PREFACE

The problem of Child labour remains a widespread phenomenon throughout the world. For large number of children work is an ordeal, a source of suffering and exploitation, and a fundamental abuse of human rights. Often, child labour results in educational deprivation, social disadvantage and poor health and physical development.

Industrialised economies have by now reduced, to a considerable extent, employment of children; they are yet not fully out of the phenomenon of child labour. But problem of child labour as faced by the the developing economies today has indeed serious dimensions. India has the largest number of world's working children. The evil of child labour is deep rooted in socio-economic stratification, restricted job opportunities and prevailing poverty situations. Most of the families living below the poverty line suffer from alienation, illiteracy, malnutrition, inferiority, social evils and pessimism. The parents from these deprived groups do not only send their children to work but also deprive them of numerous opportunities required for a healthy social living.

Statewise statistics regarding child labour in India show that the incidence of child labour is highest in Jammu and Kashmir. Children in this state are engaged in a variety of occupations such as Carpet weaving, paper machie, shawl manufacture, Handloom weaving, small work shops, Repair
shops, Hotels and dhabas etc. The Carpet Industry of Kashmir employs a large number of children. The plight of these working children in these units is all the more distressing. These children are not only the exploited but also brutally abused and physically assaulted.

The present study is aimed at bringing to light the plight of the children working in Carpet Industry in Kashmir. These children are forced to work overtime in dark, dingy work places in extreme unhygienic conditions. The thesis comprises of eight chapters. In the first chapter definition, historical perspective of the problem as well as of Carpet Industry has been discussed. Review of some of the studies conducted earlier on the problem is also included. In the second chapter some prophylactic measures i.e., legislative enactments and National Policies have been analysed. The third chapter deals with the research design of the study. In the 4th, 5th, 6th and 7th chapter the socio economic background; working conditions; Education, social security and Health; Perceptions and Aspirations of the Carpet Weaving children have been discussed respectively. The causes which push these blooming buds into this furnace have also been analysed. In the eighth and the last chapter conclusions have been drawn and some suggestions are put forth which if considered sincerely can be of a great help in doing away with the evil of child labour.
All Praise be to Allah, the most merciful, the most beneficent, Whose spiritual inspirations and blessings enabled me to complete the work. I am highly grateful and indebted to my benefactor respected teacher and research guide Prof. Noor Mohammad whose parental affection, unlimited timely help and ungrudging guidance has all along been a source of inspiration in completion of this work.

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(AJAZ AHMED SHEIKH)