PREFACE

Future of a nation depends on children. It is the responsibility of the society to take proper care of children, so that they will be able to offer their valuable services as useful numbers of the society when they will grow up. The society should ensure these children their basic rights of education, leisure and recreation. It is unfortunate that some children are deprived of their rights. They have to enter the labour market at an early age and they have to face exploitation from their employers at the workplace.

In such circumstances, it becomes the duty of the society and the state to take appropriate measures to protect the child labour from exploitation. In India, different Constitutional and legal provisions are there relating to child labour. These laws deal with various aspects like minimum age, working hours, rest hours and medical facilities. Thus, these laws have prohibited the employment of children in certain occupations and regulated the conditions of works performed by the child labourers in other occupations.

Inspite of having so many legislations and Constitutional provisions to safeguard the rights of child labour, there has not been any significant change in the conditions of child labour. The number of child labour is still very high. This is due to the failure in the proper implementation of child labour laws. It is a matter of hope that the judiciary has made intervention on various issues relating to child labour. It has made some concrete efforts to safeguard the child labourers from the exploitative
tendencies of their employers. It is felt that the issue is of significance and requires critical examination. Here, a critical study is made on different laws available for the benefit of child labour and the role of judiciary in protecting their rights.

As during the investigation, the census report of 2001 relating to child labour was not released, so, census data is given up to 1991 census.

This thesis comprises seven chapters. In Chapter I, nature and importance of the study has been discussed. Chapter II deals with the meaning of the term “child labour”, its evolution, causes and consequences. Initiatives taken in international arena to combat child labour are highlighted in Chapter III. In Chapter IV, a detailed analysis has been presented on the laws which are available in India on child labour. Role of enforcement mechanisms in the implementation of the laws is examined in Chapter V. In chapter VI, role of judiciary is focussed. In Chapter VII, there is the summary of the study. Some suggestions have also been given in this chapter.

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