

Socio-Economic Conditions of Rural Non-Farm Households of different Social Groups in Punjab: An Empirical Analysis

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Abstract

The paper aims to examine the socio-economic conditions of rural non-farm households of different social groups in Punjab. The study is based on primary data and a total of 659 households have been selected from the three districts of Punjab. The analysis clearly indicates that living conditions of non-farm households are very poor in rural Punjab. The condition of non-farm households is the worst among Scheduled Castes (SCs) due to the lower level of social and human capital.

Keywords: Rural Non-Farm Sector; Social Groups; Scheduled Castes (SCs); Socio-economic conditions

Introduction

Like Joint family system and village communities, caste system is also considered as one of the prominent feature of Indian society. Although 'economic growth with social justice' or 'growth with equity' have been the basic objectives of public policy in India since Independence and refer to a broad based strategy of development, with an emphasis on reduction of poverty and inequality (Mutatkar, 2005) but so called untouchability still persists in our modern and developed society, just the forms of its manifestation have been changed. It is widely accepted phenomenon that there are considerable regional variations in the development of social relationships among different groups of caste in different regions of India (Beteille, 2000). In the northern part of India, the Punjab state is one of the prominent states, where the large share of *dalit* population is residing. According to the 2011 census

data Punjab state is a home of 31.93 per cent of India's total *dalit* (SC) population. In some areas of Punjab close to 40 per cent share of local population constitutes the SC population. In this sikh-majority state, the caste distinctions are sharper in rural areas (Jodhka, 2000). In the rural areas of the state, agricultural land is the only productive asset for local population. One can easily observe the caste discrimination in these areas, which persist in the form of agrarian land ownership and very few *dalits* are cultivators. For their survival, they are dependent on wage labour (Beteille and Rath, 2000). Consequently, the larger share of *dalits* is working on land as labour class and earning their breads from menial jobs in these areas (Jodhka, 2000). Due to stagnation in the employment opportunities of agricultural sector, the rural non-farm sector in the state economy is emerging as the prominent sector (Gill, 2002; Gill and Ghuman, 2001). In the labour force, small and marginal farmers from different social groups are shifting from agriculture to non-farm sector in the search of new and better work opportunities. So, it becomes very important to discuss in detail the socio economic conditions of rural non-farm households of different social groups mainly because the socio-economic profile of any segment of population portrays its state of well-being as well as quality of life. This also helps in understanding the differences in attainments of key indicators that determine the quality of life. Hence, in the present paper, an attempt has been made to discuss the socio-economic and demographic profile of the sampled non-farm households of different social groups that provide an overview of their living conditions. This paper discusses the variations in the socio-economic characteristics across social groups. These characteristics include the distribution of households according to their age, religion, caste, family size, literacy rate and sex ratio. Apart from this, the information regarding specific economic variables like landholdings, asset ownership patterns and number of earning, earning dependent and dependent members in the household for depicting the economic status of the households has been provided in his research paper.

SELECTION OF THE STUDY AREAS

This paper is mainly based on the primary data which has been collected from 659 households of 31 villages of selected districts of Punjab. For the Analysis the whole state has been divided into three agro-climatic regions. At the first stage, one district from each region, i.e., Bathinda district from the South-West Region; Jalandhar district from the Central Plains Region; and Gurdaspur district from the Shivalik Foothills Region have

been selected. At the Second Stage, One village has been selected from each development block. There are thirty one development blocks in the selected three districts. Thus, in all, the thirty one villages have been selected from the three districts. Nine villages from Bathinda district, eleven villages from Jalandhar district and eleven villages from Gurdaspur district have been selected. At the last stage, taking into consideration the numbers of variables, the numbers of households with positive responses and degrees of freedom in the form of time and resources, 659 households of different social groups has been selected from the three districts for the purpose of survey. Out of total selected 659 households, 253 households have been selected from Bathinda district, 238 households from Jalandhar district and 168 households from Gurdaspur district.

MAIN FINDINGS OF THE STUDY

1. SOCIAL GROUP OF SAMPLED HOUSEHOLDS

Undoubtedly Indian Society is one of the most stratified societies of the world (Gupta, 2005). One important factor which determines this stratification is its caste system (Deshpande, 2010). For the removal of wide range of social and economic disparities and upliftment of the bottom communities, a categorization scheme has been introduced by the Indian government in which the untouchable castes are categorized as scheduled castes (SC); the backward tribes are categorized as scheduled tribes (ST) and the other disadvantaged castes as other backward classes (OBC). The Forward castes (FC)/Others community generally constitute the upper caste group (Sankaran, *et al.*, 2017). Hence, the Present Indian society is segmented into four broader social groups. These are - SCs, STs, OBCs, and General/Others (Azam, 2009). Among these social groups the SCs, STs and OBCs are the disadvantageous groups of Indian society (Deshpande, 2011). Due to restriction in access to fixed capital assets, low level of skill due to restrictive access to education and high unemployment and low wage rate due to discrimination in labour market, these groups are highly dependent on manual wage labour for their source of income (Sadana, 2009). About 94 per cent of these socially vulnerable workers (such as STs, SCs and OBCs) has been working in the unorganized segment of India. Each vulnerable group (SCs, STs and OBCs) accounted for roughly 85 per cent of informal workers in non-farm sector while on the other hand, nearly one-fourth of the other forward caste groups is in the organized segment of non-

farm sector (Sakthivel and Joddar, 2006). Results of sampled households from rural non-farm sector of Punjab also confirm the above statement. It can be observed from the table 1 that the proportion of the workers belonging to the Scheduled Castes in non-farm employment is greater than that of the other social groups.

Table 1: Distribution of Sampled Households by Social Groups

Social Groups	Number of Households	Percentage Share
SCs	296	44.91
OBCs	142	21.55
Others	221	33.54
Total	659	100.00

Source: Field Survey 2017-18

OBCs- Other Backward Classes and SCs-Scheduled Castes.

The table shows that the Scheduled Caste category constitutes 44.91 per cent of the sampled non-farm households; whereas 21.55 per cent of the sampled households belong to the Other Backward Classes and 33.54 per cent households belongs to the 'Others' social group which represents the upper castes.

2. GENDER COMPOSITION OF NON-FARM WORKERS

The gender dimensions of rural non-farm employment have a great significance in economic literature and a number of studies have considered it as a main determinant of rural non-farm sector. The female labour force participation rate is significantly lower in India as compared to the male workers. Apart from this, the rate of structural shift is also higher among rural male workers as compared to their female counterparts. Among male workers, the occupational shift is mostly directed by the agricultural prosperity while on the other hand in case of females it is mainly distress driven. The large strata of rural females from the low income groups joined this sector as a last resort of their income. The evidences coming from various parts of the country support these facts (Jahan, *et al.*, 2002; Kumar, 2009; Chowdhury *et al.*, 2009; Dhara, 2016; and Dhanaraj and Mahambare, 2018). It has been also found from the analysis of rural non-farm employment of Punjab that fewer of the females are involved in the non-farm activities as compared to their male counterparts and the participation is higher among socially backward and poor families. Evidences regarding this have been presented in table 2.

Table 2: Gender Composition of Non-Farm Workers of Sampled Households in Punjab

Social Group	Sex of Sampled Workers		Total
	Male	Female	
SCs	430 (79.78)	109 (20.22)	539 (100.00)
OBCs	209 (82.94)	43 (17.06)	252 (100.00)
Others	284 (84.02)	54 (15.98)	338 (100.00)
Total	923 (81.75)	206 (18.25)	1129 (100.00)

Note: Figures in brackets denote percentages

Source: Field Survey, 2017-18

OBCs- Other Backward Classes and SCs-Scheduled Castes.

The table 2 presents the gender composition of rural non-farm workers of different social groups in the selected areas of Punjab. The table reveals that there are 1129 non-farm workers in the sampled households. Out of 1129 workers, 539 workers are from SCs, 338 are from Others and remaining 252 workers are from OBCs. About 82 per cent of the total non-farm workers are males and only about 18 per cent are females. The proportion of male workers is the highest for the 'Others' caste category (84.02 per cent), followed by OBCs (82.25 per cent) while the lowest proportion of males is found among the SCs (78.59 per cent). Accordingly, the share of female workers in rural non-farm sector is the highest (20.22 per cent) among SCs and the lowest (15.98 per cent) among the Others.

3. RELIGION WISE DISTRIBUTION

After examining the gender-wise distribution of the non-farm workers of different social groups, it is also important to look at their religion-wise distribution because the social hierarchy determined by the religion or the castes is reflected in the labour market as well. The workers belonging to the upper caste and the dominant religion are generally more endowed with physical as well as human capital as compared to those who belong to other socially marginalised classes. As a result, those belonging to the lower social groups are trapped in low paid traditional occupations. Since Punjab is predominantly an agrarian economy, the land is considered to be the most productive asset in rural areas and as its ownership is mainly concentrated in the hands of upper castes, rest of the social groups are either earning their living by working as labour in agriculture or/and supplementing it with non-farm activities which is clearly indicated by the table 1. Now we can observe the religion-wise distribution of the non-farm workers of different social groups in Table 3. As

Punjab is a sikh majority state, the data of the above mentioned table provides the evidences for this statement. The table shows that 64.64 per cent of all sampled households is associated with sikh religion which is followed by those who believe in Hinduism (32.32 per cent). While the households connected with the Islam, Christianity and Buddhism have been found in negligible proportion. On the other hand, when we look at the religion wise distribution of various social groups, relatively larger proportion (67.61 per cent) of sikh religion has been found in case of OBC households and Others (65.61 per cent) as compared to the SC households (62.50 per cent). In contrast to this, relatively higher proportion of the SC households has been found to be following Hindu religion than other caste groups. 37.16 per cent of the SCs households to this community as compared to 34.39 per cent and 19.01 per cent for the 'Others' and OBCs, respectively. The table further shows that 11.97 per cent of OBC households are Christians.

Table 3: Religion-wise Distribution of Sampled Non-Farm Households of different Social Groups of Punjab

Description		SCs	OBCs	Others	All Sampled Households
Religion	Sikhism	185 (62.50)	96 (67.61)	145 (65.61)	426 (64.64)
	Hinduism	110 (37.16)	27 (19.01)	76 (34.39)	213 (32.32)
	Islam	0 (0.00)	2 (1.41)	0 (0.00)	2 (0.30)
	Christianity	0 (0.00)	17 (11.97)	0 (0.00)	17 (2.58)
	Buddhism	1 (0.34)	0 (0.00)	0 (0.00)	1 (0.15)
	Total	296 (100.00)	142 (100.00)	221 (100.00)	659 (100.00)

Note: Figures in brackets denote percentage

Source: Field Survey 2017-18

OBCs- Other Backward Classes and SCs-Scheduled Castes.

4. FAMILY TYPE AND FAMILY SIZE

The size of family significantly affects the economic status of a household. It determines the level of consumption expenditure as well as income. However, the larger families with greater number of dependent members can be more prone to fall under the poverty line (Meenakshi and Ray, 2000). Hence, it is important to examine the family type, its size as well as its composition in case of the sampled households. In this context, Table 4 represents the average family size and family type of the sampled non-farm households of

different social groups. According to the table, 66.31 per cent proportion of all sampled households has nuclear families and it can be easily observed from the data that only 33.69 per cent of households have the tendency to reside in joint families.

Table 4: Family Type and Family Size of Sampled Non-Farm Households of different Social Groups in Punjab

Description		SCs	OBCs	Others	All Sampled Households
Family Type	Nuclear	210 (70.95)	93 (65.49)	134 (60.63)	437 (66.31)
	Joint	86 (29.05)	49 (34.51)	87 (39.37)	222 (33.69)
	Total	296 (100.00)	142 (100.00)	221 (100.00)	659 (100.00)
Family Size		4.77	4.96	4.74	4.80

Note: Figures in brackets denote percentage

Source: Field Survey 2017-18

OBCs- Other Backward Classes and SCs-Scheduled Castes.

The comparative analysis of various social groups shows that the tendency to have a nuclear family is higher in SC households than other social groups. 70.95 per cent of SC households have nuclear families as compared to 65.49 per cent and 60.63 per cent for the OBC and 'Other' households, respectively. Thus, the 'Others' social group households have the higher share of the households having a joint family. It is a general conception of our society that the SCs are at the bottom of resource ladder. Normally this social group is considered as resource poor group as compared to the Others. Keeping this in view, it seems from the table that resourcelessness leads to greater tendency of nuclear families. As far as the distribution of sampled households according to the average family size is concerned, it has been found that the average family size is almost the same for all the social groups. The overall average family size for all the sampled households is found to be 4.80.

5. HOUSING CONDITIONS

Housing is an essential prerequisite of human well being. Along with the requirement of shelter, other facilities such as type of dwelling unit, drinking water, sanitation, drainage, etc., comprise housing conditions of the people. These housing conditions form a fundamental component of their overall quality of life. Table 5 displays the data about type of house, housing condition and source of drinking water for rural non-farm households of Punjab.

Table 5: Type of House, Housing Condition, Bathroom and Source of Drinking Water of Sampled Non-Farm Households by Social Groups in Punjab

Description		SCs	OBCs	Others	All Sampled Households
Type of House	Owned	292 (98.65)	140 (98.59)	218 (98.64)	650 (98.63)
	Rented	3 (1.41)	2 (1.41)	3 (1.36)	8 (1.21)
	Homeless	1 (0.34)	0 (0.00)	0 (0.00)	1 (0.15)
	Total	296 (100.00)	142 (100.00)	221 (100.00)	659 (100.00)
Type of House	Katcha	15 (5.07)	4 (2.82)	6 (2.71)	25 (3.79)
	Semi Pucca	94 (31.76)	37 (26.06)	24 (10.86)	155 (23.52)
	Pucca	187 (63.18)	101 (71.13)	191 (86.43)	479 (72.69)
	Total	296 (100.00)	142 (100.00)	221 (100.00)	659 (100.00)
Condition of the Dwelling Unit	Good	147 (49.66)	90 (63.38)	188 (85.07)	425 (64.49)
	Average	103 (36.46)	42 (29.08)	25 (11.47)	171 (26.43)
	Dilapidated	44 (14.86)	11 (7.75)	8 (3.62)	63 (9.56)
	Total	296 (100.00)	142 (100.00)	221 (100.00)	659 (100.00)
Bathroom	Yes	288 (97.30)	141 (99.30)	218 (98.64)	647 (98.18)
	No	8 (2.70)	1 (0.70)	3 (1.36)	12 (1.82)
	Total	296 (100.00)	142 (100.00)	221 (100.00)	659 (100.00)
Source of Drinking water	Tap	206 (68.44)	81 (55.87)	99 (43.24)	386 (57.19)
	RO	40 (13.29)	28 (19.31)	87 (38.00)	155 (22.97)
	Hand Pump	29 (9.64)	21 (14.49)	20 (8.74)	70 (10.38)
	Motor	23 (7.65)	15 (10.35)	20 (8.74)	58 (8.60)
	Without any Source	3 (1.00)	0 (0.00)	3 (1.31)	6 (0.90)
	Total	301 (100.00)	145 (100.00)	229 (100.00)	675 (100.00)

Note: Figures in brackets denote percentage

Source: Field Survey 2017-18

OBCs- Other Backward Classes and SCs-Scheduled Castes.

The table shows that 98.63 per cent of sampled households have their own houses and only a negligible proportion has been found homeless during the field survey. As far as the condition of houses is concerned, 72.69 per cent of households have been residing in pucca houses and 23.52 per cent and 3.79 per cent finds shelter in semi pucca and katcha houses, respectively. Notably, the proportion of the SCs living in a Katcha and Semi Pucca house is higher than the rest of the social groups. Out of total sampled households, 64.49 per cent households had good conditioned houses while 26.43 per cent and 9.56 per cent households are residing in average and dilapidated houses, respectively. Further, the social group wise distribution shows that a higher proportion (36.46 per cent) of SC households are residing in a dwelling unit with average conditions as compared to the other caste categories. Another 14.86 per cent of the sampled SC households were found to be residing in dilapidated houses. This is not an end of the story, it is observed during the field survey that majority of this social group has only one room house and they use this room as living room as well as for cooking their meals. We can clearly observe from the table that 2.70 per cent of households are without a separate washroom facility while this proportion is 0.70 and 1.36 for OBCs and Others. Additionally the analysis of source of drinking water shows that 68.44 per cent of SCs and 55.87 per cent OBCs have been using public taps. While the Others finds their higher share in using RO facility.

6. SEX RATIO

The term sex ratio means the number of females per thousand males in a given population at a given time. Table 6 shows that for all sampled non-farm households there are 847 females for every 1000 males. The segregation of sex ratio by social groups shows that it is higher for the SCs (874) than the OBCs (860) and the 'Others' (802). According to the 2011 census Punjab, Haryana and Delhi states are those states where the sex ratio is lower as compare to the other Indian states. The sex ratios of these states are not lower in overall terms but these ratios are lower among all the social groups of our population. The census data depicts that the SCs have higher sex ratio as compared to the other social groups. Like census results, the results from our field work confirms the fact that among all the social groups the sex ratio is higher for SCs as compare to the OBCs and Others. There is a common belief that education will improve our situation regarding sex ratio but the results are different in reality. If we look at Table 7, 21.35 per cent of the SCs has been found illiterate and this proportion

is only 12.64 for the ‘Others’. Thus education does not seem to be improving the sex-ratio across social groups.

Table 6: Sex Ratio of Sampled Non-Farm Households of different Social Groups of Punjab

Description		SCs	OBCs	Others	All Sampled Households
Sex Ratio	Male	754 (53.56)	379 (53.76)	582 (55.43)	1715 (54.14)
	Female	659 (46.64)	326 (46.24)	468 (44.57)	1453 (45.86)
	Total	1413 (100.00)	705 (100.00)	1050 (100.00)	3168 (100.00)
	Sex Ratio	874	860	802	847

Note: Figures in brackets denote percentage

Source: Field Survey 2017-18

OBCs- Other Backward Classes and SCs-Scheduled Castes.

7. EDUCATION LEVEL

Literacy is defined as the ability to read and write, with an understanding in any language. The United Nation Educational Scientific and Cultural Origination (UNESCO) has defined literacy as, “The Ability to identify, understand, interpret, create, communicate and compute, using printed and written materials associated with varying contexts. Literacy involves a process of learning to enable an individual to achieve his or her goal to develop his or her knowledge and potential and to participate fully in the wide society” (as cited in Khatoon, 2013). Literacy and education are the important indicators in a society and play a central role in human development that impacts overall social-economic development of a country. Higher level of literacy and education lead to attainment of health and nutritional status, economic growth, population control, empowerment of weaker section and community as a whole. But the progress of education among the social groups (Scheduled Caste, Scheduled Tribes, and Other Backward Classes etc) in India as well as in Punjab has remained low as compared to other sections of population. Hence, in order to analyse the economic condition of the rural non-farm workers, it is necessary to examine their educational attainments according to the social group. Table 7 presents the educational level of the sampled rural non-farm households of Punjab.

Table 7: Educational level of Sampled Non-Farm Households according to Social Groups of Punjab

Educational Level	SCs	OBCs	Others	All Sampled Households
Illiterate	285 (21.35)	136 (20.67)	126 (12.64)	547 (18.29)
Below Primary	121 (9.06)	68 (10.33)	91 (9.13)	280 (9.36)
Primary	248 (18.58)	121 (18.39)	110 (11.03)	479 (16.02)
Middle	177 (13.26)	82 (12.46)	131 (13.14)	390 (13.04)
Matric	242 (18.13)	117 (17.78)	209 (20.96)	568 (19.00)
Secondary	167 (12.51)	95 (14.44)	182 (18.25)	444 (14.85)
Graduation	53 (3.97)	19 (2.89)	58 (5.82)	130 (4.35)
Post-Graduation	11 (0.82)	10 (1.52)	41 (4.11)	62 (2.07)
Professional	31 (2.32)	10 (1.52)	49 (4.91)	90 (3.01)
Total	1335 (100.00)	658 (100.00)	997 (100.00)	2990 (100.00)

Note: Figures in brackets denote percentage**Source:** Field Survey 2017-18

OBCs- Other Backward Classes and SCs-Scheduled Castes.

The table shows that out of the total members of the sampled households, 18.29 per cent share were illiterate while 16.02, 13.04, 19.00 and 14.85 per cent share have attained education up to Primary, Middle, Matric and Secondary level, respectively. Further, the distribution of population according to their education status across social groups shows that relatively a larger proportion of SCs and OBCs are illiterate and have education up to primary level only while that of the 'Others' is higher beyond secondary level of education. We can also notice that the SCs and OBCs are over-represented in education up to middle level while under-represented in education level beyond that while in case of upper castes i.e. 'Others', a relatively higher proportion can be observed in case of education above matric but a lower one below that.

8. AGE-WISE DISTRIBUTION

Age structure is one of the important characteristic of demographic profile as it gives an overview of the proportion of the productive and unproductive age groups in our sampled households. This information is presented in Table 8. The table shows that majority of the

population of our sampled non-farm households belongs to the working age group i.e. 15-59 years (70.80 per cent) and only 30 per cent population lies in the dependent age group. These include children below age 15 and elderly people (above 59 years of age). However, in reality, neither all the persons belonging to the age group 15-59 are working nor all of those belonging to age groups below 15 years and above 59 years are dependent or non-working. It can be due to lower female labour force participation and existence of child labour in our rural society. Hence, a clearer picture of dependent and working population can be observed from the table 9 which shows the distribution of the family members of the sampled households by their economic status.

Table 8: Age-wise Distribution of Sampled Non-Farm Households by Social Groups in Punjab

Description		SCs	OBCs	Others	All Sampled Households
Age (in Years)	0-9	163 (11.54)	100 (14.18)	120 (11.42)	383 (12.08)
	9-15	126 (8.92)	57 (8.09)	81 (7.71)	264 (8.33)
	15-59	1001 (70.84)	488 (69.22)	754 (71.81)	2243 (70.80)
	59-65	65 (4.60)	35 (4.96)	45 (4.29)	145 (4.58)
	65 & Above	58 (4.10)	25 (3.55)	50 (4.76)	133 (4.20)
	Total	1413 (100.00)	705 (100.00)	1050 (100.00)	3168 (100.00)

Note: Figures in brackets denote percentage

Source: Field Survey 2017-18

OBCs- Other Backward Classes and SCs-Scheduled Castes.

9. ECONOMIC STATUS

Table 9 divides the sampled population in three groups - earners, earning dependents and dependents. The table shows that 38.60 per cent of the total family members of the sampled households were earners, 4.33 per cent were earning dependents and 57.07 per cent were dependent. Thus, about 43 per cent of the sampled population was found to be working on principal and subsidiary status. Further, the distribution of this population by economic status across social groups shows almost a homogeneous pattern. On the other hand, if we analyze the results of Table 8 and 9 jointly, the results indicates that approximately 28 per cent share of non-farm sector population is unemployed in Punjab.

Table 9: Economic Status of Sampled Non-Farm Households of different social groups of Punjab

Description		SCs	OBCs	Others	All Sampled Households
Economic Status	E	546 (38.64)	270 (38.30)	407 (38.76)	1223 (38.60)
	ED	64 (4.53)	28 (3.97)	45 (4.29)	137 (4.32)
	D	803 (56.83)	407 (57.73)	598 (56.95)	1808 (57.07)
	Total	1413 (100.00)	705 (100.00)	1050 (100.00)	3168 (100.00)

Note: Figures in brackets denote percentage**Source:** Field Survey 2017-18

OBCs- Other Backward Classes and SCs-Scheduled Castes.

10. LAND OWNERSHIP

In Table 10, we can look at the distribution of land ownership across social groups. The table shows that majority of the sampled non-farm households are landless. But we can also observe within group and between group disparities from this Table. We can see that about 79.67 per cent of all social groups taken together are landless but this proportion is only 50.68 per cent in case of the 'Others' caste category as compared to 86.62 per cent and 97.97 per cent for OBCs and SCs, respectively. We can observe that only 2 per cent of the SC non-farm households own land, while this proportion is 13.38 per cent in case of OBCs, out of which 11.97 per cent own land up to 2.5 acres and 1.41 per cent own it between 2.5-5.0 acres only. On the other hand, in case of 'Others', 49.32 per cent of the non-farm households own land, 26.70 per cent of them own land up to 2.5 acres, 14.03 per cent between 5.0-15.0 acres, 7.69 per cent between 5.0 -15.0 acres and 0.90 per cent own 15.0 acres & above. In rural Punjab, land being a main productive asset, the variations in its ownership become the root cause of all other socio-economic discriminations. Due to the poor resource base, the SCs are at the bottom in every socio-economic parameter. It leaves them in poor living conditions, poor access to education which further determine their occupational choices and outcomes.

Table 10: Land Ownership Pattern of Sampled Non-Farm Households of Punjab

Size Categories (in acres)	SCs	OBCs	Others	All Sampled Households
LANDLESS	290 (97.97)	123 (86.62)	112 (50.68)	525 (79.67)
Up to 2.5	5 (1.69)	17 (11.97)	59 (26.70)	81 (12.29)
2.5-5.0	1 (0.34)	2 (1.41)	31 (14.03)	34 (5.16)
5.0-15.0	0 (0.00)	0 (0.00)	17 (7.69)	17 (2.58)
15 & above	0 (0.00)	0 (0.00)	2 (0.90)	2 (0.30)
Total	296 (100.00)	142 (100.00)	221 (100.00)	659 (100.00)

Note: Figures in brackets denote percentage

Source: Field Survey 2017-18

OBCs- Other Backward Classes and SCs-Scheduled Castes.

SUMMING UP

To sum up, it can be stated that the proportion of non-farm households is the highest among SCs and the lowest among the category of OBCs. The Scheduled Caste Category constitutes 44.91 per cent of the sample, whereas 21.55 per cent households belong to the Backward Classes and 33.54 per cent households belong to the 'Others' caste category. The Sikh religion forms 64.64 per cent, while the Hindu religion is found to be comprising only 32.32 per cent of the sampled non-farm households. As many as 67.61 per cent and 65.61 per cent share of the sampled non-farm households of OBCs and Others categories respectively belong to the Sikh community. In the category of SCs the proportion of the households belonging to Sikh religion is 62.50. The Others Caste Category has a greater tendency towards having a joint family, while in case of SCs and OBCs, the sampled non-farm households mainly have nuclear families.

About 73 per cent of total sampled households are living in *pucca* houses and 23.52 per cent sampled households are residing in *semi-pucca* houses. Further, if we look at the housing condition, 64.49 per cent sampled households own the houses of good condition; 26.43 per cent own houses of average condition and 9.56 per cent own dilapidated houses. The living conditions of the sampled non-farm households are poor in the Scheduled Caste Category as compared to the other social groups. It has also been found that the main source of drinking water for sampled households is tap. The sex ratio for the average sampled farm households

is 847 females for every 1000 males. As many as 18.29 per cent rural non-farm sampled population is illiterate. The proportion of illiterates among non-farm households is higher among SCs. Only 4.35 and 2.07 per cent non-farm sampled persons are graduates and post-graduates, respectively and only 3.01 per cent non-farm sampled persons are having any professional degrees. About 81.75 per cent of the total non-farm workers are males. Remaining 18.25 per cent are females. It has been found that, the proportion of earners is the highest among Others and the lowest among OBCs. About 79.67 per cent of total households are landless and only 2.88 percent of total households own land more than five acres. The analysis clearly indicates that living conditions of non- farm households are very poor in rural Punjab. The condition of non- farm households is the worst among SCs due to the lower level of social and human capital.

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