CHAPTER 3
RESEARCH METHODOLOGY

3.1 INTRODUCTION

Research aims at describing, explaining, and understanding of various phenomena, which involves systematic and critical investigation. Therefore, every research activity needs a particular type of methodology. According to Berger et al (1989), Research methodology offers a guidance that directs the research action, which reduces time and cost. It also offers a systematic approach to the research operation, so that all steps are executed in the right sequence.

The present chapter incorporates the research methodology pursued by the researcher and thereby focuses on providing the statement of the problem, rationale for the study, operational definitions, research design, research objectives and associated research questions, sampling procedure, sources, methods and tools of data collection, difficulties encountered during field work/ data collection, and the chapterisation plan.

3.2 STATEMENT OF THE PROBLEM

Over the years, several legislations have been passed for the elimination of child labour, but still child labour is on an increase as per the statistics given by census data. As far as all the metropolitan cities of India are concerned, the emergence of the urban informal sector as a major source of employment and income is primarily a manifestation of increasing population pressure combined with inadequate growth of employment in rural areas and in the formal and government sectors of the economy on the other (Shukla & Shukla, 1993). Due to rapid industrialization and urbanization there is an unprecedented flow of the poor from villages to cities, mostly in search of gainful vocations. Such migrant families often concentrate in urban slums and squatter dwellings and have to struggle for their existence. People who migrate to these areas find it difficult to make their both ends meet. The cost of living in metropolitan cities is very high. Many of them are compelled to work in various unorganized sectors and are made to earn for themselves a livelihood and sometimes, even to support their families, through hard, strenuous and hazardous jobs. So in order
to meet the survival needs, children are put to work. The nature of child labour in urban areas is very complex, particularly in India, because most of the child labourers in urban areas are found in unorganized manufacturing and service sectors. In urban India, there are “maids-of-all-work” whom professor Boudhiba described as “Virtual Slaves” (Boudhiba, 1982 cited in Shandilya et al, 2006). Most of the children fall prey to evil habits due to bad company and environment. Their number is swelling unabatedly and the problem has acquired dangerous dimensions. But unfortunately the child labourers are suffering a lot, subjected to toil some work without having opportunities to grow. They are living miserable, cheerless lives, toiling endlessly to ward off starvation totally deprived of all comforts and opportunities.

3.3 RATIONALE

An overview of review of literature undertaken in the earlier section shows that there are large number of studies conducted in the fields of traditional occupations like carpet industry, gem polishing, diamond industry, match industry, bangle units, transport sectors, brick kiln work, foot wear industry and rag picking. However, there is little empirical research on the child labour in specific settings like automobile garages, dhabas, and subzi mandi (vegetable markets) and shops particularly in the metropolitan cities. Moreover, no such studies have been conducted after the employment of children were banned in 2006 in dhabas (road side eateries), restaurants, hotels, motels, tea shops, resorts, spas or other recreational centers. So, the present study is basically an attempt to fill this gap. Therefore, the researcher decided to undertake a comprehensive study on the various dimensions and determinants of the child labour in a metropolitan city like Delhi. It is also equally important to analyze the frequency of change and changing patterns of jobs taken by child labour, their desire for education, their aspirations, as also their present conditions including health conditions, employment conditions, adopted by children as well as their parents for fulfillment of basic needs. The present study focused on living and working conditions of children, coping mechanisms adopted by children, as well as critically examined the various provisions of all legislations prohibiting child labour. It will enable the planners, policy makers, academicians, researchers, non
governmental organizations to have a right perspective of the problems of child labourers engaged in small scale commercial establishments.

3.4 OPERATIONAL DEFINITIONS

Child labour: Those children below 14 years of age who are engaged in occupational pursuit with wages in Delhi.

Determinants: Determinants refer to factors contributing to taking up a job.

Dimensions: Dimensions for the purpose of the study refer to the various aspects of the living and working conditions, educational interests, and aspirations, frequency of changing jobs, attitudes of parents, guardians and employers for working children.

Small Scale Commercial Establishment: The establishments which employ less than 10 people, and characterized by low labour productivity and include particularly the four categories of establishments i.e. shops, tea stalls/ dhabas, subzi mandi(vegetable markets) and motor garages.

Employer: An employer is a person who operates enterprises or engages independently in a profession of a trade and pays some other persons to help him.

Nature of Employment

Regular: This refers to stable or permanent employment or employment for an indefinite period.

Temporary: This refers to employment for a fixed period or of less than one year’s duration.

Causal: This refers to intermittent employment on daily or weekly basis.

Full time worker: A full time worker is one who works for full day work constituting of 8 hours or more.

Part time worker: A part time worker is one who works only for a part of the day.
3.5 OBJECTIVES

- To prepare a demographic profile of children employed in small scale commercial establishments as well as their parents and employers.
- To study the factors contributing to the incidence of child labour.
- To critically examine the various provisions of all legislations prohibiting child labour.
- To examine the living conditions of children working in small scale commercial establishments.
- To examine the working conditions of children in small scale commercial establishments.
- To extend suggestions for social work intervention for mitigating the problems faced by child labour.

On the basis of these objectives, the present research has answered the following research questions.

- What is the socio-economic background of the children who are involved in various occupations?
- What are the major causes for the incidence child labour?
- Which are the places from which the child/family migrated to NCT of Delhi?
- What is the role of family in making the child undertake occupational pursuits with wages?
- What is the educational level of the children and their parents?
- What are the aspirations and future plans of child labourers?
- What is the frequency of change and changing patterns of jobs by child labourers in a year?
- What are the trends in the incidence, participation in economic activities, and nature of occupational pursuits followed by child labourers (past and Contemporary)?
Chapter 3: Research Methodology

- What is the duration of work undertaken by children?
- What are the employment conditions under which children are put to work?
- What kinds of health and safety measures are provided to children by their employers?
- What kind of attitudes parents/employers have towards child labourers?
- What is the consumption pattern of child labourers?
- What is the nature of illness/diseases faced by child labourers due to their employment?
- Where do the child labourers procure the requisite treatment/required medicines for their treatment?
- What is the nature of living conditions which prevail for the child labourers.

3.6 RESEARCH DESIGN

The study is descriptive in nature in that it seeks to describe the working and living conditions of child labour, factors contributing to child labour, and coping mechanisms adopted by the children and their families for the fulfillment of their basic needs. It also seeks to study the reasons of migration, recreational pattern, a future hopes and aspirations.

3.7 SAMPLE

According to Manheim (1977), “a sample is a part of the population which is studied in order to make inferences about the whole population”. In order to get comprehensive idea of the problems, the responses of various stakeholders viz. children, parents and employers were studied. The sample comprised of

i) Child labourers
ii) Employers
iii) Parents/Guardians
i) **Child Labourers**- For the selection of respondents, the Quota Sampling method of the Non-probability type was adopted. The sampling was done in two stages.

In the first stage, the population was divided into four strata: Children working in shops, subzi mandis, motor garages and dhabas/tea stalls in Delhi.

In the second stage, equal numbers of children i.e. 30 were selected from each stratum. The total samples of working children derived were 120. Besides these respondents, the qualitative data was collected using narrative analysis as a method of data collection. Ten cases were identified from all the four strata.

ii) **Employers**- Forty employers constituted the sample size selecting 10 from each stratum. This was done to study their views/perspectives on the reasons for employing child labourers, their working conditions and other components associated with work performed by these children.

iii) **Parents**- Forty parents of child labourers constituted the sample size. The parents of those children who were working in Delhi and become the sample of the study.

**Thus, the sample size included:**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Category</th>
<th>Number</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Total number of child labourers</td>
<td>120</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Total number of employers</td>
<td>40</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Total number of parents /guardians</td>
<td>40</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Lawyers/Social Workers/Social Activists</td>
<td>15</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Total size of sample</td>
<td>215</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

The researcher ensured that the respondents were selected from the different parts of Delhi. He tried to cover as many areas as possible to make samples more representative.

The zone wise distribution of the respondents is listed in the following table.
Table 3.1: Zone wise distribution of the respondents (Child Labourers)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Sl. No</th>
<th>Place of Stay</th>
<th>Frequency</th>
<th>Percentage</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1</td>
<td>East Delhi</td>
<td>48</td>
<td>48</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2</td>
<td>West Delhi</td>
<td>19</td>
<td>15.83</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3</td>
<td>North Delhi</td>
<td>21</td>
<td>17.5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4</td>
<td>South Delhi</td>
<td>32</td>
<td>26.66</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Total</td>
<td></td>
<td>120</td>
<td>100</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

The areas included were Seelampur, Zama maszid, Tis Hazari, Indira market, R.K.Puram, Kashmiri Gate, Govindpuri, Wazirpur, Palam, Dakshinpuri, Azadpur, Ashok Vihar, Ambedkar Nagar, Giri Nagar, Sarai, Loni, Sanjay Gandhi Transport Nagar, Anand Vihar, Nand Nagari, Sunder Nagari, Shahdara, Loni border, Jhilmil, Harsh Vihar, Mansarover Park, Meet Nagar, Adarsh Nagar, Ashok Nagar, and Welcome.

iv) The researcher has also interviewed a select group of lawyers, social workers, social activists working in the field of child labour, selecting 5 respondents from each category to collect their views on the abolition in the incidences of child labour with the help of a small guideline. The purpose of interviewing them was to suggest recommendations for mitigating the problems faced by child labourers.

3.8 INCLUSION CRITERIA

The study was limited to children between the ages of 7 and 14 years. The lower age limit of 7 years was set based on the assumption that younger children would not be able to provide requisite information to the researcher. All children between the age of 7-14 years employed in either of the specified occupations with wages, and working more than four and half hours in a day for a minimum period of 6 months in Delhi were included in the sample.
3.9 SOURCES OF DATA COLLECTION

The data were collected both from Primary and Secondary sources (documentary sources). The primary sources of data comprised the child labourers, parents, employers and other significant persons (lawyers, social workers and social activists) for gaining first hand information from the respondents. The secondary sources were tapped and information procured from them was analysed. This primarily pertained to the constitutional provisions, various legislations, Census data, NSSO reports, ILO reports, relevant reports of Ministry of Labour, Government of India, Reports of Government of Delhi, Books, Journals, Periodicals and Reports of Voluntary Organizations.

3.10 METHODS AND TOOLS OF DATA COLLECTION

The effective use of different methods to elicit information generally rests upon the problem, its dimensions and areas under the study. In the present study, the data was collected by using both qualitative and quantitative methods of data collection. The methods of data collection included interviews, observation, and using narrative analysis. The following tools were used for the three categories of respondents to be covered by the study.

1. Interview schedule for child labourers.- An interview schedule was used to collect in-depth information from child labourers which covered I) demographic profile of child labourers such as age, education, caste, nature of family and native place. II) Working conditions and terms of employment such as place of work, hours of work, payment of wages, over time, etc. III) Present living conditions like housing, basic facilities available at home like bath room, toilet facilities etc. Besides that, the schedule also contained questions regarding the factors contributing child labour, their educational level, awareness about child labour legislations, their future aspirations etc.

2. Interview guide for parents of child labourers.- The schedule for parents was prepared with a view to gather some information which was considered to be difficult to be gathered from the child labourers because of their relatively
limited understanding and knowledge, and also to verify the information given by the child labourers. It was used to understand the socio-economic condition of the household, purpose of migration, reasons for allowing children to work, their living conditions and other relevant aspects,

3 **Interview guide for employers of child labourers**- The schedule for employers was also prepared with a view to understanding their motives and feelings in employing children and also to know their awareness about the labour laws and perceptions about child labour. It was used to understand the working conditions of child labourers, leisure period provided, hazards associated with the performance of the job, recruitment policy for appointing child labour, payment to the child labour, attitude towards employment of child labour etc.

4 **Narrative guide**- Ten cases using narratives were undertaken to generate qualitative information for an in-depth knowledge of the research questions and to support quantitative data. Narrative inquiry is concerned with the production, interpretation and representation of storied accounts of the lived experience (Shacklock and Thorp, 2005). Ten cases for narrative analysis were selected by purposive sampling of non probability type. These narratives have basically highlighted their demographic profile, reasons for migration, their life as a child labour, life at home and working place, educational and health status, work responsibility and leisure time, future hopes and aspirations and other relevant aspects.

5 **Observation guide**- An observation guide was developed to study the living and working conditions of child labourers.

6 **Interview guide**- A small interview guide for the lawyers/social workers/social activists was developed to elicit their views/suggestions regarding mitigating their problems and reducing their problems. Diagrammatically, the methods employed in collecting data are given in the following figure.
3.11 DATA ANALYSIS AND INTERPRETATION

Data was processed both manually and through the use of computer programmes. Quantitative information has been used substantially in the analysis to interpret the findings. The process of analysis involved categorizing the qualitative raw data (obtained through administering interview schedule) under some common headings and then coding the same. The quantitative data was pre-coded. The codes were then transferred to the master charts and then to the SPSS spread sheet. This whole procedure was very tedious and time consuming. But once this was accomplished, the data was analyzed descriptively. Through SPSS, univariate tables were made. Tables were used to add to the descriptive data and for easy understanding and viewing. Diagrammatic representation of data was also attempted to provide clarity and easy
comprehension. Data analysis was done as per the objectives of the study. The chapterisation plan which was followed for report writing was in accordance with the objectives of the study.

### 3.12 ETHICAL CONSIDERATIONS

The researcher has obtained verbal consent as part of ethical considerations for conducting research. The consent of child labourers, parents and employers were obtained for the purpose of data collection. The researcher has taken very special care before asking any questions which could hurt their sentiments. The permission was asked for from each respondent before interviewing him and a commitment was made to keep their names and responses confidential.

### 3.13 DIFFICULTIES ENCOUNTERED DURING FIELD WORK/DATA COLLECTION

Fieldwork is a personal experience for it involves close interaction with the subject of one’s research. Every field worker has therefore to arrive of his own equation with his informants. There can be no clear cut prescribed formula for handling any given field situations, for each situation is in some way unique. While there are certain standardized research techniques, the manner in which they are used and the results that they yield depend on the rapport which the observer is able to establish with his informants. In the ultimate analysis each field worker must face his own challenges and experience his own triumphs and tribulation (Srinivas, 1979). During the present study, too, some problems were faced for data collection.

- As the respondents are children, aged below the age of 14, it created typical problems to establish rapport with them.
- Besides, children working in industries/informal sector have hardly any free time. Therefore, interviews with them under such circumstances were cumbersome.
- The child respondents demonstrated initial hesitation, reluctance and mid way refusal to answer.
In this connection, it appears pertinent to refer to the observation made by Elizabeth, 1972 “The obstacles to scientific study are ubiquitous and sometimes almost insurmountable, of the many obstacles the most common and the most difficult to cope with are: securing children for scientific research finding suitable and scientifically accurate methods for studying children, controlling the accuracy of the material obtained and establishing rapport with children. The children also usually took more time to understand the questions and whenever certain questions related to recreation and income were put, many tried to evade. Another difficulty was the way in which a number of other children surround the child respondents and prompt them, and make them answer the way they wanted. Though the schedule and interview guides were prepared in English, the questions were put to respondents in Hindi. Care was taken to put the questions in a descriptive manner which would make the child respondents understand properly and furnish the needed answers. Before conducting the process of data collection, the researcher had moved to various parts of Delhi and tried to locate the children engaged in various informal sector settings. The researcher had sincerely tried to make the sample, a representative sample and present a realistic picture. Though the researcher had to cross many a hurdles during field work, particularly obstruction by the employers of the children but he was able to succeed in his mission. Some times it so happened that the person who had engaged the child did not allow the researcher to talk to the child. The researcher also faced difficulty in getting information from the employers. They did not provide the complete information as desired by the researcher. However, the parents showed some interest in providing information and insisted to the researcher to keep the information secret and confidential. On the whole, the child respondents and their parents/guardians were cooperative and willingly agreed to respond in course of time.

3.14 CHAPTERISATION OF THE STUDY

The present research has been organized in nine chapters. As usual, the first chapter ‘Introduction’ provides a conceptual understanding of the concept of ‘child’, ‘child labour’, global and national magnitude of child labour as well as the magnitude of
child labour prevalent in Delhi. It has also highlighted the important factors contributing to the persistent presence of child labour in the present context.

The second chapter ‘Review of Literature’ presents a comprehensive review of the empirical studies on child labour conducted in India after 1986, arranged in a chronological manner. It also discusses the findings of the review process.

The third chapter ‘Research Methodology’ highlights with the methodology adopted in the study. It has included the statement of the problem, rationale of the study, the objectives of the study, research questions, operational definitions, sampling details, methods and tools of data collection and data analysis, as well as field work experiences of the researcher.

The fourth chapter ‘Child Labour Legislations in India: A Critical Analysis’ provides a detailed depiction and critical analysis of child labour legislations in India. It has highlighted the various conventions relating to child labour, the constitutional provisions and the legal protection of children at work and its limitations.

The fifth chapter ‘Demographic Profile of the Respondents’ presents the demographic profile of the respondents viz. the child labourers, parents and employers.

The sixth chapter ‘Determinants of Child Labour’ has outlined the important factors contributing to the prevalence of child labour in the study context.

The seventh chapter ‘Dimensions of Child Labour’ has explicated the working conditions, terms of employment and the living conditions of the child labourers.

The eighth chapter titled ‘Narratives- A Qualitative Analysis’ presents a narrative analysis of the child labourers.

The ninth chapter ‘Conclusions, Recommendations and Implications for Social Work Intervention’ is devoted to the summary of the research work and has provided
various recommendations for social work intervention regarding policy framework and action plans for the prevention/mitigation of child labour.

Besides the nine chapters, the thesis also includes the list of detailed bibliographic references. The formats of interview schedule of child labourers, Interview Guide for parents, and Interview Guide for Employers, observation guide, Narrative guide for child labourers and small interview guidelines for Lawyers/Socialworkers/Social activists have also been included in the report as annexures.