CHAPTER - IX

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The rural areas of India are most secluded and remote, as a result very little is known about their socio-economic conditions and problems. A number of attempts have been made at national and state level to estimate the socio-economic inequalities in general, but very few detailed and comprehensive studies have so far been conducted on the socio-economic inequalities among the rural population both at the national as well as state level of Himachal Pradesh. The distinguishing feature of the rural areas in the state is that they are very vast in geographical areas.

The present study has been undertaken in order to achieve the following objective, (i) to study the socio-economic profile of the sample households among the different size of holding groups; (ii) to analyses the income, employment and consumption pattern of sample households, among different size of holding groups; (iii) to work out the inequalities in the distribution of household assets, income and consumption expenditure among the sample households on the different size of holding groups; (iv) to study the nature and extent of unemployment with the help of multi-dimensional approach, among the sample households on the different size of holding groups; (v) to analyses the nature and extent of absolute poverty among the sample households on the different size of holding groups; (vi) to evaluate the impact of rural development programmes on the socio-economic conditions of the sample households; and to suggest measures for improving the welfare of the people by reducing the inequalities among the sample households.

For the present empirical investigation district Mandi has been selected purposely from the rural areas of Himachal Pradesh. In the present study, Mandi district has been selected purposely for conducting the present empirical investigation on the rural inequalities among the sample
households. There are ten development blocks in Mandi district, viz; Mandi Sadar, Rewalsar, Drang, Chauntra, Chachiot, Siraj, Dharampur, Gopalpur, Sunder Nagar and Karsog. At the first stage all the blocks have been arranged in an ascending order on the basis of their respective population and two blocks have been selected randomly. At the second stage all the panchayats in each selected development block have been arranged in an ascending order on the basis of their respective population and two panchayats have been selected randomly from each selected block. Thus total four panchayats have been selected randomly in the study area. At the third stage a list of villages have been obtained from the office of each selected Panchayats and all the villages (Panchayat wards) in each selected Panchayat have been arranged in an ascending order on the basis of their respective population and three villages (Panchayat wards) have been selected randomly from each selected Panchayat of each selected development block. Thus total 12 villages (Panchayat wards) have been selected randomly in the study area. At the Fourth stage a list of the households have been prepared in each of the selected village (Panchayat wards) and all the households in all the selected villages (Panchayat wards) have been arranged in an ascending order on the basis of their respective size of holdings viz marginal (0-1 hectare) small (1-2 hectares), medium (2-4 hectare) and large size of holdings (4 hectare and above) and about 300 households proportion to the total number of households falling in each category have been selected randomly for collecting the required first hand information.

The required information has been collected with the help of pre-tested scheduled from the sample households. In the present study the value of minimum nutritional requirements of 2400 calories per consumer unit per day plus the value of minimum non-food items of 2010-11 prices has been taken to estimates the extent of absolute poverty among the rural sample household. Whereas 'head count ratio', Gini-coefficient and Lorenz curve measures of inequalities have been applied in order to estimate the magnitude of inequalities in the distribution of household assets, income
and consumption expenditure. The extent of relative poverty has also been analyzed with the help of Sen's Measure of 1973 and 1976. The extent of unemployment has been worked out with the help of time, income and willingness criteria. The total number of males, females and children of varying ages, when converted into 'standard consumption units', (by applying in scale given by the Nutritional Experts) came out 658.9, 460, 343.4, 31.5 and 1493.8 on the marginal, small, medium, large and among all the holding groups together respectively. The number of 'standard mandays' (by attaching proper co-efficient of efficiency to male, female, children and old persons) have been worked out 466.25, 325.5, 243, 22.25 and 1057 on the marginal, small, medium, large and among all the holdings together respectively (Table 4.1, 4.2 and 4.3).

The different socio-economic indicators which have a direct bearing on the socio-economic conditions of the rural people have been empirically analyzed in order to find out the variation in the pattern of the assets distribution, gainful employment opportunities, income and consumption and thereby the variation in the socio-economic conditions of the sample households. The empirical findings of the present study indicate that the average size of family has been worked out 4.22, 6.07, 6.57 and 5.5 per cent on the marginal, small, medium and large size of holdings respectively. Among all the holdings together the percentage of average size of family came out 5.13. The percentage of labour force has been worked out 64.13, 68.57, 64.51 and 66.67 per cent on the marginal, small, medium and large size of holdings respectively. Among all the holdings together this percentage came out 65.58. The percentage of dependents has been worked out 35.87, 31.43, 35.49 and 33.33 per cent on the marginal, small, medium and large size of holdings respectively. The percentage of dependents is the highest on the marginal size of holding group as compared to small, medium and large size of holdings. Among all the holdings together the percentage of dependents came out 34.42. The percentage of dependents is the highest on the marginal size of holdings mainly due to higher illiteracy ratio as compared to the larger size of holdings (Table 4.2).
The per household total area operated has been worked out 0.26, 1.22, 2.33 and 4.00 hectares on the marginal, small, medium and large size of holdings respectively. Among all the holdings together per household area operated came out 0.95 hectares. The percentage of area under filed crops has been worked out 57.0, 57.32, 53.94 and 50.00 per cent on the marginal, small, medium and large size of holdings respectively. Among all the holdings together this percentage came out 55.16. The percentage of area under horticultural crops has been worked out 00, 00, 1.84 and 3.33 per cent on the marginal, small medium and large size of holdings respectively. Among all the holdings together this percentage came out 1.24. The percentage of area under field crops shows a decreasing tendency with an increase in the size of holdings, whereas, contrary to it, the percentage of area under orchards shows an increasing tendency with an increase in the size of holdings. It happened mainly because of the reason that smaller size of holding groups due to their less productive and uneconomic size of holdings cultivate their maximum land area in order to grow the field crops like, maize, wheat, barley etc., with a view to meet out the basic food requirements of their family members. Whereas, the larger size of holdings with quite large size of holdings and regular sources of household income, can afford to utilize the maximum land area for the production of commercial crops in order to increase their household income manifold. The percentage of cultivated land to the total owned land shows a decreasing tendency with an increase in the size of holdings. The percentage of area under grass and trees has been worked out 42.1, 42.68, 44.21 and 46.67 per cent on the marginal, small, medium and large size of holdings respectively. Among all the holdings together the percentage of area under grass and trees, came out 43.60. The percentage of area under grass and trees shows an increasing tendency with an increase in the size of holdings. The percentage of uncultivated land to the total owned land has been worked out 42.07, 42.68, 44.21 and 46.67 per cent on the marginal, small, medium and large size of holdings respectively. Among all the holdings together the percentage of uncultivated area came out 43.60. Thus, contrary to the percentage of cultivated area which shows a decreasing tendency with
increase in the size of holdings, the percentage of uncultivated land area indicates an increasing tendency with an increase in the size of holdings. The practice of leasing-out as well as leasing-in land is not practiced in the sample area. The overall position of land-holdings shows that the actual farm production in most cases is not sufficient even to meet out the demand of their domestic consumption. More than 95 per cent of the cultivated land areas are unirrigated (Table 4.4).

The distribution pattern of household assets (i.e. both productive and household durables) shows that the percentage value of land to the total value of all household assets have been worked out 61.17, 50.63, 49.45 and 74.77 per cent on the marginal, small, medium and large size of holdings respectively. Among all the holdings together this percentage came out 54.72. The percentage value of livestock to the total value of all household assets have been worked out 1.16, 0.69, 0.76 and 0.45 per cent on the marginal, small, medium and large size of holdings respectively. Among all the holdings together this percentage came out 0.83. The percentage value of agricultural implements to the total value of all household assets has been worked out 0.08, 0.06, 0.06 and 0.03 per cent on the marginal, small, medium and large size of holdings respectively. Among all the holdings together this percentage came out 0.06. The percentage value of shops to the total value of all household assets have been worked out 1.85, 3.49, 1.18 and 0.39 per cent on the marginal, small, medium and large size of holdings respectively. Among all the holdings together this percentage came out 2.06. The percentage value of household industries to the total value of all household assets has been worked out 0.00, 0.02, 0.09 and 0.10 per cent on the marginal, small, medium and large size of holdings respectively. Among all the holdings together this percentage came out 0.04. Land, livestock agricultural implements, transport equipments, shops and household industries have been treated as productive assets in the present study. The percentage value of these productive assets together to the total value of all household assets has been worked out 66.05, 56.04, 54.66 and 77.96 per cent on the marginal, small, medium and large size of holdings respectively. Among all the holdings together this percentage came out
59.78. The percentage value of household durables, i.e. of furnishing articles, electrical appliances, utensils, and, bedding, jewelry, buildings etc. to the total value of household assets also varies sharply from one size of holding groups to the other. The variations in the distribution of these durable necessarily indicate the variations in the socio-economic conditions of sample households but have a negligible direct effect on the pattern of household income and employment. The percentage value of furnishing articles to the value of household assets has been worked out 1.48, 3.58, 1.59 and 0.88 per cent on the marginal, small, medium and large size of holdings respectively. Among all the holdings together this percentage came out 2.16. The percentage value of electrical appliances to the total value of household assets has been worked out 1.97, 2.34, 2.14 and 1.03 per cent on the marginal, small, medium and large size of holdings respectively. Among all the holdings together this percentage came out 2.09. The percentage value of utensils to the total value of household assets has been worked out 0.48, 0.58, 0.82 and 0.39 per cent on the marginal, small, medium and large size of holdings respectively. Among all the holdings together this percentage came out 0.62. The percentage value of beddings to the total value of household assets has been worked out 0.81, 0.1, 1.45 and 0.55 per cent on the marginal, small, medium and large size of holdings respectively. Among all the holdings together this percentage came out 1.07. The percentage value of jewelry to the total value of household assets has been worked out 3.68, 6.98, 8.29 and 4.12 per cent on the marginal, small, medium and large size of holdings respectively. Among all the holdings together this percentage came out 6.31. The percentage value of buildings to the total value of household assets has been worked out 25.30, 29.35, 30.94 and 15.03 per cent on the marginal, small, medium and large size of holdings respectively. Among all the holdings together this percentage came out 27.84. The percentage value of household durables together to the total value of household assets has been worked out 33.95, 43.96, 45.34 and 22.04 per cent on the marginal, small, medium and large size of holdings respectively. Among all the holdings together this percentage came out 40.22. Thus, the distribution pattern of household assets shows that there
exists an unequal distribution of these assets among the different holding
groups. The percentage value of land to the total value of household assets
is the highest, i.e. 54.72 per cent among all the sample households. The
second major household asset is the buildings which accounts for 27.84 per
cent followed by jewelry which constitutes 6.31 per cent. The percentage
value of total productive assets came out 59.78 per cent, and the percentage
value of household durables came out 40.22 per cent. There exist sharp
variations in the distribution of household durables from one size of holding
group to the other (Table 5.7).

The per capita value of household productive assets viz; land, livestock, agricultural implements, machineries and vehicle indicates an
increasing tendency with an increase in the size of holdings. The per capita
value of land has been worked out Rs. 202283.50, Rs. 294137.05, Rs.
380142.34, and Rs. 1168972.73 on the marginal, small, medium and large
size of holdings respectively. Among all the holdings together the per capita
value of land came out Rs. 291227.35. The per capita value of livestock has
been worked out Rs. 3851.07 Rs. 4028.56, Rs. 5834.60 and Rs. 7060.61 on
the marginal, small, medium and large size of holdings respectively. Among
all the holdings together the per capita value of livestock came out Rs.
4430.47. The per capita value of agricultural implements has been worked
out Rs. 263.54, Rs. 351.04, Rs. 440.55 and Rs. 518.18 on the marginal,
small, medium and large size of holdings respectively. Among all the
holdings together the per capita value of agricultural implements came out
Rs. 335.74. The per capita value of transport equipments has been worked
out Rs. 5909.81, Rs. 6710.60, Rs. 23986.70 and Rs. 34696.97 on the
marginal, small, medium and large size of holdings respectively. Among all
the holdings together the per capita value of transport equipments came out
Rs. 10932.42. The per capita value of buildings has been worked out Rs.
89751.69, Rs. 190884.13, Rs. 247652.07 and Rs. 242575.76 on the
marginal, small, medium and large size of holdings respectively. Among all
the holdings together the per capita value of buildings came out Rs.
159363.94. The per capita value of household durables has been worked out
Rs. 28619.28, Rs. 84835.26, Rs. 110700.87 and Rs. 109572.73 on the
marginal, small, medium and large size of holdings respectively. Among all the holdings together the per capita value of household durables came out Rs. 65914.56. The per capita value of all household assets has been worked out Rs. 330678.88, Rs. 580946.62, Rs. 768757.13 and Rs. 1563496.97 on the marginal, small, medium and large size of holdings respectively. Among all the holdings together the per capita value of all household assets came out Rs. 532204.49. Thus the per capita value of total household assets shows an increasing tendency with an increase in size of holdings (Table 5.8).

The pattern of household total income (i.e., both from agricultural and non-agricultural income) shows that the percentage share of income earned from field crops to the total household income has been worked out 0.11, 1.26, 1.88 and 1.65 per cent on the marginal, small, medium and large size of holdings respectively. Among all the holdings together this percentage came out 1.03. The percentage share of income earned from field crops is the highest on the medium size of holdings as compared to the small, marginal and large size of holdings. It happened mainly due to the reason that the households falling on the medium size of holdings make intensive use of their land which is comparatively more fertile. Whereas, contrary to it, the households falling on the marginal size of holdings due to their uneconomic size of holdings which is generally steep sloped, stony and thick surfaced cannot produce food grains even to meet out their domestic needs. Whereas, the large size of holdings due to sufficient land area, can afford to spare larger land area for horticultural uses. The percentage share of horticulture income to the total household income has been worked out 0.00, 0.00, 0.08 and 0.21 per cent on the marginal, small, medium and large size of holdings respectively. Among all the holdings together this percentage came out 0.03. The percentage share of household income earned from livestock activities to the total household income has been worked out 2.12, 1.04, 1.42 and 1.80 per cent on the marginal, small, medium and large size of holdings respectively. Among all the holdings together this percentage came out 1.56. The percentage share of income earned from livestock activities to the total household income is the highest on the marginal size of holdings as
compared to small, medium and large size of holdings. The percentage share of livestock income to the total household income shows a decreasing tendency with an increase in the size of holdings. It happened mainly due to the reason that marginal farmers have received milch cattle under Integrated Rural Development Programmes (IRDP). The percentage share of other agricultural income to the total household income has been worked out 0.69, 0.70, 1.12 and 3.34 per cent on the marginal, small, medium and large size of holdings respectively. Among all the holdings together this percentage came out 0.91. The percentage share of total agricultural income to the total household income has been worked out 2.92, 3.00, 4.50 and 7.00 per cent on the marginal, small, medium and large size of holdings respectively, whereas, among all the holdings together this percentage came out 3.53. The percentage share of agricultural income to the total household income shows an increasing tendency with an increase in the size of holdings. It happened mainly due to the stony, scattered, uneconomic size of holdings, lack of fertilizers, manures, irrigation facilities, inferior quality of seeds, untimely and less intensive ploughing operation by the hired in bullock labour, lack of modern inputs used by the households falling on the smaller holding groups as compared to the households falling on the larger size of holdings (Table 5.16). The percentage share of household income earned from services to the total household income has been worked out 52.79, 69.35, 70.22 and 75.10 per cent on the marginal, small, medium and large size of holdings respectively. Among all the holdings together this percentage came out 63.84. The percentage share of household income earned from services to the total household income shows an increasing tendency with an increase in the size of holdings. This happened mainly due to the sound and regular sources of household income and higher literacy percentage among the larger size of holding groups. The percentage share of household income earned from business activities to the total household income has been worked out 11.18, 7.67, 6.10 and 3.29 per cent on the marginal, small, medium and large size of holdings respectively. Among all the holdings together this percentage came out 8.34. The percentage share of household income earned from business activities to the total household
income is the highest on the marginal size of the holdings, mainly on account of the financial assistance received by the marginal households on subsidized rates under the Government scheme for providing them gainful self employment opportunities with a view to supplement their meager household income. The percentage share of household income earned from households industries to the total household income has been worked out 2.84, 0.23, 0.09 and 0.82 per cent on the marginal, small, medium and large size of holdings respectively. Among all the holdings together this percentage came out 1.16. The percentage share of household income earned from household industries is highest on the marginal size of holdings, is mainly due to the financial assistance and skill formation provided under the ' Anti-Poverty Programmers ' as well as to supplement the meagre household income of the poor households. Most of the households falling on the marginal size of holdings are provided with the financial assistance, skill formation and instruments mainly for the expansion of their household industries with a view to raise their household income. The percentage share of household's income earned from wage work to the total household income has been worked out 17.04, 0.39, 0.35 and 1.85 per cent on the marginal, small, medium and large size of holdings respectively. Among all the holdings together this percentage came out 6.44. The percentage share of household income earned from wage work is the highest on the marginal size of holdings. It happened mainly on account of their meagre household income and lack of gainful employment opportunities on their own farm they prefer to go for wage work nearby, mainly in road construction and projects. These households due to meagre household income, high dependency ratio and higher debt burden cannot afford to remain without work and as a result of it, they lay their hand on any wage work irrespective to the nature of the work as well as wage rate given to them. On the larger holdings, the percentage share of wage income to the total household income is low mainly due to the reason that these households on their large size of holdings get gainful work throughout the full agricultural year and therefore, they do not prefer to work on wage basis which they considered below status. The percentage share of income derived
from pension to the total household income has been worked out 11.69, 19.10, 14.28 and 8.23 per cent on the marginal, small, medium and large size of holdings respectively. Among all the holdings together this percentage came out 14.70. The percentage share of household income earned from other sources (mainly from the religious work, commercial vehicles and contract work etc.) to the total household income has been worked out 1.54, 0.27, 4.46 and 3.70 per cent on the marginal, small, medium and large size of holdings respectively. Among all the holdings together this percentage came out 1.99. Thus, the percentage share of household non-agricultural income to the total household income has been worked out 97.08, 97.00, 95.50 and 93.00 per cent on the marginal, small, medium and large size of holdings respectively. Among all the holdings together this percentage came out 96.47. The percentage share of household's non-agricultural income to the total income shows a decreasing tendency with an increase in the size of holdings. It occurred mainly due to the well developed and fertile agricultural land, which contribute to the total household's income of the large farmer, whereas the households falling on the smaller size of the holdings due to the uneconomic size of the holdings, meagre household income, higher dependency ratio and higher burden of the debt repayment, generally supplement their meagre household income mainly by way of wage work and partly through other non-agricultural source of household's income (Table 5.16).

The percentage of mandays spent in crop production to the total mandays utilized in different activities has been worked out 6.14, 10.26, 16.47 and 18.29 per cent on the marginal, small, medium and large size of holdings respectively. Among all the holdings together this percentage came out 9.72. The percentage of mandays spent in crop production to the total mandays utilized in different activities is the lowest on the marginal size of holdings as compared to small, medium and large size of holdings. The percentage of mandays spent in horticultural activities to the total mandays utilized in different activities has been worked out 00, 00, 0.26 and 1.22 per cent on the marginal, small, medium and large size of holdings respectively. Among all the holdings together this percentage came out 0.09. Thus the
percentage of mandays spent in crop production and horticultural activities shows an increasing tendency with an increase in the size of holdings. It happened mainly due to the reason that male members of the families falling on the smaller size of holdings are not necessarily required on their own uneconomic size of holdings even during the peak agricultural seasons and hence, they keep themselves busy in more remunerative regular jobs outside agriculture. Whereas, the households falling on the larger holdings due to gainful employment on their own economic size of holdings as well as due to sufficient income earned form crops, devote maximum time in agricultural and horticultural activities. The percentage of mandays spent in livestock activities to the total mandays utilized in different activities has been worked out 14.12, 18.01, 19.06 and 19.51 per cent on the marginal, small, medium and large size of holdings respectively. Among all the holdings together this percentage came out 16.31. Thus the percentage of mandays spent in livestock activities shows an increasing tendency with an increase in the size of holdings. It is observed that during the busy agricultural periods, less mandays are spent per household in looking after cattle, whereas, during the lean agricultural seasons, the farmers spent most of their time of looking after the animals. All this goes to suggest that probably larger proportions of the mandays spent exclusively in looking after of livestock, is more in the nature of doing something since there was nothing to do. The percentage of mandays spent in all the agricultural activities to the total mandays utilized in all the activities has been worked out 20.27, 28.27, 35.79 and 39.02 per cent on the marginal, small, medium and large size of holdings respectively. Among all the holdings together this percentage came out 26.12. The percentage of mandays spent in services to the total mandays utilized in different activities has been worked out 23.62, 29.55, 27.92 and 29.88 per cent on the marginal, small, medium and large size of holdings respectively. Among all the holdings together this percentage came out 26.21. The percentage of mandays spent in services is the lowest on the marginal size of holdings as compared to small, medium and large size of holdings. The percentage of mandays spent in servicers, shows an increasing tendency with an increase in the size of holdings. This happened mainly on account of
the higher literacy percentage among the households falling on the larger size of holdings as compared to the smaller size of holdings. The percentage of mandays spent in business activities to the total mandays utilized in different activities has been worked out 5.99, 7.25, 6.61 and 2.13 per cent on the marginal, small, medium and large size of holdings respectively. Among all the holdings together this percentage came out 6.34. The percentage of mandays spent in business activities is the highest on the small size of holdings as compared to medium, large and marginal size of holdings. The percentage of mandays spent in business activities by the households falling on the small size of holdings, is the highest mainly on account of the fact that these households have received loans at low rate of interest under the self-employment scheme to start their business to supplement their meagre household income. Whereas, the households falling on the medium and large size of holdings due to their sound and regular source of income as well as higher literacy percentage, can afford to make investment in business activities. Contrary to it, most of the households on the marginal size of holdings due to their uneconomic size of holdings, meagre household income and higher illiteracy percentages are not prepared to take risk by taking Government loans for business activities which are advanced by the Government agencies against the security of their land and houses. The percentage of mandays spent in household industries to the total mandays utilized in different activities has been worked out 0.28, 0.56, 0.67 and 1.14 per cent on the marginal, small, medium and large size of holdings respectively. Among all the holdings together this percentage came out 0.46. The percentage of mandays spent in household industries shows an increasing tendency with an increase in the size of holdings. The percentage of mandays spent in wage work to the total mandays utilized in different activities has been worked out 12.84, 1.34, 0.91 and 3.05 per cent on the marginal, small, medium and large size of holdings respectively. Among all the holdings together this percentage came out 7.11. The percentage of mandays spent in wage work is the highest on the marginal size of holdings as compared to small, medium and large size of holdings. This happened mainly due to the reason that smaller being
poor, are ready to get work irrespective to the nature of work as well as the wage rate. Due to the higher dependency ratio, uneconomic size of holdings and meagre household income, they cannot afford to remain unemployed during the lean agricultural season and or even during the peak agricultural season, when they are not necessarily required on their own uneconomic size of holdings. Whereas, on the large size of holdings due to higher percentage of literacy, sound and regular sources of income and social status, most of well-to-do families consider wage work below status. The percentage of mandays spent in other activities to the total mandays utilized in different activities has been worked out 1.50, 2.16, 1.39 and 2.67 per cent on the marginal, small, medium and large size of holdings respectively. Among all the holdings together this percentage came out 1.67. The percentage of mandays spent in all the non-agricultural activities such as services, business, household industries, wage work and other activities has been worked out 44.22, 40.86, 37.50 and 38.87 per cent on the marginal, small, medium and large size of holdings respectively. Among all the holdings together this percentage came out 41.79. The percentage of mandays spent in family affairs to the total mandays utilized in different activities has been worked out 19.86, 16.85, 14.28 and 11.47 per cent on the marginal, small, medium and large size of holdings respectively. Among all the holdings together this percentage came out 17.68. The percentage of mandays spent in social affairs to the total mandays utilized in different activities has been worked out 7.84, 7.43, 7.88 and 7.66 per cent on the marginal, small, medium and large size of holdings respectively. Among all the holdings together this percentage came out 7.74. The percentage mandays spent in sickness to the total mandays utilized in different activities has been worked out 7.81, 6.59, 4.55 and 2.97 per cent on the marginal, small, medium and large size of holdings respectively. Among all the holdings together this percentage came out 6.68. The percentage of mandays spent in ‘necessary activities’ to the total mandays spent in all the activities has been worked out 35.51, 30.87, 26.71 and 22.10 percent on the marginal, small, medium and large size of holdings respectively. Among all the holdings together this percentage came out 32.10. Thus, the percentage
distribution of mandays spent in different activities by the sample households shows that the major proportion of mandays spent in non-agricultural activities followed by necessary and agricultural activities (Table 6.4). The total number of available mandays per household has been worked out 849, 1302, 1350 and 1113 on the marginal, small, medium and large size of holdings respectively. Among all the holdings together the total mandays available come out 1056. The percentage of mandays utilized in agricultural activities has been worked out 18.67, 18.76, 26.94 and 38.33 per cent on the marginal, small, medium and large size of holdings respectively. Among all the holdings together this percentage came out 21.05. The percentage of mandays utilized in agricultural activities, shows an increasing tendency with an increase in the size of holdings. The percentage of mandays utilized in non-agricultural activities viz; services, business activities, household industries, wage work etc., to the total available mandays, has been worked out 40.75, 27.12, 28.23 and 38.19 per cent on the marginal, small, medium and large size of holdings respectively. Among all the holdings together this percentage came out 33.68. The percentage of mandays utilized in ‘necessary activities; i.e., mandays utilized in family affairs, social affairs, and sickness to the total mandays available, has been worked out 32.72, 20.48, 20.11 and 21.71 per cent on the marginal, small, medium and large size of holdings respectively. Among all the holdings together this percentage came out 25.87. The percentage of mandays utilized in all the agricultural, non-agricultural and necessary activities during the year under the study (2010-11) has been worked out 92.14, 66.36, 75.28 and 98.23 per cent on the marginal, small, medium and large size of holdings respectively. Among all the holdings together this percentage came out 80.59. Hence, the percentage of unemployed mandays to the full employment norms, i.e. of 8 hours a day, 25 days in a month or 300 days in a year according to Time Criterion, has been worked out 7.86, 33.64, 24.72 and 1.77 per cent on the marginal, small, medium and large size of holdings respectively. Among all the holdings together this percentage came out 19.41. The percentage of mandays available/willing for additional work to the total available mandays has been worked out 24.56, 15.69,
13.24 and 10.93 per cent on the marginal, small, medium and large size of holdings respectively. Among all the holdings together this percentage came out 18.09. Thus, the percentage of mandays willing for additional work shows a decreasing tendency with an increase in the size of holdings. The percentage of available mandays willing for wage work to the total mandays willing for additional work has been worked out 36.00, 20.00, 00 and 00 per cent on the marginal, small, medium and large size of holdings respectively. Among all the holdings together this percentage came out 24.80. The percentage of mandays willing for services to the total available mandays has been worked out 64.00, 80.00, 100.00 and 100.00 per cent on the marginal, small, medium and large size of holdings respectively. Among all the holdings together this percentage came out 75.20. Thus, it is clear that the percentage of mandays willing for wage work shows a decreasing tendency with an increase in the size of holdings, whereas, the percentage of mandays willing for services shows an increasing tendency with an increase in the size of holdings. It happened mainly on account of the higher illiteracy and higher dependency percentage, uneconomic size of holdings and meagre sources of household income on the marginal and small size of holdings, where all the family workers are not necessarily required on their own farm throughout the year and even during the peak agricultural season, whereas, on the larger size of holdings the family workers are gainfully employed on their own farms. The percentage of mandays willing for services is higher on the large holdings as compared to the smaller size of holdings. It happened mainly on account of the higher literacy percentage and regular sources of household income among the households, fallings on the larger size of holdings are interested only to get white collar jobs and consider wage work below status. As a result of it, the percentage of voluntarily unemployed mandays has been worked out 17.95 and 11.18 per cent on the small and medium size of holdings respectively. Whereas, contrary to it, the percentage of mandays willing for over employment came out 16.70 and 9.16 per cent on the marginal and large size of holdings respectively. The workers fallings on the marginal size of holdings are willing to work for longer hours mainly due to the higher dependency ratio, meagre household income and higher
burden of debt repayment. Among all the holdings together the percentage of mandays willing for over employment came out 1.32. This clearly confirms the fact that marginal suffer the most and the large suffer the least from involuntary unemployment according to Willingness criterion. The number of underemployed workers earning less than the minimum desirable monthly income (in order to meet out the minimum food and non-food requirements of a person at 2010-11 prices has been worked out Rs. 1355.53). The percentage of underemployed workers, who are earning less than the minimum desirable income, is the highest on the marginal size of holdings (i.e. 30.08 per cent) as compare to small (i.e. 26.15 per cent) and medium (i.e. 16.48 per cent) size of holdings. Among all the holdings together this percentage of underemployed workers according to Income criterion came out 25.11. Thus, the percentage of underemployed on the marginal holding groups exists mainly due to their uneconomic size of holdings, higher ratio of dependents, low literacy percentage and higher burden of debt repayments etc. whereas, the households falling on the larger holdings due to their sound and regular sources of household income, higher literacy percentage as well as the availability of gainful employment on their own farms, do not suffer from underemployment according the 'Income criterion' (Table 6.5).

The pattern of household consumption expenditure (i.e., on both food and non-food items) shows that the percentage of expenditure on food-items to the total household food and non-food expenditure has been worked out 67.25, 61.13, 60.70 and 51.84 per cent on the marginal, small, medium and large size of holdings respectively. Among all the holdings together this percentage came out 62.89. Contrary to it, the percentage expenditure on non-food items to the total consumption expenditure has been worked out 32.75, 38.87, 39.30 and 48.16 per cent on the marginal, small, medium and large size of holdings respectively. Among all the holdings together this percentage came out 37.11. The percentage expenditure on non-food items to the total household consumption expenditure shows an increasing tendency with an increase in the size of the holdings. Thus, the empirical results of the present study have supported the 'Engels law of consumption'
that as the income increases, the percentage expenditure on food-items decreases and the percentage expenditure on non-food items increases (Table 7.3). The per capita per day consumption of cereals has been worked out 505.77, 566.12, 571.73 and 630.69 grams on the marginal, small, medium and large size of holdings respectively. Among all the holdings together this per capita per day consumption of cereals came out 542.15 grams. The actual average availability of cereals in case of marginal farmer came out 505.77 gram per capita per day, which is less than the quantity of the cereals suggested by the Indian Council of Medical Research i.e. 540 grams. The per capita per day actual consumption of pulses and grams has been worked out 44.27, 48.48, 54.16 and 65.61 grams on the marginal, small, medium and large size of holdings respectively. Among all the holdings together this per capita per day actual consumption of pulses and grams came out 48.29 grams, as against the recommended per capita per day consumption of pulses and grams i.e., 12 grams. The per capita per day actual consumption of vegetables has been worked out 76.53, 92.64, 141.35 and 257.67 grams on the marginal, small, medium and large size of holdings respectively. Among all the holdings together the per capita per day actual consumption of vegetables came out 100.21 grams; whereas the recommended per capita per day consumption of the vegetables is 99 grams. The per capita per day actual consumption of milk has been worked out 129.87, 192.25, 245.23 and 365.08 grams on the marginal, small, medium and large size of holdings respectively. Among all the holdings together the per capita per day actual consumption of milk came out 180.56 grams against the recommended quantity of 80 grams. The per capita per day actual consumption of meat, fish and egg has been worked out 15.73, 16.67, 19.03 and 16.20 grams on the marginal, small, medium and large size of holdings respectively. Among all the holdings together the per capita per day actual consumption of meat, fish and eggs came out 15.81 grams against the recommended quantity of 05 grams. The per capita per day consumption of meat, fish and eggs on different size of the holdings is more than the balanced diet suggested by the Nutrition Expert. The per capita per day actual consumption of fruits has been worked out 51.53, 75.94, 82.80
and 98.41 grams on the marginal, small, medium and large size of holdings respectively. Among all the holdings together the per capita per day actual consumption of fruits came out 67.22 grams against the recommended quantity of 05 grams. The per capita per day actual consumption of oil and fat has been worked out 12.24, 21.30, 25.43 and 29.63 grams on the marginal, small, medium and large size of holdings respectively. Among all the holdings together the per capita per day consumption of oil and fat came out 18.43 grams against the recommended 15 grams. The per capita per day actual consumption of sugar and gur has been worked out 35.11, 37.97, 49.50 and 58.20 grams on the marginal, small, medium and large size of holdings respectively. Among all the holdings together the per capita per day consumption of sugar and gur came out 39.79 grams against the recommended quantity of 13 grams (table 7.4). The value of average daily diet composition (at 2010-11 prices) as has been suggested by the Indian Council of Medical Research, which provides 2400 calories per consumer unit per day has been adopted for determining the value of poverty index. The quantities of food-items consumed by each household during the month preceding the survey, has been divided by the number of ‘Consumer Units’ in order to arrive at the per capita per month consumption of food-items. The value of the per capita per month consumption basket has been calculated by multiplying the quantities of different food-items by their respective prices prevailing in the sample area during the period of investigation (i.e. during 2010-11) among the sample household. The value of per capita per month minimum food-items to meet out the minimum calorie requirements (i.e. 2400 calories) has been worked out Rs. 870.43. The per consumer unit per month actual consumption expenditure on food-items has been worked out Rs. 1316.21, Rs. 1427.28, Rs. 1748.81 and Rs. 2343.81 on the marginal, small, medium and large size of holdings respectively. Among all the holdings together the value of per consumer unit per month consumption expenditure on food-items came out Rs. 1471.53 (table 7.5). By adopting the value of poverty index, i.e. Rs. 870.43 per capita per month consumption expenditure on food-items as the dividing line between the ‘poor’ and ‘not poor’, the percentage of the poor on the
marginal, small and medium size of holding groups has been worked out 25.27, 24.59 and 13.66 per cent respectively. Whereas the overall percentage of the poor among all the holding groups together came out 21.86 (which is evident from table 7.6). The present study clearly reveals that the percentage of the poor is the highest on the marginal size of holdings followed by small and medium size of holdings whereas, on the large size of holding groups, none of household falls in the category of poor. It is important to mention here that on the marginal size of holdings the percentage of the poor is the highest mainly due to uneconomic size of holdings, high percentage of illiteracy and dependency, meagre household income and lack of gainful employment opportunities. But contrary to it on the large size of holdings due to economic size of holdings, high percentage of literacy, low percentage of dependency, gainful employment opportunities, sound and regular sources of household income none of the household falls in the category of poor. The minimum food requirement is necessary but not sufficient for the existence of mankind. A certain minimum amount of non-food items is equally important for the survival of human beings. In the present study due consideration has been given to the non-food items, such as fuel expenditure, gas, electricity bill, clothing, footwear, soap and toilet requirement, education etc. No specific norm comparable to 'minimum calories requirements' has so far been suggested by any institution or individual scholar for non-food items. Therefore in the present study, in order to find out the value of the poverty index the value of 'minimum non-food requirements' has been worked out by calculating the ratio of non-food expenditure to the total food expenditure for the poor. This percentage of non-food expenditure to the minimum food expenditure came out 48.70 per cent for the marginal, 63.58 per cent for the small, 64.74 per cent for the medium and 92.92 per cent for the large size of holding and 59.01 per cent for all the holdings together. The ratio of non food expenditure to the minimum food expenditure for the poor came out 55.73 per cent. The addition of 55.73 percent minimum expenditure on non-food items (i.e. Rs. 485.10) in the per month value of the food-items providing minimum calories requirements(i.e. 2400 calories per capita per day) determines the
value of poverty index in the present study. Thus, the value of poverty index in the study is based on the per capita per month value of both minimum food and non-food requirements (i.e. Nutrition Plus Approach), which came out Rs. 1355.53 (i.e. the value of the per capita per month minimum food-items Rs. 870.43 plus the value of the per capita per month minimum non-food items Rs. 485.10). Thus the value of poverty index based on per capita per month minimum food and non-food requirements at 2010-11 prices has been worked out Rs. 1355.53 (table 7.8). By giving due allowances to the minimum non-food items, the overall percentage of poor among all the sample households has increased from 21.86 to 25.11 percent. The percentage of the poor on the marginal size of holding increased from 25.27 to 30.08 percent, whereas the percentage of the poor on the small size of holding increased from 24.59 to 26.15 percent and the percentage of the poor on the medium size of holding increased from 13.66 to 16.48 percent (Table 7.6 and 7.9).

The above empirical results clearly established the interrelationship between the value of household productive assets, gainful employment opportunities, household income and the consumption expenditure. On the smaller size of holdings due to the lack of sufficient productive assets (i.e., mainly land, live stock, and machinery), the family human labours are either unemployed and/or underemployed, which resulted into meagre household income with the help of which they are not even in a position to meet out their minimum food and non-food requirement. Whereas, contrary to it, the household falling on the large size of holdings have sufficient productive assets which provide gainful employment opportunities to the family human labour as well as regular and sound sources of household income with the help of which they can afford to maintain a good standard of living.

The extent of relative inequalities in the distribution of household assets, income and consumption expenditure have been analysed with the help of Lorenz curve and Gini-coefficient. The value of Gini-coefficient for the distribution of productive assets has been worked out 0.1673 for household falling on the marginal size of holdings. Both the value of Gini-
coefficient and the shape of Lorenz curve (Fig.V.1) shows less inequalities in the distribution of productive assets among the marginal farmers. The Gini-coefficient for the distribution of productive assets among the small and medium size of holdings have been worked out 0.3239 and 0.3314 respectively. The value of Gini-coefficient and the shape of Lorenz curve for the medium size of holding groups (Fig. V.3) shows more inequalities if compared to the value of Gini-coefficient as well as the shape of Lorenz curve on the marginal and small size of holdings. The Gini-coefficient for the distribution of household productive assets on the large holding group has been worked out 0.3569. The value of Gini-coefficient as well as the shape of Lorenz curve (Fig. V.4) shows that higher inequalities exits in the distribution of household productive assets among the large size of holding groups as compared to the marginal, small and medium size of holding groups. The Gini-Coefficient of the value of productive assets among all the sample households has been worked out 0.3139. The value of Gini Co-efficient as well as the shape of the Lorenz curve for the different size of holding groups clearly shows that the extent of inequalities in the distribution of productive assets shows an increasing tendency with an increase in the size of holdings. The shape of Lorenz curve (Fig. V.6) as well as the value of Gini-coefficient, i.e., 0.2269 for the distribution of household income falling on the marginal holdings indicates the extent of relative income inequalities among them. The shape of Lorenz curve (Fig. V.7) and the value of Gini-coefficient, i.e., 0.2825 for the income distribution among the household falling on the small holdings if compared with the shape of Lorenz curve and the Gini-coefficient of income distribution of the marginal farmers, clearly indicates relatively higher inequalities of income distribution among the small size of holdings. The value of Gini-coefficient for the distribution of household income among the medium farmers has been worked out 0.3399. The shape of Lorenz curve (Fig. V.8) and the value of coefficient of the income distribution clearly indicates the higher magnitude of relative inequalities in the distribution of household income among the
medium farmers if compared to the marginal and small farmers. The value of Gini-coefficient of the income distribution for the household falling on the large size of holdings has been worked out 0.3808. The shape of Lorenz curve (Fig. V.9) and the value of Gini-coefficient of the income distribution of the large farmers, if compared with the shape of Lorenz curve and the value of Gini-coefficient of the income distribution among the marginal, small and medium farmers clearly indicates that the extent of the relative inequalities in the distribution of household income is higher on the larger size of holdings. The value of Gini-coefficient for the distribution of household income among all the sample households together has been worked out 0.2772. Thus, both the shape of Lorenz curve (Fig. V.10) as well as the value of the Gini-coefficient (i.e., 0.2772) clearly indicates that there exits relative inequalities in the distribution of household income in area under study. The value of Gini-coefficient for the distribution of household income among the poor households has been worked out 0.1884. The shape of Lorenz curve (Fig. V.11), which is closer to the line of equal distribution as well as the relatively lower value of the Gini-coefficient (i.e., 0.1884) clearly indicates less skewed distribution of household income among the poor sample households.

The magnitude of inequalities in the distribution household consumption expenditure has been worked out with the help of Lorenz curve, Gini-coefficient 'head count ratio' as well as by using the Sen's measures of poverty of 1973 and 1976. The value of Gini-coefficient of the distribution of household consumption expenditure on food-items among the marginal farmers has been worked out 0.1419. The value of Gini-coefficient of the distribution of household consumption expenditure on food-items among all the small farmers came out 0.1817. The shape of Lorenz curve (Fig.VII.2) as well as the value of Gini-coefficient for the distribution of household consumption expenditure among small farmers shows higher inequalities as compared to the shape of Lorenz curve (Fig.VII.1) and the value of Gini-coefficient for the marginal farmers. The value of Gini-coefficient for the distribution of household consumption
expenditure on food-items among the medium and large farmers has been worked out 0.2220 and 0.2573 respectively. The shape of Lorenz curve (Fig. VII.4) as well as the value of Gini-coefficient for the distribution of household consumption expenditure on food-items clearly shows higher inequalities among the large farmers as compared to the marginal, small and medium farmers. The value of Gini-coefficient for the distribution of household consumption expenditure on food items among all the sample household has been worked out 0.1740. The shape of Lorenz curve (Fig. VII.6) as well as the value of Gini-Coefficient for the distribution of consumption expenditure on both food and non-food items among the marginal farmers has been worked out, 0.1468 indicates the extent of inequalities among them. The shape of Lorenz curve (Fig. VII.7) as well as the value of Gini-Coefficient for the distribution of consumption expenditure on both food and non-food items among the small holdings has been worked out 0.1803, indicates the extent of inequalities among them. If it compare with the shape of Lorenz curve and the value of Gini-Coefficient for the distribution of consumption expenditure on both food and non-food items among the marginal holdings i.e., 0.1468 clearly indicates relatively higher inequalities in the distribution of consumption expenditure on both food and non-food items among the small holdings. The shape of Lorenz curves (Fig. VII.8) as well as the value of Gini-Coefficient, i.e., 0.1923 shows higher inequalities in the distribution of consumption expenditure on both food and non-food items among the medium sample households as compare to the marginal and small holdings. The shape of Lorenz curve (Fig. VII.9) as well as the value of Gini-Coefficient, i.e. 0.2782 shows higher inequalities in the distribution of consumption expenditure on both food and non-food items among the large sample households as compare to the marginal, small and medium size of holdings. The shape of Lorenz curve (Fig. VII.10) as well as the value of Gini-Coefficient i.e. 0.1833 shows relatively less inequalities in the distribution of consumption expenditure on both food and non-food items among all the sample households together as compare to the medium and large size of holdings.
On the basis of 'head count ratio' the percentage of poor among the rural sample households came out 27.77 percentages. But 'head count ratio' as a measure of poverty, is completely insensitive to the aggregative shortfall in income from the poverty line as well as to the distribution of income amongst the poor. The poverty measure has been modified by A.K. Sen. by taking into account the following two factors:

I) We should be concerned not merely with the number of people below the poverty line but also with the amounts by which the income of the poor fall short of the specified poverty level; and

II) The bigger the shortfall from the poverty level, the greater should be the weight per unit of that shortfall in poverty measure.

According to Sen's measure of poverty (1973), 7.41 percent of the total sample households has been worked out below the poverty line, whereas, according to Sen's measure of poverty (1976) the percentage of poorest amongst the poor came out 2.24 percent. Sen's measure of poverty (1976) is superior to both the usual 'head count ratio' as well as to the standard measure of 'relative inequality' (Gini-Coefficient). Thus, the extent of relative poverty with the help of different poverty measure, i.e., 'head count ratio'(H), Gini-Coefficient (G) and Sen.'s measure of poverty 1973 and 1976 which is Ps and Ps* has been worked out 27.77, 12.45, 7.41 and 2.24 percent respectively (Table 7.20). The percentage of rural poor varies with the help of different measures. But Ps* is considered more reliable as, both the distribution of income among the poor as well as the extent of the aggregate shortfall in income from the poverty line has been taken into account. While Ps* Measure is closely aligned to the Gini-coefficient, it has too distinguished features; (1) It covers only a part of the distribution, and (2) It is an absolute measure.

Thus, the varying estimates of inequalities in the distribution of household assets, income and consumption expenditure as well as the extent of relative poverty among the sample households has been worked out with the help of Lorenz curve, Gini-coefficient, head count ratio, Sen's measure of poverty of 1973 and 1976 in order to analyze the socio economic
conditions according to the size class of holdings. The estimates of unemployment among the sample households has been worked out by using the time, income (i.e. poverty) and willingness criteria in order to work out the magnitude of unemployment in term of 'idle', 'poor' and 'willing'. The extent of poverty among the sample household has been worked out with the help of both ‘normative’ and ‘positive’ measures. Keeping in view the merits and demerits of the different measure of absolute and relative poverty, the results worked out with the help of ‘normative approach’ (i.e. by taking into account the value of per consumer unit per month minimum food and non-food requirement at 2010-2011 prices ) gives more reliable results of absolute poverty among the sample households. Among the positive measure of poverty, the Sen’s measure of poverty (1976) is considered more realistic because it measures the magnitude of poorest among the poor. Thus, it can be concluded that the estimate of poverty so arrived at with the help of ‘normative approach’ and the Sen's measure of poverty (1976) are more accurate, realistic and reliable from the policy point of the view.

The percentage amount of subsidy on food-items shows a decreasing tendency with an increase in the size of holding. The percentage amount of subsidy on food-items is the highest on the marginal and small holdings group mainly due to the reason that Government provide food-items on subsidies rate to the BPL families and maximum BPL families belongs to marginal and small holdings group, whereas contrary to it, the percentage amount of subsidy on fertilizers shows an increasing tendency with an increase in the size of holding. The percentage value of subsidy on fertilizers is the highest on the large holdings group mainly due to the reason that these farmers use more fertilizer as comparatively to small holdings. The percentage increase in the value of household assets, income and employment on the account of the assistance received from the Government for the construction of houses shows that under rural development programmes among the marginal, small, medium and large size of holding groups the least better-off household benefited the most and the better-off
benefited the least. It happened mainly due to the reason that the Government provides assistance for scheduled cast, scheduled tribe and BPL families for construction of houses under various schemes. The percentage of assistance received from the government for old age pension, fee concession and fellowship received by the sample household shows an increasing tendency with an increase in the size of holdings (Table 8.1). This clearly reveals that under the rural development programmes in case of employment scheme the poorest benefited the most and least poor benefited the least. Thus, in the sample area, rural development programmes and employment scheme seems to have improved the socio-economic conditions of the poor rural households.

Thus, it can be concluded from the present empirical study that there exists lot of inequalities in the distribution of household assets, income and consumption expenditure among the sample households falling on the different holding groups, which resulted in wide variations in the socio-economic conditions of the sample households. The better-off households are engaged in gainful activities on their own farms, whereas, the worst-off households are suffering from involuntary unemployment and underemployment, the magnitude of which is very high on the marginal size of holdings and shows a decreasing tendency with an increase in the size of holding. Therefore in order to reduce the inequalities in the distribution of household productive assets, employment opportunities, household income and consumption expenditure between the rich and poor as well as to raise the socio-economic conditions of the poor rural households through increased availability of productive assets, skill formation and gainful employment opportunities, the planning strategy for rural development should be judicious mix of beneficiary oriented programmes, human resource development and infrastructure development. The emphasis should be placed on the minor irrigation, soil and water conservation, co-operation, rural roads and reforms in the infrastructure Sector; drinking water supply, general education, technical education and health in the social service sector; horticulture, animal husbandry, dairy development, fisheries and
forestry in the agricultural sector and small village and cottage industries in
the industrial sector. Therefore, in order to raise the socio-economic
conditions as well as to reduce the gap between the rich and poor, the
planners, policy maker and administrator should implements the poverty
alleviation programmes more effectively in the rural area in such a way so
that most poor be benefited the most and the least poor be benefited the
least.