The purpose of the study was to find out the nature and pattern of socialization and also their working conditions in different occupational groups in the urban informal sector. We had three categories of workers — (i) Sweepers, (ii) Construction workers, and (iii) Maid Servants. The study was conducted in Rohtak city and was confined to the lower segments of society.

The proposed study consists of six chapters excluding the seventh chapter i.e., the concluding chapter. The first chapter deals with the conceptual and theoretical clarification relating to the female workers' conditions in urban informal sector. So far as the female workers' conditions in the informal sector is concerned, the situation is not as precarious as it obtains in the formal sector. The findings of the present study bear testimony to this fact. Yet another interesting feature of the present study was that despite the legislative measures and increase in female literacy rate, the females' subordinate position still continues to be the hard fact of their life. The feminist arguments discussed in the present study is confirmed through our field-based studies also. Some of the arguments of the radical feminist also find confirmation in our study specially when we examine their
predicament while recording women's perception towards their job.

We have also taken the samples from the three categories of workers in the informal sector so that the representation of female workers in informal sector may be justified. As we see that Indian society observes the patriarchal system which further differentiates privileges, opportunities, accessibility to power in the different socio-economic strata not only along caste lines but also along the line of gender. Therefore, we tried to locate the reasons and feelings for this gender inequality in terms of their socialization pattern, working conditions, forms of exploitation and domestic problems etc.

Thus by taking these objectives into consideration, our study throws light on the nature and basis of inequality. The socialization pattern starts from the family itself which is responsible for continuing gender-based distinction. The females attribute the gender inequality in their socio-cultural background for giving importance to the belief that women are by birth inferior to men.
The second chapter of our thesis surveyed the research conducted in this area and a brief review of study revealed that the social dimensions relating to the socialization of female workers and their perceptions about the job have not been adequately dealt with in those studies. Needless to add here that the economic condition of female workers engaged in informal sector would also require a detailed study in case of Haryana. Such studies, incorporating the social dimensions is almost negligible in case of Haryana. And therefore, the findings of the present study proposes to fill that void which is there in respect of study on female workers in informal sector. For this purpose in the present study, we worked out an interview schedule containing list of questions which were filled up by asking questions from the respondents. Wherever needed we also collected information from labour contractors by conducting informal interviews. Informal interviews were also sought from those respondents who were victims of economic exploitation and sexual harassment. Similarly the labour contractors/employers were also interviewed.

In this study, we had samples of 225 respondents,
75 from each occupational group. The urban informal sector employs a large number of people in the city. However, the women workforce percentage in it is significantly higher. All these women workers work both at employers' houses as well as in their own houses. Before drawing the conclusions from the study, it is quite pertinent to summarize the main findings of the study.

Majority of the respondents i.e., 93.78 per cent, were found to be below 45 years of age. This is quite significant especially in view of the fact that there is no upper age limit in the informal sector.

This observation of age of the workers clearly indicates that the informal sector activities require a lot of physical strain. That is why, though without any age restrictions, younger or less elderly people are found engaged in urban informal sector.

It was found that 16 per cent of the maid servants were above 45 years of age whereas only 1.33 per cent workers were above 45 years of age in the other two categories. This clearly indicates that the nature of work of maid servants is comparatively less arduous.
Majority of workers in the urban informal sector were found to be Hindus with only four Muslim respondents—one in maid servants, and three in construction workers' category. All these women were migrants from U.P. and Rajasthan. The majority of the respondents were Hindus and eighty per cent of them were married. This indicated the respect of Hindus to the institution of marriage. The respondents belonged to different castes. For the purpose of discussion, they were divided into three classes viz., Higher, Middle and Lower. Higher caste groups included Brahmins, Jats, Banias & Khatris. The middle caste group consisted of Sunars, Luhars, Khatis and Kumhars etc. The third was the lower caste group consisting of Chamars, Balmikis and Dhanaks. It was found that in sweepers' occupation, there was no one from higher caste group or middle caste group. All sweepers belonged to the lower caste group which showed the caste-based orientation of this occupation. In the category of construction workers, respondents were either from the low castes or from middle caste groups. This indicates the low social esteem attached to their occupation. However, about 50 per cent maidservants belonged to upper caste group. Two respondents were Jats and 5 respondents were Brahmins.
and the rest of the respondents i.e., 30 belonged to Khatri caste of Punjabis. These persons who came from Pakistan after partition are commonly known as Punjabis. The occupation of construction workers and sweepers was found to be caste based, though there is no specific caste bias in the maid servants' category.

Majority of the respondents, i.e. 92 per cent, were illiterate in the urban informal sector. There was no significant difference in the percentage of literacy in the three occupational groups. The rate of illiteracy was the maximum in the construction workers' category. This can be attributed to the high percentage of migrant labourers among them.

Majority of the respondents lived in nuclear families. This percentage was the highest in construction workers which can be attributed to the highest level of migration among them. The over all high percentage of the nuclear family, 90.22 per cent, shows that the joint family system is on the way out. We also found that average size of a family was 4-6 in most of the respondents.

So far as problem of accommodation was concerned 57.33 per cent of the respondents found to be living in
their own houses. 38.67 per cent of the respondents who have their own houses belong to the category of construction workers. Among the construction workers, the percentage was found to be low primarily because a great deal of these workers were the migrants.

All the sweepers and maid servants lived either in rented houses or in their own houses. The houses, however, were found to be congested in most of the cases. In the houses of sweepers, there was no separate kitchen and bathroom. The houses of maid servants had generally both kitchen and bathrooms. These workers mostly take water from municipal committee taps. The difference lies in the fact that sweepers fetch water on their heads from the taps while construction workers and many of the maidservants had water taps in their own houses.

Significant number of workers in the urban informal sector had Hindi as their mother tongue. They speak Hindi with "Haryanvi" dialect.

While analysing their earnings it was found that 53.33 per cent workers earn Rs. 501-1000 per month and 24.44 per cent below Rs. 500/- and only 22.22 per cent
earned Rs. 1001 to Rs. 1500/-. The income in Rohtak's urban informal sector was found to be generally more than some of the southern states like Karnataka and Tamil Nadu. This is because of the fact that Haryana is one of the most prosperous states of India next only to Punjab.

The findings on the social aspect of our study show that the majority of the respondents, of all castes and occupational groups, confessed the differentiation in behaviour towards them vis-a-vis their brothers. This pattern of socialization, as found by them, in their family of orientation was later repeated in their family of procreation. Poverty combined with traditions and cultural factors is the root cause of this differentiation. This type of disparity lies in our customs also since a girl goes to her husband's house after marriage and the boys are expected to live with their parents and help them in distress. Thus, it is the family itself, which, subjects a female child to a subordinate position, in the first instance.

The level of discrimination was found to be higher in the lower caste groups (i.e., 53.33 per cent). Majority of the respondents had accepted this state of
affairs as their destiny or the wish of the Almighty. The discrimination was shown not only in food and educational facilities but also in the health care attitudes. The boys are allowed to play while the girls are mostly confined to the household chores. These lower segments of society, though attached some importance to the education of male child they considered the education of female child as a wastage of time. If at all, due to less means, the education of some of the children was to be sacrificed, invariably the case of female child was found to be more critical.

Some of the respondents made strange observation that if the girls become highly educated, they will tend to learn less of the household chores and thus may find a lot of difficulties and even harassment at the hands of their in-laws after marriage.

Nearly half of the respondents fulfilled all requirements of their husbands and children. However, 50 per cent thought that they are not able to fulfil all the requirements of their husbands and children. Majority of women attributed this to their economic condition i.e. less income, or less wages etc. Regarding the occupational
diseases, majority of women workers replied in the negative. Only a few of them complained about pain in joints, bodyache etc. due to the heavy physical works that they were subjected to.

Two-thirds of the women in the present study had no problem due to their occupation. The remaining respondents had economic problems or the socio-religious problems like that of untouchability.

Majority of the married women in the urban informal sector lived with their husbands and only one woman, a construction worker and 16 per cent of maid servants were not living with their husbands. All married sweepers stayed with their husbands. On studying the arrangements of their children during their working hours, it was found that the children of construction workers play on the site of their work itself. Children of sweepers and maid servants, either go to schools or live with their relatives and with the neighbours. No creche facilities were seen in the informal sector.

Majority of the respondents in the construction industry were migrants. In maid servants category, 40 per cent workers were migrants. And in sweepers category only
17.33 per cent workers had migrated due to economic compulsions. The migrants were found engaged in construction activities. It can be attributed to the fact that they want to exert more to earn more. They were mostly working along with their husbands in the construction work.

Majority of the respondents worked for 9 to 11 hours. They also spend 5 to 6 hours daily on their own household works. Thus they are found working for almost 17 hours a day. Not a single worker gets overtime payment. They were even not found aware of overtime payment concepts. But the sweepers and maid servants, if worked more than their contracts, do get something in kind e.g., used clothes, some eatables, or old bed sheets etc. The mode of payment was seen to be monthly to maid servants and sweepers but in case of construction workers it was not fixed. These construction workers do not get payment directly from employers. It is usually the husband who takes the payment on behalf of their wives. Only widows get direct payment. It was also found that some of the workers left a part of their earnings with their employer, as savings which they collect from them as and when they go to their native places.
Majority of the construction workers were found earning between Rs. 1001 to Rs. 1500. Though the construction work demands heavy labour, yet the females were engaged in it mainly because their husbands were doing this work. Other categories of workers get some perks on the festivals which were not available to construction workers. The income patterns of the present study were more as compared to Delhi, Bihar, Kerla, Tamilnadu and Karnataka. The daily wages of construction workers are also higher in comparison to Sharamshakti reports. However, the living conditions of these construction workers were indeed, not very good.

Wage discrimination in between males and females was found to be prevalent in the construction workers' category. They were even found to pay Rs. 2 to Rs. 5 per day to labour contractors as commission in lieu of having provided them with employment. These construction workers, normally, work, on the same site, where their husbands work. This is to avoid any sort of harassment being meted out to them by the employer or their fellow male workers.

Majority of the harassed women in these three occupations had suffered harassment at the hands of their
employers, especially in construction occupation. They were economically harassed because they were given low wages as compared to the time and quantum of their work. Nearly 27.11 per cent workers have been subjected to physical harassment of one sort or the other. In the absence of female members of a household, they were sexually harassed by their employers. These women workers do not, normally, make an issue of these physical or sexual harassment on the fear of being thrown out of job. In Construction occupation, the contractors (Thekedar) or even the employers use these workers for their own pleasures and sexually harass them. If they resisted, they harassed them physically. They were sometimes, even used as service commodity. They were free to move anywhere and to leave the job also. So sexual harassment differed in this respect in the occupations under our study. During the course of this study, it was found that construction workers, did not want their young unmarried daughters to work alone. It was because of the prevalent sexual harassments.

Conjugal violence was found to be a common phenomenon in lower segments of society. It was more
common among schedule caste women. All the men of lower castes in the present study, were found to be suffering from drinking habits. After drinking, they beat up their wives. More conjugal violence was found in sweepers than in construction workers and least in maidservants category. But the women workers of all these categories, thought that the government should ensure strict and complete prohibition. It was noticed that the children and wives were the worst sufferers of this bad habit. The husband snatched away money from them and thus wasted their hard earned income. Beating and drinking was more common in sweepers as compared to maidservants and construction workers. Younger of the lot drank even more. Majority of the respondents reported cases of beating by their husbands and nearly 20 per cent of them suffered injuries even. We have also noted that women of scheduled castes or lower strata of society, do not hesitate to talk about beating or drinking. They openly discussed it. Its adverse effect on work culture was found to be more among sweepers followed by maid servants and construction workers.

The migrated construction workers used to work as agricultural labourers before coming to the construction
occupation. We found that male sweepers had started moving to other works like rickshaw-pullers, construction workers; but females had been found doing the traditional work of sweeping. But these sweepers also take their daughters along with them. Daughters were sent to school in childhood and thereafter they were expected to work. 41.33 per cent workers of the present study did not want their unmarried daughters to work in their occupation. They wanted some better occupation for their daughters. 18.66 per cent were outside the scope of this question. 38.67 per cent did not want their daughters in these occupation even after marriage. These workers felt that good marriage might help their daughters. Maid servants wanted their daughters to get some training and take to some better job. This was found to be common among the maidservants. It was possible to think along these lines for them because they come in close contacts with higher strata families and therefore, have become more conscious about the better future prospect of their female children. But sweepers wanted that their daughters should work as sweepers. Thus we found that traditional work culture was more common among sweepers. The practice of overtime payments was not found to be prevalent among some workers.
e.g., construction workers did not get any over time benefit in the real sense of the term, though maid servants and sweepers do get some benefits i.e., paid holiday for a day or two or some clothes, eatables or sweets occasionally.

Majority of women workers (above 60 per cent) deemed it fit that women should work to supplement family income. Rest of the women were of the view that women should work in the absence of male earning hand only. However, all these women were essentially working to supplement their family incomes.

On studying the aspect of their being reprimanded for mistakes, it was found that 20 per cent were reprimanded even for minor mistakes. Some of the employers even resorted to wage-cuts to make good their losses. All the workers in urban informal sector were not satisfied with their present jobs due to low wages and insecurity of jobs. These workers feel that male education among the lower classes will ultimately help them to move up in the social ladder. This was the difference that was seen due to the difference in the pattern of socialization. Generally male members of family were provided with educational facilities because it was expected from a
male child to support the family. In case of all the women workers, i.e. in construction workers, sweepers and maid servants, no difference was noticed as far as imparting education to children was concerned.

On probing their involvement in the union activities, it was found that not even a single woman worker expressed her desire to be member of any union.

The prevalence of the ugly practice of untouchability was also noticed among the female workers. The schedule caste workers in the present study were accorded low esteem than the workers of relatively higher caste groups.

Our findings further suggest that domestic problems have once again complicated the female workers' condition as they hardly get help from their male counterparts. At the site of work, they are exploited by their employers and some of the labour contractors. On some of the occasions, they are physically exploited. In most of the cases, their earnings are appropriated by their husbands. The discrimination between males and females lies in the wage structure.
Our findings also suggest that they are denied the medical benefits, maternity and other leave benefits, compensation etc. Thus in the urban informal sector the working condition of women were found to be worse.

The review of studies on the female workers' working conditions and wage structure by different scholars in different states suggested that it was much better. This was the case especially in some of the studies of South Indian States conducted by D. Vardharajan 1988, Exploitation of domestic workers : Case Study from Kerala, Tamilnadu and Karnataka.

Despite this, the intensive efforts are needed to improve their conditions in terms of socialization pattern, giving education, equal wages and providing legal safeguards protecting them from exploitation.

Women workers in the urban informal sector work for longer hours. After coming back from work place they have to do their household chores. The male workers extend no help to their wives in the household chores. All the earnings of construction workers are found to be taken away by the male members and they spent the money as they
wished. However, the sweepers and maid servants get their earnings by themselves and are able to spend it as they like.

There was the practice of making payment to the middlemen i.e., contractor in construction work but in case of sweepers and maid servants, the role of middleman was non-existent. Educational level was even lower in construction workers due to their migrant nature. Their places of living were also located away from the main city.

No overtime payments were found to be practised in any of the three occupational groups. However they were able to strike a better rapport with the employers by these extra petty services. Some of the employers also gave them advance payment to meet various contingencies. Some of the male members of these workers took advance money from employers and put these women at the mercy of their employers.

In all the three occupational groups under study, it was found that none of the workers was given any medical benefits or maternity leave. Poor and deplorable working and living conditions were also a common feature of the
three groups which in turn is a common trait of the urban informal sector.

Our results, do support, the commonly accepted notion that women are more vulnerable to exploitation. The construction workers were the most exploited lot. However, some degree of exploitation was found in all the occupational groups under study.

Women were found to be exploited both by the employers as well the male members of the family. They have to work harder and for longer durations than men but more power is vested in the hands of male members of the family. It is due to the patriarchal type of family-system.

The women is being accorded an inferior status vis-a-vis the men, both in the family as well as in her work sphere. Thus the "powerful one" is seen to be exploiting the "powerless beings", be it in the familial role-relations or the occupational ones.