CHAPTER IX

SUMMARY AND SUGGESTIONS

Growth with social justice has been an avowed objectives of planned development in India. As such various programmes and measures have been implemented during the last about three decades to achieve this objective. Tribal population of the country is one such important segment which has almost been left out of the main stream of the development process. The scheduled tribes are mostly concentrated in the district of Kinnaur and Lahaul-Spiti and Pangi and Bhamour tehsils of Chamba district. Tribal areas are nestled in the remotest parts of the State where transport, communication and other necessary infrastructural facilities are nearly non-existent.

All economic and social development activities are planned for the welfare of its people and this is truly reflected in their levels of living which is the end product of all economic efforts. Therefore, it was deemed important to study the levels of living of tribal population in order to have an idea of the performance of development process.

A comparative study of size distribution of household consumer expenditure of tribal population of Himachal Pradesh assumes special importance in order to know their level of living. For the present study funds of expenditure approach is used. Multi stage stratified sampling was adopted for the present study. The data was collected from 101 households of the three sampled villages of Lahaul Block.
Himachal tribes form the major part of Northern Western region. The scheduled tribes inhabiting in Himachal Tribal areas are Gaddi, Gujjars, Jads, Lumbas, Khampas, Bhods, or Budhs, the Kinnaurs or the Lahauls; the Pangwals; and Swanglas.

Lahaul-Spiti is the remotest district of Himachal Pradesh bordering Tibet. The district is divided into two subdivisions: Lahaul and Spiti. The entire district remains buried under heavy snow for at least seven months in a year. The two most important features of topographic diversity of Lahaul are the high mountain ranges and narrow river valleys. Lahaul valley is composed of three distinct regions: the Chandra valley, the Bhaga valley and the valley of the combined Chandra and Bhaga rivers, called the Pattan valley.

Agriculture is the predominant occupation of the overwhelming number of households. The traditional crops are getting replaced fast by commercial crops, particularly seed potatoes which fetch a premium in markets of the plains for reasons of their natural freedom from virus diseases. Only one percent of the total geographical area in Lahaul Block is cultivated. Nearly 73 percent of the areas falls under permanent pasture and grazing land. In the selected villages sown area was more in Gondhala as compared to other villages. Triloknath had higher proportion of forests as compared to Beeling. Land not available for cultivation was nearly three times more in Beeling as compared to Gondhala and Triloknath villages.
It is generally accepted that higher proportion of expenditure on food indicates relatively a low level of living. According to this principle the households of Triloknath were found to be leading a lower level of living as compared to the households of Gondhala and Beeling. Proportionate expenditure on cereals (as % of expenditure to total food) was observed to be higher in Triloknath as compared to the other two villages.

As regards food intake the households of Triloknath were observed to be worse off as compared to the other two villages. The food intake was found to be better in Gondhala village. Beeling was found to be better in terms of protein intake.

The consumption pattern of people throws some light on their economic well-being. The proportionate expenditure on food was lowest (66 %) in Beeling, whereas it was highest (72. %) in Triloknath. Furthermore, lower proportion of expenditure on food reveals higher levels of living of the people of Beeling village than those of Gondhala and Triloknath. Based on these parameters one can infer that the level of living of the inhabitant of Beeling village is comparatively better as compared to their counter-parts in the other two villages. In case of Triloknath village upto expenditure class of Rs. 408 to 516, the proportionate expenditure on food increases to as high as 85 per cent and then declines to nearly 60 per cent. In case of Beeling village proportionate expenditure increased to nearly 89 per cent till expenditure class
of Rs. 306 to 408 and thereafter it declined to nearly 58 per cent in the class of Rs. 2400 and above. Nearly 88 per cent of total expenditure on food was done till the expenditure class of Rs. 508 to 516 in village Gondala and thereafter it declined to nearly 61 per cent in the expenditure class of Rs. 2400 and above. This proportionate expenditure on food started declining after expenditure class of Rs. 288 to 330 in Gondala.

The proportion of expenditure on meat, fish and eggs, also reflects the well-being of the households. The proportion of average per capita expenditure on meat, fish & egg was nearly 12 per cent in Beeling, 10 per cent in Gondala and only 9 per cent in Triloknath.

The per capita consumption of oils & fats was observed to be highest in Triloknath village. On the average, proportionate expenditure on this item ranged between nearly 5 per cent for Beeling and Triloknath and 3.61 per cent for Gondala.

Fruits and vegetables except cauliflowers which are produced locally, are brought to the valley from Kullu and thus their availability is for a very limited period. The poor households spend less on vegetables in Beeling and Gondala village (except Triloknath) whereas rich household spend more on these in all the villages, except Triloknath.
On an average, proportionate expenditure on vegetables ranged between 2.54 to 0.86 per cent in case of Beeling and Triloknath villages. On an average, proportionate expenditure on fruits and vegetables ranged 4 to 5 per cent.

Butter milk is consumed daily with meals. Butter is used in salted tea. The butter and milk is used in beverages and soups. Families at Gondhala village were in a better position in terms of per capita expenditure on this item and were spending nearly double as compared to their counterparts in the other two villages. Average expenditure among richer households were more as compared to the poorer in all the villages under study.

Every household uses 'Tandoor' which also helps in keeping the dwelling warm. Wood is used as fuel and the use of charcoal is rather limited. Per capita expenditure on fuel and light was highest in Gondhala followed by Triloknath and Beeling.

The per capita average expenditure on recreational activities was more in Triloknath as compared to Gondhala and Beeling villages. Proportion of expenditure on fairs and dances increases with the expenditure class. Similar trend existed in expenditure on tobacco which is consumed by both men and women. The Lugadi and Chhong, the home made intoxicants, formed a major proportion of expenditure on recreational activities. The expenditure on this item is
directly correlated with the economic and social status of the households.

On an average, every family was undertaking two visits to Manali in a year, one in May-June and the second one in September-October. These visits are made with specific purpose of purchasing goods. The per capita expenditure on travel by the people of Triloknath was found to be higher as compared to those in Beeling and Gondhala.

Village Gondhala presently boasts of a High school, Beeling enjoy similar facility at a distance of only two kilometers while the third village Triloknath has only a primary school. In the case of Triloknath village, the higher per capita expenditure on education indicates good number of students deputed outside for receiving education beyond high school.

Medical facilities are available within two villages and the per capita expenditure on medical care was highest in Triloknath followed by Beeling and Gondhala villages. The higher expenditure indicates either more occurrence of disease in the village or they are more health conscious. Levels of living depend on income which in turn depends on the occupation followed and its size/magnitude. The highest expenditure per capita per annum was observed in the case of the people following other occupations, and the least by those depending on cottage and household industries.
The proportionate expenditure on food is inversely correlated to the total expenditure. This confirms the Engne's Law of consumption. The amount of money spent on items other than food also indicates the level of living of an individual or a group of individuals. Other things remaining the same, the proportionate expenditure incurred on these items is more with persons of higher income and living better life. In absolute terms, households following other occupations were observed to be spending higher amounts than those of the other two occupations, but when the position is viewed proportionately, the situation changes in several cases.

Levels of living are a manifestation as well as the end result of structural character of our economy. It represents an integrated view of the structural balance of imbalance of an economy. These imbalance/or disparities revealed that relative dispersions are higher in Beeling village in case of cereals, pulses, fruits & vegetables, oil & fats, sugar, milk, neet, fish & egg, and it was found to be lowest in Gondhala village for cereals, pulses, fruits & vegetables and oil & fats. Similarly Triloknath accounted for lowest dispersions for expenditures on sugar, milk, neet, fish & egg. Highest level of dispersion were observed in Triloknath for fruits & vegetables and lowest in Beeling for condiments & spices. Co-efficient of variation was found to be highest in case of fruits & vegetables for Triloknath villages and was lowest in Gondhala village for cereals.
In case of items other than food, relative dispersion was highest in Beeling for clothing, fuel & light, recreation & intoxicants and travel. This was highest for durable goods and housing etc. in Triloknath village. This village has lowest disparities among its residents and also has highest average per capita expenditure, whereas village Beeling is on the other extreme for having largest disparity and lowest per capita expenditure. In case of items other than food resident of Triloknath were far better than the other two villages.

Based on levels of living indices, Gondhala emerges out to be having the highest levels of living from every aspect considered in this study. This may be explained by the fact that village Gondhala has locational advantage of being located nearest to Manali and has comparatively easy accessibility and therefore affected by external influences. This factor seems to be responsible for infrastructure development in village. All these effects have together raised the level of living and brought them above the levels prevailing in the other two villages.
As stated earlier, the study area is cut-off from the rest of the world for about seven months in a year. This hinders the development of this area inspite of much budgetary allocation by the state Government. Due to this, the available resources are not efficiently exploited. Therefore it affects the general levels of living. Further to improve the level of living of the tribals of Himachal Pradesh the efforts should be made in the following direction.

Communication assumes utmost importance in the tribal area, therefore, first of all, the Government of Himachal Pradesh should improve communication system in general and to construct a all weather tunnel so that it does not hamper the development of the area. Further efforts should be made to improve the condition of road, quality of basic facilities like health, higher & technical education, ensuring proper & regular power supply etc. is the need of hour

Agriculture being the main stay of the people needs next priority. While developing agriculture sector, special efforts should be made to introduce commercial crops, increase yield rates, developing culturable waste etc. People should be educated about the commercial crops like potato, other vegetables etc. introduction of H.Y.V. of these crops particularly for potato be evolved so that farmers of the area get higher returns.

Department of Animal Husbandry should put all efforts to improve
the livestock breed on the one hand and availability of fodder on the other. All these in turn will increase the purchasing power of the people and hence levels of living.

Next to Agriculture is the Cottage/Household Industry e.g. carpet weaving, Namanda Making, socks etc. Artisan skill should be developed by conducting skill development programme, increasing market awareness among rural artisan, ensuring availability of raw material and design by establishing Rural Material & Marketing Centre (R.M.C.'s) are the need of the artisan. There is a sufficient potential to establish limestone and livestock industry. The dust free climate of the tribal areas is highly suitable for establishing electronics complex. With the establishment of these industries, a new vista's will open in the life of tribal people and hence improve their levels of living. But all these requires the development of communication at the first stage.

In order to ensure proper and timely supply of essential goods, Department of Food & Civil Supply should put all efforts. Further to break down the superstitions of tribal people, there is a need to educate them either through audio visual cassette or by extending extension workers in the fields of Adult education.
To strengthen the Cooperative movement in the tribal areas further efforts are needed. Lahaul Pot to Grower & Marketing Society though located at Muli is doing a wonderful job. It can further strengthen the development of the area, if communication system is improved. This will increase the interaction between farmers on the one hand and people engaged in the Lahaul Pot to Grower & Marketing Society on the other. Keeping the success of this Cooperative, there is a need to establish Industrial Cooperative Society for marketing of carpets as it has sufficient demand in national and international market. All these efforts in this direction would increase the purchasing power of people and hence levels of living.