CHAPTER 7
CONCLUSIONS, FINDINGS AND SUGGESTIONS
7.1 CONCLUSION

Child Labour

❖ India has all along followed a positive and pro-active policy towards elimination of child labour.

❖ This Policy is reflected in Article 24 of the Constitution and in the laws which have been enacted from time to time.

❖ The Policy, however, was not in favour of absolute prohibition of child labour but in favour of combination of prohibition and regulation.

❖ Employment of Children Act, 1938 which was rather restrictive in scope and content was replaced by Child Labour (Prohibition & Regulation) Act, 1986.

❖ National Policy on Child labour was formulated soon thereafter in August, 1987 with the following objectives:

- A legislative action plan.
- Focusing of general development programmes for benefitting children, wherever possible.
- Project-based action plan in areas of high concentration of child labour engaged in wage/quasi wage employment.
National Child Labour Projects (NCLP) were launched in 1988-89 at 9 pockets of concentration of child labour to release children from work and to rehabilitate them through education, nutrition and check-up of health. This was subsequently raised to 12.

This strategy rested on adopting a selective, gradual and sequential approach to rehabilitate children released from work, starting with the most hazardous and proceeding to less hazardous and ending up with rehabilitation of non-hazardous industries/occupations/processes.

In August, 1994, a high-level decision was taken to intensify the process of rehabilitation by opening additional number of NCLPs. Through in-depth consultation with Collectors of a few selected districts (62) in a Conference in September, 1995, the number of NCLPs was raised from 12 to 76.

The Cabinet Committee on Economic Affairs (CCEA) in January, 1999, while approving the continuance of the NCLP approach during the 9th Plan period, agreed to raise the number to 100 and approved a total outlay of Rs. 261 crores.

As of date, 85 NCLPs have been operational with 1.8 lakh children enrolled in about 2000 special schools being manned by 2500 teachers. An integrated approach for rehabilitation of children released from work through
education, nutrition, health check-up and skill training is being adopted in these special schools.

❖ Simultaneously, efforts have been made in the following directions:

- To add industries/occupations/processes to Part A and B of the Schedule to the Child Labour (Prohibition & Regulation) Act, 1986 on the recommendation of the Technical Advisory Committee constituted u/s 5 of the Act. So far 39 additional occupations and processes have been added bringing the total to 64.

- To adopt an area-specific, time-bound, result-oriented and cost-effective approach, which is also progressive, gradual and sequential to elimination of child labour.

- To pool resources from a variety of sources and integrate them imaginatively and skillfully with a view to achieve the objective of holistic and integrated rehabilitation.

- To treat the problem of child labour as a concern of all Ministries/Departments/Agencies, a national as well as a global concern, a human right and a development related issue and not a trade related issue.

- To ensure with the involvement of Departments of Education and ministry of Health the following:
• The curriculum, course content and textual material which are adopted for the special schools are need-based and attuned to the real life situation, in which children and their parents are placed.

• The emphasis is on universal enrolment, universal retention and achievement of minimum levels of learning.

• Such skills (life skills, communication skills, survival skills, behavioural skills, managerial and supervisory skills) are imparted as would develop the children to responsible and responsive adults (as they enter adulthood).

• Health check up is conducted in such a manner that it not only helps in diagnosing the damages suffered by them on account of exposure to hazardous work but also in repairing the damage and restoring children to normal health after being released from work.

• Ensure that the children on completion of three years of schooling in the special schools are mainstreamed into the world of formal learning.

• Ensure that children while in the special school participate in a host of activities which would enhance their creativity and pursuit of excellence.
A full-fledged Division for Child Labour with a joint Secretary in-charge has been made operational from 19.03.98. Since then, it has been possible to undertake a host of activities in the direction of elimination of child labour and full rehabilitation of children released from work. Steps have been initiated in the direction of ratification of the ILO Convention No. 182 on elimination of the worst forms of child labour, as also for introducing a uniform age of entry into employment. Efforts are on to sign a fresh memorandum of understanding with ILO for continuance of IPEC activities in India beyond December, 1999.

**India and the ILO**

- India is a founder member of the International Labour Organisation (ILO). The Constitution of the ILO aims at universal and lasting peace based on social justice. The ILO is considered as one of the specialized agencies under the United Nations (UN) system. The organization, however, has a unique character because of its tripartite composition. At every level in the Organization, governments are associated with social partners i.e. workers and employers.

- Government of India holds a permanent seat in the Governing Body of the ILO, as one of the 10 countries of chief industrial importance. India has been regularly
attending the Sessions of the International Labour Conference (ILC) since its establishment in 1919.

- The most important activity of the ILC is to set international standards in the form of ILO Conventions and Recommendations. The ILO Conventions are open to ratification by Member States whereas Recommendations are in the form of guidelines to Member States for incorporating them in policies and programmes. India has already ratified 38 ILO Conventions so far. The track record of India in this respect is better than many other member countries both within the region and outside.

- India has so far ratified 3 out of 8 ILO Core Conventions. The ratified Conventions are No.29 concerning Forced Labour, No.100 concerning Equal Remuneration and No.111 concerning Discrimination in Employment and Occupation. India is also in the process of completing the ratification formalities in respect of Convention No. 105 concerning Abolition of Forced Labour.

- The active involvement of the Government Delegation in coordination with other developing countries resulted in the ILC unanimously adopting the ILO Convention No. 182, as well as the Recommendation No. 190 concerning Prohibition and immediate Action for elimination of the Worst Forms of Child Labour. Tripartite consultation and inter-
departmental consultations with a view to ratify the above convention are in progress.

- Convention No. 138 concerning Minimum Age for Admission to employment and work could not be ratified by India so far because there was no omnibus provision in our laws and regulations fixing a minimum age for admission to employment and work. The Government is considering enacting a Central legislation fixing a minimum age of entry for employment and work which will not be less than 14 years of age. Considering the size of the unorganized and informal sector in the country, there will be initial difficulties in enforcing and achieving full compliance with the proposed legislation. Ratification of the Minimum Age Convention No. 138 would be considered when it is realised that we have achieved satisfactory compliance of the proposed legislation.

- The guarantees provided for workers under ILO Convention No. 87 concerning Freedom of Association and Protection of Right to Organize and No.98 concerning Right to Organize and Collective Bargaining are available by and large to all workers in the country through Constitutional provisions, laws and regulations. However, it has not been possible for India to ratify these two Conventions because of a technical problem relating to trade union rights of the Government.
employees. The constitutionality and reasonableness of the restriction imposed on government servants have been upheld by the Courts in India and as such it would be difficult to ratify these two Conventions at this stage.

- India subscribes to the principles enshrined in the ILO Constitution, Philadelphia Declaration and the recently adopted ILO Declaration on Fundamental Principles and Rights at Work.

**Labour Statistics**

- Labour Bureau is an apex organization for collection, compilation, analysis and dissemination of statistics and related information on different facets of labour, such as wages, earnings, productivity, absenteeism, labour turnover, industrial relations etc. for policy formulation, evaluation and research. Two main wings of the Bureau are located at Chandigarh and Shimla, with 4 Regional Offices and one sub-regional office.

- The Bureau brings out Consumer Price Indices for Industrial workers (CPI-IW) and agricultural/rural labourers on monthly basis, mainly the industrial workers and agricultural labourers. CPI-IW is used by the Government and PSUs for fixing/revising DA of employees.
❖ The Bureau also brings out retail price indices for essential commodities, productivity indices and wage rate indices.

❖ The Bureau receives statutory returns under the provisions of various labour enactments and information available in these returns are compiled.

❖ The Labour bureau conducts a number of field surveys relating to labour conditions, unorganized sector, socio-economic conditions of workers etc.

❖ NICNET connectivity has been made available, which will facilitate transmission of data at a fast pace and thereby result in increase in the efficiency and productivity of the Bureau.

❖ A new Family Living Survey for updating the present base year of 1982 for the Consumer Price Index for Industrial Workers is being conducted by the Bureau in collaboration with National Sample Survey Organization. This will form the basis for revising the series to a new base.

❖ Labour standards should be promoted through national laws and regulations and by pursuing appropriate economic and social policies. The government always pursues and achieves its objectives of enlisting the support of the social partners for its policy of opposing any attempt to link labour
standards and trade and try to establish a social clause mechanism.

❖ Mr. Juan Somavia, Director General, ILO in his first Report to the International Labour Conference in June, 1999 has espoused the cause of "Decent Work" by promoting four objectives, i.e. (1) promotion and realization of fundamental principles and rights at work; (2) creation of greater opportunities for women and men to secure decent employment and income; (3) enhancing the coverage and effectiveness of social protection for all; and (4) strengthening tripartism and social dialogue. The Government of India has supported the strategic objective approach of new DG.

7.2. FINDINGS OF THE STUDY

The International Labour Organisation has estimated the number of child workers to be around 100 millions in the world as a whole. The bulk of them are from the under developed countries, with Asia's contribution to the maximum extent. Most of the child labour is concentrated in South and South-East Asia. According to the unofficial figures, in India along there are about 44 million children in the labour force. Few occupations, such as domestic services, street trades, jobs in hotels, restaurants and various other shops are common for children everywhere. A vast majority of juvenile workers are employed in the informal sector,
where they are subjected to prolonged hours of hard labour for minimal wages and without weekly offs or proper rest intervals.

Apart from poverty, the low educational and occupational status of the parents, and inadequacy of the legislative system, as well as, its insufficient enforcement are the other reasons for the persistence of child labour. Many of the employers proper to employ children over the adults for their greater benefits. Some of the parents feel that the job disciplines the child and protects him against vagrancy and delinquency. Though, there are some advantages of child labour, but the negative effects outweigh the positive ones. Apart from health hazards, working children suffer from the incidence of malnutrition and under-nourishment. They are also easy victim to the anti-social activities, like black-marketing, smuggling, theft, drug-addiction, prostitution, etc.

The study suggests that most of the Juvenile workers were males, who had the freedom to enter into any activity, whereas, the girls had to restrict themselves to certain selected occupations which were less strenuous and could ensure them better physical security. Therefore, most of the female children were working as unpaid family labourers, where they could adjust their working hours according to the requirements. It was also observed that apart from the waged work, female children contributed more in the household chores than their male counterparts.
Though most of the children worked up to 12 hours in a day, nearly one-fourth of the simply worked for more than 10 hours, of which a substantial proportion (10.2%) was engaged in shop/domestic services for more than 14 hours in a day. Some of the extremely poor children were doing two jobs on the same day spending nearly fifteen to sixteen hours in the economic activity to make both their ends meet.

A wide variation is there in the income distribution of child workers. A number of them, specially apprentices, did not get any money for their labour, while others get only Rs. 150 to 200 per month. The earnings of children in self-employment and family labour depend purely on the nature and place of work, and the amount of labour put in that. Some of the vendors, shoe-shinners and rag pickers informed that their average earning was more than Rs. 500 per month. On the other hand one-third of the children did not receive their earnings themselves, rather the money was sent directly to their parents or guardians. Most of those who received it themselves gave this money to their parents to maintain their families, and in turn, get some pocket allowance to meet their day-to-day expenditure.

Despite their hard labour for prolonged hours and minimum wages, children are not provided with even the basic amenities like toilet, at the place of their work. Only one-fourth of the children were provided with shelter at their work sites and an
equal number get the medical facilities from their employers. These children who get food from their employers were invariably given the leftovers of the previous day and were hardly provided with fruits, salad or sweets.

Some children informed that they were not treated properly by their employers and/or co-workers. They were neglected, abused and punished over trivial mistakes. Many others did not receive proper love and affection from their parents and had run-away from their homes because of the non-adjustments with their families.

In the back of proper housing, more than one-third working children were staying in hutments, and a substantial proportion being houseless, were forced to spend the nights either in the night shelters or on the footpaths.

The dwellings where nearly three-fifths of children were staying did not have private drinking water and sanitation facilities. To get water people had to stand frequently in big queues, as the water was available only for a short period. Nearly one-sixth children, specially girls, helped their parents in factoring water and doing other household chores, such as cleaning, cooking, taking care of their younger children or animals, etc.

More than half of the children (56.7%) did not get time to play due to excessive hours of work, fatigue and responsibility
towards household chores. Only one-sixth of them could spend their extra time in studies.

Nearly two-thirds of the working children could be counted as migrants. Already at the lower economic status, the families of these migrant children could not pay the exorbitant rents in the city. Many of them had set up their dwellings in a vacant patch of land converting it into a slum colony, which lacked the basic amenities like water, sanitation and electricity. This deteriorated the quality of life of children, specially those who belonged to big families, where they could not get ever sufficient food to eat.

Most of the migrant children hailed from the underdeveloped areas of Uttar Pradesh, Madhya Pradesh, Rajasthan and Bihar. Nearly one-third of them had abandoned their villages as the earning members of migrated because of the existing poverty and unemployment in the family. Some others had quarreled with their parents/guardians and had abandoned their homes; while others wanted to learn a skilled work. Few of them had migrated in search of better job prospects.

The interrogations confirmed that there was widespread illiteracy among the working children. Nearly one-third of them were completely illiterate, two-fifths, who were literate, had not even reached the primary level of education, and one-fifth had passed the primary class but did not complete the middle education. Further analysis suggested that the educational
standard of girls was worse than that of boys. Many parents did not consider the education of daughters important enough, since they thought that the real duty of girls was to rear children and stay at home. Moreover, they thought education to be purely academic and inappropriate to their work needs. Many parents were willing but unable to educate their children because of their chronic poverty. Nearly one-sixth of the children could combine their education with the work. A substantial proportion of those who were not going to school reported that they were not sent by their parents due to their own whims and attitudes, another one-sixth were not going because they never liked the school education system, nearly an equal number could not attend it because their poor economic conditions did not allow them to do so. The other reasons given by children for not studying were the fear of punishment given by class teachers, ill-treatment by classmates, failure in studies, frequent shifts in the place of stay, etc.

Obviously, poverty is the main cause for the early employment of children, but this is not the sole cause. Many children (15.0%) joined labour force because they did not have anything else to do. Prior to work, they were idling away their time and to make a sensible use of their time so as to stay away from vagrancy, theft, begging and other social evils, they had taken up the jobs. A substantial number of children were working
only in their spare time and, thus, utilizing it in a remunerative way.

On the demand side of child labour, nearly one-third of the employers stated that they wanted to help the poverty stricken people by providing jobs to their children. They felt that for this social welfare act they should be commended rather than being criticized. Another important reason for the employment of children was their honesty, sincerity, low wages and greater efficiency which raised their demand above adults. There are few jobs which require the suppleness in fingers and, therefore, can be performed in a better way by children only, e.g., carpet-making, putting filaments in bulbs etc. Some employers showed more interest in the completion of their jobs rather than the status of the person who performed them, whether a man, a woman or a child. These employers did not show any fascination or aversion for a child who was needy and capable.

There are several factors which play an important role in determining the child labour, the educational level of parents being one of them. The parents who have a higher level of literacy give priority to the education of their children, whereas, illiterate parents do not understand the importance of schooling in improving the lot of their children. Orphanage is another factor which plays an important role in pushing children in the labour force at an early age. An orphan child lives at the mercy of others,
who instead of providing him protection, try to exploit him in every possible way. In the absence of any guardian if the social welfare institutions do not offer protection to the orphan children, they are left on the roads to earn their own living. In the patriarchal society, the death of the father, who is the main earning member in the family, puts a great financial responsibility on the child.

It was found that the negative effects of child labour ever weighed its positive effects. Though child labour is considered as an important form of socialization; in the long-run these behavioural norms generate positive attitudes towards the patterns of exploitation, social organized action and labour utilization. Early employment retards the physical and mental development of a child. The lack of education several restricts his vision of society and he cannot see beyond the narrow limits of the occupation he is engaged in. He loses his confidence, his ambitions remain low and he does not aspire to reach even a mediocre position in the labour market. Though their earnings are quite meager, still it was found that children contributed nearly 30 percent to the total income of their poverty stricken families. It was also realized that a child worked nearly two-thirds of an adult, and complete abolition of child labour from the country could provide nearly eleven million jobs for unemployed adults. However, in the present socio-economic circumstances, the proposal of ban on child labour does not seem to be viable.
The economic independence at an early age makes a child pseudo-mature. To differentiate himself from the non-working children and to assimilate in the adult world he develops certain bad habits, such as smoking, gambling, drug running, prostitution, etc. Under the spell of these habits he spends less money on his food and more on those anti-social activities. The strain of work and inadequate nutritional intake put a negative effect on his healthy development.

**7.3 SUGGESTIONS TO ERADICATE CHILD LABOUR**

Child labour cannot be approached as an isolated problem. It is a complex socio-economic-demographic phenomenon which can be reduced and eliminated by multiplicity of actions, both by government and public, at social as well as individual levels. Child labour is not much meaningful where it is imparted by parents as a skill to their children in the form of socialisation of the new generation. The highest concern lies where the process takes place through exploitative mechanism which consumes more energies than the child possesses and the work is done under great physical and mental strain. Unless child labour is eliminated completely, there is a need to take progressive measures aimed at regulating and humanising child work so that the young earners could be provided with some protection against conditions that hamper their physical and mental development,
and deny them educational and better job opportunities. These measures include the adoption and enforcement of protective labour laws and improvement in the working conditions under better welfare facilities.

Child labour is rooted in poverty and must be viewed with patience and understanding. The progressive elimination of this problem is possible through improvement in the income distribution and social awakening, the measures which may be addressed to the society as a whole and not particularly to the children. The income disparity can be removed by providing better employment opportunities to the lower stratum of society through creation of more jobs; agrarian reforms, enforcement of minimum wages, law, social security, pension to agricultural workers, etc. These measures make it less necessary for low income groups to rely on children for meeting subsistence requirements, or for providing security for the future.

In addition to that, enforcement of universal compulsory education and the provision of training and apprenticeship schemes can play a significant role in reduction and ultimately elimination of child labour. This measure would not only reduce illiteracy but would also provide opportunities for skill acquisition and better employment in adulthood.

The policies regarding child labour can be at two levels, viz., long-term and short-term. The long-term policies should be aimed
at improving the conditions of the society as a whole to such an extent that ultimately child labour is completely eliminated, whereas, the short-term policies should be aimed at improving the working and living conditions of children so long as child labour prevails.

A. Long-Term Policies

The purpose of the long-term policies is to bring about a gradual standstill to the problem of child labour, i.e. the complete elimination of this social evil. This could be achieved by raising the overall standard of society through the following measures:

(a) Remove of Poverty

Since, poverty is the fundamental cause of child labour, eradication of poverty is a lasting solution to this problem. Nearly half of the Indian population lies below poverty line, not spread evenly in all the regions. The problem of poverty is more acute and pervasive in rural than in urban areas, and it is concentrated in subsistence and small farmers and landless labourers. In urban areas, it prevails more among those who work in informal sectors. Children are a source of additional labour power and income to their poverty stricken families. Child labour, therefore, can be controlled and eliminated by concentrating more on the lowest socio-economic groups. Our efforts should be more towards balanced regional development and employment generating policies. More emphasis should be put on improved
technologies, economic and social services, including the access of the poor to land, credit, improved seeds as well as to better water, sanitation and health services. The poverty can also be reduced by paying family allowance to needy families, which could be granted on condition that children would attend school and not carry any form of paid, family or self-employed work.

The fight against child labour is one aspect of the overall fight against poverty. When the employment opportunities are generated for the adults and they are rewarded more fairly to raise their standard of living, children will no longer be required to work in the drudgery conditions. Therefore, there is a paramount need for the removal of adult unemployment and rationalisation of the existing policy on prices and income.

(b) **Eradicate Illiteracy**

The uneducated parents, struggling with poverty, fail to appreciate the role of child education as a key status raiser. It is, therefore, utmost important that parents are made education conscious through concerned propaganda and publicity. Hence, emphasis should be placed not only on educating the child but the parents as well, through a greater emphasis on the adult education programme.

In many areas, despite their willingness, children are unable to attain education because of the lack of schools or other infrastructural facilities. In a number of cases, even if the
facilities exist, children fail to take advantage of them because they and their parents hardly see any practical value in attending a school and sacrificing immediate income. Many view school education as a theoretical and academic exercise, which is not adapted to the daily working needs of the poor people. Hence, education should be imparted with elements of local needs, including pre-vocational training. Starting from the elementary classes, vocational training should be given to children to train them to some productive work, not under the exploitative conditions but as a socialization process, in the best possible circumstances. This kind of training would generate a feeling of the dignity of labour and enable children to find a job after attaining certain skill to earn higher wages and make a better life. Making vocational training a part of the school curriculum would add life to the dull atmosphere of theoretical knowledge and enhance the development of child through the addition of skills. Furthermore, the vacation in the schools should be adjusted to the agricultural seasons, so that pupils can help their parents in the lighter jobs, without having to miss their schools.

Apart from that, to increase the attraction of schools, handsome incentives should be provided to children of the socioeconomically backward classes in the form of scholarships, free books, stationery, dresses and nutritious meals for, at least, up to fourteenth year of age. Surprise checks should be made to see that these advantages are actually received by the children for
whom they are meant. These incentives would raise the literacy level on one hand, and reduce the extent of child labour, on the other.

The drop out rates, specially in rural areas, are very high among the girls, who have to help their mothers in the household chores, particularly looking after younger children. If some institutional arrangements are made for such children who could bring in their siblings to their school-cum-creche and attend their classes, the community response towards schooling would be much higher.

For children, who are not interested in studies, there should be apprenticeship programmes through vocational training institutes, which could retain children by providing them skilled training as well as handsome scholarships, mid-day meals, free dresses, etc.

(c) Increase Public Awareness

High number of persons are unaware of the unsafe working conditions in which children work and the repercussions of early employment on the child in particular and the society in general. There is a need to arouse awareness in the child workers, their parents and employers of the damage the early work can cause to the society, young earners and their generations to come. They should also be informed about the benefits the alternative solutions can bring forward. They should be explained the
difference between light, educational work on one hand, and the
exploitative drudgery on the other. For a wider publicity of this
message, mass media should be used giving regular information
and running educational campaigns. Public lectures can also be
organised with more emphasis on the problem and its
repercussions. People, specially employers and the parents of
children should be made aware of the existing laws concerning
child labour and the penalties imposed upon flouting them.
Measures should be taken for stricter implementation of these
laws. The lapses of employers in implementing legislative and
other provisions regarding working children should be widely
publicised in order to build a strong opinion against defaulters.

(d) Role of Trade Unions

The trade unions can play a very important role in the
implementation of existing laws on the minimum age for
admission to employment, minimum wages, working hours and
rest intervals. Since working children are not members of the
trade unions, they do not have the bargaining capacity over their
conditions of work. The lack of patronage makes children the
most exploited group, who can be fired any time despite the
lowest possible wages which are given to them for the longest
possible working hours. Trade unions can work more effectively if
they comprehend the physical and mental havoc the working
children have to face, and the fact that child labour reduces adult
wages as well as adult employment. Many individuals who are dogged by poverty and use their children for income enhancement may become an obstacle in the way of trade unions, but if the latter are determined to tackle the evil of child labour, they can come forth with positive results before too much loss has been incurred.

(e) Socio-Economic Development

Child labour is most common in backward economies where participation of children in the labour market is an important component of the social structure. The social phenomenon is a reflection of the economic phenomenon and vice-versa. Therefore, the solution to the problem lies in the orderly development of society. The elimination of Child labour cannot be achieved in isolation but would be an integral part of the other socio-economic changes. Mechanization, which needs more skilled workers, would discourage child workers and encourage them to opt for education and skilled training.

(B) Short-Term Policies

Though our long-term objective is the complete elimination of child labour efforts must be concentrated in short term policies towards improving the working conditions of children through child labour laws and other welfare programmes.
(a) Welfare Services

Generally, children work in the appalling conditions in the informal sector and small scale enterprises. Their poor working conditions include the long hours of work, short rest intervals, lack of weekly offs and other holidays, safety and health hazards, physical and physiological abuse, lower wages, etc. To protect the child from exploitation, legal measures are necessary. Child labour laws can play a catalytic and supportive role in establishing a more humane socio-economic order. Since, the possibility for the enforcement of protective laws in the unorganised sector is limited, importance should also be given to the supportive actions that bring improvement in the working and living conditions of children so that the evil effects of the premature work on their health, growth and future life could be minimized. The legal help could be taken to reduce the working hours, providing weekly offs, minimum wages and equal pay for equal amount of work to men, women and children, prohibition on lifting excessively heavy loads, etc. Child labour should be completely banned in hazardous occupations, such as bidi-making, carpet-weaving, cement manufacturing, weaving, printing and dyeing of cloth manufacturing of matches and fireworks, nice cutting and splitting tamming, wool cleaning, building and construction activities. Children should not be allowed to work during the night hours (between 7 p.m. and 8 a.m.). On showing improvement in the working conditions of
children, their employers should also be given incentives in the form of tax reductions, subsidies and other types of bonus.

(b) Health and Nutrition

Children are more prone to occupational risks and accidents and, therefore, should be provided with better occupational safety and health services. Gloves and other protective items should be provided to the factory workers and stone breakers. Efforts should be placed on making the working and living environment more hygienic and congenial. Actions should also be aimed at protecting children from work associated diseases.

As most of the child workers hail from poor families, they often suffer from undernutrition. The long working hours and the additional energy requirement for excessive work and physical growth creates nutritional deficiencies in them. Therefore, the provision of supplementary feeding programme for working children should be given an important place in the improvement of their working conditions. Employers should be persuaded to provide nutritional food to child workers at subsidized rates, if not free of cost.

(c) Working Conditions

Apart from the occupational risks, children need to be protected from other organizational problems, such as excessively
long working hours, night work, piece rate payment system, etc. They should be provided with adequate tools and equipments and, at least, the simple protection clothing's. They should also be ensured social security including medical care and sickness benefits. There should be periodical medical check-ups of the working children and this practice should be enforced through proper laws, specially in the organized industries. Emphasis should also be placed on keeping the working environment hygienically free from smoke, dust, etc.

(d) Housing

Proper housing is important for healthy growth, which, in turn, is necessary for higher efficiency. Lack of proper housing not only impairs the healthy growth of children, but also brings them in contact with undesirable elements leading to anti-social and delinquent behaviours. In urban areas, most of the working children stay in slums, which are devoid of proper water supply, sanitation and lighting-arrangements, leading to an unhealthy growth. Therefore, provisions should be made for housing with basic amenities.

There should be adequate night shelters with all the basic necessities for orphans and children who run away from their homes. These night shelters should have recreational facilities like television, radio, etc. and should impart moral, educational
and vocational training for an hour or so in the morning or evening, adjusted according to the working hours of the inmates.

(e) Recreation

After the day long monotonous toil, working children need some recreation for further activity and extra mental energy. Facilities for sports and cultural activities should be provided to children at their place of work as well as residence. Laws should be made to enforce employers to provide these facilities with the actual and regular participation of children in recreational activities, which would help in their overall development as well as stop them from drifting into vagrancy and delinquency.

(f) Occupational and Moral Protection-

Self-employed children face a tough competition with the adults employed in the same occupation. Many of these adults use all kinds of immoral ways to put their junior competitors down, such as to abuse or beat these children snatch of throw away their money and material, teach them bad habits like gambling, smoking, drinking, etc. Lack of protection may also bring these children in contact with the undesirable elements, leading them to vagrancy, delinquency, prostitution, drug running, etc. Protection should be provided to these children against the occupational competition with the adults and moral duration.
To implement the recommendations relating to child employment and welfare, a chain of social welfare institutions should be established. If the substitute children, who form a substantial proportion of child labour, are not taken care of in a proper way, the chances of their drift into anti-social activities or delinquency are fairly high.