries, have largely been ignored.

Apart from summaries of past legislation, there was absence of information on the role of local, state and central Government in preventing or regulating child labour. Although it is evident that enforcement of child labour laws is severely lacking, there was little investigative research into its reasons and very few interviews with Government officials. The present study has attempted to cover this aspect also.