CHAPTER –VIII
SUMMARY, CONCLUSION AND SUGGESTIONS
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Introduction:

Childhood, the most impressionable period of human life, is perhaps the most longed for whims every adult would fancy to relapse into sweet, carefree moments, unaware of the trauma of life. During this formative period, a child imbibes the basic traits in developing personality, responsibilities, and traits. A happy childhood is the right of every child and providing it is the concern of every nation. Children are the most important asset of the society. The welfare and development of any community depends largely on the health and well being of its children.

Child labour is a gigantic problem as it involves around 250 million children across the globe, may be even more and more. Children as young as five years are compelled to either eke out for their own survival or supplement family income to meet both the ends (Siddiqui, 2003). The exploitation practice of child labour has come to be recognized as a major socio-economic problem(Kumar Bal, etal 2001).

Child Labour has existed in ancient India; slavery was common in the past. The male and female slaves who worked in their master’s houses and children born to them were owned by the master. The master obviously did not rear them just for to sake of rearing. As soon as they grew up, either they were sold to other slave owners or made to work in the master’s houses and fields as menials and cowherds. In ancient India, it can be said that it existed in the forms of child slaves. The children of less than 8 years were purchased as slaves. Children of slave took birth as slaves, lived and died as slaves unless the master liked to release them from slave. However, later on Kautilya realized that children were not physically fit to do ignoble work. Therefore Kautilya sought ban upon the sell and purchase of children as slaves. Any person pledging or selling his
own minor children or children of his relatives as slaves was heavily fined (Rai, 2002).

In medieval period children however helped them in household activities and family crafts. They learnt the skills by observing and participating in such activities. Increasing pressure on land led to fragmentation of holding. Growing families had to look beyond personal cultivation for subsistence. A class of landless labourers comes into existence, often bonded to the large land owners. These labourers used their children to help in their economic activities. Not only that “occupation” was determined largely on the basis of heredity, and children were introduced to their traditional craft at a young age. (Shandily Tapan Kumar and Khana Shakeel Ahamad, 2006)

After independence, the framers of the constitution realized the gravity of the child labour prevailing in the country provide in the constitution for its prohibition (Rehman, etal, 2002). The Constitution of India, vide article, 23, 24, 39, and 49 etc., and various Acts on child labour have provided adequate provisions to arrest the menace of child labour. Despite the constitutional provision child labour Acts and other efforts both at governmental and non-governmental levels, the measures have yielded a very little positive result. The number of child labours is growing at an alarming rate and problems related to wage, health, safety and development are also becoming more complex (Venkataiah-2001).

**Summary:**

Many studies and researches have shown the existence of the universal phenomenon of the child labour in the world. But there are no researches and studies have examined the problems confronted by child rag pickers engaged in urban areas. It is a socio-economic problem in the society. It is a social responsibility to provide full opportunity for the physical, psychological, emotional, intellectual, social, educational, economical, moral and spiritual development of these rag picking children.

Rag pickers are as much a part of our society as we are just that they do not have the most respected or a dignified job. It is a rag pickers pride that he is
not a beggar or a thief. No, it’s not a food that they are after, but they are on a constant look out for plastics, clothes, metal pieces, boxes and a host of other things that we throw away everyday.

For the present study, theory of cultural of poverty put forth by American anthropologist Oscar Lewis is taken as a model. Oscar Lewis argued that some poor people share a distinct culture of poverty. The culture of poverty constitutes a “design for living” that is passed on from generation to the next. Individuals feel marginalized, helpless and inferior and adopt an attitude of living for the present.

According to Lewis the cultural of poverty perpetuates poverty; it tends to perpetuate itself from generation to generation because of its effect on children. By the time slum children are aged six or seven, they have usually absorbed the basic values and attitudes of their subculture and are not psychologically geared to take full advantage of changing conditions or increased opportunities which may occur in their lifetime.

The present study was designed to find out the socio-economic conditions of the child rag pickers in Bijapur city. The specific objectives were to find out their social status, living arrangements, working condition, exploitation of child rag pickers, economic condition, perception of their work, education and child rights etc. For the present study, Bijapur a drought prone city in Karnataka was selected. According to statistics available at the Labour Department, Bijapur District, there are 1252 child labours in Bijapur District. Among them approximately 626 are child rag pickers. All these child ragpickers are found in Bijapur city. Among them 40% of (i.e., 250) child rag pickers are selected as sample on the basis of random sampling method for the present study. There are totally 40 slums in Bijapur city, of them 12 slums were considered for data collection. The field research was conducted in different slums of Bijapur city.

In the present study, the qualitative information obtained during the interviews, using a pre-coded questionnaire. Quantities information obtained from the structured interview schedule was edited carefully. The data were processed by SPSS package. Analysis of quantitative information consisted of producing
simple frequency. In order test the hypothesis statistical technical of Chi-square is calculated. The data related to profile is presented in the form of percentage.

The present research was limited to Karnataka. It was delimited to the drought prone city Bijapur. The study was restricted to the selected child rag pickers who represent their universe.

**FINDINGS:**

Following are the findings of present research.

1. Majority of children engaged in rag picking activity are 14-16 years age group.
2. Majority of girls are engaged in rag picking.
3. Many of child rag pickers reside in slums.
4. Large number of child rag pickers belongs to Hindu religion.
5. The largest portion of child rag pickers belongs to Schedule Castes. (SC)
6. Larger portion of child rag pickers belong to Gollar community.
7. Very high percent of child rag pickers mother tongue is Telugu.
8. Large number of child rag pickers have not attended any school.
9. Vast majority of child rag pickers are illiterate.
10. Very high percentage of child rag pickers is school drop outs.
11. Parent related factors are main reasons for drop out of child rag pickers.
12. Larger number of child rag pickers acquires no training in any skills.
13. Larger number of child rag pickers was born in place of Bijapur.
14. Larger number of child rag pickers engages in this job due to poverty.
15. Larger portion of child rag pickers resides tin shed house.
16. Very high percent of child rag pickers belong to small families.
17. Majority of child rag pickers come from elementary family.
18. Majority of child rag pickers belong to single parent family.
19. Majority of child rag pickers do not live with both parents.
20. Very high percent of child rag pickers are deprived of parental security.
21. Many of child rag pickers are having male siblings.
22. Majority of child rag pickers’ fathers got elementary education up to 5th standard.
23. Majority of child rag pickers’ mothers are either illiterate or can barely read/write.

24. Majority of child rag pickers’ fathers are engaged in Hamali work.

25. Many of child rag pickers father’s yearly income is below poverty line Rs. 11,000.

26. Majority of child rag pickers’ fathers are drunkards.

27. Many of child rag pickers’ mothers are engaged in rag picking.

28. Majority of child rag pickers’ mothers yearly income is below Rs.11,000.

29. Majority of child rag pickers total family income is Rs.20,001 to 30,000 only.

30. A vast majority of child rag pickers are deprived of hygienic living conditions.

31. Vast number of child rag pickers families does not have adequate assets of modern entertainments and communication facilities.

32. Higher number of child rag pickers parents is worked in childhood as a rag picker.

33. Larger number of child rag pickers is engaged in rag picking for a long period.

34. Nearly one third of child rag pickers start to work at their age of 5-7 years.

35. Majority of the parents are pushing their children to start work as rag picker.

36. Very high numbers of child rag pickers collect the materials mainly plastics, card board, papers, and tin.

37. Majority of child rag pickers do not use any separate equipments during rag picking.

38. A small number (7.6%) of child rag pickers use equipments like a wooden stick during rag picking.

39. A vast majority of children are picking up the rags regularly.

40. Larger portion of child rag pickers work for a whole year.

41. Majority of child rag pickers work four to six hours daily.

42. Many of child rag pickers collect rags from 5 to 6 kgs per day.

43. Majority of the rags of child rag pickers are bought by junkyards.
44. Majority of child rag pickers spend their other time in house work and caring their younger siblings.
45. Majority of child rag pickers earn less than Rs.300 in a month.
46. Majority of child rag pickers are engaged in other work apart from rag picking.
47. Very high percent of the girl child rag pickers work as domestic servants apart from rag picking.
48. Many of child rag pickers like ragpicking.
49. Majority of child rag pickers like their job, because they have no other option.
50. A small number (9.2%) of child rag pickers dislike rag picking as they felt that there is no future in rag picking.
51. Many of child rag picker’s earning is received by their mother.
52. Majority of child rag pickers are getting pocket money from their parents.
53. High percent of child rag pickers utilized their pocket money for eating.
54. Majority of child rag pickers save very little money.
55. Many of child rag pickers are cheated by junkyards.
56. Majority of child rag pickers do not live with brokers.
57. Majority of child rag pickers exploited by adult rag pickers.
58. Majority of child rag pickers families had heavy debts due to absolute poverty.
59. A large portion of child rag pickers families take loan.
60. Many of (48.8%) children express negative feelings about their work as rag picking.
61. Vast majority of child rag pickers ever been sick during the work.
62. Majority of child rag pickers suffer from many diseases for long time.
63. Many of child rag pickers suffer from fever and back pain.
64. Majority of child rag pickers have injury during the work.
65. Majority of child rag pickers have injury by the small cuts, iron or blade piercing, glass piercing, dog or pig bite.
66. 31.2 percent of child rag pickers have not consulted the doctor.
68. Only 8.8 percent of child rag pickers consult government hospital.
70. Many of child rag pickers do not go any private or government hospital due to lack of money.
71. 25.2 percent of child rag pickers have some kind of disability.
72. Many of child rag pickers are handicapped.
73. 28 percent of child rag pickers are not taking bath every day.
74. Large number of child rag pickers takes bath in public places.
75. A vast majority of child rag pickers do not use soap for cleaning body and clothes.
76. Very high percent of child rag pickers do not drink pure drinking water.
77. A large number of child rag pickers use toilet in public place.
78. Sex has significant association with age at entry into rag picking.
79. There is no significant association between religion and age at entry into rag picking.
80. Caste is significantly associated with age at entry into rag picking.
81. Level of education of child rag pickers significantly difference in age at entry into rag picking.
82. There is no association between the type of family and the age at entry into rag picking.
83. Structure of family is not significant associated with age at entry into rag picking.
84. There is significant association between the income categories and age at entry into rag picking.
85. There is significant association between sex and the type of job.
86. There is significant association between religion and the type of job.
87. Caste is significantly associated with the type of job.
88. There is significant association between level of education and the type of job.
89. There is no significant variation between type of family and the type of job.
90. There is no significant association between the structure of family and the type of job.
91. There is no significant association between the total family income and the type of job.
92. Majority of child rag pickers work in a group.
93. Many of child rag pickers go to rag picking with 4-6 members.
94. Many of child rag pickers accompanied by both boys and girls.
95. Majority of child rag pickers pick the rags in the container, street, dumping ground.
96. Many of child rag pickers picking the rags thrice a day.
97. Majority of child rag pickers prefer to work in the morning.
98. Majority of child rag pickers picking rags every day.
99. **29.6** percent of child rag pickers do not get meals twice every day.
100. **29.6** percent of child rag pickers spent a day without food in the last week.
101. **10.8** percent of child rag pickers spent 2 days without food.
102. **14.8** percent of Child rag pickers have smoking habit.
103. Large number of child rag pickers has admitted to bad habits like chewing gutka, tobacco or pan.
104. **11.2** percent of child rag pickers consume alcohol.
105. Majority of child rag pickers involve in anti-social activities.
106. Many of child rag pickers afraid of drunkards.
107. There is no association between sex and getting meals twice a day.
108. There is no significant association between religion and getting meals twice a day.
109. There is no association of caste in terms of getting meals twice a day.
110. There is significant variation between education levels with regards to getting meals twice a day.
111. There is no significant association between the type of family and getting meals twice a day.
112. There is significant association between the structure of family and getting meals twice a day.
113. There is significant association between the income of family and getting meals twice a day.

114. NGOs have not approached many of child rag pickers.

115. Very few child rag pickers have got education from NGOs.

116. Large number of child rag pickers does not know child labour as an offence.

117. No child rag pickers aware of child rights.

118. Large number of child rag pickers does not taking benefits of government schools because they are not interested in schooling.

119. Majority of child rag pickers need good living facilities.

120. Majority of child rag pickers do not wish to have good education.

121. Very few child rag pickers go to school (again) if arranged.

**Conclusion:**

Child ragpicking is a severe form of child labour. The findings show that child rag pickers are facing multivariate problems of shelter, health, security and exploitation due to their illiteracy. The main occupation of child rag pickers’ family is rag picking itself. These children are found living with parents or guardians in Bijapur city and their parents are also involved in rag picking. These children are working under unhygienic conditions just for sake of daily bread. Child rag pickers have their dark future and their life is in danger by the point of view of health degradation and polluted working environment. Even under such condition children themselves are willing to work as rag pickers.

According to findings, child rag pickers start to work at early age and for longer hours a day. Large number of child rag pickers had to leave school due to parent related factors. Consequently the children remain uneducated and unskilled. It leads them to the limit of expectations and they are not aware of their future. It is loss to nation because today’s children are tomorrow’s strength for nation’s future. But if the children’s future is dark, then we cannot expect nation shining.

The work rag picking is very easy to start, as they need no investment in this work. Once children are engaged in work there is no hope for them to gain
education. They are deprived of education. Though these children desire to do better work alternately and if they got chance they will give this dehumanized work up, but they have no opportunity for that. The problem of child rag pickers is one that cannot be solved unless children from disadvantaged families are given a way to fully enjoy their fundamental child rights. The more time these children spend on the street, the more difficult it is to take them away from it, as they enjoy a sense of freedom and self-dependence, which they feel they cannot have in other environments.

Society has a vital role in development of country. It has many important and indispensable components. One of the very important essentials of the society is child. But in our society this part is so ignored that we have serious problem of child labour. The ultimate solution to the problem is by way of social awareness and action groups to help develop these children’s sense of belonging and provide them with the tools to reintegrate into society in an agreeable way. Such social work requires commitment and dedication from governments, non-government organizations (NGOs) and society as a whole. This process includes the support and implementation of government policies and programmes at the national and regional levels.

Government as well as other national and international non-government organizations are working and implementing various plans for child welfare in the country but it has not been successful to improve their condition. It seems that child labour in other sector has been discouraged but in reality it is still not satisfactory.

Rag picking has been a distinct sector of child labour. However these days many more campaigns against child labour has been carried out, there are laws and regulations enacted against child labour but still they are not working properly. So there is need of strong enforcement of every fool to use for welfare of children. Social and lawful efforts must be made. All the citizens in every aspect should be sensible, they have to realize and successfully play role to complete their responsibility for child development and welfare.
Ragpicking should be institutionalized

- Ragpickers reduce the amount of waste that needs to be collected, transported and disposed of with public funds.
- In many cities, informal recycling is the only kind of recycling that occurs at all. It decreases the amount of virgin materials used by industry, thereby conserving natural resources and energy while reducing air and water pollution.
- To include child ragpicking as an evil practice among child labours.
- To formulate specific legislations related to child ragpickers.

Suggestion for further studies

- To conduct comparative study of boy and girl child ragpickers.
- To conduct comparative study of men and women ragpickers.
- To study the problems of women ragpickers.
- To conduct the study of health problems of women ragpickers.
- To evaluate the implementation of child labour policies.