CHAPTER V

SUMMARY AND CONCLUSION
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This study on 'Intelligence of Child Workers and Cohorts attending school and an exploratory attempt at Educational Intervention to Child Workers' was carried out in hosiery industries at Tirupur, Tamil Nadu. Three per cent of the total 1,614 industries registered was selected following Systematic Random Sampling. Of these 48 industries, eight units did not have child workers (CWs) as work undertaken by these units did not require them and two industries refused permission. Thus, only 38 industries having CWs formed part of this study. The study was restricted to include one male and/or one female CWs from each unit belonging to 11-14 age group. Therefore 31 units contributed one male and one female CW , five units contributed each one male CW , and one unit provided one female CW, that totalled to 32 female CWs (FCWs) and 36 male CWs (MCWs) finally.

Part-time CWs (PCWs) and non-workers (NWs) matched against CWs in terms of age, sex and socio-economic status (SES) were drawn from the local Municipal schools.

One hosiery industry having 15 CWs below 15 years were chosen to conduct educational intervention.

The data collected through interview with CWs for this part centred around SES, family background, working conditions, schooling, health, social aspects, recreation and aspirations. Cohort I - PCWs were interviewed to gather family background, SES, working conditions, health, social aspects, recreation
and aspirations. Cohort II - NWs were interviewed to elicit information on SES and family background. Mothers' awareness regarding their child's employment were obtained by interviewing. Intelligence scores of the children were obtained by administering Bhatia's Battery of Performance Test of Intelligence individually to 66 CWs, 61 Cohort I and 62 Cohort II.

The educational intervention programme given to fifteen CWs in an industry aimed at improving literacy level. It also provided opportunities for self expression through social interaction and recreation. The findings of the study are summarised below:

1. Socio-economic profile:

1.1 The CWs and Cohorts were Hindus by religion, and belonged particularly to backward castes.

1.2 A large number of the CWs than Cohorts were from nuclear families. A reverse trend was seen with respect to family size.

1.3 Over 50 per cent of the families of the children except the MFCWs were wage labourers involved in occupation not related to hosiery works. Most of the mothers were housewives; those who were involved in wage labour made cotton waste during leisure hours at home.

1.4 The average family income of the CWs was more than Cohort I and II.
1.5 Illiteracy level was highest among mothers of the CWs followed by the mothers of the Cohort I and II respectively. Parents of the Cohort II had better educational status than the other two groups.

1.6 Ordinal position of more than one third of the CWs was the second. More of the FPCWs (44%) were the first borns, while the MPCWs (30%) held the second birth order. A similar trend was seen with the Cohort II.

1.7 More number of the CWs had siblings, who were working than the Cohort II whose siblings were attending schools.

2. Specific Issues of Working Children:

2.1 Parental compulsion and economic need were predominant reasons for joining job.

2.2 More than 85 per cent of the CWs worked six days a week: a large number of Cohort I (52%) worked for seven days a week after school hours, about 80 per cent of the CWs worked 12 hours a day for at least three days a week.

2.3 While weekly wage earned by 60 per cent of the MCWs, was Rs.30 to Rs.50, it was less than Rs.40 for 63 per cent of the FCWs.

2.4 About half the CWs had comfortable seat to work; individual working area and working equipment. One third of the CWs were working in industries that were spacious and protected from sun and rain and the building had good roofing. A large number (91%) of CWs had drinking
water facility at industry; however, cleanliness of drinking water was not ensured. None of the industries had canteen facility, resting room and space for recreation. More than 50 per cent of the CWs had no toilet facility and of those who had this facility, they were with poor drainage and inadequate water supply.

2.5 A sizeable number of the CWs (about 80%) walked to reach the industry and return home. One third of the CWs walked less than two kilometres (one way) distance. However, about 40 per cent of them felt the distance between home and industry as very far and unapproachable.

2.6 A few CWs(<8%) felt their work 'very light'. About 40 per cent of the CWs and over 50 per cent of the Cohort I disliked their job.

2.7 One fourth of the CWs received verbal reward and the rest had no comment for their good work. Nineteen and 36 per cent of the FCWs and MCWs respectively were subjected to physical punishment.

2.8 There was no significant difference between the sexes of the CWs and Cohort I in the remunerative workload performed by them.

2.9 Length of service and facility at work spot did not influence remunerative workload borne by the CWs and Cohort I, as revealed in the statistical appraisals.
2.10 Work load at home:

2.10.1 Type of household work done by the FCWs and FPCWs were fetching water (69% and 66%), sweeping (75% and 83%) and washing vessel (66% and 77%), while their male counterparts were entrusted with shopping (53% and 74%) and fetching water (36% and 68%).

2.10.2 The MCWs and MPCWs spent less time on household tasks than their female counterparts. The Cohort I spent more time than the CWs on household tasks.

2.10.3 The female children performed significantly more household work than the male children in both the categories.

2.10.4 Statistical analysis indicated that SES, family size and ordinal position did not influence workload at home.

3. Schooling and Education;

3.1 Reasons for not attending school as putforth by the CWs were economic problems, disapproval by parents, disinterest and failure in school examinations.

3.2 Sixty nine and 50 per cent of the FCWs and MCWs respectively were interested in education, if provided within the industry premises. Forty one per cent of the FCWs and 33 per cent of the MCWs were eager to attend school: the rest were not keen. The reason putforth for being interested in education/learning were that they were bored with work and were desirous of taking up good job in the future and be a better person.
Seventy three per cent of the FCWs and 39 per cent of the MCWs had never made efforts to know about schooling. However, nearly half the respondents were willing to learn in between working hours within the industry premises, preferably for one hour. Nearly half these CWs opted for formal education, about 18 per cent of the FCWs and 22 per cent of the MCWs preferred job oriented education.

4. Intelligence

4.1.1 Kruskal-Wallis test (H) values revealed no significant difference in Koh's Block Design Test performance scores between the groups; sexes and length of service. The average scores of these children were one fourth of the maximum score (25).

4.1.2 The H values indicated no significant difference in Passalong Test performance scores between the sexes; length of service and the three groups.

4.1.3 The difference was insignificant between the CWs and the Cohort I and II in their performance in Pattern Drawing Test. The overall mean scores of these groups were one third of the total score (20).

4.1.4 Computed H values of Immediate Memory Test scores indicated significant differences between the three groups among the MCWs favouring the Cohort II, who scored higher mean scores than the other two groups. The FCWs with two years of service had higher mean scores than those with three years of service.
4.1.5 A significant difference in performance scores in Picture Completion Test was found amongst the FCWs. Those who had more than three years of service did remarkably well than their counterparts with two years of service.

4.1.6 Computed H values of cumulative performance scores of the five subtests between male and female Cohort I and II Male children out performed their female counterparts in both the Cohort groups. The total mean scores of Cohort II of both the sexes were significantly higher as compared to CWs and Cohort I. The Cohort I had higher mean scores than the CWs.

4.2.1 Significant difference was seen in the mean IQ score, between the CWs and Cohort II, favouring the latter.

4.2.2 The MPCWs significantly differed having higher mean IQ scores than the female counterparts.

4.2.3 Regardless of the length of service, the IQ scores of the groups were on par with each other.

5. Health Aspects:

5.1 Almost all the categories of children were on par with the NIN Standard Norms with respect to heights, but weighed lesser than the norms. The FCWs had better nutritional status than the CWs in terms of heights.

5.2 The most commonly expressed health problems of the CWs were headache, poor appetite and tiredness. The female children of both the groups had more health problems than their counterparts.
5.3 The employers did not provide any medical facility to the CWs.

6. Social Aspects:

6.1 All the CWs had friends. Over 50 per cent of them had friends belonging to both lower and higher age level. Most of them had friends belonging to the same sex. More of the MCWs (44%) and FPCWs (17%) had the same and opposite sex friends. Very few CWs had school going friends. The trend was same with the Cohort I.

6.1.1 Nearly three fourths of the MCWs (72%) played games involving monetary commitment through traditional games. Seventy five per cent of them had tried smoking. Of these 56 and 22 per cent smoked once a week, and once in few days (more than once a week) respectively.

6.2 Play and Recreational Activities of the and Cohort I

6.2.1 Thirty one per cent of the FCWs never played. Twenty five and 66 per cent of the FCWs and MCWs took part in play activities once a week, the rest played occasionally. The majority of the Cohort I (97%) played at one time or the other. Both the CWs and Cohort I played group games. The majority of the CWs and Cohort I (98%) played traditional and school games respectively.

6.2.2 Almost all the CWs and Cohort I enjoyed chit chatting, as recreation. While the FCWs indulged in listening to radio (75%), the FPCWs enjoyed reading (80%), playing (66%) and listening to radio (63%).
6.2.3 Over one fourth of the FCWs and FPCWs were dissatisfied with their recreational activities.

6.3 Aspirations:

6.3.1 Only 28 and 25 per cent of the FCWs and MCWs respectively aspired up to Higher Secondary level. This was so with 83 per cent of the FPCWs and 48 per cent of the MPCWs.

6.3.2 Majority of the FCWs (81%) and 42 per cent of the MCWs aspired to become tailors in the industry. Two thirds of the MPCWs (65%) aspired to take up jobs not related to hosiery industry and 54 per cent of the FPCWs were disinterested in jobs.

7. Mothers' Awareness about Child's Employment:

7.1 Fifty eight and 72 per cent of the FCWs and MMCWs respectively were unaware of the name and location of the industry in which their children were employed. But for few (< 14%), all the mothers of the CWs were aware of the tasks carried out and duration of work done by their children in the industry.

7.2 One fourth of the mothers of the CWs felt work done by the CWs was not difficult.

7.3 About two thirds of the MFCWs were unaware whether their children had received disciplinary measures/action from the employers. Comparatively a lesser number of the MPCWs were ignorant.

7.4 About 50 per cent of the mothers were satisfied with the child's earnings. The child's salary was utilized for food and on miscellaneous items used every day.
7.5 Forty eight per cent of the mothers gave pocket money every day to their child that ranged from less than 50 paise to Rs. 2/- . About three fourths of them knew that it was spent on food.

7.6 The mothers' enumeration of the child's health problem were similar to that of the CWS' health complaints.

7.7 Fifty and 61 per cent of the MFCWs and MMCWs respectively felt education for the child was essential. About 44 per cent of the MMCWs and 25 per cent of the MFCWs indicated secondary education should be adequate for their children.

7.8 The MFCWs (56%) allowed their children to play with neighbour children. The MMCWs (64%) permitted their children to play with any group.

7.9 Eighty four per cent of the mothers had not received any complaints about their children from employers. Of those who received, it was for the child's playful behaviour.

7.10 The mothers were of the view that employment helps the child to develop values of money; contributes to the family maintenance; develop more realistic attitude towards life; contribute knowledge on day to day affairs better than education; and develop necessary skills at an early age. The mothers disclosed that employment had not decreased their interaction with the child; but affected child's education and deprived the child of childhood happiness.
8. Educational Intervention to the CWs:

8.1 Ability to write alphabets, words and sentences by the literate CWs increased from a mean of four words to seven at the end of the intervention programme, as for the illiterate CWs it was five alphabets and four words. While the illiterate CWs were able to add and subtract one digit, the literates were able to do that with two and three digits over a period of seventeen weeks.

8.2 Only four literate CWs could draw, participate in rhyme and game activities in the initial stage. Increased participation by both the groups was observed in these activities and also in pattern making towards the end of the programme. Informal talk and recalling/association elicited least participation from them.

8.3 All the 15 CWs liked the educational intervention programme. The CWs absent from classes due to sickness (34%), extra work (17%) and disinterest (17%).

8.4 The problems faced while conducting educational intervention programme were the employer's frequent interference while conducting classes in terms of cutting short lunch break and disallowing to conduct classes on heavy work schedule day; congested space, inadequate light and ventilation; the CWs' restlessness-attraction to be away from industry during lunch break and FCWs' refusal to participate in outdoor activities.