CHAPTER – X
SUGGESTIONS, RECOMMENDATIONS AND
CONCLUSION

THE MAJOR ASPECTS ON WHICH ATTENTION IS TO BE FOCUS

A) LEGAL MATTERS:

The policy makers must concentrate on four major legal enactments. 1) The shops and establishment act 2) Factory act 3) Minimum wages act 4) Mines act. These four acts include provisions for regulation and abolition of child labour and providing welfare measures to working children and particularly their families. It is observed that at various factories, most of the safety and welfare facilities, which have to be provided in factory premises and mining area, are not provided. The industrial estate established twenty years back is also with lack of facilities, which are to be provided as per factory act. The fitness certificate, as per the act, from a doctor, which is necessary is not asked, for being considered for employment of the labour either in a mine or factory.

The minimum wages act does not apply to the house-hold units and they are placed under the jurisdiction of shops and establishment act. The house hold units are not entitled for benefits like provident fund and Employee State Insurance (ESI). The act also specifies that
the children of the family working in their house hold units are exempted from the application of act. It becomes a cumbersome process for the inspectors to prove the identity of the child labour, whether he is working in their house hold units or in other units, as the license obtained for the house hold unit is not showing the specific type of unit.

The minimum wages act specifies only some category of jobs (skilled and semiskilled). Un-skilled labour are being paid under piece rate basis. Hence most of the factories categorize the labour in unskilled category and pay on the basis of the piece rates and also place all the skilled labour under general category which category attracts the lower wages.

The mines act 1952 is made applicable to slate mines and quarries and not to slate factories. As a result the mine worker is not entitled to any benefits which his counter part is enjoying in factories. The mine inspection has to be carried out by the inspector of mines under the authority of central government. The Child labour (P and R) Act 1986 is implemented by the assistant labour officer (state government official) who has the jurisdiction and authority to take action with in the municipal limits as prescribed by the state government order. Hence the Child labour (P and R) act is in the jurisdiction of the state government officials and applicable to with in the Markapur municipal limits.
The child labour act (1986) regulates the employment of children below fourteen years in respect of all slate manufacturing units. However it does not ban the child labour in slate manufacturing units. The A.P. Shops and establishment act 1988 prohibits the employment of child labour. Hence there is an in-consistency between the two acts along with the clash of authority between central and state government officials as noted above.

**HEALTH SCHEMES & MEDICAL ASPECTS:**

The occupational diseases affecting the child labour and adult workers, who are working in slate factories and mines, are TB, silicosis, pneumoconiosis, dust allergy and bronchitis. Most of the child labour complains respiratory problems and body pains. The children complain bleeding finger tips and hurt nails, when they fix nails and bolts while packing the design slates and also frames of writing slates in case of stone writing slates.

The private practitioners make use of this situation for their advantage and not guiding the workers properly because some of the doctors are involved in design slate export business. The government must ban the slate export business by the doctors and lawyers who are in their profession and practice. The trade union leaders must be given the responsibility of watching and guiding the families involved in slate mining works. This can be made successful by giving some benefits and part of the mining lease license fee to the trade unions.
The district hospital must be provided with complete infrastructure facilities and appoint experienced specialist doctors by giving some incentives. It is necessary that political involvement in day to day administration and management must be minimized if not possible to stop it. The hospital must be given the autonomous status with a special officer of medical department as an administrator.

**IMPLEMENTATION OF CENTRAL AND STATE GOVERNMENT WELFARE PROGRAMS:**

The state government is implementing many welfare and development programs like rural development programs, Jawahar rojgar yozana. The district rural development authority and SC, ST and BC corporations are also financing several schemes. Out of the banks in this area State Bank of India, Andhra bank and Syndicate bank are involved in implementing some of the government schemes. Majority of the factory owners and slate exporters have taken loans from Vysya bank, which being a private bank, is not concentrating on implementation of government schemes. The problem in implementing the schemes is due to interference of political leaders, medical professionals, some of the trade union leaders, who dictates the conditions in the distribution of the amount sanctioned.

This may be due to the fact that workers have already might have taken the loans from them for some purpose or other. While giving the loans, banks are asking for surety. Again the mine owner
will come to provide the surety. The mine worker is now forced to send their children to the mine work till the loan amount is cleared. Hence at each and every place the mine worker is depending on the mine owner. The solution for this seems to be formation of mine cooperative which takes care of all the financial problems of the member worker.

**Development of Agriculture and Irrigation Potential:**

The government has got clear indications that eradication of child labour, can be achieved by developing the area agriculturally. It is due to the absence of irrigation facilities, the Markapur division is backward. Small area is being irrigated with bore wells sanctioned by Andhra Pradesh irrigation development-corporation providing dip-irrigation for orange and other crops. However small former did not get benefit out of it. Hence the government has taken up Velugonda project, to store the rain water, as well as the diverted Krishna water during floods, and use them for drinking and irrigation. However the work is going on in slow pace due to lack of funds sanctioned by the government. The agricultural cooperatives are active in Krishna, Guntur and Nellore districts of Andhra Pradesh. However they are not active in the region of Prakasam district.

**Integrated Child Development Program (ICDS) and Anganawadi Schemes:**

The welfare program of ICDS is implemented in Markapur municipal division only. Hence the places where mines situated,
(outside the municipal limits of Markapur and Tarlupadu, Kandukur, Konknamitla, Donakonda divisions) are not benefited. Lack of proper and permanent buildings for Anganwadi centers (where the children are taken care of and educated) is a major problem. The food supplied to children is not of good quality. The lack of coordination between ICDS and other voluntary organizations has affected the schemes.

**Housing Schemes:**

Government has constructed housing colonies like Poolasubbaiah colony in between Markapur and Tarlupadu and Ekalavya colony near the slate factories in Markapur division. However, limited members of the families of workers are staying in these colonies and it has not benefited the most of the workers who are coming from near by villages and other revenue mandals. Also some workers are staying nearer to the mines (at about one kilometer) from the time of their fore fathers. This is also one of the reasons for continuation of child labour and take-up the work of mining as their family tradition.

**Educational Aspects:**

Government has initiated educational developmental programs such as adult education programs, and non formal education programs and technical schools. Even though children have chosen to join formal education schools in the beginning, they are dropping out in the middle. It is due to the selfishness of the staff running the
programs, the seasonal migration of local families to other places due to the economic under-development of the area and requirement of day to day earnings for lively-hood. Adult education programs and mid day meals schooling are not properly run due to lack of funds. Under these circumstances parents feel that their children are their capital of earning the lively hood. Hence they feel that sending their children to the school is a loss of day to day earnings.

**Administrative Problems and Initiatives from Elected Representatives:**

The awareness of child labour eradication program is very high in officials, including RDO, MRO, MPP, Municipal commissioner and others. The elected representative like MLA, M.P and municipal chairman knows about the implications of child labour and complications in non-implementation of the developmental measures taken up by the government to combat child labour. However the entire official machinery and above mentioned elected representatives seems to depend on voluntary organization, Assist India. However Assist India is not having proper infrastructure for the supervision on implementing the different schemes. They plan and supervise the schemes from Chilakaluripet (place at two hundred kilometers from the project area of implementation), which is their head quarters, and hence the proper supervision is lagging in implementation. As a result the programs are not reaching the child labour and the economically poor families satisfactorily.
TRADE UNION ISSUES:

The different trade unions are involved in the abolition of child labour. All India Trade Union Congress (AITUC) is the main trade union that has been actively involved in promoting the welfare activities. Under its banner there are five affiliated sub-unions 1) Bodibandalu workers union. 2) Slate factory workers union. 3) Slate and piece goods workers union. 4) Enamel, plastic frame slate workers union. 5) Tin slate workers union.

The mine workers have formed the union called as Bharat slate workers union with the support of AITUC. The trade union members hold the view that most of the workers are not paid the minimum wages and mine owners are placing them in general category to escape from paying minimum wages as per the category of work.

This view has made the trade unions to concentrate their attention more on getting minimum wages and not particularly eradication of child labour. The unions felt that poverty conditions, lack of alternative employment to the families and non payment of minimum wages are the main reasons for the existence of child labour. The trade union leaders could not complain against mine owners for taking legal action as some of their relatives and lower cadre leaders have their children working in the mines. They lay down the whole responsibility on government officers and local NGOs and want that government must improve the local conditions. The trade unions are
diverting the issue from child labour to the minimum wage payment and reflecting the second one as the main issue. They are of the opinion that when government solve the minimum wages issue then automatically the child labour will be eradicated.

**RESPONSE OF LOCAL PEOPLE ON THE CHILD LABOUR LEGISLATIONS AND WELFARE MEASURES:**

There is a severe criticism about functioning of Assist India, (an NGO responsible for implementation of child labour eradication programs on behalf of the government of Andhra Pradesh), by the local trade union leaders and others. There is a criticism that the funds which are meant for slate workers are not reaching them. Children who have been never as the workers of slate mines are enrolled in the school run by Assist India at Rayavaram. Also the child labour working at mines are shown in the attendance registers at school for name sake. The child labour is instructed to tell the inspectors that they are freed from mines. The families sending their children for work are not identified properly for the sake of enrolment in the governmental schemes. Hence there is resentment about the government programs saying that they are all politically motivated.

The food served in residential schools is of no good quality. Hence children would like to take food at their houses instead of staying at the hostel and want the scholarship amount should be given to them. Housing allotment is made with the recommendations
of slate mine owners and also the local political leaders. Hence the allotment of houses is not done impartially.

Educational improvement for the local poor people is not attained, even through the B.Ed, engineering, degree, and P.G. colleges are started at the project area. They are all self financed and started with a motive of selfishness by the local political leaders. When an engineering college was started in 1990’s the total admissions are from out side people only.

The staff has been recruited from outside. The trade unions are trying to encourage the vote bank to their mother party and hence there is negligence in child labour eradication programs.

There are very many loopholes in the legislations. Hence local people have an apprehension that the legislations are for the lawyers who earn money out of the accidents that occur at mines and factories.

The farmers with small land holdings are not listed while distributing loans and not recommended for bore wells and hence irrigation development by the small farmers has become only marginal in the project area.

The banks are not reaching the far of villages where most of the child workers are concentrated. The banks are insisting on surety for the sanction of loans. Hence common people are not approaching the banks, since the process is lengthy and they need surety for sanction of
loans, in which case the mine owners have to come to their rescue again. Government scheme implementation is not satisfactory and they have not reached the base line. In-come generation programs are limited to some places only.

Under these conditions most of the families are indebted to various employers, like pit owners, contractors, local leaders. The Industrial development society, which is an authority in sanctioning the bore wells, has not done the base line survey to implement the scheme.

The local people of villages blindly follow the customs, traditions associated with rituals and compulsions which are treated as family traditions. The false guidance is injected to the local villagers by the vested interests.
**RECOMMENDATIONS:**

**IMPROVEMENT OF MINING AND PRODUCTION PROCESSES:**

Modernization and mechanization of mining methods by using elevators, conveyers, pneumatic tools and cranes can reduce the child labour. The modernization of processes has yielded better results as well as reduction of child labour in carpet weaving at Kashmir and match industry at Sivakasi. It was found, at these places, there is a little increase in production cost (3 percent to 5 percent) even if child labour was not used. The government while giving license to mining, must insist on that the mine licensee to submit the modern methods and the machinery used for extracting the slate slabs inside the mine, removal of raw slabs of slate and bringing them to the top surface, lifting the waste, mud and stone pieces to the surface from the mine pit, as well as safe methods for the labour movement in to the mine and coming out of mine. The mined slates must be brought out with the help of wagon conveyors.

The engineering personnel must study the method of mining and recommend the modernization process suited for that place and certify the total process and methods. The government must permit licensed engineers to certify the drawings using the modernization process and the list of machinery used in mining on which basis the license to be given.
The production processes such as cutting, slicing, and sizing must also be modernized. The trade unions must be given a clear understanding about the mechanization and modernization so as to indicate that modernization is not to remove the adult labour force. The local population as well as mine owners must be educated about the benefit of mechanization. The labour unions must be briefed that modernization is only for eradication of child labour and not for reducing the labour.

Since licenses are issued on the basis of mechanization of processes, the mine owners are liable to shift to the methods according to recommendations of licensed engineer and the government.

**FORMATION OF MINE WORKERS COOPERATIVE SOCIETIES:**

There is a demand from slate mine workers for grant of lease rights to them to avoid the monopoly of limited families. Under this demand, the solution seems to be the formation of society with workers which will remove middle man and pit contractors and labour leaders (who is the leader of a group the child labour). There must be good and efficient administrative machinery for control of these societies. The recognized society with working members in each village has to be formed. All these village societies will be affiliated to and controlled by the mandal level Mandal Central Cooperative society. This society will be given the “lease rights” of mines situated in that mandal, (group of Villages are under administrative control of mandal) so that members
are given equal rights and responsibilities. These societies will take up the issue of bank loans to the families of child worker by giving guarantee instead of mine owners and labour leaders giving the guarantee for the loan. This system will free the families from taking loans at higher interest rates as well as bonded labour condition and concentrate on the future of their children. The societies can maintain the registers of work-force of villages, who are coming to mine work. The wages can be distributed by the village societies to the labour at the mines or at their house directly. This system will benefit the families and the habit of drinking and other habits will be reduced. The village society can also take care of the farmers of small land holdings in the village by encouraging agriculture as an alternative to mining.

**MINE WORKERS DEVELOPMENT SOCIETY:**

The Development Society will be formed with the Mandal Central Cooperatives as its members. The development society will be controlling all the works that are carried out for the benefit of mine workers. The dry land agricultural development authority is to be set up with the help of agricultural university and controlled by the Mine Workers Development Society. They will develop the lands for the suitable crops. Since the Velugonda project has been taken up in full swing, the agricultural development authority will prepare master plan of implementation of crops. The Velugonda project has to be completed as early as possible. The government must formulate regulations to bring all house hold units, export units as the society members.
This type of administrative set up will force the members sensible for child labour problem. Involvement of trade unions and media in this movement will also be worked out. The workers cooperative societies, if already formed at villages and registered must also be made as members of development society. The responsibility of canvassing and training in the rural development programs must be given to this Mine Workers Development Society. This will bring down the child labour since all transactions are done with proper and complete record. The dependence on private organizations (such as Assist India) for implementing the programs will be checked and staggered by this way of organizational set up. Jagruthi Sosiety which is established to implement the ILO programs will be replaced by this Mine Workers Development Society.

The cooperative societies may work in the pattern of cooperative like Amul dairy situated at Anand in Gujarat state. The structure and different activities must be framed to fit in to the local society requirements and regional set up of Markapur region.

**INDUSTRIAL DEVELOPMENT OF THE AREA:**

The department of industries has to start its full pledged office at Markapur and post a senior official to take charge. Now the official at Ongole is looking after this region. The industrialization has to be planned. Many units which are feasible to this area are given below.
Brick manufacturing units:- Manufacture of machinery parts such as conveyor belts, conveyor buckets, crane parts, parts of earth moving machinery etc.

Thermal power plant:- The area is full of bushes which can be used as firewood. By using this firewood thermal power plant to generate electricity can be started. A company by name M/S Agri-Gold Private Ltd. has started the mini thermal plant utilizing this firewood. The area has abundant supply of the waste stones brought out of mines. Research has to be carried out by the geologists for the use of these waste stones.

ESTABLISHMENT OF FRUIT JUICE PLANTS:

The orange crop has come up at different parts of project area. The government should encourage the starting of the fruit juice bottling plants.

PESTICIDE MANUFACTURING UNITS:

The rock powder is used as vehicle (carrier for the chemical) for pesticides. Hence the industrialists can be encouraged to work on setting up the pesticide plants using the waste stone slate powder.

LEGAL RECOMMENDATIONS:

The minimum wages act has to be modified such that all general labour in mines and slate factories must be made as semiskilled. Hence minimum wages of semiskilled are applied to all the general labour in
slate mines. The minimum wage act (applicable to factories, and not to the house hold units) must also be made applicable to house hold units. These house hold units are now under the jurisdiction of shops and establishment act. At present the child labour, from same family, in house hold units are exempted from this act. All the child labour working in house hold units, even though they are family members, must be brought to under this act. Also the labour whether they are adult or child must be brought under the purview of this minimum wages act. This ultimately reduce the child labour in slate works.

Depending on the capacity of mine and quantity of work the government must fix the category of labour needed for the different mining work or factory work and check the attendance registers accordingly. The inspectors must check up whether this minimum required strength of categories are written in the registers or not. If maintained properly and accordingly the wages are modified, this system will reduce the child labour and the designation of general labour will not be used by the mine owner. The labour working in mine must be recognized as recognized workers as being done at factory for getting benefits like P.F. E.S.I. and other benefits.

DIFFERENT ACTS OF STATE AND CENTRAL GOVERNMENTS:

The enforcement of mines act is entirely under the purview of central government. The minimum wages act of the state government will not apply to the mine workers. Hence the legislative protection must
be brought by the state government to apply the minimum wages act to the mine workers. The state government must attest by a special G.O with incentives, to bring the slate mine workers under this minimum wages act with incentives for working in hazardous processes as the slate mines comes under hazardous processes.

The child labour act 1986 applies only to the slate and slate pencil factories in the Markapur municipality and not to the mines of surrounding area as prescribed in the act and applied by the commissioner of municipality. The act must be modified to apply the mines in and around the municipal limits. Most of the writing slate factories are now converted to “design slate” units and a new type of production is started. Hence the child labour act must be applied to “design slate mining and production” at slate mines and factories in all the areas of different revenue divisions in Prakasam district irrespective of the particular city municipal limits. Since the act is now applied only to writing slates and that too in Markapur, child labour is not punishable as per child labour act in mines of surrounding area which are producing “design slates.” Also the Child labour act 1986 is implemented by the assistant labour officer whose jurisdiction is limited to the Markapur municipality. However the mines are situated in the outside municipal limits which is under the jurisdiction of Inspector of mines. Hence the inspector of mines must also be authorized to implement the child labour act 1986 as well as mines act.
It is also seen that all the acts indicate the regulation of child labour. They are not strictly banning the child labour. Hence the specific areas are to be formulated where to ban the child labour and where to regulate the child labour. The acts should also include other revenue divisions as the slate mines are situated at different revenue divisions, especially in Kandukur division.

**EDUCATION & HEALTH:**

The native people are against Assist India schools and medical facilities provided by Jagruthi, an organization which is set up by the government to implement the government schemes. The primary health centers must be handed over to mining cooperative societies, which are to be formed as said earlier. This will provide an opportunity for local people, who are members of society, in maintaining them. All the objectives of rehabilitation centre set up by Jagruthi–Assist India must be protected by the societies which are formed with mine workers as members. The society must be granted with loans from the banks to construct the permanent buildings for schools, health centres and other rehabilitation centers. The schools run by Assist India must be brought under the inspection of inspector of schools. The corporate managements must be requested and insisted on to start English medium schools at places where child labour concentration is more. The infrastructure and testing facilities of area hospital must be
strengthened. Political interference in the hospital management and administration must be stopped. Senior doctors must be posted to the hospital. The hospital must be strengthened with testing equipment by making it as an autonomous hospital.

**FUNDS MOBILIZATION FOR COOPERATIVE SOCIETIES:**

The cooperative society will collect some fee from slate exporters to register with them for supply of raw design slate and the finished slate. The Markapur municipality is not collecting local taxes from the units falling under shops and establishment act. Now this must be collected and part of it (75 percent of it) must be given to these cooperative societies for development. If any lease rights are to be taken it must be routed through these cooperative societies and its recommendations are made mandatory.

**AGRICULTURAL DEVELOPMENT:**

The farmer cooperatives can be formed which helps in getting the loans to the farmers. It is observed during the study that at some places like Padamitipally and Obaypally the crops like chilli, cotton, orange are developed and many parents have stopped their children from mining work and sending them to schools.
OTHER RECOMMENDED ACTIVITIES:

Nursery education centers, pre-primary education centers, non-formal education centers must be taken over by village education committees which will be under the cooperative societies that are formed. Community development centers at village level with ladies as members must be formed. They must take up the formation of self help groups and take up education awareness programs at village level to educate the children and help to eradicate child labour.

BANNING OF SLATE BUSINESS BY THE GOVERNMENT OFFICIALS:

The enforcement officials and their families, doctors and other officials involved in the enforcement of child labour act must be banned from doing the slate export business. At present the mines are leased to the political party leaders. They should not be allowed to sub-lease the mines to the contractors. The person who has obtained the lease right must involve himself in the mining operations and should be responsible for all the activities at the mining operation.
CONCLUSION:

It is seen that the local people are indebted to many trade union leaders, political leaders and the mine owners. Hence the workers are forced to keep their children for work in the mines. Even though the people know about the dangers in employing the children, they are helpless due to financial problems. Hence it is necessary to form Mine Workers Development Society, which can take the lease rights of mines and take care of the needs of mine workers. This type of system will definitely help in the reduction of child labour because of the fact that the society will employ the adult labour only and recommend alternatives for the loss of wages due to the removal of child from the work. The society will look after the welfare programs by implementing the government programs. Only self financed private colleges are operating in the area. These colleges are owned and run by the mine owners or their supporters. Hence the government must itself start the arts, science, engineering and medical colleges to impart the education to the local poor people. Imparting the free and quality residential school education to the children will help in the eradication of child labour.

The Jagruthi society is formed under the chairmanship of district collector to implement the government programs to eradicate child labour. However this society has not strengthened its own infrastructure to implement the programs. It is dependent on the Assist India (private N.G.O.) in the program implementation. Since Assist India is also does
not have the strong infrastructure, this NGO has not gained the confidence among the local people. An alternative solution to this will be the formation of Mine Workers Development Society. The SC/ST/BC hostels attached to different primary schools are run by the government. However the maintenance and management is under the control of local political leaders who are also the owners of the mines and slate factories. These leaders are involved in slate export and mining business. Hence these leaders are unable to run the hostels and schools whole heartedly and satisfactorly. Hence these hostels must be handed over for the control under Mine Workers Cooperative Societies. The trade unions are only fighting for the rights of a worker and equal wages whether he/she is an adult or child. They must now concentrate and fight for the eradication of the child labour also without bothering about the membership to their parent union.

Only very few mining and factory owners are using modern mining methods. Majority of them use the same old methods which require more manpower. This has made them to search for the cheap labour. Ultimately they are attracted towards the child labour who accepts lower wages. Hence equal wages must be paid and implemented either the worker is an adult or child by accepting the demand of trade unions. Also equal wages must be paid to male or female. This wage structure implementation will reduce the child labour. It is also necessary that the enforcement officers of factory and mining departments must insist on switching over to the modern practices of
mining and slate works and abandon the obsolete methods. There is no
development in the agriculture sector. This is because of very low
ground water table and no rivers flowing in the area. Leaving the area of
mining other area can be developed for agriculture if the source of water
is available.

Velugonda project is started to promote the agriculture and to
give drinking water to the project area. However the project works are
very slow due to financial constraints. Hence the government must
complete the project as early as possible. The agricultural development
will reduce the child labour in mines. The farmers with marginal land
holdings will think of educating their children instead of making them
child labour as seen at some places of survey.

The house hold units are not covered under minimum wages act.
Hence these units actually engage mining works on contract basis as
well as export of design slates. They engage child labour in different
works of slate manufacturing. The officials must see the actual work
going on in the campus instead of going through what is shown in the
registers. They should judge the quantum of work handled by the house
hold unit and the corresponding labour shown in the registers. If the
labour strength shown in the registers is less than the required
minimum, it indicates that child labour is employed and the unit owner
must be booked under child labour act. With-out the sense perceptions
and general judgment of the works going on at the house hold units,
by the enforcement officials, it is difficult to eradicate the child labour in slate units at Markapur.

Sufficient strength of doctors and specialists are not provided at government hospital, Markapu which is raised to the status of area hospital with one hundred bed capacity. The doctors who have interest at Markapur, who owns established private clinics at Markapur, and relatives of local political leaders, are posted under political pressure. The hospital administration must not be under the control of political leadership. The government must look into the teething problems of hospital and solve them immediately. The hospital must be equipped properly and fully to compete with the private clinics which are fully equipped for attending any emergencies. It is necessary that the area hospital must be geared up with full pledged equipment to face any type of emergencies especially for taking care of accident cases coming from the mines.

Alternate industrial units other than slate manufacturing units must be planned in the area. There are many chances for starting brick manufacturing units, fruit juice plants, pesticide units, small thermal power units and dairy and cattle feed units.

The government officials and their families, doctors and their families and other officials and their families who are directly or indirectly involved in enforcement of eradication of child labour must be banned from doing the slate export business. Since some
enforcement officials are in slate export business indirectly, the child labour is un-checked. It is also found that the enforcement officials have to come from Nellore or Guntur. This usually delays the process of checking as well as complete inspection. It is also seen that by the time enforcement officials reach the mine site the child labour will not be seen at the works.

The lease holders must directly be involved in the mining operations instead of sub-contractors does the operations. Sub contractors are employing the child labour and the actual lease holder is not taking the responsibility of the child labour employment. In the case of an accident the name of the child, who met with an accident, will not be found in the registers and he/she is not eligible for compensation.

The dominant social category in slate factories/companies and slate mines are backward castes (about 60 percent). The 95 percent of area selected as project area is of red soil and 5 percent is black soil. The agricultural backwardness due to water scarcity and industrial backwardness has forced the local people to make it customary to send their children to slate mines for work. Compared to boys, majority of the girls go for work in the age of less than ten years. This is because of the parents who do not prefer to send the girls for schooling. The dominant castes like vadderas, upparas and muthrasi families feel that the earth work as well as mining is their culture and family tradition. Hence they intend to send their children to this traditional work
instead of schools. This attitude can be changed by diverting their habits towards some of the works which are not hazardous with modern methods in their own culture.

Even in rehabilitation programs by the government the villagers go by the advice of the mine owner, and think on it whether it is with in their custom and tradition of their family or not. The political leaders and money lenders play an important role in continuing the child labour. In some villages, it is found that families themselves take contract and work with their children. The family members say that they have the tradition of contract slate culture. Though most of the parents know that slate work will effect the future of their children, as they are also sufferers, they emphasizes the inevitable condition which necessitates for children go to work and supplement the family income. Even though the parents wished their children to get education, the poverty condition forced them to work. They feel that every thing is compulsion and customary. Hence they cannot send their children to school. Regarding the aspirations, out of the children interviewed, only 30 percent wish to continue in the present jobs while 70 percent would like to shift to better income job as they are not satisfied with the present job.

Information on nutrition and diet revealed that children rarely consume liquid food. Some of the children have rarely consume the milk. The main food items include sorragum and paddy and wheat obtained from the ration shops.
The government must inculcate the cooperative culture at Markapur and other surrounding project areas, instead of slate culture. These cooperatives working under the authority of Mine Workers Development Society (as recommended by the researcher) can boost up the activities of project area and provide confidence in the mine labour, making them to think about their children’s future. If we strictly and sincerely try, we can eradicate the child labour in slate mines and we can see the smile on the faces of little children who are now turning their little fingers towards us in the implied sense that “Sir, we are children dependent on you. Help us to grow in full confidence of better future and become a healthy and matured adult”.