CHAPTER 7

7. FINDING, CONCLUSIONS AND SUGGESTIONS

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7.1 FINDING

Our study has revealed that the problem of child labour requires immediate attention, both from the Central and State Government and also from local non-governmental organization. Our findings suggest that the reason for the problem is manifold. However the primary reasons include, poverty and illiteracy. The solution lies not only is curbing the problem of child labour, through the implementations of the law, but also is rehabilitating the children and their families.

To summarize the problems Faced by Child Workers are as follows:

1. Long hours of work: 8.8% of the children complained of long hours of work.

2. Harsh treatment from employers: Another 8.8% of the children complained that their employers were too severe and demanding from them. Sometimes, they were made to do work beyond their capacity.

3. Hard work 12.8% of the children felt that they had to work really hard and that tired them.
4. Children engaged ill selling plastic bags, lottery tickets, newspapers, peanuts, ice-creams, etc. i.e. petty vendors complained of erratic sales which affected their earnings. There were times when the sales were very poor, which meant less or no income for them, making their life miserable.

5. Less/no food to eat: 3.2% of the children complained that the food given to them was less and they were left unsatisfied. Ironically, this was the complaint from boys working in hotels and restaurants. Not only they were given less food, but that too, late. '

6. Not paid on time: 2.4% of the children complained that they were not paid their wages on time. The employer took ad vantage of them and paid them as and when he liked.

7. They have to work in all types of weather i.e. in the hot sun or in the heavy rain. 3.2% of children had this complaint. Petty vendors were most affected by this factor.

8. 1.6% of children complained that their jobs were risky. One of the children worked as a cleaner in a bus and he complained that at times when the bus was full to capacity, he hardly had place to stand and he had to hang out of the bus, which was dangerous, as, he could have a fatal fall. Another child engaged in extracting sand from the river had to dive in the river to do his job, which again was risky. Rag pickers have to handle not only
dirty and harmful materials but also hazardous items like broken glasses, rusted metal, etc. Children working as assistants and welders have to sometimes hold welding parts together without any protection.

9. *No proper accommodation:* 0.8% of the children complained that they were not given a proper place to live by the employer, especially, children employed in hotels and restaurants.

10. *Harassment from senior workers:* 0.8% of the children complained of being harassed by senior workers. These were children employed in hotels and restaurants. They complained that the senior workers often beat them up.

11. *Harassment from relatives:* 0.8% of children complained that their earnings were snatched by their relatives. This occurred amongst children staying with relatives.

12. Non-payment for goods sold or service rendered. 1.6% of the children complained that sometimes customers did not pay for the goods sold on the pretext of having no change, etc.

13. *Exploitation by guards at the bus stand:* 3.2% of the children complained that the guards at the bus stand exploited them. They had to pay them some money to be able to sell their goods at the bus stand e.g. the peanut sellers at the bus stand in particular, were harassed by them.
14. *Poor working conditions:* 2.4% of the children felt that the conditions they worked-in were poor. Besides their wages, no other facilities were given.

15. 0.8% of the children complained that sometimes the employers made them do work not contracted for. Whether they liked it or not, they had to do it or else risk losing their jobs.

16. No *extra pay for extra work:* 3.2% of the children complained that their employers did not pay them extra, when they had to do more work. The payment remained the same irrespective of the work.

17. *Continues work without a break:* 0.8% of the children complained that they had to work continuously without any rest. This happened particularly in hotels and restaurants and domestic services. The work demanded of them was endless. One child working as a domestic servant complained that she did not even have time to eat her food.

18. *Not paid the amount agreed upon:* 0.8% of the children complained that the employers often went back on their word and paid them less than that agreed upon.

19. *Low wages:* 2.4% of the children complained that they were paid low wages.
20. No payment Even sick: 1.6% of the children complained that if they fell sick, their pay was cut. Thus, even when they were not well they had to work.

21. Fights with other children: 2.4% of the children complained that they had to sometimes fight with other children because of sales. This happened particularly to children engaged as petty vendors e.g. selling plastic bags, peanuts, etc.

The above are the problems encountered by the child workers. It is, however, interesting to note that 33.6% of the children replied that they faced no problems when approached by the interviewer. We conclude from this response that these children were afraid to tell their problems for fear of reprisal from their employers.
7.2 CONCLUSIONS:

If concluded that the child labour is very miserable in our country. This problem is taking a worst form day by day. More children are often considered a burden on the family. They are not allowed to study, because their parents cannot afford the expenditure of their study. So they send their children to work so that they can earn the money and fulfill the need of their family members.

Poverty, Population and illiteracy each breeds each other. Therefore, with prevailing economic needs social conditions and easily available and exploitable child, we have surplus adult unemployment but persistent demand and supply of child labour. So far, most of the studies have dealt with the child labour jointly.

The Present study attempted to know the socio economic conditions of the child labour. Besides this, various factors responsible for their demand and supply, conditions under which these children have to work, the problem faced by them, just because of they are child labour they are also investigated and projected.

In the proceeding chapters we have analyzed various economic aspects and social conditions of the child labour. On the basis of these analyses certain conclusions have been drawn, which are summarized as follows: -
The mean age at which these working children are working in the force is between 12 to 13 years. In auto workshop activity the percent of average age of working is found to be (18.47 percent) in departmental store is (16.93 percent) the lowest percent of age is found in Begging (6.16 percent) and in other is (4.64 percent) Maximum of the child labour i.e. (60.0 percent) belong to backward classes, and schedule caste and maximum are in the group of 12 to 14 years.

The education that is considered the most important factor that can break the vicious cycle of population and poverty is given no importance. About (35.08 percent) children are illiterate (39.38 percent) child are those, who could gain the education up to 2nd standard (25.23 percent) children are below 5th standard. It is observed that a great number of child labours comes mainly from the large nuclear families with average pf 9' to 12 members. This further confirms the concept of more the children more the working hands. (68.61 percent) of them are staying with their families (and (49.02 percent) of children are staying with the employers (41.18 percent) of children are staying with their relatives. This is unfortunate that in socio- economically backward classes, we have not so far been able to popularize small family norms.

Illiteracy and child labour has close relationship. The children with low level of education in labour force are having illiterate parents. Government should give much emphasis on adult education. The bulk of child labour comes t labour market out of economic
compulsion. The maximum of them are very poor. They are having very low family income and many mouth to feed. The highest pay scale of child labour is 1000 to 1500.

As far as the status of the child labour is concerned, they are victim of existing social structure. Inspite of working hours and working at home still they are considered, inferior to the other children of society. In our society a male child addition is welcomed, while that of female child is regarded as a matter of grief. It may be stated that the seriousness of crudities and disparity inflicted on girls. The disparity and crudities need not be physical violence, but in form of mental harassment deterring proper growth and development.

Low wages are the main contributing factor for their demand. Besides low wages efficiency, discipline, obedience, no unionism and hard work are other contributing factors towards their demand. These are the root problems concerning the demand for child labour.

Whatever the earnings of these working children are having is generally received by elder (35 percent). Even if they receive directly, the family adults take it away. They utilize it according to their wish and purpose very few children are sending their earning on their maintenance and according to their wish (57.53 percent) Another important factor about the demand for these working children is easy exploitability. Most of the child labour revealed that they are paid less and take the work very much.
The supply of these working children is a socio economic problem. Family income and poverty are the main compulsion for maximum of these working children coming to the labour market. Bad habits like addictions of the male members (18.84 percent) to payoff loans taken by adults (31.85 percent) are other factor for the supply. The parents themselves motivate and pursue these children to start working and supplement the income in maximum number of cases, this is told (70.15 percent) of the children's. Therefore, it is not the employers only who want these children to work for them. Since they are readily available and the parents themselves request to keep them, that are why the employers can exploit them with their own terms and conditions.

The child labour works are mainly employed illegally and in unorganized sector. They do not getting any bonus, provident fund, pension and statutory benefits. The working conditions are really deplorable. They do not earned leave or weekly holiday. They are scolded abused and even beaten at times by their employers. If at all they happen to take leave, fall sick or discontinuity due to other reasons, their wages are deducted. They are punished physically or financially for any breakage or damage. They are occasionally given gifts or bonus. No compensation in any form is given for medical treatment. This all accounts for exploitation. Another important problem faced by these children is the security at place of work.

As these children work under miserable conditions, they are deprived of basic requirements. The environment is grossly
detrimental to the growth and development. There is no adequate light, ventilation, safety, and cleanliness and safe water to drink. The environment in and around is highly polluted. The basic facilities for eating food, entertainment, rest, toilet is generally lacking. If at all these are parents, are in a miserable conditions.

It is clearly established that, prevalence of child labour is due to social conditions and economic reasons. Therefore, it demands economic developmental programmes, so that the parents can at least meet the minimum basic needs of these children.
7.3 *Suggestions for Improving the Plight of Working Children*

Child labour is a phenomenon that cannot be wished away. As long as there is poverty, there will be child labour. So, what can be done is to see to it that the children who are employed are protected by effective legislations and punitive measures are taken against violators of the norms.

1. Prohibiting the employment of children in hazardous occupations. The Employment of Children Act, 1938 which was repealed in 1986 after enacting the Child Labour (Prohibition and Regulation) Act, prohibited the employment of children below 15 years in hazardous occupations. This act should be vehemently pursued.

2. Regulate the hours of work of child labour. We note from the survey that many children work for 8 hours and more which is too tedious for a young body and mind; The maximum hours a child should work should be 4-6 hours with a break in between. This has also been mentioned in the Child Labour (Prohibition and Regulation) Act, 1986.

3. The wages of child labour in various occupations should be fixed, so that there is no scope for exploitation.
4. The problem of child labour should be tackled at its root. The root cause of child labour being poverty, the government should concentrate on vigorously implementing the anti-poverty programmes in their respective States. A general rise of a large percentage of the population above the poverty line, will lead to progressive elimination of child labour.

5. Measures to promote employment-oriented development both in rural and in urban areas, adequate facilities for both formal and non-formal education, vocational education and training, social security and family welfare measures, etc. would go a long way to tackle the basic and root causes of child labour.

6. Those children who have to work to make both ends meet for their families should be allowed the facility to attend part time schools. Special schools can be set up to cater to the needs of such children. There are some NGOs doing this, but they should be given encouragement and support to do it on a larger scale. Thus, these children do not miss out on school education and at the same time can help their families. However, committed teachers will be required to take up this type of Teaching.

7. Working children should also be provided with free meals, rest room for freshening up before classes begin, as we
have to remember that these children are coming to school straight from work.

8. A stipend can be given to those children who are removed from prohibited employment.

9. Health care should be provided for such children.

10. The general 'public should be sensitised to the plight of working children, so that they are more sensitive to the needs of such children. A large percentage of the children as we see from the survey, "re engaged in the informal sector activities and if people sympathise with them, then a lot of their misery can be alleviated e.g. in the case of domestic servants. If employers are sensitised, they can treat these children in a human way and not make them work for long hours with no rest, or give them work beyond their capacity to perform and pay them less than what they would pay an adult worker for the same work done. The media, especially the television, can be used to sensitise the public to the plight of working children.

11. Since poverty and illiteracy are the main causes of child labour, it is imperative that the government provides financial assistance to the household artisans so that they become independent of the Bharatiyas and exporters so that the vicious circle of the poverty – illiteracy – child
labour can be broken. They can also get the capacity to educate their children. It is also important to save the traditional craft from hijacking.

12 All the existing household units should be compulsorily registered and the owner and the worker should be made aware of the law relating to the labour and industry.

13 Provision should be made to provide raw material to the household units so that they do not depend on the Bharatiyas.

14 Cooperative and registered societies of the household units should be strengthened.

15 All processes relating to brassware industry should be treated as factory produce and there should be very clear demarcation between handicrafts and factory goods.

16 Alternative job opportunities for the artisans should be made available.

17 Factory Regulation Acts must be vigorously implemented.

18 The administration should not only improve the working conditions in the state but should also provide proper
schooling to the children near the work place or near the household units.

19 Artisans as well as the children must be made aware of the health hazards and also pre-medical aid be provided to them regularly.

20 prohibition or banning child labour through strict enforcement of Child Labour Act of 1986 and the Bonded Labour (Abolition) System Act 1975,

21 ratification of the ILa Convention 138 and Article 32 of the UN Rights of Child,

22 withdrawing/stopping all subsidies to industries employing children,

23 opening the residential schools for children withdrawn from jobs to give them education and training in vocations of their choice,

24 providing the families of such children with substitute sources of income,

25 compulsory schooling for children in non-hazardous jobs,
26 continuous monitoring of the enforcement of law and the implementation of projects seeking to provide substitute income for the families.

27 Creation of employment opportunities for adult unemployed,

28 introduction of compulsory primary education upto the age of 14 as per Article 45 of the Constitution,

29 extensive and intensive rural and urban community development programmes that create gainful employment for adults,.

30 entrepreneurial development through financial assistance and training to the poor and those interested/willing to set up their own enterprises or take to self-employment, opening up of free vocational and industrial training institutes for poor children after they complete compulsory primary education.

32 India should have a statutory National Minimum Wage (a living wage) equal atleast to the first-day wage of the lowest paid government employee. Subsequent revision due to inflation etc. should also be linked simultaneously. State governments must guarantee all citizens
employment at a National Minimum Wage for at least 200 days in a year or productive infrastructure building projects. While computing the cost of production of farm produce such as wheat, paddy, sugarcane, cotton etc., the government should calculate National Minimum Wage as the basis for all human labour. This will mean not only economic justice to the poorest sections but also greater unity between the farmers and agricultural labourers, leading towards social integration.

33 All means of mass communication, particularly Doordarshan and Akashvani should disseminate all aspects of National Minimum wage in all languages and dialects on a regular basis. This will empower the voiceless and unorganised labour to galvanise and unionise themselves and fight for a rightful place in the society.

34 For combating child labour, it is suggested that Indian Government should give national priority to education and social services. Government should commit itself to universalisation of free and compulsory elementary education for all children upto the age of fourteen years with training in productive skills.

35 Some educationists and trade unionists have suggested a compromise between the needs for education and child
labour, that the school hours be adjusted so as to make it possible to work and learn. But the danger is that whenever there is a conflict, education will be sacrificed and not work. Either the children will not attend the school at all, or he or she will be too tired to learn anything. Moreover, we should make out our objective to discourage long hours of work for children. There are of course special cases. Helping the family farming is one—it may be necessary to adjust school hours in the busy agricultural season (Dharma, 1988, p. 35).

Twenty years after its passage, the goals of the Bonded Labour Act—to punish employers of bonded labour and to identify, release, and rehabilitate bonded labourers have not been met, and efforts to do so are sporadic and weak at best. The bonded labour system continues to thrive, with millions of children tangled inside it. To eradicate bonded child labour, the Indian government must do two things: enforce the Bonded Labour Act, and create meaningful alternatives for already bonded child labourers and those at risk of joining their ranks.

In addition to genuine government action, it is essential that nongovernmental organizations be encouraged by the government to collaborate in this effort. The government has the resources and authority to implement the law, while community-based organizations have the grass-roots contacts and trust necessary to facilitate this implementation. Furthermore, nongovernmental groups can act as a
watchdog on government programs, keeping vigil for corruption, waste, and apathy. The elimination of current debt bondage and the prevention of new or relapsed bondage therefore requires a combination of concerted government action and extensive community involvement.

Effective vigilance committees must be formed and must, together with district magistrates, perform their statutory duties of identifying, releasing, and rehabilitating bonded labourers. Savings and credit programs must be instituted at the community level, giving the impoverished access to small loans during financial emergencies. This resource is crucial. Nearly every child we interviewed told us that they were sold to their employers because of their parents' desperation for money.

A community-based savings and credit program has been introduced in North Arcot district of Tamil Nadu, and early indications are that it will strike a significant blow against bonded child labour. The district collector for North Arcot, who claimed that sufficient funds and personnel were available from existing rural development programs, launched the program. Similar initiatives should be launched in all areas marked by bonded child labour.

Alternatives to servitude must be offered to children. The availability of free, compulsory, and quality education is widely regarded as the single most important factor in the fight against
bonded and nonbonded child labor. Despite this, less than half of India's children are in school. Recognizing the centrality of this issue, India's leading nongovernmental organizations have called for the implementation of universal education. They include: the Child Labour Action Network (CLAN), the Campaign Against Child Labour (CACL), the Centre for Rural Education and Development Action (CREDA), and the Bonded Labour Liberation Front (BLLF). UNICEF-India and Anti-Slavery International have also called for universal education in India.

At the same time, alternate efforts to at least minimally educate bonded children are already underway in a few areas. CREDA in the carpet-belt, the MV Foundation in Andhra Pradesh, and the Indian Council for Child Welfare (ICCW) in North Arcot, are all involved in non-formal education initiatives. Some of these programs utilize modest "incentives" to attract children, including small cash stipends and periodic grain allowances.

In addition, CREDA and the MV Foundation emphasize popular education for all members of the community, in which community teachers stress the importance of education for children and the deleterious effects of exploitative child labour. Such outreach is necessary in order to chip away at the thick web of myths and justifications that support exploitative child labour: that children must be trained at the "right" age or they will never learn a skill; that children must be trained in a profession "appropriate" to their caste and background; that children are well-suited for certain kinds of work...
because of their "nimble fingers"; and that child labour is a natural and desirable function of the family unit. These views are widely shared by parents, educators, government officials, and the public at large, with the result that talk of children's labour rights is dismissed summarily. These views must be pulled out from under the bonded labour system.

In sum, the fight against bonded child labour must be holistic, with a focus on two fronts: enforcement and prevention. Those employers who continue to bind children to themselves with debt, paying just pennies for a hazardous and grueling work day, must be prosecuted. Children must be removed from bondage and rehabilitated to avoid a subsequent relapse. Finally, the educational and survival needs of all children at risk must be addressed in order to stop the cycle of bondage.

Child labour in the Brassware industry is an age old problem for which multipronged and sustained efforts by the government machinery have to be made. The cooperation and involvement of the Bharatiyas and exporters have to be sought. The artisans have to be made aware of the child labour implications. Since it is a human problem it has to be handled with human cooperation and financial assistance from government. The hazardous processes of the brassware industry have to be replaced with safer and more mechanical processes. Education will provide them the main liberating force.
The government has to frame best suited and sustainable policies and programmes to eliminate child labour. The society, at large, has to be more conscious about the gravity of the problem of child labour.

The Rights of the children have to be established clearly. They should not remain abstract, general and legalistic concepts. A movement on behalf of the children and young has to be launched not at the national level only but at the international level. Compulsory courses relating to human rights should be introduced in all educational institutions.

The world is changing and the notion that children are possession of their parents has to be changed. Now they are no more the possession of their parents but very important future citizens of the world.
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