Conclusion

The present study was designed to explore the present plight of the migrant agricultural labourers in Haryana. We have studied the conditions of migrant agricultural labourers by considering the various aspects, viz. socio-economic profile, employment structure, wages, earnings, employer – employee relationships, working and housing conditions and political, social and organizational awareness along with agricultural situation in Haryana. The main purpose of the study was to present a comprehensive account of the migrant agricultural labourers in Haryana. An In-depth analysis was done with regard to the nature of agricultural development during the last three decades and how the socio-economic conditions of the migrant agricultural labour effects the process of migration.

The field work based study was conducted in Haryana state during the period 2000-2001. Three regions were considered to make a comparative and comprehensive analysis. For demarcating the regions, all the nineteen districts of the state were arranged in descending order.
on the basis of agricultural productivity, cropping pattern and gross irrigated area. Three region demarcated were agriculturally advanced region, semi-advanced region and backward region in agricultural development. District Karnal was selected from region ‘A’, which is agriculturally advanced region. District Rohtak was selected from region ‘B’ and Bhiwani district from region ‘C’. From Karnal district village Navel and Dalanpur were selected on the basis of large landholding and small population comparatively. Similarly village Kansala and Hamayupur from District Rohtak and village Bond and Ghuskani from Bhiwani district were selected.

The main focus of the study was on migrant labour in agriculture and their working activities and socio-economic conditions at the places of origin as well as in Haryana. Individual migrant labour was taken as a unit for analysis. For the study total 243 respondents considered from the three regions and interviewed with the help of prepared interview schedules.

Since, it is an exploratory study, the qualitative aspects of data and observations were examined in-depth. Simple statistical analysis was used where ever considered necessary. Application of the findings
in planning, policy making and development is limited to the locale of the study.

A perusal of literature as well theories shows that studies on various themes of migration and migrant labour in agriculture such as Revenstien's laws of migration, Lewisian's migration streams, L-F-R model of migration, Sjaastad and Todaro's migration models, organizational experience of Freeman of immigrants in France and Britain, Lewadowski's migration effecting factors like lack of employment, wage rate, political freedom, personal safety, new economic opportunities, caste based migration study of Jose, Thomas and Znaniecki's study of social and personal factors, a few have been examined. All such works are scattered through different writings. The present analysis attempts to fulfill this gap by examining the socio-economic and employment conditions of migrant agricultural labourers in Haryana.

The state of Haryana prior to advent of green-revolution was marked by subsistence agriculture, low productivity and poor agricultural infrastructure. But the state witnessed vast changes in its agriculture ever since it experienced green-revolution, which incidentally coincided with its formation in 1966. This was despite the
fact that the state not much favourably placed in terms of its physical resource base. Inadequacy of fresh water in general and presence of brackish and deep water over a large part, scanty and untimely rainfall are its basic problems.

Agriculture is the dominant sector in the economy of the state with 37.60 percent contribution in the Net State Domestic Product. Agriculture continues to be the dominant sector of state economy with majority of work force engaged in it (Table – 2.2). However there has been a decline in primary sector and a move towards tertiarisation these days. This shift in agriculture can be interpreted as a part of the healthy process of moving workers out of low productivity jobs. But in agriculture, this process had began at the cultivators end of the ‘agricultural worker’s spectrum and not with respect to agricultural labourers. According to 1991 census 57.43 percent of the total male workers in Haryana were engaged in agriculture and its allied work activities.

Infrastructure has played a significant role in raising the productivity level even in areas suffering from some physical constraints. Per hectare productivity has gone up everywhere in Haryana in real terms since 1966. Productivity per hectare was 705 Rupees per
hectare in 1962-65 which increased to 2402 Rupees per hectare in 2000 at constant prices of 1970-71 in Haryana. District Sirsa toped the whole state in case of productivity and on the other hand district Bhiwani stand on the lowest step of the ladder of productivity of major crops. The rise in productivity was more pronounced in areas which were already at a higher level of productivity asserted by both physical and technical factors. The disparity in agricultural productivity per male agricultural worker was also observed as having increased over time, 1993.53 Rupees per agricultural worker in 1962-65 to 5434.71 rupees during tritium 1997-2000.

Land not available for cultivation is declining continuously in the state and net sown area registered a significant increase of + 5.33 percent between 1962 to 2001. With the spread, intensification of irrigation and use of modern farm inputs there has been a change in cropping pattern. The proportion of area under cereals to the total cropped area has registered an increase of + 9.66 percent between 1966-67 to 2000-2001 and cash crops also registered a significant increase of + 6.35 percent in its proportion to total cropped area. These changes are being replaced by high value industrial cash crops without adversely effecting food grains output.
The package of improved inputs including irrigation – “the lifeline of agriculture”, use of chemical fertilizers, high yielding variety of seeds, insecticides and pesticides make us unable to achieve this spectacular progress in agriculture, which is the base for development of rural Haryana. The use of these inputs has been continuously increasing since the advent of green-revolution. Gross irrigated area to the gross cropped area has registered a significant increase of 42.91 percent during 1966-2001 period. The modes of irrigation have also been changing in favour of tube-wells.

The analysis of socio-economic profile of the respondents indicated that out of 243 respondents, maximum 28.39 percent migrant agricultural labourers were from Bihar and minimum 13.18 percent respondents were from Eastern Uttar Pradesh. A significant number 20.16 percent respondents have come from Nepal — our neighbouring country, in Haryana. Respondents from Madhya Pradesh were in majority in region ‘A’, Nepali migrants were maximum in region ‘B’ and migrants from Rajasthan were in majority in region ‘C’. Inference can be drawn that the distance is not a major intervention in the way of migration of labourers.
During this field work, it was observed that majority of migrant agricultural labourers 71.20 percent belonged to scheduled castes and a significant number 11.52 percent belonged to upper castes. This is very revealing aspect. Generally prevalent conception has been that upper castes do not allow their family members to work as labourers in agriculture and also in non-agricultural activities. Upper castes in India take up only white collar jobs and in no case upper caste people are not work as labourer, even if their families are very poor. During this survey, the trends that emerged were entirely opposite from prevailing traditions.

Regarding age of the respondents, it was found that about 90 percent respondents belonged to 20 to 35 years age group, which is generally considered as middle age in which people are actively engaged in their pursuits. Educational level of a society, of a group or an individual reflects the quality of life. In all the three regions, most of the migrant labourers in agriculture were illiterate, 83.95 percent. The education of remaining respondents was only upto matric standard. Regional difference can be seen by the analysis of educational level of the respondents. In region ‘C’, there were maximum literate respondents and majority of them were matriculates. A vast majority of the migrants
about 84 percent were totally illiterate. Generally, these labourers come from the families where the family size was relatively large and the number of earners was rather small and too small yearly income. Poverty among these labourers is wide spread. It was noticed that majority of the respondents 65.03 percent were having income less than 4000 rupees 35.40 percent respondents income was between 2001 to 3000 rupees. It was found that income and number of respondents were inversely proportional each other in the study area. Majority of the respondents were earning less than 4000 Rupees in a year at their place of origin. It reflects their income and living standard and also labour demand and job opportunity at their place of origin.

Household size of the respondents indicated that majority of the migrant agricultural labourers have a size of family between 4 to 9 members. This was due to the large household size supports the contention in rural areas where a large number of people are engaged in agricultural works which demands manual labour. Secondly village life is still characterized by joint family system in which household size is invariably larger and low rearing cost of children. Majority of the migrant agricultural labourers belonged to joint families i.e. 81.89 percent. This aspect is contrary to the common belief prevalent these
days that with the effect of modernization and economic development most of the families are individual. But the prevalence of joint family system among migrant agricultural labourers is not attributed with this fact. This is due to after migration their families left alone and remain unsafe which forces them to stay together. So, they have no choice but to continue joint family system.

The analysis of ancestral occupation is very important to study the socio-economic conditions of the migrant labourers in agriculture. Occupation shows the social placement of an individual in the society. Occupation, income and education are the three important variables that are not only related to each other and reinforce but also influence an individual’s socio-economic status in a social set up. 63.79 percent respondents were involved in agriculture as labourer. Only 20.17 percent respondents have changed their work activities from cultivators to agricultural labourers. This change was due to low agricultural returns after high expenses.

T.V. seeing and cinema going tendency among migrant agricultural labourers was very strong. Hundred percent respondents had T.V. seeing tendency and 77.78 percent respondents had cinema-going tendency. Newspaper reading tendency was found only in 7.00
Housing conditions reflects the economic status and living standard of the people. The housing conditions in India is generally a reflection of social status of people both in rural and urban areas. 94.65 percent respondents of the study area were living in their own houses at their native places. This fact reflects the sound economic conditions of migrant agricultural labourers. But despite this fact more than 70 percent respondents did not have constructed their houses and they were living in their parental houses. Out of the total respondents, 81.89 percent respondents were living in shared houses. A overwhelming majority of respondents were having kuccha house, 45.68 percent and 37.86 percent have mixed type of house and only 16.46 percent respondents were living in pakka houses. During survey, it was observed that 28.81 percent respondents houses area was upto 100 sq. yards and 23.87 percent respondents houses area was 250 sq. yards. More than 20 percent respondents were constructed their houses on more than 2000 sq. yards of land. So, it can be said that area of the house of the respondents was more than sufficient. 37.86 percent respondents were living in only one room and 38.27 percent respondents have more than
four rooms in their houses. 94.23 percent respondents house had not separate bath room and 98.35 percent had not separate kitchen. 43.21 percent respondents source of drinking water was wells and tube-wells and 36.63 percent respondents were getting water for drinking purpose from hand pumps. Unavailability of municipal tape as a source of drinking water in all the native places of respondents unjustified the Government claims that overhead water sources facility for drinking water has been made available to all the villages of India. Air provision in the houses of the respondents was not found in majority and 87.65 percent. 85.18 percent respondents houses were not electrified.

It was also found that more than fifty percent respondents were landless. About one third of the respondents were having land in range upto one acre. Only 2.06 percent respondents were have land above 3 acres. Land owned by 56.64 percent and 43.36 percent respondents was unfertile and semi-fertile respectively. The owner of semi-fertile land were maximum, 51.28 percent in Region ‘A’. Non-availability of irrigation facilities were noted at their native places of migrant agricultural labourers in majority, 89.38 percent. Wells, tube-wells and tanks were the major source of irrigation. The principle crops were wheat, rice and bajra at their place of origin. Pure commercial crops
were not grown in the farms of respondents. High yielding varieties of seeds, fertilizers, agro-chemical and farm-mechanization either used rarely or not used completely. The motive of production of respondents was meet to their family needs. 70.79 percent respondents crop productivity was less than five quintal per acre. This was due to prevalence of traditional agriculture techniques.

The findings of this study favourable compare with trends, generally, to be found throughout the country that it was the economic factor as the main consideration for migrant agricultural labour to seek the agricultural job and to continue with it. 49.79 percent respondent migrated to Haryana to earn more money and 31.68 percent migrated due to unemployed at their place of origin. 64.82 percent respondents in region ‘C’, were migrated due to natural calamities in their villages. The major cause for immigration in Haryana was to earn more money and to improve their economic conditions by getting jobs in developed agricultural state. 63.79 percent respondent have come to Haryana after getting job security and settlement and only one third came in search of work. This analysis aside some broad features of their contacts at the place of destination.
The mode of employment of migrant labourers in agriculture is an important consideration in this study. This spells out not only the demand for these migrant labourers but also, to an extent, the degree of risk involved on both the parts of employers and employees. It was found that large majority 69.96 percent respondents find employment directly by contacting the actual employer.

It was observed that there are three types of migrant agricultural labourers in Haryana - permanent agricultural labourers, semi-permanent and casual migrant agricultural labourers. Permanent labourers were called 'Naukar' and were only 9.05 percent in our study area. It was noted that causal labourers were more 67.90 percent. Semi-permanent labourers are those, who comes and work with Malik for every year but after completion Malik's work they are free to work for others but at malik's will, were 23.05 percent. These were maximum in region 'B' 36.37 percent. 62.79 percent migrant agricultural labourers were traditional agricultural labourers.

Employment has been a major objective of modern time. The analysis of structure of employment of migrant agricultural labourers suggested that 34.16 percent respondent's employment was wheat harvesting and threshing, 27.57 percent respondents was paddy
transplantation, 28.39 percent was paddy harvesting, and threshing and only 9.88 percent respondent’s employment was sugarcane operations. Hundred percent respondents of region ‘C’, were purely engaged in wheat harvesting and threshing. Other agricultural operation were not in process in region ‘C’. In region ‘B’ and region ‘C’ respondents in majority were engaged in paddy related operations. A notable percentage of migrant agricultural labourers was engaged in sugarcane operations but only in slack seasons. Region ‘A’ and region ‘B’ have more occupational operations than region ‘C’, which engages more migrant agricultural labourers.

The wage rates in agriculture over the years have been experiencing the rising trend and specially for paddy and sugar cane operations. It may be due to the fact that sugar cane and paddy operations are labour intensive and needs to be completed within short period of time. The migrant agricultural labourers were paid maximum for paddy harvesting and threshing in region A and also in region B. Wages for paddy harvesting cum threshing was 540 rupees per acre in region A and Rs. 750 and 775 in village Hamayupur and village Kansala of region B. The second most remunerative agricultural operation for migrant labourers was paddy transplantation. It was due to
paddy transplantation and harvesting cum threshing left for migrant agricultural labourers being they are more expert in paddy operations than local or family labourers. Low wages for wheat harvesting and threshing was due to the influence of local labourers, the machines and number of agricultural migrant labourers available in abundance in region A and region B. The wage rates for wheat harvesting was maximum in region C. The respondents in village Bond and in village Ghuskani were taking Rs. 600 and Rs. 620 for harvestation of one acre of wheat. It was also observed that during wheat harvestation employers prefers to employ the local labourers since they are physically strong and more skill in wheat operations (Table 4.8).

The migrant agricultural labourers help to meet the increasing demand for labour, their economic position is improved and they carry back the resources and new skills. However, the increased influx of migrant agricultural labourers to Haryana have depressed the wages and employment levels of the local labourers.

The mode of payment seemed to have changed form kind to cash or mixed. The mode of payment to agricultural migrant labourers was higher in account of cash i.e. 76.96 percent, 76.96 percent. In the studied area respondents were getting their payments in shape of cash. No
respondent was found having knowledge about minimum wages fixed by the government in all the regions of the study area. The number of man-days for the labourers employed were more in region ‘A’ and ‘B’ as compared to region ‘C’. This was mainly due to cropping pattern, rice and wheat crops are grown in region ‘A’ and ‘B’ and only wheat crop is grown in region ‘C’.

The net earnings of the migrant agricultural labourers varies according to the number of days worked and wage rate. Four distinct patterns of migration of agricultural labourers have been observed in Haryana. There patterns can be observed in region A and region B. One set of workers come during wheat harvesting and stay until paddy transplantation nearly 80 to 90 days. The second set of workers are those who come during wheat harvesting and continue to stay until paddy harvesting nearly 180 days. The third set of the workers come during paddy transplantation and stay until paddy harvesting cum threshing on an average for 100 days. The forth pattern was observed in region C, where the fresh migrants stay for only one operation of wheat harvesting and goes back to their places of origin. The yearly earnings based upon the number of days worked and wage rates were maximum in region A followed by region B for all agricultural
operations. The respondents in region A and in region B earned money by paddy operations and respondents in region C earned money by wheat harvesting and threshing operations. The respondents in region A were earning more than ten thousand yearly and the respondents in village Navel were earning maximum 10515 rupees per head. Respondents in village Kansala of region B were earning Rs. 8825 per head. The new field of employment and earnings for migrant agricultural labourer is sugarcane operations which is growing faster than the other agricultural operations in Haryana (Table 4.10).

It has been observed in the present study that majority, 44.45 percent respondents were working in the fields of landowners between 14 to 16 hours per day and 42.79 percent respondents were working between 12 to 14 hours per day. Minimum working hours for the migrant agricultural labourers were 10 to 12 hours per day.

Timely performance of agricultural operations coupled with higher use of labour increases the bargaining power of labourers. But the findings of table 4.13 shows that 91.36 percent respondents were not taking part in bargaining. This was due to surplus work during peak seasons.
Traditionally, the main source of credit for the migrant agricultural labourers were landlords or farmers. They had heavily depended on credit/loan, not for cultivation purposes, but for meeting the domestic needs. 61.73 percent respondents were credited by landowners but none of them took loan from landlords and others. The credit of respondents was not more than thousand rupees. However, landlords pay them in advance to keep their dominance and to insure the availability of the labour at right time. Among those who were saving, were keeping their savings with their employers, 57.20 percent and 42.80 percent respondents were sending their savings to their families through money orders. This shows the development of post office facilities. Majority of the respondents, 63.79 percent reported good behaviour of employer. The conflicts with landowners was reported more in region ‘C’ compared to region ‘B’ and ‘A’. This marked difference was primarily due to mode of payment and nature of contract.

It was found that 81.89 percent respondents wages of work done were paid in time. It was also found during the data analysis of migrant agricultural labourer’s knowledge about workers right and laws of migration that hundred percent respondents were not aware about
workers rights and existing government laws of migration. In the findings most of the migrant labourers in agriculture were forced to be satisfied (73.66 percent) with their work, wages and working conditions. They were also feeling that the behaviour of local labourers and as well as employers was good and there was not any adverse impact on local labour and their wages.

In short, agricultural labourers constitute the historically deprived social groups, displaced handicrafts man and dispossessed peasantry. They are the poorest of the poor in rural India. Assetlessness, unemployment, low wages, under nutrition, illiteracy and social backwardness constitute the poverty syndrome among these migrant agricultural labourers. Their growth reflects the colonial legacy of under-development and the inadequacies of planning interventions in the Independent India. Overcrowding and growth of agricultural labour continued unabated, given poor labour absorption in the non-agricultural as well as agricultural sector in Haryana.

The most visible impact of migration is that it has resulted in enhanced incomes for the migrants. Besides, the migrants have acquired new skills with the passage of time especially in two handling of machinery and equipments and they have become more efficient also
in various farm operations. The process of migration has not only created employment opportunities for the migrants in Haryana but also released pressure on employment opportunities for the remaining population in the states of Bihar, Uttar Pradesh, Madhya Pradesh and Rajasthan. Consequently, the overall economic status of a significant proportion of the population has improved. The facts and methods learnt by the migrants in Haryana about intensive agriculture, share cropping, wage rates, terms of contract, and perquisites, might be benefited for them in their native places. Further, the migrant have carry with them new skills regarding inputs use which are likely to help in the dissemination of new technology in various parts of the country. Moreover, the migration phenomena of agricultural labourers has helped the cause of national integration, better understanding of each other's culture and socio-economic problems and brought out the advantages of inter-dependence. The process of migration has reduced trade unionism among the local labourers and indirectly resulted in eliminating some tension between the farmers and local laboures which was noticeable in earlier years.

The negative aspect of migration of agricultural labourers manifests itself in two form of lower wages and lesser employment
opportunities for the local agricultural labour in rural areas. There has been evidence of occupational diversification in the employment pattern of local labour consequent upon the influx of migrant labour. This might force the local labour to work in already overpopulated and congested urban areas with manifold problems for them. Another negative aspect has been the spread of habit of smoking bodies, chewing zarda and betel nuts among migrant agricultural labourers.