Preface

The entire world is beset by the problem of child labour although with a difference of magnitude. Proper nurture, nourishment and care of children is a guarantee for a healthy nation. No nation in the world can afford to ignore this area of strategic significance because children of today are the future responsible countrymen and if this foundation is weak in any way, the superstructure is bound to collapse. The national and international governmental and non governmental organizations are striving every nerve to minimize the incidence of child labour in the world through social and humanitarian approach so that the tender souls are not supposed to lead premature adult lives. The fact however, remains that in spite of having a plethora of laws and being signatories to different international commitments, the nations of the world find it still difficult to evolve a rapid fire solution to the burning problem. The problem is being severely felt in underdeveloped nations and hard-to-reach areas where children are supposed to work in ugly situation oblivious of public and media attention. However, there is dire need to bring to limelight the ugly state of affairs of the working children in these areas so that this issue finds its place in the strategic planning of the governments.

The present study which has been taken with this objective in hand is contemplated to study the magnitude, extent and causes of child labour in Kashmir valley where children (locals and non locals) are working on hill tops and hard-to-reach areas in life threatening cottage level handicrafts units besides restaurants, automobiles, trash collecting, brick making etc. The study has been divided in five chapters with exploratory and empirical investigation.

Chapter I of the study introduces the subject matter and also states the methodology used to carry out the investigation.
Chapter II gives a comprehensive overview of literature on the subject giving a detailed account of international conventions, national laws and efforts of voluntary organizations to end the problem of child labour.

Chapter III discusses the problem in the Kashmir context highlighting the extent of government intervention into the matter. The efforts put in by the J&K Government to end or at least minimize the incidence of child labour is the subject of discussion in this chapter. The analysis has been made through secondary data.

Chapter IV is the core of the study which is based on empirical investigation and the analysis and interpretation of data which has been collected from different respondents in order to know the factual position of child workers with regard to their socio-economic conditions in the light of ethical and humanitarian laws and principles.

Chapter V suggests the remedial measures in the Kashmir context as dictated by the empirical investigation and has policy implications for the planners in the Government.