CHAPTER V

THEORITICAL BACKGROUND OF CHILD LABOUR

a) Causes of Child Labour
   i) Social factor
   ii) Economic factor
   iii) Political factor
   iv) Caste and tribes

b) Profile of child labour parents

c) Problem of child labour

b) Child Labour: Myths and Realities
There are some social factors which influence child labour. The important social factors empirically tested as determinants of child labour are mainly illiteracy, schooling or enrolment of children and presence of scheduled castes and schedule tribes in population.

For explaining the relationship between child labour and social factors, SC and ST population and adult literacy rates have been considered.

(a) **Scheduled Caste and Schedule Tribe Population**

In India, there is a stratification in society in terms of caste are economically poor and educationally backward. The tribal people who live in the remote parts of the country, particularly in the hilly and forested tracks, are also poor and have little education. These lower caste people and tribals are a major source of agricultural labour in India. Due to socio-economic backwardness, child labourers are more frequent among SC and ST population than others.

(b) **Adult Literacy Rate**

In India, most of the people are illiterate and they usually prefer to send their children to work rather than to
school. Firstly, they are not aware of the importance of education of the children. Secondly, in the face of open unemployment despite education, many people think that there is no return on the investment on children's education. Finally, among these people both direct costs and indirect cost (with schooling children cannot be engaged in work) are very high for schooling of the children on account of their meagre income. So, people are more interested to employ their children for earning rather than their schooling.

(c) Illiteracy and Ignorance of Parents

In India, the lower socio-economic groups of population are illiterate. They only think about the present which is their sole concern and worry. They are fully satisfied with their gain by the earning of children. It is ignored by them that their children may prove to be a better asset after gaining education or technical training. It also affects their health and they are converted into labourers of low wages for all their lives.

Ministry of labour, Government of India, has maintained tradition, poverty, lack of adequate awareness among parents for education children, illiteracy, large size of the family, employment and lack of land as the causes of child labour.
Child labour is concern extensively in the lower socio-economic groups because of the lack of appreciation on their part of the role that education plays in improving life and living conditions of the people. Thus greed for money and gross ignorance on the part of the parents in not sending their children to school is a sad commentry and condemnable. Thus illiteracy and ignorance of parents is also an important factor. These parents do not consider child labour as an evil.

(d) **Large Family**

Large families with comparatively less income cannot have the happy notions in their mind. As a result, they cannot give shelter to their children. If a family is limited and well planned there will be no question of sending their children to the labour market and the children can be carefully educated. Illiterate and rustic parents think just contrary to this, if parents have a small size of family, they can provide all facilities to their children which are necessary for their mental, physical and social growth.

(II) **ECONOMIC FACTORS**

The economic condition is no doubt the most important cause of child labour not only with Indian parents but also with the parents in all the third world countries. The poor economic condition of the parents force them to send
their child to work so that he/she can at least earn his/her own food and thus support his/her family. The most important economic factors influencing child labour are discussed below:

(a) **Poverty**

In almost all the studies it has been shown that poverty is one of the important causes of child labour. In the report of the committee on child labour it has been mentioned that nearly half of the population of India subsists below the poverty line. In the countryside, the distribution of land is most iniquitous and only 4 percent land is occupied by nearly lower 50 percent households. On an average, in all metropolitan cities 1/3 of the total population lives in slums. Because of the poverty parents cannot make any investment for child development and are also reluctant even to support them.

In the report of the working group on the employment of children it was noticed that the poor economic condition of large segment of population associated with low income, low saving, low investment and low consumption with high dependency ratio in families necessitates members to contribute to the family income at an early age. In this sense, the report on child labour in Indian industries mentioned that the problem of child labour can hardly be legislated away, as
it's root lies in a abject poverty. It is seen, wherever social and economic conditions have improved children go to school and child labour has virtually disappeared.

(b) **Unemployment and Wage**

Poverty and unemployment are the two facts of the same coin. Child labour is closely associated with the problem of unemployment and low wages of the people. Wide spread poverty arising from unemployment and low wages forces people to send their children to work to get in the family's struggle for survival.

Empirically it has been found that whenever the problem of unemployment is low and the adult wage rate is high, the child work participation rate is less for instance, an econometric analysis of district level data of India, base on 1961 Census, done by Rosenzweig and Evanson found a significant negative relationship between the adult female wage rate and child work participation. In this very study they had observed that the wage rate of children has a negative influence on the school enrollment of the children.

(c) **Income and standard of living**

The income of the household is one of the most important determinant of child labour. Research in many
countries including India (Rosenzweig) has consistently demonstrated a strong inverse relationship between income of the household and child work participation. Higher income is generally associated with a higher level of education and there is lesser need for the children to work. The tendency of the better educated parents is to have higher educational aspirations for their children.

(d) Child Labour is Cheap

With the advent of industrialism, there came a tendency among the employers to have quick and more profits at low costs. Hence, in every county there was an employment of children in large numbers – in factories, who are paid very low wages, were subjected to excessive hours of work and were made to work under terrible conditions.

Employers have developed ancient commodity approach towards these working children. At present, too, employers think that a lot of work can be done by the children in their workplaces and their labour is very cheap in comparison to that of an adult. In fact, it ensures them more ‘Margin of profit over less investment.’

Jerome Davis stated that, “besides the compulsion of poverty within the family, is the stimulus of the manufacturer who desires to secure cheap labor and more profit”.
Child labour exists not because children are more able workers but because they can be had for less money. Thus preference for child labour by many employers is mainly due to the fact that it is cheap, safe and without any liability. All the reports on child labour also indicate that the wages paid to the children are exploitatively low.

(e) **Absence of Scheme for Family Allowance**

In India there is absence of schemes for family allowances, as can be given to families so that people may have adequate standard and may not be forced to send their children to the labour market.

The amount which is paid to widows as compensation or pension is too insufficient to maintain their family without the help of their children’s income. Thus poverty is the root cause for child labour. Kulshreshta has maintained poverty, absence of scheme of family allowance, large family, cheaper rates of child labour, absence of compulsory education, illiteracy and ignorance, slow process of protective labour legislation and inadequate inspecting machinery as the causes of child labour.

The scholar is the of the opinion that parents force their children to take up employment because their own
earning power is low. If their incomes are increased, they are likely to desist from sending their children to work.

(III) POLITICAL FACTORS

(a) Defective Plans and Programmes of Development

Due to defective and unsuitable plans and programmes of development particularly on education policies, we find that the objectives are not met successfully. Most of the schemes whether poverty elimination or literacy campaign do not fulfil the local needs of the people and the schemes meant for them being not fit for their socio-economic and cultural environment are not fruit bearing. Experiences show that a very negligible percentage of children (particularly tribal children) get admitted into primary schools and majority of them drop-out after continuing there for a year or two. During the seasons of agricultural operations most of them remain absent. This is in the form of peak and stack seasons.

At the international level also we find that the poorest of the poor children can be exploited in this way has increased because of international economic developments over the last decade and a half, structural adjustment programmes imposed on the economies of developing countries by the World Bank and the International Monetary
Fund (IMF) have meant cuts in social spending that have hit the poor disproportionately. In Zimbabwe, reports of both the Government and the International Labour Organization (ILO) have linked the explosion of child labour directly to the impact of the country’s structural adjustment programme. National policies and priorities also contribute to the problem. Cuts in social spending have hit education – the alternative to child labour particularly hard. In the countries experiencing economic hardship in the last decade, per capita spending on education has declined significantly. In all regions, spending per student for higher education fell during the 1980s, and in Africa and Latin America, spending per pupil also fell for primary education.

(b) Attitude of the Government and Employer

Though the Government is undertaking legislative measures to protect the child labour in India these are not effectively implemented. Moreover, there is need for strengthening the existing legislation aimed at protecting the child labour to make it completely free from loopholes. Further the corrupt government Machinery adds to their woos.

The employers are also responsible for intensifying the problem of child labour in India. Though the employees community takes prides in providing low bound welfare measures, this section is not whole heartedly interested in
implementing the spirit behind the legislative measures. The employer always wants to cash on the loop-holes that are there in the legislation. Hence, there is need for change in the attitude of the employers towards the upliftment of the child labour. But, this humanness is mostly lacking in most of the employers.

(IV) CASTE AND TRIBES

India has a stratified social structure in terms of castes and there are different tribal groups in India since long back. It is found that lower castes people and tribals are educationally backward and economically deprived. So, in terms of standard of living these lower caste people and tribals are lagging behind. That is why the phenomenon of child labour is more frequent among the people of lower castes and tribes. After independence, for the upliftment of these lower caste and tribes, Government of India has brought them under the list of scheduled castes and scheduled tribes to give special socio-economic facilities.

OTHER FACTORS

(v) Schooling Facilities

The report of the committee on child labour has mentioned that the lack of schooling facilities is responsible
for low enrollment rate and high drop out rate among children. In many far flung areas of the country, schooling facilities are scarce and inaccessible. In most places the school presents a drab and dismal picture and holds little attraction for the child. The report has also mentioned that increasing volume of unemployment among the educated youth undermines the faith of the poor in the efficiency and pay off the education.

Hirway has mentioned that child labour system in third world countries is partially due to inadequate educational system and certain socio-cultural constraints of the poor. The educational system in developing countries frequency lacks the infrastructure for providing compulsory primary education to all the children and there are serious problems with the quality of education many a times, in the eyes of the poor, the cost of education is higher than the returns.

(VI) DEVELOPMENTAL FACTORS

Development has a great impact on child labour. With development children are taken much care of and society becomes more conscious about the exploitation and ill effects of child labour. Here, two types of developmental variables have been chosen, i.e. irrigation and schooling facilities in the villages.
(VII) LOW ASPIRATION LEVEL

Generally a man adopts suitable means in order to attain the goal of life. This is the philosophy of life in case of every individual, may he be a tribal or a ruralite or a city dweller. When the educational level is very low, economic conditions are adverse and exposure to modern materialistic civilization is almost negligible, it is but natural that socially backward people can’t aspire to have a better standard of living. Moreover, the man who is confronted with the problem of starvation can never dream of a better future. For him the problem of starvation can never dream of a better future. For him the problem that needs immediate attention is the question of survival. Therefore, the immediate solution which offers itself to him is to get some work and earn a living.

(VIII) PERCEPTION ABOUT THE CHILD

In our country, a child is brought to the world with the expectation, that when the parents become old, the son or daughter will look after them in the old age. A child is taken as an insurance policy for them against any eventuality. In general, it is expected that a son will definitely look after the parents. The child is supposed to have a moral obligation to provide for the parents in their old age. But the parents, who are responsible for bringing a child to the world also have some sort of moral obligation to the child. The socio-
economic compulsions of the parent/guardian are also responsible for making the institution of child labour survivable. Through an unmistakable undercurrent of anxiety for the future of their children is seen in some of the parents/guardians, this attitude hardly helps them to help their children in view of their poverty-striken lives.

Another direct cause of child employment is the situation at work. There may be tension and uncertainty, provoked or increased by poverty, the father may have left home, the father or the mother, or both may fall ill or die. However, the argument that the children are obliged to work because of the disappearance of the breadwinner is often fallacious, because it is generally the head of the family himself who sees to it that his children go out to work.

(IX) MIGRATION TO URBAN AREAS

Further, some studies have found migration to cities, due to industrialization and urbanization, also to be one of the factors responsible for the problem of child labour. The Delhi study shows that there is a substantial number of migrants among child workers, particularly in the field of domestic services. They also work at tea-stalls and 'dhabas'. A large number of domestic servants belonged to Almora and Garhwal district of north-eastern Uttar Pradesh, while most of those working in tea-stalls and 'dhabas' and also those hawking
evening newspapers, had migrated from Azamgarh, Basti, Gorakhpur and Gonda district of Uttar Pradesh and to great extent, from Bihar. The rag-pickers were partly local and partly from West-Bengal. The shoe shine boys mostly hailed from Agra, Jhansi and Shahjahanpur districts of Uttar Pradesh. It is not just a coincidence that the migrant child workers invariably belonged to the relatively poor and backward regions of the country and not the economically developed areas, such as, West Bengal, Haryana and Western Uttar Pradesh.

(X) CHEAP COMMODITY

As it has already been said earlier, the employers prefer to take in children when the given job can be accomplished by them better than the adults or at par with them, and even otherwise. To them the labour power of the children is a cheap commodity. By employing them they save on the wage bills. Besides, children are apt to the docile and more obedient, can be easily bullied into submission. They readily do all sorts of odd jobs without a whimper. The more needy a child happens to be, the less he will be paid by the employer.

Child labour is not only very cheap, it is also trouble free since children cannot organize agitations by themselves and being minors, the membership of trade unions is not open
to them. Neither can they demand any overtime, nor the medical and other benefits.

The activeness, suppleness and agility of the child's delicate body is an additional asset to the employer, making him more desirable for employment, for he can be made to rush in and out on errand, run up and down and stairs, bend or lie down, fetch and take back things or hand over the tools to the adult workers. He readily does all this and much more without whimpering, protest, sense of shame or hurted ego. No adult can be expected to do all this.

In the above respect, the committee on child labour has observed. "Children have less developed ego and status consciousness. They are also less affected by feelings of guilt and shame. Children can be put on non-status, even demeaning jobs, without much difficulty. Children are more active, agile and quick and feel less tired in certain tasks. They can climb up and down staircase of multistoried buildings several times during the day carrying tea and snacks for employees of offices located in these buildings. They are also better candidates for tasks of helper in a grocer's shop or an auto-garage. Employers find children more amendable to discipline and control. They can be coaxed, admonished, pulled up and punished for default without jeopardizing relations."
The study of child labour in lock industries of Aligarh also led to the same conclusions. When we interrogated the employers of child labour they said that thought it was out of sympathy that they give some work to children, actually, they preferred them because they are more disciplined and controllable. Besides, they demand nothing and are cheaper.

Sometime, when seasonal work demands additional hands, children are more in demand for example during harvesting seasons when adult workers are not readily available to cope up with the work in hand.

In this country, children of very young age are engaged for domestic work because they are very cheap. The middle class families, falling within low income groups, especially prefer boys and girls of the age group 8 to 14 to work in their homes as domestic servants for food and some pocket money. These employers, through educated in formal sense, appear to have the least concerned for these children and their conscience hardly pricks.

(XI) **NON-EXISTING OF PROVISION FOR COMPULSORY EDUCATION**

Non-existence of provision for compulsory education in our country is another important cause of child
labour. The child labour and non schooling of children have a vital linkage among the proper sections of the population.

The provision of compulsory education upto a prescribed age would compel the children to attend school, leaving hardly any scope for their employment of the self-styled benevolent masters.

In India, out of 5,47,672 villages, 48,566 do not have any school and 1162,271 rural schools have just one teacher for each school. At most of the places, the school presents a drab and dismal picture, and holds little attraction for the child. Thus, also because of the non-availability of schooling facilities at the initial stage, a good number of children migrate to cities and towns to seek job as an alternative to the rustic and dull village life. The parents also prefer to keep their children occupied in gainful employment lest they continue to be a burden on them and be exposed to temptations of the Vagrancy without knowing its ill consequences.

Further, many of the parents, especially that of the rural and slum areas, cannot afford the prescribed minima of uniforms, books and stationery etc, even though education is free upto primary level. Apart from the consideration of expenses, the allurement of the child’s income also plays a
major role in their decision against schooling of their children. They are also not sure that schooling will really brighten up their children’s future prospects. They dread uncertainty, and prefer to follow the saying that one bird in hand is better than two in the bush. The plight of the educated unemployed youth in our country lends support to their views.

In relation to child labour, the importance of need for compulsory education gets confirmed, though indirectly, by the report of the National Commission on Labour, 1969, when it stated therein: “The gradual reduction in the employment of child labour since independence is due partly to the expansion of educational facilities by the state and also to relatively better enforcement of statutory provisions relating to child labour”.

The main obstacle in the way of making education compulsory for all children up to a prescribed age has been rightly indicated by the above report in the following: “An artisan cannot afford to educate his wards though education is free. For him an uneducated child is an asset; desire to be educated becomes a double liability because of (i) loss of earnings, if the child does not work, and (ii) expenditure on education, however small it is.

No doubt, the role of education cannot be underestimated for proper development of children. Each and
every parent wants his child to become a reputed 'A' class person but the unfortunate children have neither the means for education nor they have time to spare for it. They have time to spare for it. They just cannot afford to wait for a bright future tomorrow, rather than having the bread sums right now.

(b) **PARENTS PROFILE**

(I) **Illiteracy and Ignorance of Parents**

Despite improvements in literacy rate from 5% in 1901 to 25% in 1981, the gross number of illiterates had swelled up during this period from 114 million to 445 million. Most of these illiterate people belong to the lower socio-economic strata of the population. These people are only concerned with the present and have rather much at hand to worry about. So, naturally, they deliberately try to escape from the stress and strains of worrying about the future. They are pleased with what they gain by the earnings of their children. Complacently, they do not care to avail of the educational opportunities for their children, including vocational training, even if the same may be available, through such opportunities are rare for the employed children. They are also unmindful of ill effects on the health of their working children.
The study on child labour in Aligarh lock industries had revealed that about 80% of the parents of child labour were illiterate, about 12% had studied up to Vth class and only 8% of them had education up to VIIth standard.

Their sole concern was the monetary aspect of their children's employment and not the development of their intelligence in the least.

Thus, the child labour is prevalent extensively in the lower socio-economic groups because of the lack of appreciation on the part of the parents of the role of education in improving life and the living conditions.

Taking into consideration all the aspects of child labour its consequences, Addam has condemned it and predicted that today's child labourers will be the paupers of tomorrow; they are the boys and girls who will grow up either without formal schooling or the knowledge of a trader; sooner or later, their youthful energies will exhaust and they will become dull, shiftless and drift less.

(2) **Employer's View Point**

Supporters of child labour argue and perhaps, believe also that children who go to work at a very early age tend to acquire the habit of being industrious and labourious which is profitable for them in the long run because they
become well-trained workers at an early age. Many employers, exhibiting benevolent pride in their child labour force, assert that the child who starts working at a very early age soon gets to know this work and the value of money which takes him to higher success in his later life. The National Commission on labour was told by some of the employers that unless the fingers get trained at a very early age when they are nimble, there adaptation later on to the requirements of work would be indeed difficult. The employers also argued that handicrafts, like carpet weaving, cannot do without the child’s nimble fingers, and so is the case with cottage industries like that of match sticks and fire works which save so much of foreign exchange for the country.

It is also argued on behalf of the supporters of child labour that the children of master craftsmen get to learn their skills from their parents and then themselves develop into master craftsmen. The employers often advance the argument that by employing children they help them to increase of their families. The employment also saves them from becoming indolent and vagabonds or anti-social.

Thus, they argue, it is the sympathy for the poor and the needy, rather than the desire to exploit them, which motivate them to employ children. When the employment of children increases the earning of the family, it keeps the
children away from mischief, they argue. However, these arguments as advanced by the employers are weightless and misleading. They look down upon the glaring fact that the practice of child labour "deprives children of educational opportunities, minimizes their chances for vocational training, stunts their physical growth, hampers their intellectual development and by forcing them into the army of unskilled labourers or blind alley jobs, condemns them to low wages all their lives. "No civilized nation can afford to take the risk of destroying the lives of its children who are the embodiment of all the hopes and aspirations for the country's future prosperity and progress. They represent one destiny of the nation itself".

(c) PROBLEM OF CHILD LABOUR

(i) Height and Weight of Working Children

Height and weight of these children have been assessed by classifying the height and weight into two breeder auguries. Item one it the subnormal category – upto 70 percent level of the 'normal' and the then one is near normal height categories ranging from 80 to 90 percent of the normal height – under Indian conditions. Only these two categories are made. In the aggregate, it is found that 19.74 percent of male child workers were found to have deficiency in height i.e. 60
to 70 percent of the standard height prescribed for different ages among girls 23.35 percent came under this category.

In the nine year old age groups three out of 6 boys are found deficient in weight by 30 to 40 percent but among girls belonging to this age group. Among 10 years old, 56.32 percent of boys and 13 percent of girls are found in this category. Among 11 years old age group, 64.70 percent of boys and 14.3 percent of girls – are under this category. Among 13 years old group, 57.63 percent and 13.16 percent of girls come under the category among the 14 years old group 6.35 percent of girls and 54.85 percent of boys have such deficiency thus with regard to weight more of boys than girls are found deficient.

(2) WAGES EARNED BY CHILD WORKERS

The compulsion of receiving low wages is a problem highlighted by many other studies too. These who did not do agricultural work especially in match/fire works units, weaving construction work, tailoring etc. are paid wages on piece – rate basis. Those in the service sector as general shop assistants, cycle repair shop assistants domestic servants etc. got wages on a flat rate. Sometimes base on experience, type of work and time involved. In match-box making units, wages are paid every week in domestic work and shops etc. on monthly basis and in others on daily basis. In fishing, wage is
paid in kind. In farming it is a combined effort of family labour including that of child workers and hence in such cases there are problems in apportioning the share of child wage. Payments made to other children doing similar work has been used as yard-stick to measure child wage in the case joint work with family members. In the case of domestic servants and helpers in hotels and restaurants besides money wage, clothes, food etc. are also reportedly given. Much locational variation exists in wages earned by child labourers. In Thanjavur district those engaged in fishing reported to earn as much as Rs. 50 per day during peak fishing seasons.

(3) HOURS OF WORK

Another problem of child labourers is long hours of work which the young children do. Hamsa reports that 20 percent of the child-labours studied got no cash remuneration. They are reported to work for 12 to 18 hours / day against the provision of food only and 5 percent earned between Rs. 21 to 30 per month and the highest income ranged between Rs. 75 to 100 per month. Only very negligible percentage of children (4%) reported to work for five hours and even less per day. In the present study too a small percentage (9.5%) had to work for more than 12 hours per day; all of them are male children. Among them majority are from Thanjavur district especially those who go out in the sea for fishing. At least here, the long
hours of work are compensated by higher wages. But grazing of animals is one work item, which is time consuming but low paid. Among non-agricultural work, working in hotels, shops, tailor shops etc. also involve long hours of work. Majority (46%) in the present study are found to work for 8 to 9 hours per day. Among the locations, majority in this category (75%) are found in Ann district followed by in Kamarajar district (50%).

In general among those who work for more than 8 hours per day majority are boys. But as seen earlier, daily earning is less among majority of girls. Girls who work in domestic service have to work for long hours and receive low wages.

(4) AVERAGE NUMBER OF WORKING DAYS

Average number of working days of child labourers varied in the study areas. Besides working for long hours and earning low income, they are subject to work with very few holidays. Nearly ¾ of them worked for 21 to 30 days a month. Slightly more than half of them worked for 26 days and more per month and nearly ¼ has to work for all days in a month. They are domestic servants, assistants in hotels and tea shops, repair shops, stationary and provision shops, watchman etc. and also those grazing animals. Thus, nature of work is such that their presence is needed without break, day after day.
(5) CHILDREN IN DISTRESS

Malnutrition, a silent and invisible emergency, exacting a terrible, tell on children and their families contributes to over six million child death every year – a proportion unmatched by any infections disease, or natural disaster.

In India, the figure of malnourished children is alarming and frightening. It is stated that 52 percent of under five years in India are malnourished with chronic endemic malnutrition, reflected as stunning against 37 percent worldwide. In fact, a report on the under-five mortality rate by United Nations Children’s Fund *UNICEF) is shocking – while in India it is 111 per thousand, it is 88 only in the entire world.

“The persistence of malnutrition has profound and frightening implications for children, society and the future of humankind. Yet this world wide crisis has stirred little public alarm despite substantial and growing scientific evidence of the danger”, says UNICEF in its annual report ‘State of the World’s children”, released here today. The report was released at a press conference addressed by Kul C. Gautam, special representative (UNICEF) and V. Ramalingamswami, a nutritionist of international repute.
In the report, UNICEF has warned that the price of infection is high because "where it does not kill, malnutrition can leave victims physically maimed, intellectually impaired and suffering from the consequences of a weakened immune system.

According to Mr. Ramalingaswami, micronutrient malnutrition is a pervasive phenomenon and its consequences are felt at all stages of human life, "from womb to tomb". Half of South Asia's children are malnourished; half malnourished children around the globe are in India, Bangladesh and Pakistan. Nutrition-wise, South-Asia is supposed to be the worst region in the world, even worse than sub-saharan Africa in some respects, especially low birth weight.

The Indian picture in this respect is terribly grim. The UNICEF study has revealed that about 33 percent of infants are born with low birth weight against 17 percent worldwide.

Vitamin A deficiency is found in 1.5 million in India against 100 millions world over. Similarly, the number of people living in iodine deficient areas and at risk of iodine deficiency is 260 million in this country against one billion throughout the world.
According to Mr. Ramalingaswami, the consequence of malnutrition are staggering—depletion of human intelligence, diminished resistance to infections, robing of mental and physical potential and diminished futures—all of which are entirely preventable. Better diets and nurturing environments can produce taller, stronger, healthier children in many countries separated by only one generation from their shorter and less robust parents.

(6) CHILD EXPORTS: THE NEW EVIL

Russia and the former Soviet Union have become the world’s biggest exports of women for purposes of prostitution, says a report by a leading human rights group.

Thousands of Russian women are recruited into the expanding global sex trade every year, often by means of deception and violence, concludes crime and servitude, an 18 months study conducted by the Washington–based Global survival network, a non-governmental monitoring agency.

“International trafficking in women and children for forced prostitution is growing exponentially”, says the report, which was released in Moscow late last year.

“Trafficking is generally accompanied by coercion through a variety of means including debt bondage, blackmail, and threat of physical or sexual violence”, it says.
"In Russia and the former Soviet Republics, where Privatization has resulted in a rapid feminization of poverty, mafia groups are exporting women and children in increasing numbers to locations throughout Asia, Europe and the United States”.

The report, based on hundreds of interview with Russian crime figures, officials Pimps and victimized women, paints a grim picture of post-soviet realities for young women growing up in a society with no economic opportunities and legal protections.

It says young women are attracted into sex slavery by advertisement offering them study opportunities or lucrative work abroad, including jobs as models, waitresses and dancers.

Russian women are very vulnerable to such appeals due “to the hard conditions that most women confront in Russia add to an innocence about the abuses possible in a market economy”, says the report “for Russian women, good jobs are hard to find, sexual harassment is pervasive and blatant, and domestic violence is common, offers of good pay for working abroad often seems like magical escapes into a better world”.
The report charges the sex business is dominated by Russian mafia groups, often working together with international criminal organizations. Corrupt officials in Russia and host countries are frequently involved in providing false travel documents and discouraging legal scrutiny.

Women drawn into the racket are provided with documentation and air travel, and told they will have to repay the costs out of future earnings. When they arrive in the foreign country, their passports are taken away and they are coerced into work as prostitutes, strippers and escorts. Often the debt “to employers continues to grow trapping the women in an endless cycle of abuse and dependence.

Traffickers and Pimps routinely use threats and violence to prevent women from going home or contacting authorities for help, the report says, “Even when they are deported or return home voluntarily, trafficked women may face serious danger from criminal rings with links to their hometowns if they have not repaid their debts”.

The United Nations estimates the illegal traffic in women earned criminal groups $7 billion in 1996 and the business is growing rapidly.
The main destinations for the illegal flesh trade are Japan, Germany, Switzerland, Italy, Israel, Turkey, The United States, South Korea and China.

But human rights groups say Russian women can be found these days working in sex clubs, bars and massage parlours in almost every country in most cases under criminal sponsorship and control.

(7) **EDUCATION BACKWARDNESS**

Employment of child labour especially in the carpet industry has adversely affected, the educational status of the present generation in the country, especially in the rural areas. As a result of massive carpet training programme, thousands of school going children were diverted towards carpet weaving activity from their studies. The early age at which children are taught to weave, results in cutting them off from the educational system, or just one or two years of schooling or even without that. In this way a large number of future generation is deliberately pushed into darkness and illiteracy in utter disregard to the canons of law. Obviously therefore, this policy Runs counter to the basic directive principles of the Indian constitution which enshrines the right of basic education to all citizens. Hence the policy is the negation of
what has been promised to the young people—the future hope to the country.

**ECONOMIC EXPLOITATION**

There are number of reasons due to children are preferred by employers. Reasons stated in the report of the committee of child labour are—

(i) Less developed ego and status consciousness;
(ii) Less affection by feeling of guilt and shame;
(iii) No hesitation to do non-status, even demanding jobs;
(iv) Activeness, agility and quickness and lesser feeling of tiredness;
(v) Greater discipline and control;
(vi) Less expensive to maintain;
(vii) Superior adaptive abilities;
(viii) Lack of organization;
(ix) Moral consideration of the employers to help and to provide succor to the destitute or forsaken children.
(x) Acquisition of fitness through initiation in the early age.
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>S. No.</th>
<th>Occupation/Industry</th>
<th>Hazards</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1.</td>
<td>Abattoirs and rendering</td>
<td>Meat injuries from cuts, burns, falls, dangerous equipments, exposure to infectious disease, heat stress.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2.</td>
<td>Acids (work with)</td>
<td>risk of burns, inhalation of toxic fumes, eye injuries.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3.</td>
<td>Agriculture</td>
<td>unsafe machinery, hazardous substances, accidents, chemical poisoning, arduous work, dangerous animals, insects and reptiles.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4.</td>
<td>Alcohol</td>
<td>intoxication, addiction, prejudicial to morals environment, risk of violence.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5.</td>
<td>Carpet Weaving</td>
<td>dust inhalation, poor lighting, poor posture (squatting), respiratory and musculo-skeletal disease, eye strain, chemical-poisoning.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>6.</td>
<td>Cement</td>
<td>harmful chemicals, exposure to harmful dust, arduous work, respiratory and musculo-skeletal disease.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>7.</td>
<td>Circular Saws and other dangerous machines</td>
<td>accidents, e.g. loss of limb or life, danger from unprotected moving parts.</td>
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<tr>
<td>8.</td>
<td>Construction</td>
<td>exposure to heat, cold, dust, falling.</td>
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<tr>
<td>S. No.</td>
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<td>Hazards</td>
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<td>9.</td>
<td>Cranes/hoists/lifting machinery</td>
<td>accidents, falling objects, musculo-skeletal disease, risk of injury to others.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>10.</td>
<td>Glass manufacture</td>
<td>molten glass, extreme heat, poor ventilation, cuts from broken glass, carrying hot glass, burns, respiratory disease, heat stress, toxic dust.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>11.</td>
<td>Domestic Service</td>
<td>long hours, physical, emotional sexual abuse, malnutrition, insufficient rest, isolation.</td>
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<tr>
<td>12.</td>
<td>Electricity</td>
<td>dangerous work with high voltage, risk of falling, high level of responsibility for safety of others.</td>
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<tr>
<td>13.</td>
<td>Entertainment (night clubs bars, Casinos, circuses etc.)</td>
<td>long, late hours, sexual abuse, exploitation, prejudicial to morals.</td>
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<tr>
<td>14.</td>
<td>Explosives (manufacture &amp; handling)</td>
<td>risk of explosion, fire, urns, mortal danger.</td>
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<tr>
<td>15.</td>
<td>Fumes, dust, gas &amp; other noxious substances</td>
<td>chemical poisoning, damage to eyes, damage to respiratory system, poisoning.</td>
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<tr>
<td>16.</td>
<td>Hospitals &amp; diagnostic labs etc.</td>
<td>infectious disease, responsibility for well-being of others.</td>
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<td>Hazards</td>
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<td>17.</td>
<td>Lead/Zinc metallurgy, white lead, lead in paint</td>
<td>cumulative poisoning, neurological damage.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>18.</td>
<td>Machinery in motion (operation, cleaning, repairs etc.)</td>
<td>danger from moving engine parts, accidents, cuts, burns, exposure to heat and noise, noise stress, eye and ear injuries.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>20.</td>
<td>Mining, Quarries, underground work</td>
<td>exposure to dust, gases, fumes, dirty conditions, respiratory and musculo-skeletal disease, accidents, falling objects, arduous work, heavy loads.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>21.</td>
<td>Radioactive substances or ionizing radiation (with work)</td>
<td>Radiation</td>
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<td>22.</td>
<td>Rubber</td>
<td>heat, burns, chemical poisoning.</td>
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<tr>
<td>23.</td>
<td>Street Trades</td>
<td>exposure to drugs, violence, criminal activities, heavy loads, musculo-skeletal diseases, accidents.</td>
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<tr>
<td>24.</td>
<td>Tanneries</td>
<td>chemical poisoning, sharp instruments, respiratory disease.</td>
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<tr>
<td>25.</td>
<td>Tar, asphalt, bitumen</td>
<td>exposure to heat, burns, chemical poisoning, respiratory diseases.</td>
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<td>27.</td>
<td>Under water</td>
<td>decompression illness, dangerous</td>
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<tr>
<td>S. No.</td>
<td>Occupation/Industry</td>
<td>Hazards</td>
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<tr>
<td>28.</td>
<td>Weights and loads</td>
<td>physical stress and strain, musculo-skeletal diseases.</td>
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<tr>
<td>29.</td>
<td>Welding &amp; Smelting of metals, metal working</td>
<td>exposure to extreme heat, flying sparks and hot metal objects, accidents, eye injuries, heat stress.</td>
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</tbody>
</table>


### Table-10

**(d) Child Labour: Myths and Realities**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>S. No.</th>
<th>Myths</th>
<th>Realities</th>
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</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1.</td>
<td>Poverty is the single major cause of child labour</td>
<td>while it is true that child labourers come from improvised families, it should be noted that child labour also perpetuates poverty since the child labourer who survives the harsh conditions becomes an unskilled, debilitated adult who is not employed even in the industry that exploited him/her earlier.</td>
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<tr>
<td>2.</td>
<td>Child labour is uniquely a problem of the developing world</td>
<td>The reality is, children routinely work in all industrialized countries.</td>
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<tr>
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<td>3. Child labour is the result of the poor having more children than they can provide for</td>
<td>A high population growth causes poverty which gives more rise to child labour. Hence, a high population growth is the cause of child labour. However, the focus remains on the numerical strength of families and ignores the denial of basic rights. Child labour therefore cannot be attributed solely to the population growth.</td>
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<td>4. If children work, they become equipped with skills for the future</td>
<td>Are simple and repetitive such as labeling, filling, rolling; fetching and carrying skill is a misnomer when applied to the back breaking toil and drudgery children engage in.</td>
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<td>5. Child labour is necessary to prevue traditional arts and crafts</td>
<td>In reality, the argument of preserving tradition cloaks the reality of children bonded to families or who are hired labour who are never taught the actual craft. Moreover, skills that were previously preserve of a few families are now widely available in the labour market because of state sponsored training programmes which cover</td>
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<td>6.</td>
<td>Children themselves want to work</td>
<td>when children express their preference for work, it is because of their inability to conceive of an alternative. Children are compelled to work by the non-availability or lack of access to schools, an irrelevant school curriculum and physical abuse from teachers.</td>
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<tr>
<td>7.</td>
<td>if children do not work, they and their families will starve</td>
<td>Starvation persist even when adults and the children are working. Starvation is the result of a combination of factors, including price policy, low income, low purchasing power, income disparity, unequal food distribution, poor availability of food, lack of access to food production and unequal land ownership patterns.</td>
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<td>8.</td>
<td>There is nothing wrong in allowing children to work in non-hazardous occupations.</td>
<td>Even jobs which are not inherently hazardous become hazardous for children, if they are made to do the job for long periods and if they are being denied their rights to development education, medical care, recreation, leisure and play.</td>
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<td>9.</td>
<td>Parents would rather send their children to work than to school</td>
<td>More difficult than the parental resistance to mainstreaming their words in formal schools is the difficulty in satisfying the administrative requirements for admission.</td>
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<td>10.</td>
<td>Child labour cannot be abolished</td>
<td>What has caused the problem of child labour to persist here is really not the dearth of resources, but lack of rest zeal. Let this not continue.</td>
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<tr>
<td>11.</td>
<td>Children work faster and have nimble fingers needed in certain types of work, especially knotting carpets.</td>
<td>An examination of the seventeen processes in match manufacture showed that children were employed in simple tasks requiring a speed of movement and coordination of action, but not special aptitude, which children might possible have and adults do not. In fact, not only</td>
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<td>12.</td>
<td>Industry will collapse if child labour is not available</td>
<td>the increase in the cost of a product caused by replacing children with adults is only of the order of about 4-7%</td>
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<td>13.</td>
<td>Child labour primarily in export clusters is not visible</td>
<td>the UNICEF report says it is in the export industries where working children are most visible. But, there are millions more who labour in virtual invisibility: in farms, plantations, houses far from the reach of labour inspectors and media scrutiny.</td>
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<td>14.</td>
<td>Legislation prohibiting child labour are sufficient to resolve the problem</td>
<td>the plethora of laws cover only 8% of the total, as these laws are not applicable in the case of agriculture and also tertiary activities, such as retail and wholesale trade, restaurants etc.</td>
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<td>15.</td>
<td>A global ban on child labour products will force</td>
<td>Child labour is essentially a domestic problem as only</td>
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<tr>
<td>the elimination of the practice of child labour and protect the children.</td>
<td>approximately 8% of India’s child labour force is engaged in the export sector. Linking the concerns of human rights to trade can only serve the protectionist interest of the development countries. These social clauses and blanket boycotts make no commitments to the rehabilitation of child labourers.</td>
<td></td>
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</tbody>
</table>