Women over the year had to face the worst form of humiliation and discrimination from those quarters which were once considered a safe haven for them. Women constitute half of the world's population but continue to be deprived of the opportunities for equality in development. Despite their contribution in primary sector, they were not viewed as being within the production system or being an economic contributor to their families. The contribution of women to the national economy of many developing countries has largely been ignored, when assessing the level of economic development. Every society assigns roles on the basis of gender. Female, as a principle of social organization, is found throughout the evolutionary spectrum of human societies, ranging from hunting – gathering communities to industrial nations.

Women work longer hours and their work is more arduous than men's. Women's contribution to agriculture—whether it be subsistence farming or commercial agriculture—when measured in terms of the number of tasks performed and time spent, is greater than men.

"The extent of women's contribution is aptly highlight by a micro study conducted in the Indian Himalayas which found that on a one-hectare farm, a pair of bullocks works 1,064 hours, a man 1,212 hours and a woman 3,845 hours in a year."

A woman is the mother of the race and liaison between generations. It is the woman who has sustained the growth of society and moulded the future of a nation. In the emerging complex social scenario, women have a pivotal role to play. They can no longer be considered as mere harbingers of peace, but are emerging as a source of power and symbol of progress. Women have now taken up professional roles in order to create a meaning for themselves. The traditional role of a housewife has gradually changed into working women and housemaker. Many of the factors are responsible for this change. It is better education,
changing socio cultural values and need for supplementary income. Nobody can deny the fact that Indian women have stormed into almost all male bastions. She is entering into new fields including administration, science and technology, medicine, journalism and the like but still the member is in minority. The number of women in top position is also quite low.

The present study is an attempt to study the labour time allocation and valuation of women's contribution in household activities: rural and urban areas of Himachal Pradesh. The study comprises eight chapters in all. The statement of the problem, an overview of women's position, economy of Himachal Pradesh in general along with the socio-economic profile of the districts Shimla and Kinnaur have been discussed in Chapter-I, whereas, Chapter-II deals with the review of related studies on the valuation of women's work, their participation and decision-making power. The definition of concepts, objective of the present study, sampling procedure, valuation of household activities and Gender-Related Development Index (GDI) along with the limitation of the present investigation have been dealt in Chapter-III, whereas, Chapter-IV deals with the analysis of the socio-economic condition of the sample households of rural and urban areas of State. The work time allocation and valuation of women's household activities among the sample household has been dealt in Chapter-V, whereas, Chapter-VI deals with differentials in sex-wise levels of consumption expenditure. Role of female in decision-making have been discussed in Chapter-VIII, whereas, Chapter-VIII deals with the summary, suggestion and conclusions.

I feel ecstatically delighted in expressing my sincere thanks and personal regards to my guide Prof. K. C. Sharma, Department of Economics, Himachal Pradesh University Centre for Evening Studies, for taking keen interest tackling the problems having in this dissertation. His benevolent guidance, perennial impetus and invaluable criticism
sustained my interest, and I have been able to complete the present study.

I am also grateful to Prof. Aparna Negi chairperson Department of Economics, Prof. D.S. Thakur, Prof. Shyam Parshad Sharma, Prof. Meenakshi Soodan, Prof. Sikander Kumar and Mr. N.S. Bist for their righteous guidance and generous help without any hesitation during the course of present study.

The present study has been completed with the active assistance and guidance, of various individuals including various agencies. Many teacher, friends, relatives and professional have rendered their invaluable help at various stages. Though it would not be possible to mention all the names of those, who rendered their valuable and generous help in their own way, yet it would be being ungrateful, if I do not acknowledge thanks to some of those without whose assistance it would not have been possible to conduct this study. I owe due apologies to all those, whose contribution I have not been able to recount. However, I cannot afford not to mention a few.

I am expressing my sincere thanks to Ma’am Dr. Anita Sharma (Associate Professor) Rajiv Gandhi Govt. Degree College, Kotshera and her loving daughters for their invaluable help at various stages of my work.

Every effort is motivated by an ambition and all ambition have in aspiration behind them. I owe this pride place to my ever-loving Mummy (Mrs. Daya Bhagti) Papa (Mr. Vidya Nand Negi) and loving husband (Mr. Ajay Singh Negi), the most revered personalities in my life, whose selfless sacrifices, firm faith, ecstatic love and showering benediction enabled me to go through this gruelling manoeuvre. Language seems to be inadequate media to express my gratitude for constant encouragement and abysmal affection from my elder brother (Mr. J.P. Negi) and sister (Sneh Negi).
My successful accomplishment of the task owes its greater extent to the loving, immemorable and joyous company of my husband, my friends Sandhya, Shashi and Rajiv.

It is inevitable to recognise the kind cooperation and help from Mrs. Neeta Gutam (Deputy Director) and Mr. Basu Sood (Deputy Director), Planning Department, Himachal Pradesh. I also remain grateful to Mr. Bist Research Officer (NSSO) Kusumpti for his cooperation during the course of this research work.

I would also like to extend my gratitude and thanks to Economics and Statistics Department (Kusumpti) library staff, NSSO Survey Office Staff (Kusumpti), Directorate of population Census (Shimla), Staff of the D.C. Office Kinnaur, Municipal corporation office staff (Shimla), library staff of Himachal Pradesh University for providing me all facilities to accomplish this work.

I would like to express my heartfelt thanks for all those who have helped me directly or indirectly in the completion of this work.

My sincere thanks are due to Mr. Molan Singh for typing and printing whole manuscript efficiently.

Lalita Devi