CHAPTER 6
DETERMINANTS OF CHILD LABOUR

6.1 INTRODUCTION

Child labour is a multi-dimensional problem. Several factors are responsible for the engagement of children in economic activities. There are several reasons which compel children to join in the work force. The various reasons include poverty, illiteracy, economic backwardness of the family, employer’s preference to employ children, parent’s desire to be free from children’s responsibility as early as possible, and use them as labour to supplement the family income.

Thus, there are several factors which seem to be responsible for the early entry of children in the labour force, but all of them can’t be qualified. This chapter will highlight the important factors which emerged from the present study that have contributed to their joining workforce in their childhood.

This chapter has been divided into three sections. Section-I describes the factors responsible for the incidence of child labour as reported by the child labourers. In this section, besides children’s responses on determinants of child labour, their views on reasons of school drop out, age and education at the time of migration, reasons of migration, aspirations of child labourers, and their awareness about compulsory education and legal provisions were studied as these seem to be important factors responsible for the entry of the children into the labour force. Section-II describes the factors contributing to child labour as reported by their parents. In this section, other important factors, poverty and inadequate income of the parents, illiteracy of the parents and occupation of the parents were studied separately as these variables were responsible for the growth of child labour. Section III describes the responses of employers regarding the reasons for appointing them in their establishments.
SECTION- I

The children were asked to narrate various reasons which compelled them to engage in remunerative jobs at a tender age. It was found that the reasons put forth by them were overlapping. The researcher tried to classify them according to the responses given by the respondents. This resulted in multiple responses as each respondent was free to give more than one response.

6.2 CHILDREN’S RESPONSES

6.2.1 Determinants of Child Labour

Table 6.1: Determinants of Child Labour

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Determinants of Child Labour</th>
<th>Number of Responses</th>
<th>Percentage</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Supplement family income</td>
<td>62</td>
<td>51.66</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Family Pressure</td>
<td>59</td>
<td>49.16</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Poverty</td>
<td>48</td>
<td>40</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Lack of interest in studies and school drop outs</td>
<td>41</td>
<td>34.16</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Migration of parents</td>
<td>36</td>
<td>30</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Self-desire to work</td>
<td>8</td>
<td>6.66</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Death of parents</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>2.5</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

N= 120(Multiple Responses)

The above table reveals that the most important factor which led them to work was to supplement their family income. More than half of the child labourers (52%) child labourers started working only because their parents wanted them to work owing to the poor economic background. They joined work so that they could provide extra income to the family. Some of the respondents also responded that their fathers did not get jobs throughout the year and hence they had to face financial crisis. So, in order to support the family, they joined in a remunerative job. Almost 40% of them also mentioned an associated compulsion arising out of sheer poverty that compelled them to opt for work. The fact that they were facing a situation of absolute poverty did not give them any other option. Another related factor was the unemployment of
parents. Again 59(49%) child labourers reported that they started work due to the family pressure only because their parents wanted them to work. This was due to the illiteracy and ignorance of the parents. Around 41(34%) respondents reported that they had less interest in studies and had dropped out from schools and did not want to study further. Some of the respondents 36(30%) also pointed out that, they dropped out from school because of the migration of their parents and hence got engaged in jobs. Only 8(7%) child labourers said that they started working because of their own desire for having a better living standard and to earn some pocket money. Still another factor was death of parent in some cases. Loss of parents or bread winner of the family, chronic illness of family members, drinking habits and other social evils among adults also, forced some children to enter employment at a tender age.

In some families children are the main bread winners. Often orphans and children from broken families run away to big cities and work as child labourers. These children viewed that they had no other option and started working in remunerative jobs.

So, the present study revealed that a majority of the children joined the labour force because of poverty and need to supplement family income; family pressure as also a lack of interest in studies, which attracted them to engagement in work. The data sheds light on the fact that a majority of the children were engaged in jobs for fulfilling the basic economic needs of the family.

6.2.2 School Dropouts

Another important cause for the perpetuation of child labour is the dropping out of children from schools because of various reasons. The dropping out of children from schools is associated with the pressing needs for the childrens’ earnings as well as with low perceived advantages of schooling. Child labour is believed to be closely related to the children dropping out from schools. Wherever dropout rates are high at the primary levels, incidence of child labour is also very high. If a dropped out child does not enter the labour force, then there is a tendency for him to drift into crime and other illegitimate activities.
Sociologists consider school dropping out of school as an important reason for the persistence of child labour. But as regards, the reason of school drop outs, there is a difference of opinion between those who argue poverty as the paramount reason and those who attribute factors within the school system as the cause. According to the National Council for Educational Research and Training (NCERT), the inability of the school system to retain children who have enrolled in the primary level education—“the push out” has been the single greatest reason responsible for the existence of child labour (Weiner, 1991). This may suggest that poverty cannot always be argued to be the only important reason of school drop outs and supply of child labour. It is poverty simply a classical defense offered by sociologists till date (Basu and Van, 1998).

Table 6.2: Reasons of dropping out of school of child labourers

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Reasons of drop out</th>
<th>Frequency</th>
<th>Percentage</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>For supplementing family income</td>
<td>65</td>
<td>54.16</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Lack of interest in studies</td>
<td>46</td>
<td>38.33</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Parental Pressure</td>
<td>54</td>
<td>45</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Migration</td>
<td>38</td>
<td>31.66</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Death of parents</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>2.5</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

N=120(Multiple Responses)

One of the important reasons that forced children to drop out of their educational institutions was their poor economic condition. The data reveals that about 54% of the drop outs were those whose parents could not afford to send them to schools due to financial constraints. These children reported that they had been pulled out of schools in order to supplement the family income. Thus, the poor income of the parents is an important factor for dropping out of children from schools. It was also found that 46(38.33%) of the total drop outs were not interested in studies and considered work more beneficial than study. A majority of these child labourers 54(45%) dropped out because of parental pressure to get engaged in either remunerative jobs or in family occupations/employment. A significant number of respondents 38(31.66%) also dropped out due to the migration of their parents to Delhi.
However, the study reported that 16 (13.3%) respondents of the respondents expressed unhappiness due to dropping out from school because they wanted to continue their study and wanted to stay on their village. In contrast, 25 (20.80%) respondents opined that they felt very much relieved after dropping out. These respondents reported that they became economically independent, in the process.

It can be concluded that supplementing family income, migration and parental pressure mainly because of poverty were responsible for the dropout of those children. The study of Achari, 1986 reported that children belonging to poor families for supplementing family income were sent to work and were not allowed to complete their schooling. Castle et.al (1997) in their study reported that low quality of education and lack of access to educational facilities were also some of the reasons for the existence of child labour.

6.2.3 Age at the time of Migration

The details of age at which these children migrated to Delhi is given below.

Table 6.3: Age at the time of migration

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Age of entry into job</th>
<th>Percentage</th>
<th>Frequency</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Less than 7</td>
<td>8</td>
<td>6.7</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>7-9</td>
<td>27</td>
<td>22.5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>9-11</td>
<td>64</td>
<td>53.3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>11-13</td>
<td>21</td>
<td>17.5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Total</strong></td>
<td><strong>120</strong></td>
<td><strong>100</strong></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

The above table shows that as high as 64(53.3%) child labourers joined work force between the age group of 9-11 years, followed by 27(22.5%) between 7-9 years and 21 (17.5%) at the age of 11-13 years and only 8 (6.7%) started work at the young age of less than 7 years.
6.2.4 Education at the Time of Migration

Education plays an important role in one’s life. Education aims at developing positive qualities in the children and helps them realise their potentialities. Accordingly, the child labourers were asked to state their educational qualification at the time of migration.

Table 6.4: Education at the time of migration

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Educational standard</th>
<th>Frequency</th>
<th>Percentage</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Illiterate’</td>
<td>58</td>
<td>48.3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Upto 2nd standard</td>
<td>25</td>
<td>20.8</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3rd to 5th standard</td>
<td>36</td>
<td>30</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>6th to 7th standard</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>0.8</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Total</td>
<td>120</td>
<td>100</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

The data show that a majority of the respondents 58(48.3%) had never attended the school at the time of joining their work followed by 25(20.8%) who had schooling up to 2nd standard and 36(30%) had education up to 5th standard. Only a single child labourer was found who had studied up to 7th standard at the time of joining the work force.

So, it can be concluded that lack of education is one of the significant factors that contribute to children being compelled to join the workforce.

6.2.5 Migration

The increasing industrialization since India’s independence brought about migration to the cities, where rural poor found greater opportunities for earning a livelihood. Migration is caused by various forces that encourage an individual to leave one place (push) and attract him to another (pull) place. For each migration, however several push and pull forces may be operating and interacting, so that the migration cannot be attributed wholly to a single force. In modern times it is the movement of families and, still more of individuals seeking economic settlement and transient work in other lands. Migration is a shift from the place of residence to the urban areas mostly because of economic opportunities. Perloff (1960) argues that localities with attractive
economic conditions can draw sizeable numbers of migrants from other localities, though only a small number may come from any single locality. On the other hand, what is very important in determining out-migration from a locality suffering from economic distress is the percentage of the labour force that is willing to leave in order to search for opportunities elsewhere. The better income opportunities and attraction of city life are some of the other factors which were responsible for rural urban migration. On the other hand, lack of work opportunities available in the village is among the push factors responsible for migration. In many cases, it has been seen that it is the parents who leave in search of better economic prospects and with them the child is forced to migrate.

Migration from rural areas to urban areas also encourages child employment. With growing population, small or no agriculture holdings, greater mechanization of agriculture and in general, inability of the agriculture sector to absorb everyone in labour force, a large number of farm workers (who are unemployed or underemployed) are forced to migrate to cities. Most of these workers are engaged in low paid work. Coupled with unfamiliar environment and deprivation, children of these migrant families are forced to join the work force.

### Table 6.5: Reasons of migration of respondents

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Reasons of migration</th>
<th>No. of Responses</th>
<th>Percentage</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Financial problem</td>
<td>59</td>
<td>49</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Family problem</td>
<td>47</td>
<td>39</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Natural disaster</td>
<td>16</td>
<td>13</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Peer pressure</td>
<td>9</td>
<td>7.5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Self-desire</td>
<td>8</td>
<td>7</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Family migration</td>
<td>59</td>
<td>49</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

N=120

The above table shows that 59(49%) children reported that financial problems of their families was the most important reason of migration. 47(39%) children reported that they had come to Delhi because of the family problems. These parents reported that their parents used to quarrel and the child felt neglected and uncared for. Eight
percent children said that they were allured by city’s charm and better job prospects, so they migrated from their home town. The above table reveals that the main reasons for migration was financial problems, family problems, natural disasters and family pressure to migrate to Delhi in search of better livelihood opportunities.

This aspect has been dealt with in some of the reviewed studies. The study of child labour in Bombay by NIPPCD (1978) revealed that 58.2% of the child labour was the exclusive result of the internalization of the urban slum culture, as their families had migrated to cities before their birth. In all, there were 90 percent of them who belonged to migrated families. The study of Gangrade (1978) in Delhi found that there were a substantial number of migrants among child labourers, particularly in the field of domestic services. Besides, domestic work they were working in tea stalls, dhabas, hawking evening newspapers and in rag picking. Most of the child labourers had migrated from Uttar Pradesh and Bihar. Khandekar (1972) revealed that low socio-economic status of family and migration from rural areas was some of the main factors which had forced their children to join the Mumbai labour market.

### 6.2.6 Aspirations of Child Labourers

The early engagement in work checks the intellectual development of a child and confines his vision only to the periphery of the occupation he is engaged in. He hardly knows about the professions/vocations beyond his territory and this, as well as the lack of education limits his aspirations to a great extent. It was found that the children who had acquired some education or were still continuing it had better aspirations. Since, it is difficult for child labourers to pursue schooling, they can not develop mental faculties in a proper way, as a result of which their aspirations get confined to low levels of aspiration.

The study reported that a majority of the respondents 94(78.3%) had never thought about their future. Their major concern was only to fulfil their immediate basic needs. Besides that, a significant number of respondents had very low ambitions.

So, it may be concluded that lack of future aspirations was also an important factor for forcing them to become child labourers and remain in the same context. This was again because of the poor socio economic background of respondents, lack of
awareness about alternate avenues for engagement and having no/little idea about how to improve their life chances/opportunities.

Table 6.6: Aspirations of child labourers

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Level of Aspirations</th>
<th>Frequency</th>
<th>Percentage</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>To continue in the same work</td>
<td>8</td>
<td>6.66</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Low ambitions (Earn some money)</td>
<td>7</td>
<td>5.8</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>High ambitions (owner of hotel, doctor, actor etc.)</td>
<td>9</td>
<td>7.5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>To get engaged in skilled job</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>1.7</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Never thought about the future</td>
<td>94</td>
<td>78.3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Total</td>
<td>120</td>
<td>100</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

6.2.7 Awareness about Compulsory education and Legal provisions

The National Policy on Education (1986) and the Right to Education Act (2009) recommended free and compulsory education for all children below 14 years of age. Prior to it, for compulsory education provision was made in the Indian Constitution (Article-45), for all children up to the age of 14 years. Besides that, the Government of India implemented the Child Labour Prohibition and Regulation Act, 1986. In spite of this, the government has not yet been able to make primary education compulsory and ensure that all children in the stipulated age group get enrolled in schools. As a result of it and because of massive poverty, children of poorer families get employed at early ages.

Figure 6.1: Awareness about Legislations and Compulsory education
The above diagram reveals that a very few respondents (3.3%) were aware of child labour legislation which bans employment of children below 14 years. These children also did not have knowledge about free and compulsory education being provided. However, a significant number of children (34.2%) were aware about various non-governmental organizations working nearby for the education and empowerment of child labourers.

SECTION- II

6.3 PARENTS’ RESPONSES

In this section, the determinants of child labour as reported by their parents have been presented. In addition to this, other important factors, poverty and inadequate income of the parents, illiteracy of the parents and occupation of the parents were also discussed separately as these variables were responsible for the growth in the incidence of child labour.

The parents also play a pivotal role in the incidence of child labour. The low income of the parents which is not adequate to meet the basic needs of the family, forces the parents to send their children to work and supplement the family income. Thus, poverty propels parents to send their children to distant places to work. The abject poverty and unemployment force the children to take up remunerative work in the informal commercial establishments.

6.3.1 Determinants of Child Labour

Table 6.7: Determinants of Child labour as perceived by the parents

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Sl.No</th>
<th>Parent’s response</th>
<th>Frequency</th>
<th>percentage</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1</td>
<td>Poverty</td>
<td>22</td>
<td>55</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2</td>
<td>Use of spare time of children</td>
<td>6</td>
<td>15</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3</td>
<td>Children’s dislike for studies</td>
<td>8</td>
<td>20</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4</td>
<td>To learn skilled jobs</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>10</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Total</td>
<td></td>
<td>40</td>
<td>100</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
When parents/guardians were asked to state their reasons for sending their children to the labour force, the study revealed that 22 (55%) sent their children because of the poverty. Six (15%) parents reported that they sent their child to job as he was wasting his time. Eight (20%) parents reported that their child was not interested in studies, followed by 4 (10%) who viewed that children were sent to jobs to learn skilled job so that in the future they could be employed in the market easily.

So, again poverty seems to emerge as the important reason which compelled the parents to send their children to remunerative jobs.

### 6.3.2 Poverty and Inadequate Income of the Parents

There are a number of factors at the household level that determine whether a child should be sent to work or not. It is often believed that it is the poverty that is the main cause of child labour. The association between household poverty and child labour is beyond dispute. The intergenerational cycle of poverty and child labour persists and that cycle continues for generations. If the households do not have enough money to meet the basic needs, children are usually sent to work to earn money for the fulfillment of the basic needs of the family. So, the most important cause of child labour is widespread poverty. In India, which is a developing country, poverty forces the parents to send their children to seek employment. Diseases and other contingencies may need extra money and the employment of children is resorted to as an easily accessible method to bring in partial money.

#### Table 6.8: Poverty as a crucial determinant

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Sl. No</th>
<th>Poverty as a crucial determinant for child labour</th>
<th>Frequency</th>
<th>Percentage</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1</td>
<td>Children</td>
<td>48</td>
<td>40</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2</td>
<td>Parents</td>
<td>22</td>
<td>55</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3</td>
<td>Employers</td>
<td>6</td>
<td>15</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

In the present study forty percent of child labourers reported poverty as the main reason for their engagement in the occupations, whereas fifty five percent of parents
and fifteen percent of employers also reported that poverty was the prime cause of child labour.

While poverty is one of the leading factors resulting child labour, there is a reverse effect too, such that it remains locked in a vicious circle. When the parents send their children to work, particularly to hazardous work, their potential to work may be declined by the age of 30 to 35 years as they are early starters of work. Hence it is like a *vicious cycle*, wherein when they become parents, they again send their wards to work when they reach their forties and this continues as a never ending process and poverty continues. This is due to the inability of the parents who began their life as child labourers.

Poverty of the households may be due to several factors: inadequate income of the family, due to unemployed adults, absence of schemes for family allowance, large family etc. Child labour actually creates and perpetuates poverty. It not only displaces adults from their jobs but also condemns the child to a life of unskilled, badly paid work. Ultimately this leads to the same impoverished, unemployed fate as their parents. Children become part of the vicious circle of poverty from one generation to another generation.

The study conducted in the Cuttack city of Orissa pointed out that due to poverty, it becomes difficult for the parents to bring up their children but to engage them in some form of economic activity to earn their livelihood and support their families (Mishra and Mishra, 1990). The study of urban working children in Bangalore (Patil, 1988) also reported that economic compulsions were the strong reason forcing 46.33% of child labourers to seek employment. The study of Kulshrestha (1978) also concludes that factors like poverty, lack of education and large family size were responsible for child labour. Ahmed (1999) has concluded after a quantitative cross country empirical study that child labour is basically associated with inequality in society but not with poverty. Both inequality and poverty in the society have been currently found to be the consequence of capability deprivation- deprivation from quality of being able to do something and, hence, the latter is a more responsible variable for the existence and continuum supply of child labour (Foster and Sen, 1998).
The problem of child labour is interrelated to the inadequate wages of the parents. This inadequacy in wages of parents compels them to send their children to do some work in return of some wages in order to fulfill their basic economic needs and the employers also takes the benefit of this weakness by providing work to the children on low wages inspite of the various protective laws. The present study also shows (Table no 5.16) that for none of the parents the income is more than Rs.5000 per month.

Chronic poverty is the largest factor responsible for the prevalence and perpetuation of child labour. Poverty forces parents to send their children to seek employment. Diseases and other contingencies may need extra money and the employment of children is resorted to as an easily accessible method to bring in that money.

A study conducted in Bombay (Singh, 1979) reveals that a majority of the children migrated to Bombay in search of employment due to lack of family income. Inadequate income of the adult earner is another factor which leads to child labour practices. The study of Rao (1996) also reported that one-third of the children were working to supplement the parental income. Similar results were found in the study of Singh (1990) conducted in Varanasi, Badhoi and Mirzapur belt. The study revealed that one of the major compulsions of the majority of the children to take up jobs has

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**Figure 6.2: Vicious Cycle of Poverty and Child labour**

- Child Labour
  - Educational deprivation
  - Deprivation from well paid jobs
    - Engagement in petty jobs with low wages
      - Deprivation from social security benefits
        - Victims of exploitation
          - Poor quality of life
            - Early marriage
              - Many children
                - Inability to maintain family due to poverty
                  - Perpetuates child labour
been the inadequate income of the family earner. In fact, compulsion is also increasing due to unemployment, underemployment, large number of dependents, little or no skills and lack of productive assets due to which children have to work. The case study of child labour working in unorganized sectors of Kashmir (Shah, 1992) has shown that the problem of child labour is basically an offshoot of the problem of low income of the parents to support a large sized family. With inadequate income even for the maintenance of the children at subsistence level, these poor parents are forced to fill their family budget deficits by the little wages earned by young children.

### 6.3.3 Illiteracy of the Parents

Literacy level of parents influences the continuation of child labour. Educated parents are able to get employment easily. Further, as they become aware of the evils of child labour, they do not prefer to send their children to work. The education level of the father plays an important role in determining the employment status of the child. Fathers, who have higher levels of literacy give priority to the education of the children, where as illiterate fathers do not understand the importance of education and hence do not send their children for schooling. In many cases, parents particularly in villages and urban slums are themselves illiterate and do not realize the importance of educating their children. They are unaware of the injustice done to the children by making them work instead of sending them to schools. They are ignorant about the rights and needs of children. Some parents, even though they realize the importance of educating their children, are compelled to send their children to work due to economic reasons. A large number of parents of poor families find no meaning in education as it does not guarantee a job in future. They prefer to send children for work at an early age instead of sending them to school with the hope that the children will at least acquire a skill or learn a trade by the time they become adults.

So, the present study revealed that literacy level of the parents has a strong correlation with the incidence of child labour as 25(62.5%) parents were found to be illiterate.
Thus; parental illiteracy is also a contributory factor for existence of child labour. Majority of the child labour comes from illiterate families. Overall the literacy level of the child labourers is very low and as such children are engaged in small scale commercial establishments as a means of survival as this occupation doesn’t require prior training or education. The incidence of child labour is found to be more in families whose fathers or mothers are illiterate. Sharma and Sharma (1997) have also come out with a similar result in their study on child labour in the glass industry of Firozabad. The study of George (1977) revealed that most of the children who came to labour force belonged to lower literacy group. His study reported that forty four percent of child labourer’s parents were illiterate.

**Table 6.9: Literacy level of parents**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Literacy level of the parents</th>
<th>Frequency</th>
<th>Percentage</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Illiterate</td>
<td>25</td>
<td>62.5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Basic education</td>
<td>11</td>
<td>27.5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Primary</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>7.5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Middle</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>2.5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Total</td>
<td>40</td>
<td>100</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**6.4.4 Occupation of parents**

**Table 6.10: Occupation of parents**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Occupation</th>
<th>Frequency</th>
<th>Percentage</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Employed in petty jobs</td>
<td>19</td>
<td>47.5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Unemployed</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Truck driver</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>2.5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Self employed</td>
<td>18</td>
<td>45</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Total</td>
<td>40</td>
<td>100</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
The above table shows that a significant number of parents 21(48%) were either engaged in petty jobs or unemployed, which is of course an important contributing factor for the incidence of child labour. Lumpkin and Douglas have very rightly pointed out that two-fifth of the children seek work due to the unemployment of adult member of the family. Nearly two-third of the children were at work because the adult member of the family had no employment or had some part time job, and one-third of children wanted to work due to the serious cuts in the pay of the adult (Lumpkin & Douglas, 1938).

The study of Savitri (1985) also stated that poverty, large family, the death of bread winner, physical and mental illness of the parents or unemployment of adult members in the family are some of the reasons which contribute towards child labour. The study undertaken by the researcher supports all the above findings of different researchers.

**SECTION-III**

**6.4 EMPLOYERS’ RESPONSES**

It is not only the children and their parents who are responsible for the early entry of child in the work force. Child labour can be attributed considerably to a segment of the employers who prefer children for various reasons. One of the main objectives of the employer is to get more profit on limited expenditure. Moreover, they are aware of the economic compulsions of the families having extreme poverty. They watch out for exploiting the parental economic compulsions when they know that children of the backward families are more tolerant, can be put on difficult jobs for long hours, even on lower wages. The employers also understand the productive quality of children who do not raise grievances pertaining to their working conditions.

Many employers prefer child labourers to adult workers for various reasons as follows.

- It is easy to handle the child in factory or at work place
- There are no discipline problems, no unions
- The children have nimble fingers
The children can do more work than adults

Children get one-third or one half of wages an adult gets

Employers need not spend on welfare facilities or pay benefits to child labourers

Children are obedient and it is easy for the employer to get more work from a child and for long hours but the same is not possible with an adult.

The reasons stated in the report of the committee on child labour (1980) for employers preference for children in work are: “less age and status conscious, lesser affliction by feelings of guilt and shame, no hesitation to do non status even demeaning jobs, activeness, agility and quickness and lesser feeling of tiredness, greater in discipline and control, less expensive to maintain, superior adaptive qualities, lack of organization, moral consideration of employers to help and to provide succour to destitute or forsaken children and acquisition of fitness through initiation in the early age”. The National commission of labour (1969) has also pointed out that “quite often it is the feeling of sympathy rather than the desire to exploit which weighs with employers in employing child workers.

The following table describes the various reasons cited by employers in appointing child labour.

### Table 6.11: Reasons for hiring child labourers

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Employer’s responses</th>
<th>Frequency</th>
<th>Percentage</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Very cheap</td>
<td>7</td>
<td>17.5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Obey Orders</td>
<td>9</td>
<td>22.5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Child centric work</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>10</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Children’s need for job</td>
<td>6</td>
<td>15</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Learning trade skills</td>
<td>13</td>
<td>40</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Parents request for proving job to their children</td>
<td>7</td>
<td>17.5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Total</strong></td>
<td><strong>40</strong></td>
<td><strong>100</strong></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
The table reveals that 13(40%) parents reported that children were engaged in the job only because they wanted to learn the trade. 7(17.5%) viewed that their parents had requested them to give employment to their child. It may be that their parents were financially very weak and are unable to fulfill the basic necessities of the life. 7(17.5%) employers reported that children were very obedient and obey orders. These children never complained on any issues. They work harder and are happy with their salary. However, 6(15%) employers reported them children had approached them directly for job due to family pressure to supplement family income followed by 4(10%) who viewed that the work is basically child centric and the children can do these unskilled jobs efficiently.

So, it can be said that learning the trade skills was the most important reason cited by the employer’s for the employment of children in small scale commercial establishments.

A study conducted by Singh(1990) in Varanasi also reported that employers prefers children because they work hard, it is cheaper and can be put on any job and can work for long hours; and lastly children create less troubles in the workplace. These factors establish the importance of employer’s willingness to employ children which further becomes an important reason for increasing child labour.

On the basis of the above discussions, case studies using narratives and from review of literature, the following determinants were found which were responsible for the prevalence of child labourers in Delhi. The responses of children, parents and employers of child labourers as well as the various structural factors identified by the researcher are presented below.
### Table 6.12: Determinants for the incidence of child labour

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Children’s Response</th>
<th>Parent’s Response</th>
<th>Employer’s Response</th>
<th>Structural factors (identified by the researcher)</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Poverty</td>
<td>Poverty</td>
<td>Poverty</td>
<td>• Inequality of development between regions leading to migration</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Migration of parents</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>• Rapid urbanization</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>-</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>• Rural urban migration</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Lack of interest in studies and school dropout</td>
<td>Children’s dislike for studies</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>• Bad governance</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>-</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>• Lack of effective enforcement of legislation</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>-</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>• Social exclusion of marginal groups</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>-</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>• Insufficient financial and political commitments to education</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>-</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>• Lack of decent work for adults.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Supplementing family income</td>
<td>Supplementing family income</td>
<td>Parent’s request for providing jobs to their children for supplementing family income</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Self-desire</td>
<td>Self-desire</td>
<td>Children’s need for job</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Family pressure</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>-</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Death of parents</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>-</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Family indebtedness</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>-</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Crop failure/draught</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>-</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Landless parents</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>-</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Family business</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>-</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Parental abuse</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>-</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Alcoholism of parents</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>-</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Unemployment of parents</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>-</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>To learn skilled jobs</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>Desire of child respondents to acquire necessary skills of special trades</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>Very cheap and was obedient</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>Child centric work</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>