The
Views expressed
By me in this study are my
Own except where stated otherwise
And these aren’t necessarily the
Views of any Government
Department or Public
Functionary.

Fayaz Ahmad Nika
Every study on the state of world’s children intended to lift the veil from the hazardous nature of the jobs and the distressed condition of the tender souls in the labour market is a step towards construction of sound and stable world socio-economic order as the betterment of any nation finds its roots in the well being of its children. The present study which is based on an in-depth appraisal of the socio-economic and ethical dimensions of child labour in the valley of Kashmir is unique in the sense that the valley has a haphazard terrain and topography and cannot be taken as similarly circumstanced with other parts of the world. Most of the children in the valley are working in cottage level industries in far and wide, hilly and chilly areas oblivious of public attention. With many subjects living in abject poverty, the children are forced to join the labour market at a tender age to help the families to meet the increased expenditures on account of vagaries of weather and other exigencies. The practice is so widely prevalent that it has now virtually come to be socially accepted. The unique political status of the valley coupled with the on going armed struggle has snatched the breadwinner of many families and the little children from such families are forced to join labour market in order to ensure survival of the families. At present many children hailing from hard-to-reach areas stand neglected in view of the poor law enforcement in the valley of Kashmir. The situation suggested a dire need to conduct an empirical study in this field of global attention so as to present a comprehensive account of the plight of Kashmiri children who are caught in the clutches of worst forms of labour and deprived of their basic right to education which could have helped them to grow and groom in a child friendly atmosphere.

It was, as a matter of fact, a Herculean task to carry out the survey in the strife torn valley and to visit far and near areas to have a first hand account of the condition of child workers on road sides and in the distantly located work centres in the security sensitive areas. Indeed this job which I had taken up with missionary zeal to bring to lime light the position of the distressed and the
oppressed would not have been possible but for the courage and fortitude bestowed by the Almighty.

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