Chapter: 3

Methodology
The aim of the present research was to explore the impact of abuse on working children as reflected in their capacity for Moral Judgement, Moral Practices and acquisition of values. In order to ascertain whether the experience of abuse actually affected or not, a sample of non-abused children was also studied. The two groups were compared on the various dimensions under studied. Furthermore, since the researcher was interested to elicit information of a more in depth nature, some case studies were also taken. In a discipline which is concerned with complex human dynamics, this would be useful in helping to build a clear picture and exposing factors and variables which may not be initially in our scope of understanding. Thus, together with the various tests which were administered, case studies of some severely abused working children were also collected.

In accordance with the requirement of the study, the first task which faced the researcher was the construction of questionnaires to measure certain dimensions under study. Since the goodness and reliability of results would depend, upon whether questionnaires were assessing desired behaviour or not, it
was necessary to undertake this work cautiously and seriously. Therefore, in the construction of questionnaire we adhered to proper prescribed procedures.

In their quest to establish the strategies of inferring psychological meaning from behaviour, Kelly (1969) and Hassan (1997) suggested three strategies for construction of questionnaire:

The rational –theoretical approach was found most appropriate in the context of present study. According to Wiggins (1973) rational-theoretical approach is the correspondence approach because it is based on the assumption of existence of one-to-one correspondence between verbal response and the hypothetical internal state. In this system, the researcher, in the light of his previous knowledge and experiences, conceptualises appropriate items and to categorize the responses of these items in terms of their ability to elicit responses which would reflect the trait under study. The genesis of items or statements, their responses and their further processing, take into consideration some theoretical model.

The following steps are involved in developing a rational theoretical instrument:
Defining the construct:
Definition of the trait must be formulated. Definition may be taken out from a particular theoretical system, in case the researcher is depending upon a pre-established theory, or the researcher may base definitions on his evaluation of the concept, supported by appropriate empirical theoretical constructs.

Editing and improving language of items:
Since one of the fundamental assumptions of rational-theoretical approach is that responses given by the subject are the verbal representation of her/his mental interior, the items in the instrument should convey the same meaning to all the subjects so as to have a sample of their same kind of mental interior. To ensure that all the subjects get the same meaning of statements, the statements should be easy to understand and not open to more than one interpretation. Some informal criteria for the editing of statements given by Edwards (1969) can be used for the selection of items. The criteria are:

- Avoid statements, which can be interpreted in more than one way.
- Avoid statements, which are likely to be endorsed by everyone or almost by no one.
- Select statements that cover the entire range of variations along the continuum.
- Keep language of statements simple, clear and direct.
- Statements should be short, rarely exceeding twenty words.
- Each statement should contain one complete reference of feeling or behaviour.
- Statements should avoid universals such as 'always', 'all', 'none', 'never' etc. because universals introduce ambiguity.
- Words such as 'only', 'just', 'merely' and others of similar nature should be used with care and moderation in writing statements.
- As far as possible statements should be in the form of simple rather than complex sentences.
- Avoid words that are not understood by those who have to give responses.
- Avoid use of double negatives.

**Determining item homogeneity:**

A rational-theoretical instrument is developed to assess individual differences in respect to the trait to be assessed. The total score obtained by adding the scores assigned to individual items should have the contribution of only one source but this is possible only when all the items comprising the scale are consistent due to their being the measure of the same characteristic. This must be ensured.
Sample:

The total population of Aligarh city (urban area) is 6,39,303 of which 3,42,304 are males and 2,96,999 are females (Census of India, 1991). According to a general estimation, some 50,000 children below 15 years are working as child labourers. These children work under non-organised settings such as lock factories, brassware, motor garages, roadside hotels, dhabas, rag picking and domestic helps.

The sample comprised of 250 children age ranging from 8 to 14 years (ILO norm of age of child labour below 15 years). Out of these 125 were child labourers who had been subjected to abuse. Abused subjects amongst these working children were identified with the help of various spotters, who lived in the subjects' locality, and know the details of abuse of subjects.

Another group of 125 children who were non-abused and fell roughly in the same age group were also included in the sample. The purpose of this was to have a group which could be compared to abused sample on the relevant dimensions.

Drawing of sample through random procedure is undoubtedly desirable but even in pure experimental research it is a difficult proposition. According to Broota (1989), "randomisation is necessary to ensure validity of independence assumptions, in practice, it is generally difficult to follow dictates
as set forth by the theory of random sampling. Usually we include, as subjects those members of the population that are easily accessible to us.”

It is therefore advisable that the researcher should draw subjects at random from those subjects that are easily accessible to him. In the present research, the sample was drawn in terms of subjects’ accessibility but it was ensured that no bias was involved in selection of sample.

In spite of attempt to ensure that equal number of male and female subjects should form part of the sample, there was ultimately a disparity as less girls in abused group sample agreed to participate in the study. In non-abused sample boys showed less interest and willingness than girls to participate in the study. The average ages were 11.57 years and 12.33 years for abused and non-abused groups respectively.

TOOLS OF STUDY:
Moral Judgement Test:

To measure the ability to make moral judgement amongst children, Moral Judgement Test developed by Sinha and Verma (1968) was used. This test follows the cognitive moral development theories of Jean Piaget (1932) and Lawrence Kohlberg (1968). This test has been constructed for use with
Indian children and based on fourteen positive and negative moral concepts (virtues and vices), prevalent in Indian culture. The seven positive moral concepts or virtues are Ahimsa (non-violence), sense of duty, respect, purity, forgiveness, punya (merit) and truth. Seven negative moral concepts or vices are betrayal of faith, greed, anger, lie, revenge, stealing and sin. The construction of the test is based on the model of a general intelligence test. The test consisted a number of items on which the subject has to take moral decisions, group moral contexts in the statements, work out the relationship between words with moral connotation, evaluate a given piece of action, use logical reasoning in moral problems and select the appropriate definitions of the moral values (Sinha and Verma, 1968). These items have been grouped in six distinct categorical components as described below:

Part-1 Discrimination: Ten items with three alternatives in each. Subject has to choose one which she/he considers as right answer for a question of moral issue.

Part-2 Incomplete sentence: Ten items in the form of incomplete sentences. From four alternatives subject has to choose one which appropriately completes the sentence.

Part-3 Analogies: Eight items with a pair of words in each. Subject has to choose a word from four alternatives, which has a relationship with the pair of the words.
Part-4 Best Moral Answer: Eight items in the form of the narration of certain incidents regarding moral dilemmas. Subject has to choose one best solution from four alternatives.

Part-5 Moral Reasoning: Six items in the form of problems and require logical reasoning by the subject for selecting correct answer out of the four given alternatives.

Part-6 Definition: Eight items, each representing one moral value. Subject has to choose one correct definition for that moral concept out of four alternatives.

There is only one correct answer for each item. For scoring, each correct answer is to be assigned a score of one and an incorrect answer a value of zero. The total score obtained by the subject would be the index of his moral judgement.

Moral judgement test was administered on abused children in a pilot study. This data collection revealed that abused subjects who come from poor working group, could not respond to the questions which required writing ability or academic knowledge. Part-2 and Part-3 of moral judgement test i.e. “Incomplete Sentence” and “Analogies” require such skills in the respondents. Therefore, four subtests were used by the researcher.

Authors using split-half method had adjudged reliability of the test to be 0.93. Reliability of the test for three age group of
children consisting 100 children in each group was found to be 0.90, 0.89 and 0.92 for low age group, middle age group and upper age group respectively. For each of the three each groups, high degree of consistency among the test items had been found proving the test highly valid.

The moral judgement test provides a simple and quantitative measure for assessing moral judgement of children. Regarding the test Sinha and Verma (1968) opines, “Since moral characteristic is a significant aspect of individual’s personality, an analysis of the various developing processes especially during the childhood years is important. Such an analysis can help in isolating the various sources, influences and opportunities for such development. It is considered a useful tool in making developmental studies of children and preadolescents.”

**Moral Practice Test:**

Detailed interaction with subjects during administration of the Moral Judgement Test gave the researcher a startling information which needed to be considered. It was seen that mere knowledge and judgement of certain moral concepts does not ensure that these moral concepts would necessarily be the part of subjects’ behaviour. It was revealed that some subjects who performed well on Moral Judgement Test seldom practiced the
same moral concepts in their daily life behaviour. This stimulated the researcher to dig into the issue and to test the actual moral practices of the subjects along with their moral judgement ability. In this background the Moral Practice Test was visualised.

In order to design an appropriate tool by following rational-theoretical approach, a pool of items was prepared. These items enquired about subjects' daily life practice on fourteen moral concepts on which Moral Judgement Test has been constructed. Almost thirty items were prepared with the help of research scholars and teachers of the department. Further, these items were subjected to scrutiny by experienced researchers. In this process, items were reduced on two criterions: first, items of no value or low value were eliminated and secondly, superfluous items were eliminated. Comments or modifications in language or structure of the items, given by the experts were incorporated. In the end, seven questions with three alternative responses were retained. These seven items were based on seven distinct dimensions of morality viz, respect of older, control over telling lie, control over deception, control over stealing, control over anger, control over revenge and control over greed. The questionnaire intended to enquire subjects' actual practice of these moral behaviours in their daily lives. Questionnaire was to
be administered to parents, employers or peers of the subjects who closely knew her/his behaviour.

Three alternative responses of each inquiry were 'Always', 'sometimes' and 'never'. Scores of '3', '2' and '1' were assigned respectively to these responses. The total score of this test for an individual i.e. moral practice index ranges from 7 to 21.

**Measure to Study Values:**

An appropriate questionnaire which tests values in our particular age group was not available. An important consideration in this matter is that values emerge in a clear manner through societal realities, experiences and interactions. At the pre-adolescent stage, they are in a fluid state and in the process of evolving. However, in a general manner some broad patterns and priorities which would later crystallise as specific value patterns are bound to be there. Since in the lower age group understanding and cognitions rely more on tangibles and observables in contrast to abstract concepts, it was felt that the internalisation of the child on the material vs. non-material continuum would indicate his value priorities in a better manner.

It was necessary that researcher design an appropriate tool preferably by using valid procedures like the rational-theoretical
approach. Same steps which were followed constructing Measure of Moral Practice were to be followed here also.

With the help of literature and various studies the researcher defined material values. Each item represented material - non-material value domain similar to Allport-Vernon-Lindsey's first part of the test of values. Our measure included values viz. selfishness, combative behaviour for gains, charity, self abnegation, flattery, greed, self control, self centrism, consumerism, honesty, equity, arrogance, caring for others, austerity, fun/pleasure, patience, forgiveness, wealth, power and righteousness etc. The theoretical connection of items follows the suggestion by Kelly (1969) which opines that "the theory prescribes what traits or variables are to be assessed, what behaviour are the best indicators of these variables, and what weights (scores or interpretations) should be given to the responses elicited."

Initially almost 75 items were formulated which were reduced and their applicability was improved following the same procedure as described in preceding paragraphs in preparation of Measure for Moral Practice. This pattern of construction of test based on concepts of concepts of material values follows strategy of Allport-Vernon-Lindsey Scale of Values (1936), developed on
the basis of Spranger’s theory of values; and Edward’s personal Preference Schedule (1954), based on Murrey’s theory of needs.

Finally, the scale consisted 18 items. Each of them presented a domain of material value – non-material value and subject had to choose one (either material or non-material value) preference as a solution of the given issue in each item. While scoring the responses, a score of 1 was assigned to each item to which subject has given the preference of material value. Total score of a subject indicates her/his material value index which ranged from zero to eighteen.

Details of Abuse Information Schedule:

“National Incident Study Data Form” constructed under “National study of the incidence and severity of Child Abuse and Neglect”, NCCAN, U.S. Department of Health and Human Services was adopted and modified according to the life styles of those working children who represent very poor segment of the society. This schedule asked information on occurrence and severity of physical and sexual abuse. The dimension of Economic Abuse was also added to the checklist for the requirement of the study. Schedule further requires details about abuser and mode of exploitation regarding abuse. It also questions about any post-abuse intervention as availability of physical and emotional needs and given or not or sparing from the medical help.
Measure of Severity of Child Abuse:

The term child abuse covers a large territory. It is not a single problem but a multitude of the problems which occur to a working child during her/his interaction with employer and other people. Abuses are elusive properties and sometimes combine with each other. For example, sexual abuse includes elements of physical and emotional abuse as well. Furthermore, the amount of inflicted abuse varies from child to child. It is very difficult to draw a line of demarcation between normal and abusive punishment or among different types of abuses and their severity. Bryant and Range (1997), studying more than 450 subjects, used a pattern of severity of abuse and categorised it in three categories viz. mild, moderate and severe for sexual and physical abuse.

By consulting previous researches in the area of child abuse, a criteria of assigning numerical values to the severity of all three types of abuses under study was established as below:

A- PHYSICAL ABUSE:
1. Low Level of Severity:
   Beating by kicking punching, kicking or pushing or using an object to beat.
2. Moderate Level of Severity:
   Marks leavening implement using a stick or rod, confinement by locking, depriving of food for some time.
3. High Level of Severity:
Punishment leading to physiological damage or threat to life, amputation, binding limbs, hanging upside down, biting or branding with hot objects.

B- SEXUAL ABUSE:
1. Low Level of Severity:
Maintaining sexual chat with child, sexual remarks, exposing them to pornography or undressing before them
2. Moderate Level of Severity:
Physical molestation (touching and fondling), forcing, tricking or bribing them to involve in sexual activities which does not involve final sexual act.
3. High Level of Severity:
Making sexual contact by persuading or threatening, rape or attempted, involving them in sexual trade including pornography, taking their pictures in nude to threaten them.

C- ECONOMIC ABUSE:
1. Low Level of Severity:
Demanding their money for loan, pending their payment or attempting to snatch their money.
2. Moderate Level of Severity:
Under payment for a little long period, forcing child to work more than their due remuneration, having concern only for
economic gains at the cost of child’s health, well being and family responsibilities.

3. High Level of Severity:
Non-payment, keeping child’s money or other valuable as a security which troubles her/him economically, prolonged underpayment.

On the basis of information gathered from Abuse Information Schedule, researcher categorised them according to above criteria. General slapping and spanking were not included as these activities are the part of employers’ behaviour who generally use it as a catalyst to keep their manpower working.

In most of the cases more than one type of abuse were found. Due to their combined nature it was very difficult to separate because one type of abuse was associated with other. Therefore, abuses in combine form were also rated and analysed.

For low level of abuse, a value of 1 was assigned; for moderate a value of 2 and for high level of abuse a value of 3 was assigned, separately for each type of abuse. The total score of severity of abused ranged from one to nine.

A demographic data information was also prepared to collect subjects' family and employment information such as her/his income, total family income, type of work, duration of working hours, length of work life, family details and all possible family history.
Collection of data:

Subjects were contacted at their living places or work places for interview. Volunteering spotters helped identifying suspected or confirmed abused (sexually, physically or economically) subjects out of working children’s population. Spotters played an instrumental role in persuading children to co-operate for the study, developing rapport between researcher and subject and helping subjects to come out with their details of abuse. However, it was very difficult to make subjects speak out their very personal experiences. They had the fear of employer’s wrath or fear of something which they did not understand about the purpose of this research. In some cases parents of the subjects were also interviewed to confirm the details of abuse.

The questionnaire set was prepared in Hindi language and was administered to the subjects in the form of interview schedule. Since the subjects were totally illiterate thus the questionnaire was orally administered to them. Care was taken to keep the real spirit of questionnaire intact. Researcher verbalised the questions in such a way that the subjects could get real idea of questions.

Collection of data from respondents underwent three stages: First, identifying abused subjects and collecting the details of their abuses; second, administration of moral Judgement Test and
Measure of Values one by one; third, testing subjects' actual moral practice by administering its questionnaire on subjects' parent, employer, other elders or peers who closely watch her/his behaviour. Kelly (1969) gives an account of the term judge, which refers to "a person making an evaluation of any characteristic on the basis of any kind of behaviour." Kelly categorised judges of this kind in three; expert judges, peer judges and self-ratings. According to Kelly, expert judges are the persons who, "by virtue of special training and/or experience, are presumed to capable of making more valid inferences in the use of a particular assessment technique." For peer judges author comments, "A necessary condition for obtaining good ratings from peer judges is that members of the group have lived, worked and/or played with each other over a sufficiently long period so that everyone has had an opportunity to observe his fellow members in a variety of situations." Thus, researcher of this study relied upon subjects' parent, employer and other elders as experts and peers to adjudge her/his moral practice by responding on the concerned questionnaire.

Statistical Treatment:

Before deciding on an statistical treatment researcher felt it necessary to ascertain whether the available data fulfils or not the
assumptions of normality. Mere watching the histograms was not felt to be an effective method of testing the normal distribution of our data. According to Field (2000), "It is all very well to look at histograms, but they tell us little about whether a distribution is close enough to normality to be useful. Looking at histograms is subjective and open to abuse." At this juncture an objective test to decide the normal distribution of data was required. Researcher decided to use Kolmogorov-Smirnov test for this purpose with the help of SPSS 10.1, computer software for statistical operations.

Administration of K-S test gave the information that the data of both the groups of children on all the personality characters was not fulfilling the assumption of normalcy. For such situation, Kerlinger (1983) stated that, "when in doubt about the normality of a population, or when one knows that the population is not normal, one should use a non-parametric test that does not make the normality assumption."

While deciding on non-parametric methods researcher had to keep in mind the nature of the data and requirements of the research. Research questions stated in the preceding chapter focus on the differences between the groups of children on the counts of abuse. A non-parametric test which immaculately computes this difference without using the assumption of normalcy is
Mann-Whitney test. Siegall and Castellan (1988) opine about this test that, “this is one of the most powerful of the non-parametric tests, and it is very useful alternative to the parametric t-test.”

Data on the severity of abuse is categorical in nature and needs a treatment of categorization of frequencies. Chi-square method seems to be most suitable on such situations. Thus, researcher decided to use Mann-Whitney U and Chi-square tests with the data.