



## Work Participation of Elderly in Haryana - A Case Study of District Rohtak

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### Abstract

*The present study deals with the work participation rate of elderly in District Rohtak of Haryana. The study is largely based on secondary data. However for an in-depth inquiry a sample survey of 500 elderly persons from different age strata was selected. The study revealed that the work participation rate of male and female elderly decreases with age. However, the female participation rate is higher than the males. Per cent share of employed elderly decreases with increasing distances from the city. It is found that 91.37 per cent of the respondents were employed during their active age and now getting family pension whereas remaining 8.87 per cent are working as casual workers in industry and agriculture.*

**Keywords:** Work participation rate, elderly, main worker, marginal worker, Rohtak, Haryana.

### Introduction

Old age is the time for an individual to relax and enjoy the remaining life but in majority of the less developed countries including India elderly persons are devoid of it. Rather they have to strive for themselves and the families' survival. The situation becomes pathetic in the absence of effective social security for this vulnerable section of the society. The governments in majority of the countries wash their hand just by providing meagre old age pension which are nothing except an eye wash.

For older adults in less developed countries, retirement is an unaffordable luxury. Four out of five older adults worldwide have no retirement income from pensions or government programs. These adults must continue to work to support themselves and their families. Many elderly work in the informal economy, selling goods on the street, or work on farms with no benefits or social protection. Without public support, people have traditionally relied on family support networks in their older ages. However, as more young people move to urban areas for work, many older people are left to fend for themselves. The responsibility of grandparents as the primary caregivers for their grandchildren compounds the challenge in less developed countries<sup>1</sup>.

**Objectives:** The paper has single objective to examine the work participation rate of elderly in Haryana.

### Methodology

The present study is empirical in its treatment of the theme of inquiry. The requisite information is obtained from primary as well as secondary sources. Secondary data were obtained from

National Sampling Survey Organization (NSSO 1995-1996, and 2004), Help Age India and Census of India.

A field survey was conducted in 2012 in District Rohtak, Haryana. In all, 500 respondents of 60+ age spreading over five development blocks were randomly selected. The selection of number of respondents is a function of per cent share of elderly to the total population of elderly. This way, 50 respondents were selected from Lakhna Majra and Sampla, 100 from Maham and Kalanaur and 200 from Rohtak. During the survey, due attention was given to the age of respondents. For, maximum numbers of respondents were selected from amongst 60-69 age group followed by 70-79 age groups. Least number of respondents was selected from 80+ years age. Simple percentages, graphs and charts are applied to unhide the issues related to the elderly in Rohtak.

**Study Area:** The study area Rohtak District lies in the south eastern part of Haryana between 28° 09' North latitude and 76° 57' East longitudes. Elderly population accounted for about 7.87 per cent of the total population whereas the percentage share of elderly in the study area is 9.2 in 2001. The district is having an area of 1668.47 square kms.

### Results and Discussion

**Work Participation Rate:** As per the census of India, work has been defined as participation in any economically productive activity. Such participation may be physical or mental in nature. Work involves not only actual work, but also effective supervision and direction of work. It is also unpaid works on farm or any family enterprise. The Indian workforce is over 400 million strong, which accounts for about 39.1 per cent of the total population of the country.

Arudinarayana N., while analyzing the Pattern of Elderly Workers in India based on 1991 census data stated that about 39.2 per cent of elderly are working (36.2 per cent main worker and 3 per cent marginal workers) instead of taking rest<sup>2</sup>. A very minute proportion (<1 per cent) is not willing to work. Interestingly, while the percentage of main workers is more than five times higher than the females whereas reverse trend is observed in case of female marginal workers. This could be because of poverty in the family and poor social security system. Elderly living in rural areas particularly, men participate more in income generating activities than their women counterparts. A large majority of the working elderly are reported Cultivators followed by Agricultural Laboureres which is obvious in Indian context. Even though work participation rate among elderly men is quite high but they don't form a significant portion of total working force. Contrary to this the participation rate of females is quite low. In our study, approximately 18.7 per cent were still working as unskilled workers against those who were at home (78 per cent). Similar results were seen in a study by Elango (1998)<sup>3</sup>, while Singh, et. al. in his study, reported that 55.8 per cent were occupied in productive work, 28 per cent in agriculture, 15.1 per cent in labor, and 44.2 per cent were dependent on others<sup>4</sup>.

As per the 2001 census and 2007-08 NSSO, about 40 per cent elderly in India (60 per cent males and 21 per cent females) were working. A comparison of 1991 and 2001 data reveals that though there is marginal increase in the elderly work participation rate but the growth in the males work participation is phenomenal. The rate of male work participation was about 57 per cent in 1991 and increased to 60 per cent in 2001. Though the participation rate among rural elderly grew marginally but it was significant in the urban areas. Irrespective

of the place of residence, the female participation increased at but at a slow pace (table-1).

An investigative survey conducted by Help Age India (2013) reported that about 23 per cent elderly are retired professionals and 10 per cent are labourers<sup>5</sup>. Equal percentages 4 per cent of elderly are skilled workers and petty traders. Around 7 per cent elderly are still into services. About 5 per cent reported to be in business. Almost one-third elderly are homemaker which mostly constitutes female elderly. As far as, Haryana and the study area is concerned it was found that about 28 per cent are retired professionals particularly from defence services. Being agricultural state around 20 per cent is working as casual workers. The percentage of active in service is negligible however; about 5 per cent are traders. Females are without business and with no option to work.

**Table-1**  
**India: Work Participation Rates among Elderly by Sex and Residence, 1991-2001**

Years		India		
		Total	Male	Female
1991	Total	37.18	56.98	15.53
	Rural	41.22	61.89	18.38
	Urban	23.33	39.75	5.96
2001	Total	40.87	60.51	21.64
	Rural	25.80	65.85	25.80
	Urban	26.75	44.60	9.38

Source: Census of India, 1991 and 2001



**Figure-1**  
**India: Work Participation Rates among Elderly by Sex and Residence, 1991-2001**

As expected the work participation among females is very low particularly in rural areas. Since Haryana is an agricultural state and majority of population reside in the villages, highest participation rate is found in the rural areas. Contrary to the male work participation, women work participation rate registered a rising trend in the state.

As far as elderly work participation rate in the state of Haryana is concerned it is less than the national average. Irrespective of sex and place of residence the rate follows the national trend however at slow pace (table-2).

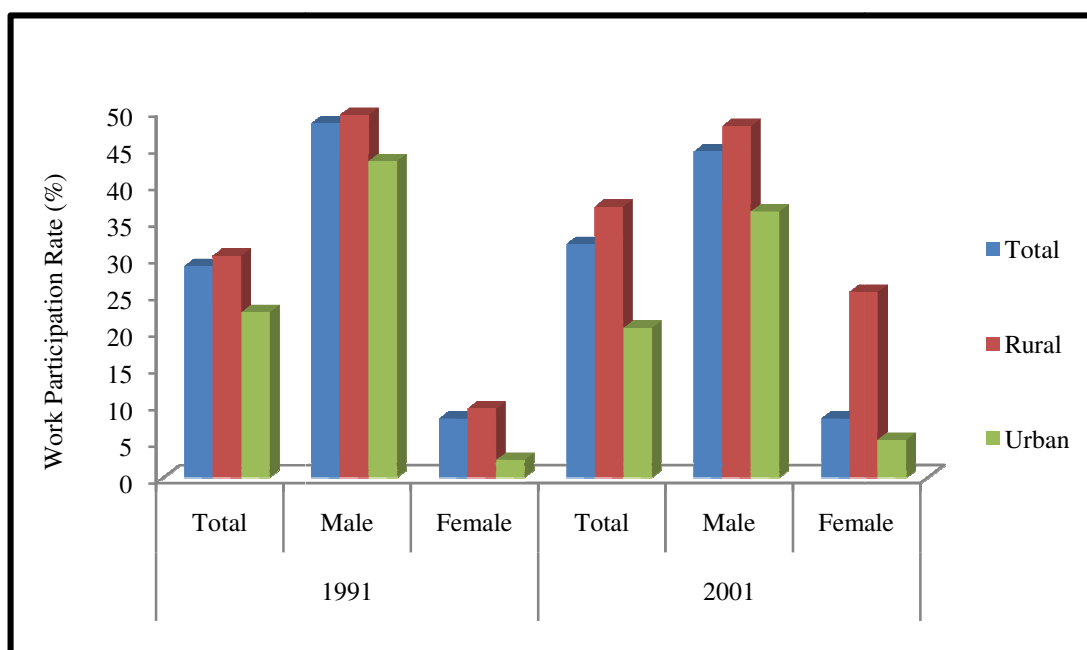
The study area followed almost the same trend as that of the state of Haryana. The participation rate which was about 28 per

cent in 1991 reached to 32 per cent in 2001. The remarkable shift in the rate of work participation is observed by sex. It was 48 per cent for the males in 1991 but, declined sharply to 32 per cent in 2001. At the same time the female participation rate was about 8 per cent in 1991 and remained the same in 2001. Again some glaring observations are made related to the work participation as per the residence. It was found that about 49 per cent males in the rural areas were working in 1991 but declined to 37 per cent in 2001. However, the female rate in the rural areas increased from 9.77 per cent to 25 per cent. The trend in urban areas is such that the male participation has declined substantially whereas female participation increased marginally (table-3).

**Table-2**  
**Haryana: Work Participation Rates among Elderly by Sex and Residence, 1991-2001**

Years		Haryana		
		Total	Male	Female
1991	Total	30.92	53.63	6.57
	Rural	32.74	55.66	7.63
	Urban	23.81	45.26	2.63
2001	Total	33.47	48.30	18.33
	Rural	36.60	50.47	22.31
	Urban	24.07	41.68	6.55

Source: Census of India, 1991 and 2001.

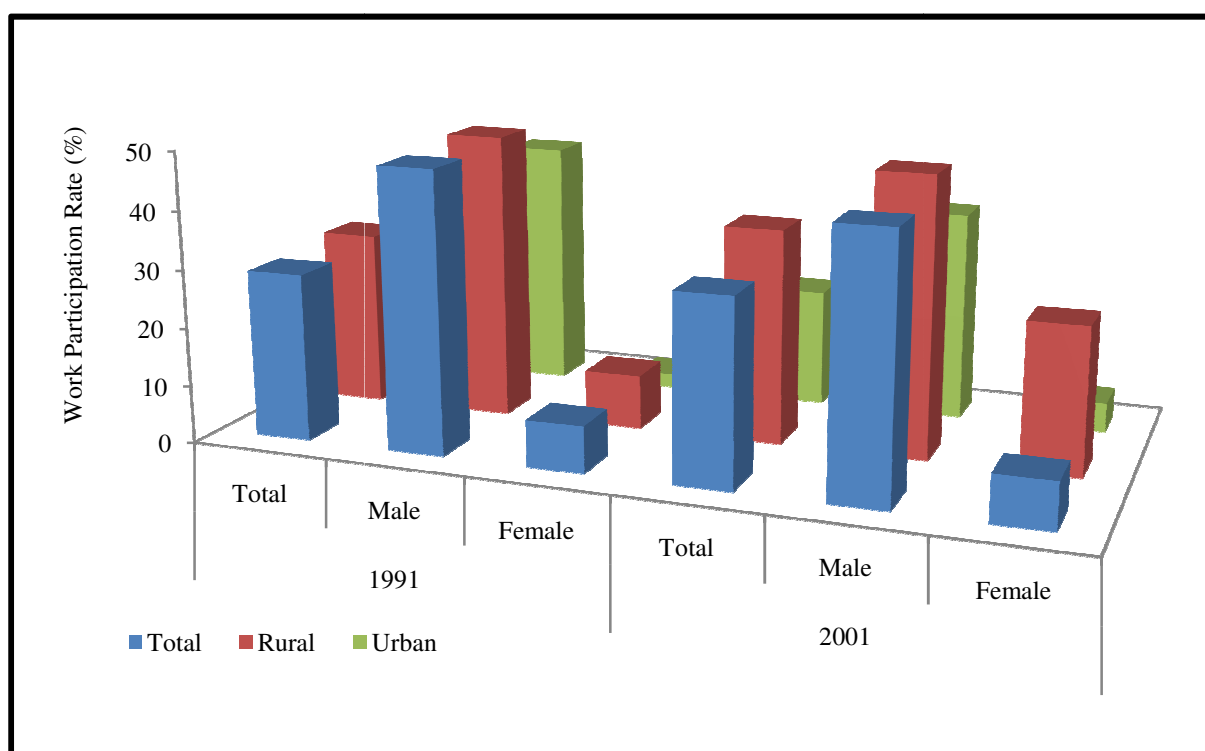


**Figure-2**  
**Haryana: Work Participation Rates among Elderly by Sex and Residence, 1991-2001**

**Table-3**  
**Rohtak: Work Participation Rates among Elderly by Sex and Residence, 1991-2001**

Years		Rohtak		
		Total	Male	Female
1991	Total	28.82	48.33	8.03
	Rural	30.23	49.44	9.37
	Urban	22.54	43.13	2.41
2001	Total	31.84	44.44	8.03
	Rural	36.92	47.91	25.31
	Urban	20.40	36.25	5.13

Source: Census of India, 1991 and 2001.



**Figure-3**  
**Rohtak: Work Participation Rates among Elderly by Sex and Residence, 1991-2001**

**Main and Marginal Workers:** As per the Census of India “Main Workers” are those who had worked for the major part of the year. Major part of the year means at least six months (183 days). Those who have not worked for the major part of the year (<183 days) are termed as “Marginal Workers”. There are about 312 million (77.8 per cent) main workers and 88 million (22.2 per cent) marginal workers in India (2001). Of the total workforce, about 51.7 per cent are males and 31.6 per cent are females. Among the main workers males account for about 76.7 per cent and the remaining are females. Majority (87.3 per cent) of female workers are from rural areas. Interestingly, among the marginal workers, females outnumbered males. As far as elderly

workers are concerned, it was found that the share of 60+ populations in total workers is about 15 per cent with almost equal share of males and females. Females outnumbered the males in both urban rural areas. It is an indicator of prevalent poverty and the pathetic attitude for the well being of elderly in India.

The state of Haryana is an agricultural turned industrial state where there is growing demand of skilled as well unskilled workers. Main and marginal workers accounted for about 12 per cent of the total elderly population of Haryana in 2001. The males accounted for about 6.80 per cent and the females 5.41

per cent. In contrast to the national scenario, the males are ahead of females as main as well as marginal workers. The striking fact is that male marginal workers are more than the female marginal workers in rural Haryana but almost the same in the urban Haryana in 2001.

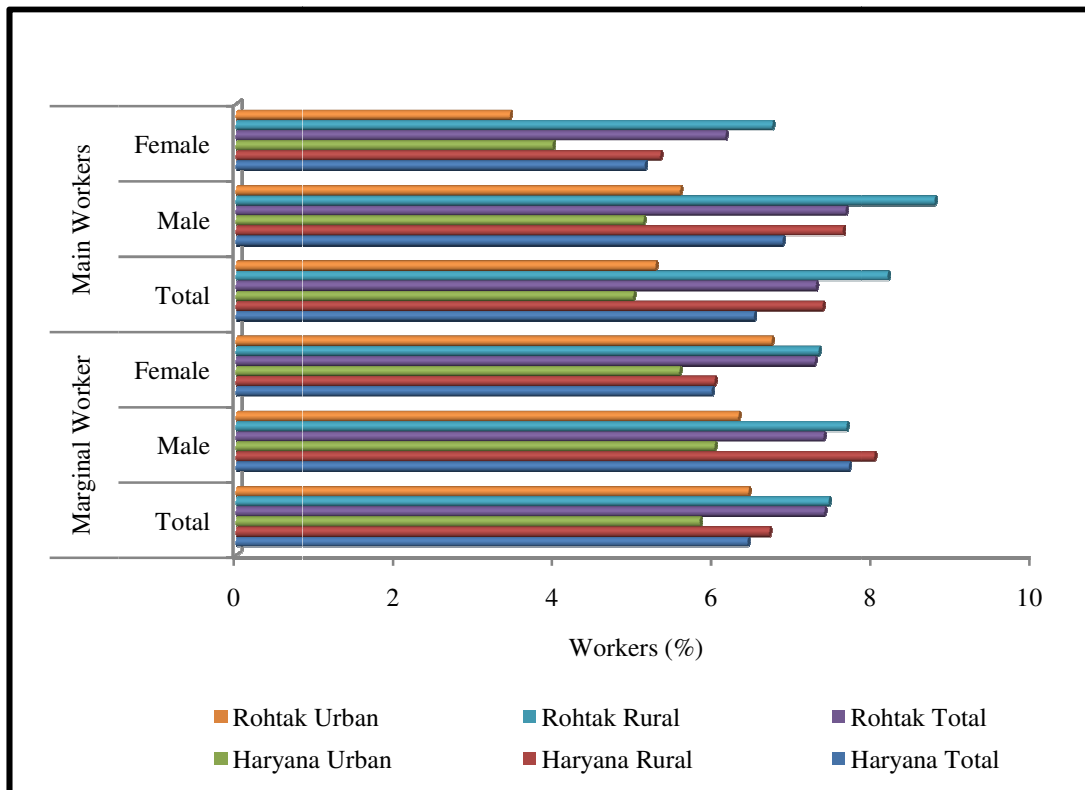
males as marginal workers in 60-69 years age group. Similar trend is observed for rural and urban areas. The percent share of both types of workers is declining beyond 60-69 years and becomes insignificant in 80+ age- group. In case of the study area the share of main and marginal workers is similar to that of the state situation except that the male marginal workers are less than the state and in the others it exceeds to the state (table-4).

Irrespective of sex and place of residence, the age specific share of main and marginal workers is such that females exceed the

**Table-4**  
**Elderly Main and Marginal Worker in Haryana and Rohtak by Age, Sex and Place of Residence, 2001**

	Age-Groups	Marginal Workers			Main Workers		
		Total	Male	Females	Total	Male	Females
<b>Haryana</b>							
Total	60-69	4.83	4.99	4.74	4.59	4.75	4.03
	70-79	1.36	2.10	0.93	1.43	1.60	0.77
	80+	0.08	0.42	0.16	0.29	0.32	0.17
	A.N.S*	0.15	0.18	0.14	0.19	0.19	0.16
Rural	60-69	4.92	5.19	4.78	5.06	5.32	4.23
	70-79	1.36	2.21	0.92	1.78	1.78	0.79
	80+	0.26	0.44	0.16	0.34	0.34	0.16
	A.N.S*	0.15	0.17	0.14	0.18	0.18	0.14
Urban	60-69	3.99	3.90	4.13	3.38	3.45	2.85
	70-79	1.34	1.54	1.04	1.12	1.18	0.69
	80+	0.29	0.33	0.22	0.26	0.26	0.21
	A.N.S*	0.20	0.23	0.17	0.22	0.22	0.22
<b>Rohtak</b>							
Total	60-69	5.31	4.60	5.81	5.15	5.24	4.87
	70-79	1.40	1.98	0.99	1.49	1.71	0.81
	80+	0.30	0.42	0.21	0.30	0.34	0.17
	A.N.S*	0.37	0.37	0.25	0.34	0.36	0.29
Rural	60-69	5.46	4.77	5.88	5.87	6.07	5.38
	70-79	1.39	2.09	0.97	1.63	1.94	0.89
	80+	0.28	0.42	0.20	0.31	0.36	0.17
	A.N.S*	0.31	0.38	0.26	0.37	0.40	0.29
Urban	60-69	4.24	3.93	4.86	3.51	3.68	2.57
	70-79	1.50	1.58	1.37	1.18	1.30	0.44
	80+	0.43	0.45	0.38	0.29	0.30	0.19
	A.N.S*	0.26	0.34	0.11	0.28	0.29	0.23

Source: Census of India 2001, B-Series, Social and Cultural Table. A.N.S.\* = Age Not Stated



**Figure-4**  
**Main and Marginal Elderly Workers in Haryana and Rohtak, 2011**

Table 5 reveals the status of employment among elderly. Majority of respondents (68 per cent) are unemployed. Though better job opportunities are available in Rohtak block yet highest concentration of unemployed elderly is there. It is so because majority of such people are unskilled and were traditionally engaged in agriculture but due to rapid industrialization and urbanization their land has been acquired and in this phase of life they find themselves incapable. Consequently they have to depend on family and government support.

**Table-5**  
**Rohtak: Block-wise Employed Elderly, 2012**

Block	Employment		Total (N=500)
	Yes (N=158)	No (N=342)	
Lakhan Majra	3.6	6.4	10
Maham	6	14	20
Kalanaur	6.6	13.4	20
Rohtak	12	28	40
Sampla	3.4	6.6	10
<b>Total</b>	<b>31.6</b>	<b>68.4</b>	<b>100</b>

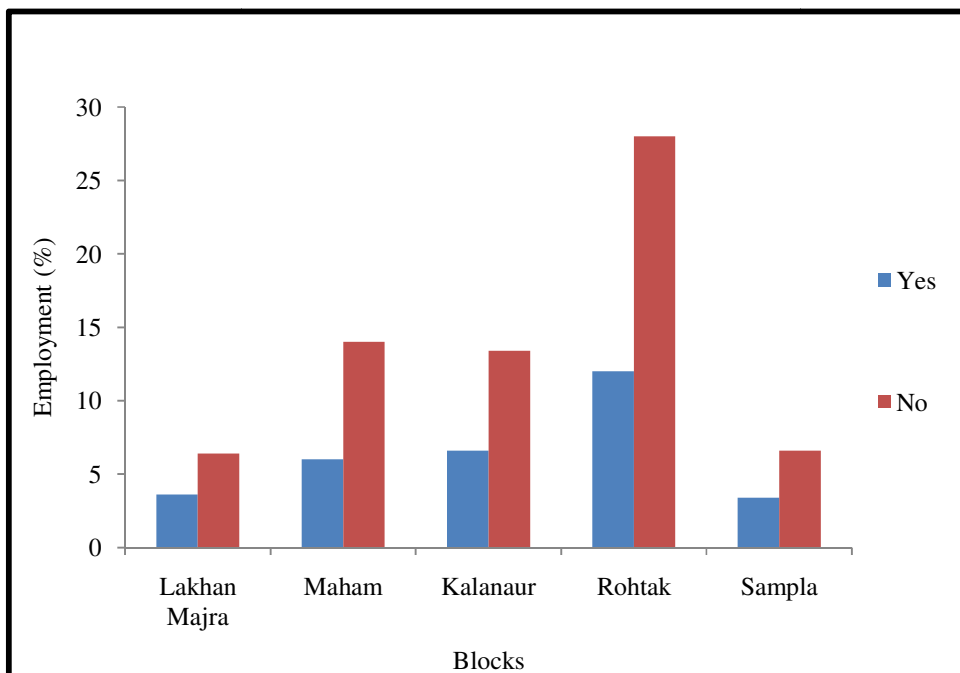
Source: Based on Field Survey, 2012

As expected, among 158 employed elderly 134 (84.81 per cent) are males and the remaining are females. Highest concentration of employed males and females is found in Rohtak. Generally per cent share employed elderly decreases with increasing distances from the city. The only point of satisfaction is that 91.37 per cent have permanent jobs but largely with private organized sectors and the remaining 8.87 per cent are working as casual workers in industry and agriculture (table-6).

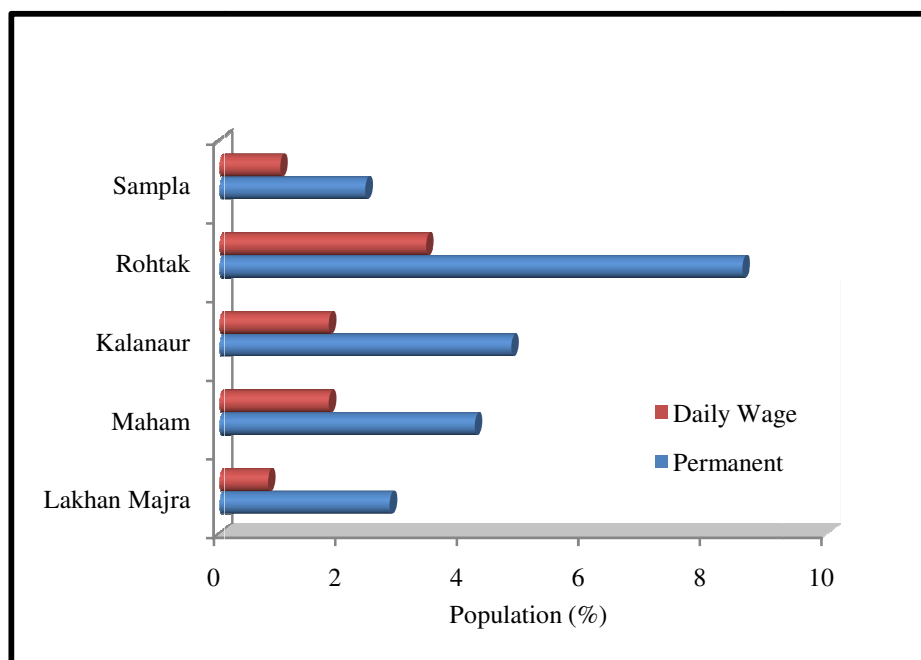
**Table-6**  
**Rohtak: Nature of Job of Elderly, 2012**

Block	Permanent	Daily Wage
Lakhan Majra	2.8	0.8
Maham	4.2	1.8
Kalanaur	4.8	1.8
Rohtak	8.6	3.4
Sampla	2.4	1
<b>Total</b>	<b>114 (91.13)</b>	<b>44 (8.87)</b>

Source: Based on Field Survey, 2012



**Figure-5**  
**Rohtak: Block-wise Employed Elderly, 2012**



**Figure-6**  
**Rohtak: Nature of Job of Elderly, 2012**

**Conclusion**

The participation rate of elderly in Haryana is quite low particularly in the rural areas. However, the participation rate for female elderly registered a rising trend in the state. Similar

trend were observed in the study area. The elderly participation registered an increase of about 4 per cent during 1990-2001. However there is a remarkable shift in the rate of work participation by sex. It was 48 per cent for the males in 1991

but, declined sharply to 32 per cent in 2001. The duration of work of elderly plays an important role in the participation rate. The share of 60+ populations in total workers is about 15 per cent with almost equal share of males and females. Females outnumbered the males in both urban rural areas. It is an indicator of prevalent poverty and the pathetic attitude for the well being of elderly in India. The striking fact is that male marginal workers are more than the female marginal workers in rural Haryana but almost the same in the urban Haryana in 2001. Majority of the respondents (68 per cent) in the study area are unemployed. Though better job opportunities are available in Rohtak block yet highest concentration of unemployed elderly is there.

The study signifies the fact the in spite of all the tall claims by the government agencies, the elderly are still prey to their families. Struggling for the survival by the elderly is a blunt on the culture and the society. The problem to be addressed at priority basis, whereby this vulnerable section of the society can pass their last phase of life with comfort. This is the responsibility of family, society and the state that the dignity of the elderly is maintained.

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