Chapter VII

Findings and Conclusions

Social or, more specifically, gender division of labour is an important aspect of human social organization. The knowledge of how work is distributed between men and women in a particular society yields insights, among other things, into its [i] quotidian life, [ii] time use and time budgets, [iii] patterns of work and leisure, and [iv] social inequalities.

In case of the traditional Indian society, the division of labour has been based on gender and age. According to the cultural norms, children particularly girls and the aged persons are not assigned any physical work that requires hard labour. But the range of activities of the adult persons is determined by gender. Generally, the adult men are assigned the roles in the productive process so that they can cater to the material needs of women, children and the aged persons. On the other hand, the women are assigned household roles like cooking of food, cleaning the house, care of children, sick and the elderly etc. Thus the division of work among men and women is not arbitrary; rather it is socially and culturally defined. However, in actual practice this normative framework is not followed rigidly as in many situations women are involved in work which supplements productive activities. Moreover, women’s involvement in some production related work does not diminish their role in household work, because culturally only women are supposed to carry out such work in the Indian society. Thus women are burdened with dual roles - household work and economically productive work.

The present study attempts to figure out the *gender division of labour in agricultural households* as it exists in the Malwa Region of Punjab. It is intended to find out how work is distributed among men and women, of different age categories, types of families, marital status and agrarian strata in agricultural households in the Punjab countryside. The specific objectives of the present research are as follows:
i. The main objective of the study is to grasp and describe the gender division of labour as it exists in the different strata of agricultural households in the Malwa region of Punjab.

ii. The gender division of labour will be studied in terms of time allocation for work and leisure for men and women.

iii. An attempt will be made to ascertain if disparities exist in the way work is distributed between gender groups.

iv. Similarly, an attempt will be made to determine how patterns of work and leisure vary among different age groups, type of families and marital status of the respondents.

In the present study, the classification of work by the Central Statistical Organization of India in a report on time use survey of Haryana state (1998-1999) has been adopted for the purpose of analysis of data. In this survey 154 activities performed by men and women have been listed which have been finally classified into three major categories: SNA-related activities, SNA-extended activities, and non-SNA activities.

The SNA activities comprised of three groups of activities, viz, (I) primary production activities, such as crop farming, animal husbandry, forestry, fishing, processing, and storage, mining and quarrying; (II) secondary activities and (III) trade, business and services activities. The extended-SNA includes three groups of activities, viz, (IV) household maintenance, management and shopping for own household, (V) care for children, the sick, elderly and disabled for own household and (VI) community services and help to other households. The non-SNA activities consists of (VII) learning activities, (VIII) social and cultural, mass media, etc, and (IX) personal care and self-maintenance activities.
The classification of various activities cited above has been used with due caution to guide the present investigation.

Summary of Findings

The main findings of the present study regarding the time spent on various types of activities according to gender have been summarized below:

7.1 Time use pattern according to gender

7.1.1 Time spent on SNA activities

The men spent more than double the time spent by women on SNA activities. The gender-wise analysis of data indicates that the women spent very little time on various agricultural activities. However, the women of middle age groups were involved in agricultural activities like transplantation, weeding, harvesting and storage of grains. The men of the lower age group spent a little time in land preparation, cultivation, transplantation and a significantly higher proportion of time was spent by the male members of the middle age group in ploughing, planting, transplanting and harvesting, as these activities require more physical strength. On the other hand, a higher proportion of time was spent by the elderly men in guarding crops, transportation, storage and harvesting. Thus the analysis of data indicates that the time spent in agricultural work was also significantly affected by the age categories of the people along with their gender.

7.1.2 Time spent on extended–SNA activities

The contribution of men in the extended SNA activities was negligible as on an average they spent only 1.48 hours per week on these activities as compared to 31.35 hours spent on an average per week by the women. The analysis of data indicates that men did not spend much time on domestic chores expect for the shopping activity in which men spent some time. As regards other domestic chores like cooking, cleaning of the household, cleaning utensils, washing clothes, the time spent by the men was negligible as compared to
the women. This can be explained in terms of social and cultural norms of India whereby men are not expected to take up any household activity except shopping and pet care.

7.1.3 Time spent on non-SNA activities

No significant difference was found in the average time spent by men and women on non-SNA activities. However, the men spent more time on these activities as compared to the women. The analysis of data reveals some interesting variations in the average time spent by the men and women on leisure time activities like watching television, reading newspaper/magazines, participation in community functions and sleeping. The average time spent on these activities by women is consistently lower as compared to the men of all the three villages under study. On the other hand, in case of the women of all the three villages, the average time spent in talking and gossiping is a little higher as compared to the men. With regard to the physical exercise very few male respondents of Ditupur and Lang villages spent some time in this activity. However, no time was devoted to physical exercise by the women in any of the three villages.

The analysis of data regarding time spent on leisure time activities by gender in the three villages indicates that the male respondents from Ditupur and Lang villages spent more time on watching television as compared to the respondents from Sular Gharat. On the other hand, the female respondents from Sular Gharat spent more time on talking and gossiping as compared to the respondents from the other two villages.

The village wise analysis regarding time spent on three types of activities revealed that the men of Sular Gharat spent the least time on SNA activities as compared to the men of Ditupur and Lang villages. On the other hand, the women of Sular Gharat spent a much higher proportion of time on SNA activities as compared to the women in other two villages. This can be explained in terms of the economic backwardness of Sular Gharat which compels
the women of this village to participate in agricultural activities in order to contribute to the family income.

7.2  Time use pattern of various age groups

7.2.1 Time spent on SNA activities

The analysis of data pertaining to time spent on various types of activities by gender and age reveals that none of the younger and older women were spending any time on SNA activities. Only the middle age women were participating in SNA activities. In case of extended SNA activities the women of younger age category spent lesser time as compared to the middle age and older women.

7.2.2 Time spent on extended –SNA activities

As regards the time spent on daily domestic chores by gender and age in all the three selected villages, it was found that in Ditupur and Lang villages the middle aged women spent more time on domestic chores as compared to the women from younger and older age groups. However, in case of Sular Gharat, the women of the younger age group spent more time on cleaning household and utensils as compared to the younger women of the other two villages. The middle aged women from this economically backward village spent more time on SNA activities and therefore the burden of extended-SNA activities had to be shared by the women of younger age group.

The analysis of data depicts that irrespective of the age categories, the women from all the three selected villages spent significantly higher proportion of time on extended- SNA activities like taking care of children, sick and elderly. This can be explained in terms of the cultural norms of the Indian society which prescribe that this type of work should be mainly carried out by the women. In the context of age, the elderly people (56 years and above) spent more time in these types of activities as compared to younger and middle aged persons in all the three selected villages. This might be due to the fact that elderly people are expected to
take care of children and sick and in the family. Moreover, in the elderly age category also the proportion of women spending more time on such activities is much higher as compared to the men.

7.2.3 Time spent on non-SNA activities

The analysis of data does not depict any significant variation in the average time spent on non-SNA activities among men and women of various age categories. This shows that all people irrespective of their age and gender devote almost the same amount of time on personal care and self maintenance. The data depicts that men were spending more time than women of all the age groups on leisure time activities. Regarding the activities of watching television and sleeping men and women of younger and older age groups spent significantly higher time as compared to the middle age groups. In rest of the activities like personal hygiene, participation in community functions the middle age group people were spending more time as compared to the younger and older age groups.

7.3 Time use pattern of agrarian strata

The analysis of data pertaining to time spent on various types of activities by gender and agrarian strata reveals that the women of lower agrarian strata were spending substantial amount of time on SNA activities while none of the women from medium and upper agrarian strata was spending any time on these activities. Moreover, the men from the lower agrarian strata were spending more time on SNA activities as compared to the men of medium and upper agrarian strata. In case of the extended -SNA activities the women of lower agrarian strata were spending substantially more amount of time on these activities as compared to the women from the medium and upper agrarian strata. As regards non-SNA activities the women of all agrarian strata were spending lesser amount of time on such activities as compared to the men. Moreover, the men of the upper agrarian strata were spending
significantly higher amount of time on non-SNA activities as compared to the men from medium and lower economic strata.

7.3.1 Time spent on SNA activities

The analysis of data reveals that the women of middle class farmers and large farmers were not engaged in any of the agricultural activities. However, the women of small farmers and landless families were involved in some of the agricultural activities. The main activities in which the women of economically weaker sections of the village were involved included weeding, transplanting, harvesting and vegetable picking. Another interesting finding is that the men of the higher agrarian classes were engaged in agricultural activities to a very little extent. This might be explained in terms of the fact that the large landholders generally employ agricultural labour to work in their fields who carry out various agricultural activities. On the other hand, it can be seen that a significantly higher proportion of men and women of the economically weaker sections of the village were engaged in various agricultural activities as they spent a higher proportion of time on agricultural activities as compared to the men and women of the middle and large farmers. It can also be seen from the analysis of data that the activity of vegetable picking was being performed to a significantly higher extent by the women of the economically weaker sections as compared to the men of this agrarian stratum. Moreover, as regards the weeding activity it is evident that this activity was being done mainly by women of the economically weaker section of the village. In case of this activity the average time spent by the women of the lower agrarian strata was much higher as compared to the men belonging to this stratum. Thus, weeding and vegetable picking were the major agricultural works performed by the women of the lower socio economic strata.
7.3.2 Time spent on extended –SNA activities

The analysis of data pertaining to time spent on domestic chores by gender and agrarian strata in all the three selected villages reveals that the women of small farmer’s families spent more time on domestic chores as compared to the women from medium and upper agrarian strata. The men of any of the agrarian strata did not participate in the extended-SNA activities except in pet care and shopping.

The analysis of data reveals that the women of Sular Gharat and Lang villages of lower agrarian strata were spending more time on extended-SNA activities as compared to the women of Ditupur. The women of these two villages were spending equal amount of time but the women of Ditupur were spending four hours less than the women of the other two villages on extended -SNA activities. In the case of upper agrarian strata the women of Ditupur and Lang were spending less time on the extended- SNA activities than the women of this strata from Sular Gharat.

7.3.3 Time spent on non –SNA activities

The analysis of data reveals that the men and women of Sular Gharat, belonging to lower agrarian strata were spending lesser time on personal care and self maintenance as compared to those from Ditupur and Lang villages. The highest proportion of time was being spent by men and women of all agrarian strata on this activity in Ditupur as compared to the other two villages. The analysis of data reveals that men and women of upper agrarian strata spent significantly higher time on leisure time activities as compared to those of the other agrarian strata.

7.4 Time use pattern according to the type of families

7.4.1 Time spent on SNA activities

The analysis of the data reveals that the average time spent by the women living in joint families in SNA activities was significantly lesser as compared to the average time spent
on these activities by the women living in the nuclear families, in the comparatively advanced villages of Ditupur and Lang. However, the situation is rather different in the economically less developed village of Sular Gharat. In case of this village quite a high proportion of women spent more time in SNA activities, both from the nuclear and joint families.

The analysis of data regarding time spent on various agricultural activities by gender and family type in all the three selected villages reveals that the women living in the nuclear families spent more time on sowing, weeding, harvesting and vegetable picking as compared to the women living in the joint families. As regards men, those living in the nuclear families spent more time on sowing, weeding and fertilizing as compared to the men living in the joint families. However, the men of Sular Gharat living in both nuclear and joint families spent almost equal amount of time on all the agricultural activities.

7.4.2 Time spent on extended SNA activities

The average time spent by women in extended-SNA activities was consistently higher as compared to men in both nuclear and joint families in all the three villages. However, the difference in the average time spent in such activities between men and women was lower in Sular Gharat. This can be explained in terms of greater participation of women of Sular Gharat in SNA activities. The analysis of data pertaining to time spent on daily domestic chores by gender and types of families in all the three selected villages indicates that the women of joint families spent more time on domestic chores as compared to the women from the nuclear families. On the other hand, the men from both nuclear and joint families spent almost similar amount of time on pet care and shopping. The analysis of data reveals that in all the three villages the women from both nuclear and joint families were spending more time on taking care of children, sick and the elderly as compared to the men.
7.4.3 Time spent on non-SNA activities

As regards non-SNA activities there is no significant variation in the average time spent by the men and women of both nuclear and joint families, but it is consistently lower for the women. The analysis of data indicates that both men and women living in the nuclear families of all the three villages spent a little higher time on personal care and self maintenance as compared to those living in the joint families. The analysis of data indicates that both men and women living in the nuclear families of all the three villages spent a little higher time on personal care and self maintenance as compared to those living in the joint families.

7.5 Time use pattern according to marital status

7.5.1 Time spent on SNA activities

The village wise comparison reveals that the married women from Sular Gharat spent significantly more time in SNA activities as compared to the married women of Ditupur and Lang villages. The higher participation of married women of Sular Gharat in SNA activities can be attributed to the economic backwardness of the village which compels the women to engage in agricultural work for earning a livelihood. The village wise comparison reveals that the married women from Sular Gharat were devoting more time in transplanting as compared to the married women from Ditupur and Lang villages. This might be due to the fact that married women of lower economic strata from Sular Gharat were spending more time in transplanting to earn some money, to augment the family income.

7.5.2 Time spent on extended-SNA activities

As regards the average weekly time spent on domestic chores by gender and marital status in the three villages selected for the study it was found that the men did not spend any time on these activities whether married or unmarried. However, the married men spent a little more time on pet care and shopping as compared to the unmarried men.
As regards the average time spent on taking care of children, sick and the elderly it was higher in the married category as compared to the unmarried category both among men and women. Moreover, the average time spent on such activities was significantly higher in case of the married women as compared to the married men. As explained earlier, such activities are culturally considered to be the work of women and that is why the average time spent by the women on such activities was higher as compared to the men.

7.5.3 Time spent on non-SNA activities

As regards the analysis of average time spent on personal care and self maintenance by gender and marital status, no significant variations have been found. However, married men and women of Ditupur spent a little more time on personal care and self maintenance as compared to the unmarried men and women. The situation is reverse in case of Sular Gharat where the married men and women spent lesser time on this activity as compared to the unmarried men and women.

The analysis of data regarding time spent on leisure time activities by gender and marital status in all the three villages reveals that the married men and women spent more time on personal hygiene, participation in community activities and talking/gossiping as compared to the unmarried men and women.

Conclusions

The time use data is an important source of gender statistics and can offer a more accurate picture of the quality of life of the nation. People spend time producing goods and services, either in the paid work sector, or in the unpaid sector where people provide food, shelter and care for their families, friends and communities. A time use survey basically collects information as to how people spend their time throughout the course of a day. The information so collected may be used to understand women’s work. Unlike the traditional
methods of data collection, a time use survey collects information about productive activities in the household and thus captures unstructured work patterns (United Nations 1991).

The analysis of data of the present study reveals that the men spent more than double the time spent by women on SNA activities which mainly includes various agricultural activities. The data also indicates that the women from economically advanced villages and especially from the upper agrarian strata do not participate in agricultural activities at all. It is only the women of the economically less developed village and especially those women who belong to the lower agrarian strata who are involved in the agricultural activities. The participation of women from the economically backward village and of lower agrarian strata in various agricultural activities is necessitated by the economic compulsions. The women of the economically weaker sections of the village are compelled to participate in agricultural activities in order to contribute to the family income. The case studies of Labho and Swarno of Lang, Rani and Gammo of Ditupur and Melo and Neetu of Sular Gharat describe in an earlier chapter corroborate these conclusions. On the other hand, the abstaining of women of upper agrarian strata from agricultural work is considered as an important indicator of husband’s status and success. According to Kumool Abbi in her study (2003), has also reported the withdrawal of women from agricultural work at all levels of the village society.

Another finding of the present study is that the men from the lower agrarian strata were spending significantly more time on SNA activities as compared to the men of the middle and upper agrarian strata. This might be explained in terms of the fact that the large land holders generally employ agricultural labour to work in their fields who carry out various agricultural activities. The case studies of Bhag Singh, Ishar Singh, Teja, Pammi, Baldev and Jeet all of whom are scheduled castes clearly indicate that all these persons were working as agricultural labourers, as they did not own any land. Thus they could earn their
livelihood by working as labourers in the fields of Jatt land owners. According to Beteille (1974), it is the organization of work which divides the society into those who perform work themselves and those for whom others work, the later being accorded higher position than the former.

The analysis of data with regard to the participation of women in different agricultural activities reveals that the women of lower agrarian strata from the economically backward village are mostly involved in activities like transplanting, weeding, harvesting and vegetable picking. These agricultural activities do not require much physical strength and that is why the women undertake such activities. A research study conducted in two villages, Ashta and Umra located in Nanded district of Maharashtra studied the time use pattern for family farm work. The study revealed that although the home is defined as the domain of women, yet women work in the fields in large numbers. The study points out that the women usually perform tasks which require feminine endurance and patience. Sidhu and Pannu (2005) in their study have reported that women belonging to landless families were participating in harvesting, weeding and sowing operations, jointly with male members. This picture was similar in ten cases of families of small and marginal land holdings. The findings of the present study also indicate that the married women of middle age groups and lower agrarian strata were spending more time on different agricultural activities. This can be explained in terms of the fact that according to the norms in Punjabi society, the young unmarried girls are not expected to take up work outside their household. That is why it has been found that the unmarried girls in younger age category are contributing in household work but not in agricultural work. This pattern of work for women of younger age group has been found in Sular Gharat where the younger women spent considerable amount of time on cleaning of the household as well as cleaning the utensils. The gender-wise analysis of data regarding the participation of men and women in various agricultural activities has revealed that the men of
the lower age group spent some time in activities like land preparation, cultivation and transplantation. On the other hand, the middle aged men spent more time in agricultural activities like ploughing, planting and harvesting as these activities require more physical strength. Moreover, a higher proportion of time was spent by the elderly men in guarding crops, transportation and storage of crops. From this analysis it can be concluded that age is also an important factor in determining the division of labour along with gender.

As regards extended SNA activities which mainly include the daily domestic chores, the findings of the present study indicate that these activities are almost exclusively performed by the women. The extent of female participation in extended SNA activities can be seen from the fact that the average weekly time spent by women was more than 30 hours as compared to 1 to 2 hours per week by the men. This finding is in accordance with the fact that according to the social norms in Indian society the women are supposed to take up all domestic work whereas men are not expected to participate in this work. Moreover, in economically backward village the women also participate in agricultural activities along with their domestic responsibilities in order to contribute to the family income. According to Boserup (1978), in rural areas women are important productive resource. The prevailing extended family pattern proved to be quite conducive for women to perform both productive as well as motherly roles. The two roles can be easily combined since members of extended family cooperate in discharging her responsibilities, that is, infants can be looked after at the work place by less active members and older children can assist their mothers and thereby ensure sustained production and work participation.

Singal (1989), in her study on Gender Differentials in Work Pattern of Rural Households in Haryana (India) found that in village Rwanda, women virtually do all the household work, three quarters of other agricultural work and half of the work with animals. Taken together women in this area work over three times as much as men. The findings
reflected that housework (child care and household chores) and economically extended work (i.e., fetching of water and fuel and making of cowdung cakes) which is crucial for family’s survival, is still exclusively a women’s responsibility. Except for fetching of fuel, it was the female children who extended a helping hand to their mothers for the above tasks. Women absolutely do not get any help from their men folk for domestic activities and economically extended activities (except for fetching of fuel). Not only in India, rather in the developed countries of the west a similar division of work among men and women has been reported by some studies. For example, INSEE, (Institute National de Statistique et des Etudes Economiques) conducted a national survey in France (1966). This survey made a comparison of the daily activities carried out both by men and women on the time budgets of the French population. The study found that for the people in 18 to 64 years old range, employed women spent nearly 33 hours on domestic work per week whereas men spent half of that, that is, 16 hours and 20 minutes.

A study conducted by Shimray (2004) among women in Naga society has also concluded that women have a greater responsibility – from domestic work – to various agricultural activities. In Naga society, one finds more division of labour in house work. In house work women spent 53 hours whereas; men spent only 17 hours weekly. Housework and household activities are still consuming women’s time and energy. Similarly, another time use study in Germany (1990), found that both in East and West Germany women spend twice as much time doing housework as men. Sethi (1982) in her study in Punjab villages has concluded that child care is totally a female responsibility, and primarily that of the mother, who is supposed to be the natural bearer. The working status of a mother does not bring about a change in her role as a nurturer and socializer of children. Sudha (1998) has mentioned in her study in Karnataka that the duties of the respondents as mothers highlighted that children are still believed as the major responsibility of women whether employed or not. In this study a
majority (64.75 percent) of the female respondents have expressed that they bear more responsibility towards children than their husbands. Only in 24.25 percent of the cases, both the spouses share the responsibility of children equally and just in 5 percent of the cases, husbands bear this responsibility.

The findings of the present study indicate that irrespective of the age categories the women from all the three selected villages spent significantly higher proportion of time on the other extended SNA activities like taking care of children, sick and elderly. Moreover, the elderly women spent a higher proportion of time on such activities as compared to the younger and middle aged women. This can be explained in terms of the fact that in Punjab villages the elderly women are expected to take care of the children and sick persons in the family.

According to the findings of the present study the village wise comparison reveals that the women of Sular Gharat and Lang villages of lower agrarian strata were spending more time on extended SNA activities as compared to the women of lower strata of Ditupur. This finding has been confirmed by the case study of women of lower economic strata presiding in these villages. Thus, it can be concluded that the women of lower strata from the moderately and less developed villages spend considerable amount of time on SNA activities. The women of these economically backward villages are thus bearing a double burden, that is, of domestic work as well as agricultural work. Munjal et.al. (1988) have estimated work participation rates and time allocation patterns among rural women. The study indicates that though women perform wide spectrum of activities but not much economic and social value is attached to their work. It is the women from small and marginal farm households who are most over worked. Sethi (1982) in her study in Punjab villages has concluded that the mere employment of women does not necessarily lead to a change in the work patterns at home. Such a situation arises because the culturally defined role of woman as a home maker stands
on a firm footing in spite of the fact that the woman worker has added to her role a new dimension that of an economic earner. The cultural content has given the woman the freedom to work under compelling circumstances but it maintains a strict vigil over her activities as a home-maker and is intolerant of any aberration. It is because of these factors that the women do all the housework themselves in the absence of any female relatives. In cases of emergency or sickness, the economic necessity holds back the male members from engaging in housework and under normal conditions the cultural factor intervenes.

The findings of the present study regarding time spent on non-SNA activities indicate that the women spent lesser time on these activities as compared to the men. This is all the more true in case of activities like watching television or listening to music. Moreover, the women of the economically backward village were also spending lesser time on personal care and self maintenance. These findings show that women of the economically backward village have very limited leisure time available to them because they have a double responsibility of looking after the household work as well as participating in agricultural operations in order to contribute to the family income. The case studies of women of the lower economic strata from Lang and Sular Gharat also lend support these findings. The findings of the present study also indicate that the women spent lesser time in sleeping as compared to the men in all the villages selected for the study. The time use survey conducted in Haryana (July 1998 to June 1999), has revealed that women slept about 2 hours less than men in a week. This finding of Haryana study is in conformity with the findings of the present study which indicate lesser sleeping hours of women as compared to the men.

The age wise analysis of time spent on non-SNA activities indicate that the younger and older women were spending more time on these activities as compared to the middle aged women. This pattern is more evident in Sular Gharat village, which is the economically less developed village. This situation can be explained in terms of the fact that the middle
aged women of this village, especially those belonging to the lower economic strata, were found to be engaged in agricultural activities along with their household responsibilities. As these women were burdened with both SNA and extended-SNA activities, they had very little time left for non-SNA activities or leisure time activities. Kanhere (1989) finds that teenage boys and girls were socialized differently for different ends. Girls were restricted to home and household activities. Marriage was made an ultimate goal in their lives and they were trained basically for life in the in-law’s house. On the contrary, boys were compelled to study failing which they were encouraged to take up jobs or to assist parents in the family economic activity, if any.

The analysis of the pattern of time use in different types of activities in the selected villages leads to the conclusion that the gender division of labour in rural areas of Malwa region of Punjab is mainly influenced by three factors that is social norms, age structure and economic factors. The division of work between men and women is primarily determined by the social norms which have been prevalent in rural Punjab for the last so many centuries. These social norms are influenced by the practice of patriarchy in Punjab. As a consequence of this practice Punjab is a male dominated society and women are given a much lower status as compared to the men. In this male dominated society of Punjab, woman is a little more than a free servant and a child bearing machine. Through the socialization process women are still strictly trained to accept their subordination to men. Family, as a primary agent of socialization continues to transmit the patriarchal values which lead to the subordination of women. According to Kanhere (1989), most of the families prepare men for a career and women for child bearing and home making even today.

The age categories also have a significant impact on the division of work, both among the men and the women. The men of rural Punjab are mainly engaged in agriculture but they are assigned different works according to their age. The younger men are assigned
that type of agricultural work which requires less physical strength. The present study has shown that men of lower age group are generally involved in activities like land preparation, sowing and weeding. On the other hand, the elderly men are mainly engaged in guarding crops, transportation and storage. On the other hand, the middle aged men are mainly engaged in ploughing, weeding, transplantation, harvesting and transportation. As regards, the women, the younger and older women were involved in agricultural activities to a negligible extent. However, the women of middle age group were involved in some agricultural activities like transplantation, weeding, harvesting and storage of grains, in the economically backward village.

Another significant factor affecting the division of labour is the economic factor. The data of the present study has amply demonstrated that the economic factor has far reaching consequences for the gender division of labour. The analysis of data reveals that none of the women from upper and medium agrarian strata was engaged in any type of agricultural activity. On the other hand, the women from the lower agrarian strata were participating in a number of agricultural operations in order to contribute to their family income. Moreover, the level of economic development of a village also plays an important role in determining the work pattern of people. In the economically advanced village the women did not go out of their homes for work. Even for their daily domestic chores the women of upper economic strata got the help of women from the lower economic strata. A number of men from the economically advanced village were not participating in agricultural activities at all and had taken to business, especially in the transport sector. They have either given their land on lease or some of the elderly men are supervising the agricultural operations which are performed by agricultural labourers. On the other hand, the male and female participation in agriculture is to a significantly higher extent in the economically less developed village as compared to the developed and the moderately developed villages. Thus,
the economic level of the village significantly affects the work pattern of the villagers, both men and women.

To sum up, the present study deals with the participation of men and women in three types of activities that is SNA (production related activities), extended – SNA (domestic and household activities) and non –SNA (leisure time and recreational activities). The findings of the study reveal that men spend a significantly higher proportion of time on SNA activities as compared to women. Men of upper economic strata spend comparatively lesser time on SNA activities in comparison to those of lower strata. The women of upper economic strata do not participate at all in the agricultural activities. However, women of lower economic strata are involved in number of agricultural tasks due to economic compulsions. The work participation rate of women of lower economic strata in production related activities has been found to be significantly higher in the economically less developed village as compared to the moderately and economically more developed villages.

As regards extended –SNA activities, they are confined only to women and there is hardly any male participation in domestic chores which can be attributed to the practice of patriarchy and the socio-cultural norms of rural Punjab. The household work is culturally defined as women’s work and they do this work happily and willingly. As a matter of fact women internalize these cultural norms during the process of socialization right from their childhood and that is why they perceive that household work is their responsibility only. Although women of upper economic strata get the help of women from lower economic strata for the household work yet they take up activities like cooking and serving of food on their own shoulders. But the women of these economic strata are not overburdened with work as they do not participate in agricultural activities at all. The practice of employing women from lower strata as domestic help is prevalent to a greater extent in the economically more developed village as compared to the economically less developed village. The findings of
the study also reveal that women respondents from all the three selected villages spend considerable time on taking care of children, sick and the elderly in their families in addition to the time spent on household activities. Thus, these women have lesser time available to them for recreational and leisure time activities (non-SNA) as compared to men.

This shows that there is gender inequality in the distribution of work. This inequality is more striking in case of women of the lower economic strata and especially from the economically less advanced village. The women of lower economic strata from the economically less developed village participate in agricultural activities along with fulfilling their traditional role as housewives and spending considerable amount of time on extended – SNA activities in addition to the time spent on agricultural activities. Thus, these women from the lower economic strata are over burdened with work and have hardly any time for recreational or leisure time activities. The case studies of women from the lower economic strata presented in the previous chapter clearly indicate the inequalities in division of work between men and women. The burden of work on women of lower economic strata is to such an extent that they feel that their life is miserable and pray to God to give them the next birth in an economically well off families. The women of lower economic strata are not only overburdened with work rather many of them are also victims of domestic violence as men from the lower economic strata are generally drug addicts and indulge in wife-battering. Thus, the plight of women from the lower economic strata is pitiable and the process of modernization in Punjab villages has not helped in ameliorating the condition of these women. However, women from the upper economic strata have benefited to some extent as a result of the modernization process. Now they have the facility of modern appliances in their kitchens and because of higher economic status they can also employ women from the lower economic strata as domestic help. Thus, it can be concluded that economic inequality leads to gender inequality in the division of work between men and women. The inequality in the
division of work between men and women is more apparent in economically less advanced village as well as in the lower economic strata.