Chapter-X

DISCUSSION

The present chapter attempts to discuss the issues developed on the basis of the findings given in previous chapters of this manuscript, relating to "A study on employment, wage structure and level of income of the farm women workers in district Kanpur Dehat". The main issues raised for discussion are as follows:

1. What is socio-economic structure of sample households under different categories?
2. What is employment pattern of farm women workers in agricultural and non-agricultural sector?
3. What is mode of wage payments prevailing in the study area?
4. How much wages are paid to farm women workers for different activities in agricultural and non-agricultural sector?
5. What is level of income of farm women workers in total household income?
6. What are main constraints faced by farm women workers in agricultural sector and non-agricultural sector.

The potential availability of family workers, on an average, came to 1310.29 workers per household (male + female) per annum in the study area. It varied from 990.50 to 1482.92 family workers/annum. Enterprises wise break-up of agriculture sector shows that female of all the categories of households got higher employment in livestock
production than that of crop production. Employment on own farm for male and female in crop production shows an increasing trend with the increase in size of land holdings. Female workers got higher employment than male workers in crop production on below 1 ha size groups, where as it was lower in other categories. In case of livestock production female got higher employment than male except in large size of land holdings. On an average female got 218.60 days/household/annum employment on landless categories to 274.18 days on medium size of household.

Coming to the hired out employment in agriculture sector, it shows that male and female got an average 108.65 and 103.73 days employment/household/annum, respectively. The female workers of large category did not go to work on other farms. They have offered their services only on own farm despite under employment. Category wise employment of female labour was the highest being 159.44 days/household/annum on landless category, followed by marginal, medium and large. In case of non-agriculture sector, male and female both were engaged to some extent in self and hiredout employment. Hired out employment of female in non-agriculture sector was lower than male in all the categories. On an average, male & female got 53.30 and 24.51 days employment/household/annum. Female employment shows decreasing trend with increase in size of holding and reverse trend was found in case of male. This indicates that non-agriculture sector provides lower employment opportunities in the study area, which also adversely affects the wage rates in agriculture sector.

As regards overall task wise participation of female workers in crop production it was found a little lower than male workers. Overall task wise division of crop production shows that participation of workers was the highest being 48.76 days/annum/household in weeding of crops,
followed by harvesting, sowing/transplanting, threshing/winnowing, land preparation and manuring. Gender wise division of different task of livestock production indicates that the participation of women in livestock production was found higher than men. Overall participation of women workers among different activities of livestock, was the highest being 58.11 mandays/household/annum in carrying of fodder, followed by grazing of animal, care of animals, feeding to animals, making cow-dung cake, chaff cutting, cleaning cattleshed etc. Similar results were reported by Singh and Singh (1982).

Recognition of the role played by women is essential for planning and implementing plans successfully. Even when they worked as labour on wages, they had to do all the work in the home with little help from males. Women belonging to all the categories were spending maximum amount of time in unpaid domestic works. Overall average daily time spent by women workers in different household chores come to 6.63 hours/household. It increases with the increase in farm categories of households. It was also affected by various factors like, education, socio-economic status of family, types of family.

It was also found that males were also helping to some extent, but very minimum. It is clear that the household chores were the responsibilities of women, but there are some of these chores in which males were also found to be participating. It is emerged that women worked longer hours daily in almost all the rural activities with aid of their muscular power. Thus, consequential division of the burden of daily work appears to be common feature not only on sample households but in the entire study area.
Coming to the hired out family labour in crop production shows that women of landless, marginal, and medium categories of households were providing their services as hiredout labour on other farms, because they could not get sufficient employment in their own farm all over the year. During peak period of crops, the demand of labours increases rapidly due to this wages rises, which attracted more and more women and child labours in crop production activities. Most of the women workers of medium category worked on other farms as mutual arrangement of labour demand and some of them worked as wage labours. But the women of landless category worked only as wage labourers. None of the women and male workers of large category worked as wage labourers on other farms in any agriculture operations in the study area.

Overall women workers were more engaged in hired out services in agriculture (122.92 mandays) than that of male (108.67 mandays/household/ annum). This shows that women worked more than male on the other farms. Total employment of hired out women labours on other farms was higher on marginal category, followed by landless and medium.

Coming to the utilization of hired labour on own farm in crop production specially on medium and large categories of farms required in peak periods to complete timely different agricultural operations. On an average 70.73 women and 69.45 male labours got employment as hired labour in different activities of crop production on medium and large categories farms. This labour force was mainly supplied by the landless and marginal categories of households, due to lack of sufficient own farm employment. The highest member of women labours were required in
harvesting of crops, followed by weeding, sowing, transplanting, threshing and winnowing.

As regards monthly hired out employment in agriculture is an important factor for employment pattern in agriculture, because pattern of employment in agriculture is seasonal. There are three main peak period i.e. July-August in kharif, October-November in Rabi and March-April in Zaid. The highest demand of hiredout employment for women labours were in the month of July, followed by April, August, March, October and November. In these (peak months) 6 months the demand for hired out labour was 72 per cent and rest (28%) was in lean period (6 months).

Coming to the non-farm sector employment, it plays an important role in rural areas, where as agriculture sector provides only seasonal employment in peak period. During lean periods workers become unemployed or under employed due to slack employment. Non-farm employment may be divided into two categories : (i) itself employment and (ii) hired out employment.

Overall basis women labours got an average 32.17 days and 24.51 days/household/annum self and hired out employment in non-agriculture sector respectively. In self employment, women were highest engaged in trade & business, followed by tailoring, construction works, agro-based industries and other activities. In case of hired out employment in non-agriculture sector, women got higher employment in government services, followed by construction works, trade & business, other activities including marketing, tailoring, cleaning of house etc. and agro-based industries. Women got lower employment opportunities in non-agriculture sector both in self and hired out in non-agriculture sector both in self and hired out in comparison to male. Hired out employment in
non-agriculture for women labour showed an decreasing trend with rise in farm category of household, due to lower employment in non-agriculture sector. However, self employment in non-agriculture showed rising trend with the rise in farm category of households due to higher investment capacity of large size category of household in self business than other categories. Overall employment in non-agriculture sector for women was about one-third of male workers. This variation was the highest on large category of household and the lowest on landless category. The variation between women and male employment in non-agriculture sector increases with the increasing farm category of households. Overall analysis shows that women workers get higher employment in agricultural sector than non-agricultural sector. Similar results were also observed by Sisodia (1985), Kalamathi (1988), Saibia (1999), Tripathi (1999), Pandey et al. (1999), Singh et al. (1999), Birari et al. (1999).

Coming to the level of income of women workers under different size group of household, level of income plays an important role in the development of economy of any household in particular and whole economy of country in general. Basically India is an agriculture dominated economy, where large number of people depend on agriculture. In this regard gender wise income generation from crop production, on an average came to Rs. 16,339.91 per household/annum, which included Rs. 9208.62 of male and Rs. 7131.29 of women income. Income from crop production was lower than male in all the categories of households except marginal farm household. As regards sexwise income generation from livestock production on an average for women and male came to Rs. 2535.65 and Rs. 2376.78 per household/ annum, respectively. Income of women workers was found higher than male in all the categories of household except large farm category of household. Total income of
sample household from livestock production showed an rising trend with the rise in the farm higher number of milch animal on large farm than other farms.

Coming to the income from non-agriculture sector, it included income generated from self employment and income from hiredout services. Overall total income of women workers was found Rs. 1377.51 per household/annum, which varied from Rs. 1118.50 on large farm to Rs. 1513.70 on marginal household category. Category wise break-up of women income from hired out services showed decreasing trend with the increase in farm category of households. Against it, in case of self employment income of women was the highest being Rs. 727.20 per household on medium category of household, followed by marginal, large and landless category of households.

Coming to the total income of household generated from agriculture and non-agriculture sector on different categories of households showed an increasing trend with the increase in farm category of households. On an average income of households came to Rs. 27039.70 per annum. It included Rs. 15995.26 of male and Rs. 11044.44 of women income per household/annum. Contribution of women income in total household was found to be lower than that of male in all the categories of household. Category wise break-up of women income was the highest on large category household, followed by marginal, medium and landless households, but in case of percentage terms, it was the highest being 43.84 per cent on marginal household, followed by landless, medium and large categories of households. Overall percentage contribution of women income to total household income came to 40.84 per cent. It was highest being 26.37 per cent in crop production, followed by livestock (9.38 per cent) and non-agriculture sector (5.09 per cent.)
Coming to the monthly hired out income generated by women from crop production, overall it came Rs. 217.33 /household/month. It was the highest being Rs. 469.00 in month of April, when Rabi crops are being harvesting and zaid crops are being grown followed by July (Rs. 466.50) when sowing and transplanting of paddy and other kharif crops are being done. Next month is August when weeding of kharif crops period. Monthly wise income trend of women showed wide variation in all over the years. Hiredout income of women in these peak months was lower than male, whereas employment days were found higher of women than male. Lower income of women than male is directly associated with the wage rate discrimination against women for similar work. In other words, wage rate for women in agriculture is lower than male for similar works in the study area.

Coming to the wage rate for a particular operation in agriculture and non-agriculture sector should be equal to wage consisting of each cash component and non-cash components (meals, refreshments, wage in kinds, portion of retained crops during harvesting etc.). The value of non-cash component to the cash payment had been included to compute the real wage rate. On an average wages for skilled male labour was the highest being Rs. 58.00, followed by harvester, weeder, other agricultural labourer, ploughman, sower/transplanter and hardsman came as Rs. 33.75, Rs. 31.50, Rs. 31.25, Rs. 30.00, Rs. 30.00 and Rs. 25.00 per day, respectively. These wages were lower for women labour and child labour than male labours. This shows gender discrimination for the payments of wages in similar nature of works. Monthly wage payment shows that the wages for the month of April, October and November were some higher than other months, due to peak period of agricultural operations. Wages in months of January, February and September were found to be very lower,
due lean of agricultural operation. Wages of child labour was also found to be very low than male and female. Large number of child labourers were employed in sowing/transplanting, weeding, harvesting, land preparation etc. activities due to lower wages on one hand and performing hard work for longer hours on the other.

As regards operation wise wage rate in agriculture for women labour was the highest being Rs. 32.50/day at harvesting of kharif and rabi crops, followed by sowing/transplanting (Rs. 31.75 day) weeding/hoeing and threshing/winnowing (each Rs. 30.25/day) land preparation and manuring/fertilizing (Rs. 27.50/day) and irrigation (Rs. 25.00/day). Against it, the wages for male labourers was found to be higher than women in all the agricultural operations. However, in some agricultural operations women do better works than male but they got lower wages. It is clear from above discussion that the pattern of wage payments in the study area is not in favour of women. Similar results were observed by Pandey (1975), Chandra et. al. (1985), Ray et. al. (1985), Sethi (1982), Acharya and Panduwalkar (1988), Nigam (1982), Mishra & Mishra (1990) Kalanasthi (1988), Diwakaran (1996). Adult women, child women and child male had poor bargaining power for their reasonable wages due to lack of sufficient employment in farm and non-farm sector in the study area. Due to lower wages of this group labour group of these household was unable to earn sufficient income for the need of their basic requirements, which pushed more and more these groups for cheapest wages rate for fulfilling their basic needs.

Regarding mode of payment of wages it varied from one farm category to other farm category. The overall majority of labourers were paid daily wages (80.07 per cent), followed by weekly (16.12 per cent), fortnightly and monthly (1.25 per cent). The payment of wages once in a
week on medium and large categories indicates that work was available to the agricultural labours continuously for a week and that they were guaranteed of working in the same farm for a few days. Method of monthly wage payment showed that on an average 67.08 per cent wages were paid in cash form, followed by 22.92 and 10.00 per cent were paid in kind form and both (cash kind form) form, respectively. All these three forms of wage payments were prevailing in all the months of year. Kind wages were paid more in months of April September and November. Majority of the month wages were paid only in cash form (more than 50 per cent.).

Test of hypothesis:

The first hypothesis that "Farm women workers gets higher employment in agriculture than non-agriculture sector" was found true as per findings given in chapter VI.

The second hypothesis that the "Farm women workers contribute significantly towards income of their households" was found valid as per findings given in chapter VII.

The third hypothesis that the "Farm women workers are paid less wages than men for performing the same operations" was also found true as per findings given in chapter VIII.