Summary, Conclusion and Suggestions
CHAPTER –VI

Summary of findings, Conclusion and Suggestions:

Summary of Findings:

The present study has been undertaken among the girl child labourers engaged in silk industry of Azamgarh district in order to establish the phenomenon of child labour in its proper perspective. The objectives of the present study have been fulfilled by projecting appropriate variables in the process of data analysis and interpretation. In this study a wider range of aspects such as family, educational status of girls and their parents, economic status, working environment, hours of work, recess, legal awareness, issues relating to health and recreation etc. have been covered. The variables taken in to account have been in a position to examine the plight of girl child labour working in silk industry. The major findings that emerged from the analysis and interpretation are briefly summarized as follows:

Socio- Economic Profile of Girl Child Labourers and Their Families:

Age:

It is deplorable to note that girl children in the age group of 7–9 years, forming 5 percent, are found among the respondent girl child labourers. While 42 percent of total girls are below the age of 12 years, and a majority (53 percent) of them are in the age group of 13 – 14 years. This means that a large number of girl children continued to be employed as full time labourers at early stages of their life.

Religion and Caste:

The majorities (90 percent) of the girl child labourers are from Muslim religion, and only 10 percent are from Hindu religion. This can be attributed to
the fact that the sample area is dominated by Muslim weaver’s families who inherited this occupation from their elders or forefathers.

The study revealed that an overwhelming majority (90 percent) of girls come from Muslim community. Among Hindus, a majority (9.6 percent) of them are from OBC and 0.40 percent from schedule caste. There is no girl from forward caste category. Therefore, it is clear that a vast majority of girl child labourers are supplied in to the silk industry by vulnerable section of the society such as Muslim and backward classes in the State.

**Family Size:**

Generally, child labour can be attributed to large size families. The situation of girl child labour may be much closer to this phenomenon. The study revealed that a vast majority (79 percent) of girl children in silk industry come from large size families with six or more members followed by nearly one-fifth (21 percent) girl child labourers from medium size families with five members.

**Housing/Living Conditions and Working Environment:**

Child labour is a social evil especially in developing societies. There is a lot of diversity and inequality in the society characterized by number of factors like poverty, mal-nutrition, housing conditions, lack of infrastructural facilities like sanitation and other basic necessities etc. due to these factors there has been a growing trend of girl child labourers both in rural and urban areas.

The study indicates that all the respondents live in their own houses. Among them, 39 percent live in “pacca – katcha” houses, followed by 38 percent live in ‘pacca’ houses and only 23 percent in ‘katcha’ houses. The study further revealed that an overwhelming majority (97 percent) houses are electrified.
The study revealed that the places of work are also the residence of girl children; therefore, all the facilities like clean drinking water, adequate light, toilet facilities and ventilation are available. The study points out that an overwhelming majority (97 percent) of respondent’s lives in neat and clean environment, 91 percent of them have toilet facilities in their houses, 83 percent have facility of drinking water, 88 percent of them have adequate light and majority of them had proper ventilation in their houses. This makes it amply clear that the environment in which they lived in and work in silk industry is not so appalling.

Ownership of Consumer Durables:

Regarding the ownership of consumer durables which are essentially a social indicators to determine the status of the families. The study shows that a vast majority (97%, 91% and 96 percent) do not owned scooter/motor cycle, telephone and fridge respectively. While a majority 82 percent, 60 percent and 94 percent respondents owned electric fan, radio and cycle respectively. The study further revealed that 63 percent and 91 percent respondents do not possess television and live stock like cow/baffallow. Thus it may be inferred that the respondents belong to poor socio-economic strata of the society.

Education:

The present study points out that a majority girl children working in silk industry are either school drop out or illiterates. The girl child labourers have -either passed primary or upper primary level. Majority (60 percent) of them has studied up to primary level, followed by 21 percent up to upper primary level and only 2 percent have passed high school. 46 percent of them are still pursuing both education and work simultaneously. Considerable percentages (54 percent) of girls are school drop outs and 10 percent are illiterates. Thus study found that right to have education denied to the girl children owing to their active engagement in work.
The main reason behind school drop out is poverty (approximately 72 percent), followed by household work (20 percent), while loss of interest in education and repeated failures account for 10 percent each. Thus a large majority of girl children pulled out of school due to economic compulsion.

**Parental Occupation:**

The study highlighted that more than one-third (78 percent) of the parent respondents are in the occupation of self-employed weavers. It was found that weaving is an ancestral occupation of respondents. Thus, it gives a clue that families have inherited this occupation from their parents; they would pass on this skill and occupation to the children. The family occupation has, therefore, emerged as contributing factor for the employment of girl children. It was found that the work of silk industry is preferred by girls due to the availability of opportunity and convenience to work and earn at home.

**Parental Education:**

The progress of education of the children depends upon the attitude of the parents towards education of their child. It is generally expected that literate parents influence their children in several ways in taking up education. The study indicated that a majority of the fathers were found literate, while 32 percent of them are illiterate. On the literacy rate of mothers of girl child labourers, the study revealed that a large majority (60 percent) of girls come from families whose mothers are illiterates. This partially explains the effect of illiteracy of parents on the work participation of children, especially girls. It is therefore; clear that illiteracy of parents, particularly of mothers, is a contributory factor for the prevalence of girl child labour.
Living Parents:

It is generally said that orphanage or depleted family is one of the important reasons for the employment of child labour. This study revealed that 89 percent of the girl child labourers have living parents and 11 percent have only one parent alive. Thus, it is not the lack of parental support but general economic condition of the family is responsible for the employment of girl children in the silk industry.

Number of Child Earners in the Family:

The study points out that a majority (42 percent) of girl children working in the industry belong to the families which have two child workers in the family, followed by 25 percent with three and 12 percent with four child workers, and a small percentage of families have 5 to 7 children working in the family. Thus it emerged from the analysis that a large majority of household have more than one child workers. The pressure of economic necessities in these families compelled the parents to engage their children in traditional family occupation to learn and earn for survival.

Economic Status of the Family:

Monthly Income of Girl Child Labour Household:

Generally, the poverty is considered as an important factor responsible for child labour. The study indicated that 45 percent respondents families are getting less than Rs.3000 per month, 39 percent families earn income in the range of Rs.1001 – 2000 per month, and 7 percent of them earned monthly income less than Rs.1000 per month. A modest 8 percent earn income up to Rs.4000 and only one percent families earn up to Rs.5000 per month. Thus the study makes it clear that the majority of the families are unable to earn enough to get their families over the most minimal poverty line of one US dollar per person per day. These are the poorest of the working poor. Therefore, it
established the phenomenon that girl child labour engaged in silk industry comes from groups of low income families.

**Monthly Income Earned and Contribution made by Girl child labourers to the Family Income:**

The monthly earnings of girl children engaged in silk industry varies from Rs.200 – 1600 per month. Nearly half (49 percent) of them earned between Rs.200 – 400, 24 percent girls used to earn between Rs.401 – 800, 16 percent of them earned between 801 – 1200, 6 percent of them earned Rs.1201 – 1600 and 4 percent of them earned more than Rs.1600 through various types of work in silk industry. These girls engaged in the industry with the object of supplementing family income at the cost of education and childhood privileges.

Regarding the contribution made by the girl children according to the parents, the study reveals that a vast majority (79 percent) of girls contribute Rs.200 – 600, 10 percent of them contribute Rs.601 – 1000 and remaining contribute Rs.1001 – 1800 per month towards their family income. Though the contribution made by the girl children are meager but significant keeping in view the economic conditions of the families. Therefore, it may be concluded that children engaged in this industry are the main economic base at the family level. However, this can not be an argument for their continuance in this industry, as it is a hazardous occupation and harmful to the health and development of child. Thus, it is amply clear that though the girls are generally treated as burden on the family due to socio-cultural and economic reasons, they are in fact economic asset to the family.

**Reasons for the Employment of Girl Children:**

Generally, the employment of girl children is attributable to the family occupation, customs and practices, economic status, parental and societal attitude etc. The study indicates that the predominant reason behind the emergence of girl child labour in silk industry is to earn and supplement family
income (52 percent), poverty (19 percent) and payment of loan just one percent. Thus the study reveals that majority of girl children work in order to supplement family income, which is essential for survival.

A little less than half (49 percent) of the parents feel that they engaged their girls to work in the industry due to poverty. This is followed by 34 percent who reported that their daughters work in order to supplement family income, only 13 percent skill acquisition and 4 percent school drop outs as the reason for employment of girl child labour.

Thus from the analysis, poverty has emerged as dominating factor for the employment of girl children in silk industry and the parents are forced by economic compulsion to engage their children in various types of work in saree weaving industry to earn and support their families.

**Employment and Working conditions:**

Children in their formative stage of life are expected to go to school and play. They are not mean to work. But unfortunately parents are compelled to send their children for earning due to variety of reasons. They work in deplorable conditions which affect their physical, mental and psychological development. Many studies have shown that children suffer from significant growth deficits from skeletal damage to impaired growth. Some studies have shown that adopting peculiar sitting postures may result in impaired growth of the liver and other parts of the body. Silk industry is one where girl children continuously are squatting on the floor and sit having both leg in the pit along with main weavers for long hours. The present industry analyses the employment and working conditions of girl child labourers toiling in this industry.
Manner in which Work is performed:

The study revealed that a vast majority (80 percent) of the girl children performs their work in sitting posture and 19 percent of them do their work both sitting and standing, while one percent performs their work standing for hours. Thus, the nature of work requires the children to work in a peculiar posture for long hours is extremely painful and tiring which may cause various health problems.

Working Experience:

The study indicates that the work experience of girl children range between 6 months to 6 years to the maximum. The study points out those 35 percent girls have 1-2 years experience, 31 percent 3-4 percent, 26 percent have 5 and more; and only 8 percent of them have 6 months to less than 6 months experience. Thus it is found that a majority (57 percent) of sampled girl child labourers had working experience ranging from 3-6 years. Since silk industry is notified as hazardous occupation or/process, and therefore, its long association may lead to various problems like health and development.

Types of Work Performed by Girl child labour:

The study reveals that 38.2 percent [35.8+2.4] girl children were found engaged in preparing *Nari* and bobbin reeling, 31.2 percent in loom operation and 30.6 percent in making embroidery. Researcher found that girls in the age group of 11 – 13 years are generally involved in loom operation while younger who constituted an overwhelming majority are involved in making embroidery, *Nari* and bobbin reeling. They work as a helper along the side of weaver makes border and embroidery on sarees. These children are required to sit in a couched position for long hours which adversely affect their physical and mental development, and ultimately leads to health related problems.
Hours of Work and Rest:

Generally, the hours of work vary considerably in the household industry and there is no rules and regulation governing it. The study pointed out that a large number (49 percent) of girl children work 8 hours with 30 minutes interval, followed by 33 percent 8 hours with 60 minutes interval, and 9 percent of them each work 10 hours with 30 minutes interval and 10 hours with 60 minutes interval respectively. However, researcher found that there is no fixed hours of work and rest interval, the children are engaged in work from morning to evening and even at night if electric supply is available. Besides, the girls are overburdened with work of domestic chores imposed on girls in India. Thus, the girl children engaged in silk industry suffer from exploitation.

Occupational Diseases:

The study indicates that children working in this industry are contracting various types of occupational diseases. It was found that the most common diseases among the girls are back pain (27 percent), fatigue (21 percent), cold (14 percent) and eye problems (9 percent). However, researcher did not find any girl child labour suffering from occupational diseases like asthma, tuberculosis and bronchitis etc. in the study area. But the children working in this industry are prone to these diseases. During field survey it was disclosed by the people that girls working in this industry suffer from different types of diseases but due to social stigma they could not reveal to others.

Leave/Holiday:

The study indicates that a vast majority (82 percent) of girls working in silk industry do not get even weekly holiday, they get leave during festivals only. This is followed by 18 percent who get weekly off days. Thus, children engaged in this industry work through out week and months. The provision of leave once in a week has no meaning to them.
Entertainment:

It was found that a large majority (66 percent) of girls work at home during holidays, followed by 18 percent of them play with friends. During holidays girls visit other's house (8 percent), watch television (5 percent), sleep at home (2 percent) and watch movie one percent. Thus, the study revealed that these children have no time for recreation which will have adverse impact on balanced personality development.

Wages:

As we know that silk industry is household industry and the weavers are paid on piece rate basis depending upon the kinds of saree produced. It ranges from Rs. 200 to 1000 per saree. The wages for girls engaged in the work are included in it. Therefore, weavers and their children work day and night in order to fetch out maximum income. The study reveals that the girl child labourers engaged in this industry are paid low wages. The periodicity of wage payment varies according to the nature of work. The study points out that more than half (51 percent) of respondents receive monthly wages, followed by 39 percent who receive weekly wages and 10 percent of them receive wages on piece rate basis.

A vast majority (92 percent) of girl child labourers' wages/earnings are received by their parents, while only 8 percent of them receive their wages directly. In fact, the researcher found that the children are employed by their parents who retain their earnings.

Abolition of Child Labour:

A majority (57 percent) of girl children have expressed their happiness on the abolition of child labour, while 32 percent of them were indifferent, 9 percent of them expressed their sadness and 2 percent of them unable to answer. About parents' opinion, a very large majority (82 percent) of the parents have expressed positively in favour of the abolition of child labour,
while 18 percent of them responded negatively and are against the abolition of child labour.

Withdrawal of Child Labour if Alternative is offered:

The study revealed that an overwhelming majority (90 percent) of the parents have expressed their opinion in favour of withdrawal of their children if alternative is offered to them, while 10 percent of them did not favour withdrawal of children from work even. Thus it became clear that child labour perpetuated out of destitution and compulsion, and the parents are ready to withdraw their children from work as soon as alternative is made available to them.

Suggestion of Parents for Removal of Child Labour:

The study indicates that a large majority (87 percent) of the parents suggested that child labour can be eradicated by removing poverty, 5 percent suggested legislation, while 4 percent vocational training and one percent compulsory schooling as a means to eliminate child labour. Whereas 3 percent were remain indifferent.

Regarding opinion of parents as to how society or community can help to abolish child labour. A majority (41 percent) of parents unhesitatingly expressed their opinion that child labour can be abolished by offering employment to adult member of the family. 30 percent of them were in favour of spreading mass awareness about its ill effect, 27 percent by imposing restriction, 2 percent of them said that child labour can be abolished through NGO’s.

Legal Awareness:

It is generally said that the violation of law by the employers carries the support of parents because they are afraid about loosing source of livelihood. However, our field survey revealed that most of the parents in the sample area
are not aware of the legal provisions. Only a small portion of the parents of girl child labour household said that they are aware of the law.

The study indicates that a vast majority (94 percent) of the parents do not have any knowledge about the existence of legislation safeguarding the interest of children working in this industry. Only 6 percent of them had some information about the law.

Regarding information about specific law, it was found that a very large majority (93 percent) of the parents have expressed their ignorance about the law protecting child labour, while 5 percent of them have some how heard about Child Labour Act and 2 percent about the Bonded Labour Act.

As regards the judgment of the Supreme Court, awareness level was rather abysmally low. Only 6 percent of the parents reported some awareness about the judgment, but do not know any thing in detail. Thus the study revealed that an overwhelming majority (94 percent) of the parents have no idea about the judgment of the apex court.

As for as the legal awareness of girl child labourers are concerned, the study points out that an overwhelming majority of girls have expressed their unawareness about the existence any legislation or judgment of the Supreme Court dealing with child labour.