

ECONOMIC ACTIVITIES AND EXPENDITURE PATTERN OF THE TRIBES OF KANNUR DISTRICT IN KERALA

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Abstract: This paper attempts to analyse the economic activities and its relationship to expenditure pattern among the tribes of Kannur District in Kerala. The economic life deals with materials wants of people and activities related with the fulfilment of resources and needs, which constitute the parts of economic life. Various durable and nondurable goods' consumption depends on the availability of income, market and on household's decisions as well as on the availability of goods and services. The tribal people live with very low income from their primary and secondary economic activities.

Keywords: Economic activities, income, expenditure pattern, tribes, tribal education, food and dress.

Introduction: This paper attempts to study the economic activities and expenditure pattern of the tribes of Kannur District in Kerala. Economic activities, income and expenditure pattern are closely related and it shows the status of development of any society. According to Business Dictionary¹ "Economic activities are related to production, distribution, exchange and consumption of goods and services. The primary aim of the economic activity is the production of goods and services with a view to make them available to consumer. In other words economic activities are those efforts which are undertaken by man to earn income, money, wealth for his life and to secure maximum satisfaction of wants with limited and scarce means". Expenditure pattern of every society gives a perfect idea about the economic status of the societies. Diwedi (2012)² says that "according to Keynes, households decide their current consumption expenditure on the basis of their current income". This is true in the case of tribal life of the present study is concerned. David Miles and Andrew Scott (2005)³ argue that the "economist pay enormous attention to consumers expenditure because they are interested in welfare which to a significant extent, comes from the utility people get from consuming goods and services". At the same time, "Modigliani Life Cycle Hypothesis emphasises that income varies somewhat predictably over a person's life and that consumers use and borrowing to smooth their consumption over their life time. According to this hypothesis, consumption depends on both income and wealth" (George Mankiw, 1992)⁴.

Expenditure regulates how much money is utilised for various amenities of life. The annual income is spent for various aspects, however, a major part of which is spent for durable and non-durable goods such as food, cloth, education and electricity. Among the tribal communities, various types of economic activities emerged as a part of socio-economic changes. The economic activities, however, can be

categorised into primary and secondary economic activities.

Area of the Study: The present study is conducted in the Peruva region of the Reserve Forest in Kannur District in Kerala. The total population of Kolayad Grama Panchayat is 18062, which consists of 8921 male and 9141 female. The status of literacy is 89.14 per cent, which comprising of 92.68 per cent males and 85.73 per cent females. Male - Female ratio is 1025. Total literacy is 89.14. Male literacy is 92.68 and female literacy rate is 85.73 according to 2001 Census⁵. The Peruva region belongs to the Kolayad Grama Panchayat in Peravoor Block of the Thalassery Taluk in Kannur District. The tribes of Kannur district live in the Reserve Forests, fringes of forests, and in the plains and they are engaged in various economic activities. In this context, the present study aims to analyze the economic activities and expenditure pattern of the tribes in Kannur District.

Primary Economic Activities: Most of the tribal people are engaged in primary economic activities such as agricultural labour, wage labour, building construction work, agriculture, etc.

Table I: Status of Workers

Sl. No.	Primary Economic Activities	No	%
1	Agriculture Labourers & Wage Labourers	28	35.4
2	Wage Labourers	15	18.9
3	Building Construction workers	9	11.3
4	Timber Industry Labourers	3	3.7
5	Timber loading in Forest Dept.	1	1.3
6	Agriculturist	7	8.8
7	Cleaner in Buses	3	3.7
8	Bakery workers	1	1.3
9	Business	1	1.3
10	Carpentry	1	1.3
11	Cattle rearing	1	1.3
12	Mason	1	1.3
13	Driver	1	1.3

14	Clark in Govt Dept.	1	1.3
15	Peon in Survey Dept.	1	1.3
16	Survey Dept.	1	1.3
17	Lineman in KSEB	1	1.3
18	Staff in CISF	1	1.3
19	Veterinary Attender	1	1.3
20	Junior Assistant KSRTC	1	1.3
Total		79	100

The Table I reveals that the Government employees are 8.8 per cent. The category of Agriculturist 8.8 per cent, Agricultural Labourers and Wage Labourers 35.4 per cent, and Wage Labourers and other labourers 35.4 per cent together constitute 71 per cent of the population. That is, still now a majority of them live by engaging in agriculture, agriculture labour, wage labour, etc.

Secondary Economic Activities: Some of the tribal people have secondary economic activities too. MGNREGA works have become a secondary economic activity. The following Table II shows the secondary economic activities of the people.

Table II: Secondary Economic Activities

Sl. No.	Category	No. of People	%
1	MGNREGA	49	56
2	No secondary jobs	39	44
Total		88	100

Income and Expenditure: Income and expenditure are the most important aspects to evaluate the economic life of the people. The income of the people varies from household to household. The annual income varies from 10000 to 30000. However, maximum number of households belonging to the income groups of 10000-20000 and 20001 to 30000. Both these groups consists 11 households each. That is, 64.8 per cent of the households are belonging to the lower income groups 10000-20000 and 20001 to 30000. The details of annual income of the people are given in the Table III.

Table III: Annual Income

Sl. No.	Income Groups	No of House-Holds	%	Total %
1	10000-20000	11	32.4	64.8
2	20001-30000	11	32.4	
3	30001-40000	3	8.8	
4	40001-50000	2	5.9	14.7
5	50001-60000	0	0	
6	60001-70000	0	0	0
7	70001-80000	3	8.8	
8	80001-90000	1	2.9	
9	90001-100000	2	5.9	
10	100001-	0	0	20.5

	200000			
11	200001-300000	1	2.9	
Total		34	100	100

Seven members from six households have got Government Jobs, which resulted in the hike of annual income of the six households, and the percentage of this broad group is 20.5. The remaining 14.7 per cent households come in between 20001-40000 income groups.

Expenditure Pattern: Expenditure pattern determines the standard of living. Spending on private consumption is considered for knowing the expenditure pattern of the people. Food, cloth, education, and electricity are the four major areas considered for the study of expenditure pattern.

Yearly Expenditure Pattern for Food: They are living with a minimum expenditure for food. They purchase rice mainly from the Ration shop and occasionally buy from other shops. They purchase food materials from the main urban centre of Kolayad.

Table IV: Expenditure Pattern for Food

Sl. No.	Expenditure Range (in Rs.)	Households	%
1	Up to 10000	2	5.9
2	10001-20000	16	47.1
3	20001-30000	10	29.4
4	30001-40000	5	14.7
5	40001-50000	0	0
6	50001-60000	0	0
7	60001-70000	1	2.9
		34	100

Maximum number of households, that is, 47.1 per cent households spends in between Rupees 10001 to 20000. 29.4 per cent households spend in between Rupees 20001-30000 for food. That is 76.5 per cent of the people spend in between 10001 and 30000 per year for food.

Yearly Expenditure Pattern for Dress: The expenditure pattern for dress or cloth is also important because they started to purchase more pairs of dress these days. Earlier, they were using two or three pairs of dress, but now they started to purchase at least five to six pairs of dress every year. The pattern of purchase of cloths is given in Table V.

Table V: Yearly Expenditure Pattern for Dress

Sl. No.	Expenditure Range (in Rs.)	No of Households	%
1	1500-3000	27	79.4
2	3001-6000	7	20.6
Total		34	100

Educating Trend: The educating trend among the tribes is growing. At present, 85.3 per cent of the people are sending or already sent their children to

schools. The educational status of the people also supports the trend of educating.

Table VI: Educating Trend

Sl. No.	Trend	No	%
1	Educating	29	85.3
2	Not Educating	4	11.8
3	No Children for Educating	1	2.9
	Total Households	34	100

Educational Status: The educational status is provided in the following Table VII.

Table VII: Educational Status

Age Group	K G	L P	UP	HS C	U G	P G	Professional	Technical
0-5	1							
6-10		4	5					
11-15			3	10				
16-20				9	9			
21-25				11	4	1		
26-30				12			1	
31-35			1	11				
36-40			5	10				1
41-45		1		3				
46-50			4	2				
51-55			3	2				
56-60			1					
61-65								
66-70								
71+								
Total	1	5	22	70	13	1	1	0
%	0.7	3.5	15.9	49.3	9.2	0.7	0.7	1.4

The total population of the studied sample is 147 members from 34 households. Of these 142 individuals are considered for explaining educational status. It is noted that 14 per cent are illiterate. 7 per cent is literate only without any educational qualifications. It is important that 49.3 per cent of the

people have achieved High School education. From the Age Group analysis it can be pointed out that this trend started around 25 years ago since the Age Group 36-40 provides a similar trend of the present day school going children's Age Group of 11-15. After High School education, there is a steady and drastic decline. It is noted that there is not even a single person qualified professional education. But, 1.4 per cent people have got technical education. In general, the educational attainment has helped them to make them more receptive to developmental programmes.

Yearly Expenditure Pattern for Education: As this population are Scheduled Tribes, they receive educational concessions, stipends, lump sum grants, etc. But, for travel and food they themselves will have to meet the expenditure. In some cases, the children are studying in faraway places, and in such cases they have to spend a lot for travel. The Table VIII provides the yearly expenditure pattern for education.

Table VIII: Yearly Expenditure Pattern for Education

Sl. No.	Expenditure Range (in Rs.)	No. of households	%
1	Do not spend	19	55.9
2	Up to 3000	6	17.7
3	3001-6000	6	17.7
4	6001-9000	0	0
5	9001-12000	1	2.9
6	12001-15000	0	0
7	15001-18000	1	2.9
8	18001-21000	0	0
9	21001-24000	1	2.9
Total		34	100

House Electrification: At present, 91.2 per cent of the houses are electrified, and 8.8 per cent are not electrified because those houses are under construction. Besides that, earlier some houses were electrified with the solar panels and batteries. Some of such solar panels have become dysfunctional. Earlier, only 20.6 per cent of the houses were electrified with the solar electrification. Today, as a part of development programmes, 91.2 per cent of the houses are electrified. The details of electrification are provided in the Table VIII.

Table IX: House Electrification

Sl. No.	Status	Number	%
1	Electrified	31	91.2
2	Not Electrified	3	8.8
Total		34	100

Yearly Expenditure Pattern for Electricity: Out of 34 households, 18 houses are electrified recently and they have not started to remit their electricity bills. Only 38.2 per cent households are remitting for the use of electricity. The Table X shows the yearly expenditure pattern for electricity.

Table X: Yearly Expenditure Pattern for Electricity

Sl. No	Yearly Expenditure for Electricity (in Rs.)	No of Household s	%
1	Rupees 1000-1200	13	38.2
2	Not Electrified	3	8.8
3	Newly Electrified Payment not started	18	53
	Total	34	100

Comparison of Expenditure Pattern: The people are spending more for food, and then for cloth. Expenditure for education is in the third place and for electricity is in the fourth place. The Table XI provides the total expenditure of the 34 household in terms of priorities.

Table XI: Expenditure Pattern on Food, Cloth, Education and Electricity

Sl. No.	Category	Rupees	%
1	For Food	768000	79.2
2	For Cloth	98000	10.1
3	For Education	89400	9.3
4	For Electricity	13536	1.4

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As per the above statistics, the annual expenditure on food per household is Rs. 22588 and average monthly expenditure is Rs. 1882 only for per household. The tribes spend maximum income for food but it is very negligible. Moreover, the expenditure is minimised as they cultivate vegetables and fruits in their homesteads.

Conclusions: Food, cloth, education and electricity are the priorities of their expenditure pattern. They spend maximum for food but minimum for electricity. Expenditure for cloth occupies the second position. Expenditure for education is come under the third position.

The study reveals that, still majority of the tribes live by engaging in agriculture, agriculture labour and wage labour. The Government employees are very limited in number. The category of Agriculturist is also low. But, Agricultural Labourers and Wage Labourers constitute a major part of their economic activities. The tribal people live with very low income from their primary and secondary economic activities. The present study supports Keynes views on “households decide their current consumption expenditure on the basis of their current income”.