CHAPTER – II

FRAME WORK OF STUDY

Child labour in recent past has evoked deep concern among all especially after proclamation of the year 1979 as the International year of the child by the United Nation’s General Assembly. Due to the child labour laws, there has been a great change in the nature of the employment of children. Earlier children were employed in all types of factories, but now the incidence of child labour is more prevalent in unorganised sectors. This is due to the legislative enactments prohibiting their employment in organised sector. The factories were converted in small units by the owners with a view to sideline the relevant or legal enactments, because these small units do not come under the purview of registration.

Magnitude Of Child Labour In J&K:

The state of Jammu & Kashmir has a population of 16,77,981 in the age group of 5-14 as per 1981 census of which 2,58,438 (15.4%) children are workers. Of the total male child population of 8,64,430 in the state, 1,31,946 (15.26%) were reported to be working. Among the female population of 8,13,551 in the state, 1,26,492 (15.55%) were workers.

The 1981 census also reveals that child workers from 9.75% of the total workforce in the state. The share of male and female child in the total force is more or less same. However, there is a larger share
of children working in rural areas. The urban child labour constitute less than 10% of the total child labour force in the state.¹

The majority of child labour in Kashmir is engaged either in agricultural or in handicraft and handloom activities. The other activities which engaged children are domestic chores, transport, automobile workshops, hotels and restaurants, construction works etc. (Statistics on the extent of employment of children is available in limited extent owing to their employment mainly in unorganised sector). The incidence of child labour is more in Kashmir division as compared to Jammu division, because handicrafts and handlooms units engaging children are concentrated in Kashmir division only.

Nazir Ahmad Shah² (1992) estimated the magnitude of child labour engaged in handicrafts and handloom activities in the state. The estimates obtained by him are given in the table (2.1).

**TABLE – 2.1**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Province</th>
<th>Handicraft</th>
<th>Handloom</th>
<th>Total</th>
<th>%Age of Handicraft</th>
<th>%Age of Handloom</th>
<th>Total</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Kashmir</td>
<td>27013</td>
<td>1106</td>
<td>28119</td>
<td>95.29</td>
<td>3.90</td>
<td>99.19</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Jammu</td>
<td>208</td>
<td>21</td>
<td>229</td>
<td>0.73</td>
<td>0.08</td>
<td>0.81</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Total</td>
<td>27221</td>
<td>1127</td>
<td>28348</td>
<td>95.93</td>
<td>3.98</td>
<td>100.00</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

The table shows that in Kashmir province out of total number of 28,119 children engaged in handicrafts/handloom activities, 95.29% are in handicrafts and 3.90% are in handloom sector. It is 99.19% of the total state child labour force engaged in these activities. On the other hand, in Jammu province, out of the total number of 229 children engaged in handicrafts/handloom activities, 0.73% are employed in handicrafts sector and 0.08% are in handloom sector. Out of the total child labour in handicraft sector just below 1% exist in Jammu province. Almost entire child labour is found in Kashmir province.

In Kashmir province incidence of child labour is more in district Baramullah followed by district Anantnag. In Baramullah total number of children working in different sectors of economy adds upto 27,703 out of which 13,205 are girls. In Anantnag the total child labour force adds upto 23,620 of which 12,613 are boys and 7,468 are girls. Below table (2.2) gives more details about the child labourers in other districts of the Kashmir province.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Name of District</th>
<th>1981</th>
<th>1991</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Boys</td>
<td>Girls</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Anantnag</td>
<td>12305</td>
<td>10755</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Pulwama</td>
<td>9061</td>
<td>10738</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Srinagar</td>
<td>12523</td>
<td>7286</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Budgam</td>
<td>11312</td>
<td>11272</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Baramullah</td>
<td>14144</td>
<td>12883</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Kapwara</td>
<td>5755</td>
<td>7556</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
2.1 **DATA BASE AND METHODOLOGY**:

Carpet industry of Kashmir is spread over a vast area in all six districts of Kashmir division. However, the rationale of taking district Srinagar is that:

1. Srinagar is the hub of carpet-weaving industry
2. Srinagar is not only the summer capital of the state, but has, as well, the distinction of being the most important commercial centre of the valley.
3. Most of the carpet units are concentrated in and around Srinagar and cater to tourists visiting the state.
4. Government Training Centres and easy accessibility for the researcher, etc.

The population of state according to 1991 census was 7118700 and that of Srinagar district was 892506. Out of this the rural population of the district was 138133 and its urban population added up to 570195. The density of population in 1991 was 318 persons per sq. km., while that of the state (J&K) was 76 persons per sq. km. There were 168 villages in the district according to 1981 census. The total number of main workers (1981 census) were found to be 212374, marginal workers were 33828 and non-workers 46126 which is 30.12% of total population of the district. Kashmiri is the mother tongue of whole Kashmir division and here in Jammu division only peoples of district Doda used to speak Kashmiri.

So far as literacy is concerned district Srinagar occupies 2\textsuperscript{nd} place in the state (followed by Jammu, 42.86%) where literacy rate is 33.90%.

The total geographical area of the state in general is 222236 sq. km. and of district Srinagar in particular is 2228 sq. km., which has
been divided into three tehsils, viz., Srinagar, Ganderbal and Kangan. The work of carpet weaving is scattered in the entire rural areas and in Srinagar city also the areas like downtown, Saida Kadal, Ahmad Nagar, Rainawari, Miskeen Bagh, Anchar, Aisha Bagh, Zakura and Gulab Bagh, are the areas where carpet weaving centres are in bulk.

The child labour though present mostly in rural areas is also considerably present in the carpet manufacturing centres of Srinagar. Children usually come from rural areas to work in Srinagar. I relied on primary data in view of the special nature of the problem and the secondary on important aspects having direct bearing on the causes of employment, magnitude of employment etc form the basis of this study. For this purpose a survey of the district Srinagar was made at the areas where carpet weaving centres were in bulk.

In the present study, multistage sampling was used. In the first stage, tehsil Kangan and in second stage tehsil Ganderbal were selected. The reason behind this selection was that because of concentration of more carpet weaving units and employment of a large number of children in the carpet industry. And secondly due to uncertainty of weather. As survey was conducted at the time when winter was knocking the door of Kashmir valley. In the third stage tehsil Srinagar was surveyed. Here at Srinagar it was upto some extent possible to visit areas in the city where looms were installed even in rainy days.

Sample was drawn after surveying the carpet weaving centres, both household and non-household. 100 such units were selected in the whole district and 300 children below 14 years were selected for the purpose of study. Besides these young children there were other workers also who were above 14 years of age, but less than 20 years and in some units workers of plus 35 years of age (usually senior
workers) were also working with these kids. These workers were also interviewed. This is shown in table (2.3).

TABLE – 2.3

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Tehsil</th>
<th>Below 14 yrs.</th>
<th>Above 14&lt;20</th>
<th>Above 20 yrs.</th>
<th>Total</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Srinagar</td>
<td>48</td>
<td>9</td>
<td>11</td>
<td>68</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Ganderbal</td>
<td>129</td>
<td>17</td>
<td>30</td>
<td>176</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Kangan</td>
<td>123</td>
<td>14</td>
<td>19</td>
<td>156</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Total</td>
<td>300</td>
<td>40</td>
<td>60</td>
<td>400</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

In the above table it is clearly indicated that in Srinagar tehsil out of total 68 workers, 48 (70.59%) were below 14 years of age and 9 (13.23%) were above 14 but less than 20 years of age and 11 (16.10%) were above 20 years of age.

And here in Ganderbal also out of the total 176 workers, 129 (73.29) were below 14 years, 17 (9.69%) were above 14 but less than 20 years and 30 (17.04) were above 20 years of age. Whereas in Kangan out of 156 workers, 123 (78.85%) were below 14 years, 14 (8.97%) were above 14 but less than 20 years of age and 19 (12.18%) were plus 20 years old. So out of the total 400 workers, 300 (75%) were below 14 years, 40 (10%) were above 14 but less than 20 years of age and 60 (15%) were plus 20 years of age. Out of 400 workers, only 300 were (which were below 14 years) interviewed for various reasons. Parents and employers were also selected for interview and the same method was used. To explicit the complete information on the subject, a set of questionnaire was prepared which was later on administered to the sample. The information was gathered with the help of interview schedule. During the survey what was shocking was
the illiteracy of the majority of respondents. Even their parents were illiterate. The questions were therefore asked in the local language i.e. in Kashmiri and the responses were noted down.

2.2 LIMITATIONS:

It is not wise to claim that present work is completely perfect. Since the units of the sample were widely scattered, the study was based on a smaller size of sample. Thus its findings can not be generalised and a similar study on wider scale is needed.

Since the study was conducted at a time when the state of J&K in general and Kashmir valley in particular was in a state of complete turmoil. Although normalcy is returning, but still there is no certainty about it. During the study researcher faced many hardships due to the prevailing conditions. The security forces were always enquiring whenever researcher was entering in any particular area. Tehsil Kangan and Tehsil Ganderbal were the areas where researcher was enquired several times. Moreover, due to bad weather, researcher came back several times from Kangan without any field work. So the two forces viz., force of weather and security forces were always creating hurdles for researcher. But thanks to Almighty, researcher eventually transcends these hurdles. Last but not the least was the problem which factory owner/units owner created. They did not allows to interview the child worker on a plea that researcher can be a Government employee deputed for collecting information about abuse of child labour in the carpet units. After assuring them that the data is absolutely for personal use, the researcher was permitted to gather the information from child workers. As a matter of fact due to these problems the study took much time as required.
2.3 NEED AND SCOPE OF THE PRESENT STUDY:

The Government has been greatly concerned about the plight of working children in the country. Despite the constitutional safeguards and various legislative provisions, the total number of working children are continuously growing and their working conditions are appalling. The more serious aspect of child labour is that children are engaged in hazardous occupations. Many working children help their families to cope with problems that are part of the adult world and are thus caught up in the trauma of adult life prematurely.

The growing number of working children, their pathetic working conditions and their premature entry into adult world are sufficient enough for the study of their plight, with a view to improve their socio-economic conditions and suggests remedial measures for gradual abolition of this undesirable force of this country.

A number of studies have already been made regarding the child labour in unorganised sector in Kashmir, though not claiming that present study is completely perfect. Researcher has only concentrated on district Srinagar. Moreover, as already mentioned that units of the sample were widely scattered, the study was based on small sample. So before formulating or launching any programme like rehabilitation of child workers or to provide social security measures or any other facility to child workers or to their families etc, we need a similar study on a wider scale, which will cover not only this particular district (Srinagar) but the whole valley where carpet units are in operation.

The various studies conducted by various researchers regarding child labour in the carpet industry (in the whole country) were studied. While going through the contents of these studies, one comes to the conclusion that the problem of child labour in carpet industry is
more or less same in the whole country. However, so far as scope of these studies is concerned, one can choose only few, which can provide better information and can provide guidelines to the Government and other agencies while tackling this social evil.

Here in Kashmir, various studies have been conducted on child labour. Some have included other occupations also besides carpet weaving and some of the studies conducted regarding child labour in the carpet industry of Jammu and Kashmir are outdated and can not serve our purpose. Though problems of child labourers have been highlighted more or less in the same manner, but the problems of carpet industry – its role in economic development of the state has not been emphasised. These days this particular industry which provides livelihood to millions of workers is facing rough weather and to highlight its problems is the need of the hour.

Though there are abundance of research studies on the child labour in general but except a few, no sincere efforts have been made so far to study the child workers in the carpet industry in particular from social point of view.

That is why I deliberately chose the topic child labour in the carpet industry of Kashmir, as is clear from the topic that it is concerned with the child labour – ‘a social evil’. My endeavour is to carry out a work – so as to fish all those children out who are forced by their parents or by their own compulsions for meager earnings.

So far as the scope of the present study is concerned, the study would be useful for voluntary organisations, policy makers, activists and research scholars, thereby helping to initiate actions to improve the quality of the working life of child labour. It is also hoped that this study in the long run will help in mobilising people and organisations for the progressive elimination of child labour.

49
2.4 **AIMS AND OBJECTIVES**

The main aim of the study is to identify the children working in the carpet industry, their working conditions, nature of exploitations, relationship with employers, situational factors forcing them to take up work at a particular age and the existing legal protection and welfare provisions vis-à-vis their implementation, so that suitable steps can be taken by the Government and voluntary agencies to improve their working conditions and to reduce their participation in economic activities for pursuing education and training.

The objectives of the study were as follows:

1. To make a detailed study of child labour in carpet industry.
2. To study the socio-economic and family background of the child worker in carpet weaving industry.
3. To explore the working conditions of the child labour.
4. To analyse the child wages and their productivity in the carpet industry and to assess the nature of exploitation.
5. To explore the causes of child labour.
6. To examine the legal protection to them and extent of its implementation in carpet industry.
7. To make a study of carpet industry, its share in economic development of J&K state and the problems facing this industry.
8. Finally to suggest measures for ameliorating the lot of child labour.
2.5 HYPOTHESIS:

I personally observed and discussed with the scholars (who had worked on the same topic) the reports on the child labours, published in various leading newspapers, journals, magazines. So while going through the contents of these available reports on the child labours, their working conditions, exploitation and the causes of the child labour, certain hypothesis were framed to be tested by this study.

These hypothesis are as follows –

1. The root cause of child labour is poverty, accompanied with lack of educational awareness among parents, as most of the child workers in the carpet industry belong to illiterate families and economically backward class.

2. Most of the child workers working in the carpet industry feel dissatisfied.

3. Working conditions in most of the carpet manufacturing units are unhealthy.

4. Most of the child workers engaged in the family carpet industry are more satisfied than those child workers employed in non-family carpet units.

5. Most of the child workers of the carpet industry have poor interest in study.

6. Parents of most the child workers are interested to educate their children.

7. Most of the child workers are fed-up with the present occupation, due to long hours of work, small wages and having no recreational facilities at work side.

8. Most of the child workers are scolded and beaten up by the employers as well as the senior work.