ABSTRACT

As a dominant sector of an economy, agriculture plays a vital role in generating income, employment and subsistence for our population and this role dominates effects the level of living of the people. Agriculture dominates the economy to such an extent that a high proportion of working population in India is engaged in agricultural production and agricultural activities. So, study about the Marginal Farmers is very important for an agriculture economy like India. The term "sub-marginal" farmers appears to be inappropriate in the Indian context. The concept of "margin" in economics, is related to a particular conjuncture of time and circumstances such as prices, conditions of supply and demand and states of technique, so that what is "marginal" activities in any sector of the economic at one time and under one set of circumstances would be sub-marginal or supra—marginal under different conditions. There should be nothing like a permanent “sub-marginal” sector in the rest of the economy, since such a sector should sooner or later cease to operate. Since a substantial part of the Indian agricultural economy continues to operate for fairly long periods of time on a “deficit" basis, it would be rather odd to call it "sub-marginal. In this direction, many studies have concluded that keeping in view, the vast majority of small and Marginal Farmers and their resource-poor condition, the question is- how to make these farm households viable. How can these farmers maximize their total returns from farming? It is a known fact in India that small and Marginal Farmers are generally resource—poor. This is more so in arid and semi-arid regions, where due to lack of adequate potential of development, like irrigation, the farmers are forced to use the available resources without caring for sustainability.

In fact, many studies have concluded that the situation of marginal farmers have significantly improved after the independence. In this area of research, the first objective of the present thesis is to estimate the per Household, per capita income and consumption level of the marginal farmers. The second objective is to compare and contrast the relative shares of different sources of income in the composition of the total income and expenditure. Further, the third objective of this thesis is to assess the extent of poverty prevailing among the marginal farmers by taking into consideration per-capita income and consumption. Furthermore, the fourth objective of this thesis is to study the composition of assets and liabilities of marginal farmers. For fulfilling the objectives of the study, the primary data was collected with the help of multi stage random
sampling method from Rohtak, Karnal and Rewari districts of Haryana. In this direction for conducting of an intensive study from all selected districts, a total sample of 180 respondents of three districts have been selected for the study. The results of the study reveal that the caste structure of Marginal Farmers in rural Haryana is different across the districts. 95.66 Percent houses are pucca among the Marginal Farmers in rural Haryana. In the same way 93 and 97 percent houses are electrified and independent 30.33 percent and 48.66 percent households have separate bathroom and kitchen in rural Haryana respectively. Size of owned land holding among the Marginal Farmers is 1.62 acre in rural Haryana. Size of family among the Marginal Farmers in rural Haryana is 4.72 members. Working members are (63.33 percent) more than non-working members among the Marginal Farmers. About 65 percent members are found literate in the selected districts among the Marginal Farmers. Marginal Farmers are in better position of political consciousness in rural Haryana. About 44 percent Marginal Farmers or head of the family read newspaper and district Rohtak accounts highest 46 percentage. 8.33 percent Marginal Farmers and 4.33 percent their children are suffered from any diseases in rural Haryana. The major source of income of the Marginal Farmers is farm-business. Wage—employment outside the agricultural sector is preferred to agricultural sector by the Marginal Farmers. Socio-cultural environment in rural Haryana forbids the cultivating households to wage employment in the agricultural sector, even though such opportunities are available at the village level. On the basis of per-capita income, the proportion of the Marginal Farmers below the poverty line is much higher (2.9%) and (26%) in Rewari and Rohtak respectively than that in the highest productivity district. The major sources of income of an average marginal farm household in the rural areas of Haryana is farm business, followed by dairying, pension, agricultural labour, shop, services and self—employment. There is much similarity in the per-capita consumption across the districts. District Rohtak has recorded highest per-capita consumption expenditure (Rs.7435.60) followed by Karnal & Rewari Rs.7010.93 and Rs. 6837.66 respectively. The relative shares of different constituents of the farm assets show that the land accounts (95.60 percent) for the major share in selected districts. The per household value of the assets follow the productivity level across the districts.

In the last, on the basis of findings of the study, some suggestions have been given to improve the conditions of marginal farmers and to remove their various problems associated with them in the Haryana state. It is observed during the survey that Marginal Farmers spend 12.10% of their
total income on unproductive expenditure which mainly includes various social and religious functions such as before and after marriages of their children, celebration of birth ceremonies, etc. So it is suggested to make them aware not to spend on the unproductive activities because it becomes a liability which effects adversely their living standard and efficiency. This awareness campaign may be organized by the various good agencies with the active cooperation from various social organizations having influence over the specific region, which will increase the spending the Marginal Farmers on the productive activities. Thus so their assets, income and living standards may improve. They should be provided loan on low rate of interest (less than 3%) for the productive activities only after the project evaluation by the concerned bank. As they do not have any assets and have only small land-holding, they should not be compelled pledge their assets and any other things for borrowing loans. Loans should be provided for long term as depending upon the nature of purpose, so that they may report as per the instructions of the banks. Without being defaulters. During the survey, it was observed that they are provided with short term loans and after lending loan bank did not monitor well; whether it is utilized for the same purpose or not. It is also suggested that commercial banks should come forward and gear up further for lending to Marginal Farmers and to bridge the gap between demand and supply left by the credit societies. It is also observed that Marginal Farmers are not recognizing the dignity of labor to supplement their income term; the small land holding rule to their ego & social values. Which is a big obstacle in their earnings from other sources. So it is felt that social organizations should aware them regarding the dignity of labor, which will increase their income, assets and standards of livings. It is also observed during the study that disguised/unemployment is very common among the Marginal Farmers. various govt. agencies should try to remove it by involving the people and other social organizations. They should be provided adequate job opportunities. 36% members of Marginal Farmers household were found to be non-worker and some are capable to do the work but still these are not working due to early statement of their age, attitude of parents toward their children etc. It is also found that about 95 percent of Marginal Farmers are growing the crops of Wheat, Rice, Bajra, and other traditional crops. These are the main sources of their income. Moreover, 60 percent of them are not using the seeds of good quality, pesticides and fertilizers due to low income. So it is suggested to adopt the commercial crops such as vegetables, pulses and other to increase their farm-income depending upon the quality of land. They should also adopt the modern techniques of production
to increase the productivity of their lands with the active cooperation from agriculture development officers etc. which will improve their living standard and efficiency.