

**TRIBAL DEVELOPMENT-  
A STUDY OF INTERNAL FACTORS**

**By  
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**CERTIFICATE**

The thesis entitled "**Tribal Development - A Study of Internal Factors**" is a bonafide record of the research work done by Mr. Francis K. M. under my guidance and supervision during 1995-2006. The thesis has not been previously submitted for any other degree or diploma.

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## DECLARATION BY THE CANDIDATE

I, Francis K. M. declare that the thesis entitled "**Tribal Development-  
A Study of Internal Factors**", submitted by me is a record of the research work done by me and that it has not previously formed the basis for the award of any degree, diploma, fellowship or any other similar title.

  
**FRANCIS K. M.**

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# INTRODUCTION

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## **Chapter I**

### **INTRODUCTION**

The question of tribal development in India has always been on the main agenda of Indian economic policy. Academicians and policy makers have paid their attention to the same, which contributed to a plethora of perspectives, studies and administrative reports during the last one century. Among these contributions, many are given by anthropologists and they have provided valuable suggestions for framing suitable policies for tribal development.

The legacy of studies related to the economic behaviour of tribes starts from B. Malinowski, who was later known as the 'Father of Economic Anthropology'. He emphasized the need for the protection of tribal life by guarding them from the exploitation of non-tribes. He bequeathed the notion that decay of tribes begins with the interaction of non-tribes with the tribes. Academicians hitherto have followed the above notion as a universal dictum that could be applied everywhere in the analysis of tribal life.

Consequently, little importance has been given to the study of problems within the internal structure of tribal organization. The external factors, which lead to the deterioration of the living standards of the tribes, received undue importance. The problems of tribes are attributed to the factors like growth of trade and market, immigration of non-tribes in search of land and employment, spread of education, opening up new occupations as well as state sponsored programmes<sup>1</sup>. Reports and case studies about tribal

development published by the Planning Commission argue that as a consequence of external intervention, tribes have lost their land<sup>2</sup> and been compelled to take employment as agricultural and unskilled labourers<sup>3</sup>. The main argument has been that the methods by which tribal land has passed from tribes to non-tribes are mainly through fraud, force, enticement, encroachment and indebtedness.

To prevent the external exploitation, a number of provisions are enacted in the Indian Constitution. Assistance in the form of subsidies, housing facilities, and reservation in education, employment and different political bodies could not improve the living standards of life of the tribes at par with that of the non-tribes. In spite of this assistance from the government through various schemes, the tribes in India continue to be the most underdeveloped among the subalterns and are on the fringes of Indian economy, society and polity. The failure of policies, which are framed on the dictum that factors external to tribal organization determine their lack of self-fulfilment, compel us to look at our traditional approach to tribal issues from an entirely different perspective. Consequently, one is forced to hypothesize that factors internal to the tribal organization are also responsible for the underdevelopment of the tribes. As the World Development Report 2006 has pointed out, deep social divisions make it harder to implement policies that benefit all in spite of the fact that getting a more precise measure of the nature and extent of such internal divisions are problematic<sup>4</sup>. Hence, the present study proceeds with the notion that any assistance to a community whose internal system is problematic and suffering from internal contradictions,

cannot find its fulfilment, unless the problems related to the internal organization of the community are corrected or rectified.

### **Internal Factors and Development**

The problems related to the economic development of the tribes are different from that of the non-tribes. Tribal sector of the economy has certain unique features that distinguish them from the non-tribal sector. The emphasis given on social cohesion among the tribes is greater than the individual freedom. Due to this, economic activities of the members of the tribal communities are controlled by the society as a whole, and in Kerala State this tribal practice is generally known as *Urukootam*. These social controls are executed through a hierarchical structure. Hierarchical structure is an instrument through which these internal factors within the tribal social life are executed. The power to control the economic activities by the hierarchs is derived from not from any formal laws and physical coercion, but from certain factors internal to tribal communities and these are culture (learned behaviour patterns); informal laws or social norms; customs; rituals; belief systems; and traditions. Karl Polanyi characterized these features in a single term, i.e., Substantive Economy, which means that the various levels of social hierarchs control economic actions of the individual members of the community. He viewed such economic practices as an instituted process<sup>5</sup>. While explaining the market process in the early economies and the tribes in the modern world, Polanyi identified that they performed their economic activity not on the basis of individual preferences but on the basis of collective preferences of the group. He writes:

Again, like hunt, raid or expedition under native conditions, trade is not so much an individual as rather a group activity, in this respect closely akin to the organisation of wooing and mating, which is often concerned with the acquisition of wives from a distance more or less peaceful means. Trade thus centres in the meeting of different communities, one of its purposes being the exchange of goods. Such meetings do not, like price-making markets, produce rates of exchange, but on the contrary they rather presuppose such rates. Neither the persons of individual traders nor the motives of individual gain are involved. Whether a chief or king is acting for the community after having collected the “export” goods from its members, or whether the group meets bodily their counterparts on the beach for the purpose of exchange—in either case the proceedings are essentially collective. Exchange between “partners in trade” is frequent, but so is, of course, partnership in wooing and mating. Individual and collective activities are intertwined<sup>6</sup>.

Studies related to the tribes in India have revealed that the above-mentioned internal factors have powerful influence in the economic activities of the tribes<sup>7</sup>. Production, consumption and distribution of tribal economy are related to socio-religious and cultural ceremonies. Lucy Mair has identified that the internal factors within the tribal life nullified the attempts of the National Government to uplift the tribes<sup>8</sup>. C. T. Paul, in his study about the hill tribes in Kerala, shows that the tribal communities are still performing their actions with the sanctions of the hierarchs, who are the custodians of traditional tribal practices. He observes that:

A group of families belonging to a particular community has a common dwelling place called *pady*. Each *pady* has a leader popularly known as *Moopan* who is a priest, a judge, a doctor and the administrative head in his jurisdiction. He is assisted by a *Leppan* who is second in command of the *pady*. The *Moopan* has a pivotal role to play in matters affecting the destiny of his fellow beings. He exercises his power to settle dispute, to fix a marriage, to work under a master, to accept a religion, to exercise political ‘freedom’ and to do all that has a social significance. It may be correct to infer from these that the *Moopan* is the main link between his group and the outsiders, and as a result of it, the

*Moopan* has first to be pleased and somehow or other his sympathy has to be enlisted to get the tribals motivated and organised for a social cause<sup>9</sup>.

What is the precise role of these internal factors, i.e., tribal culture, rituals and belief systems, customs and traditions, and hierarchical structure—totality of these internal factors are termed as institutions—in determining the variations in the development achievements of the tribes? These internal factors put control over the economic freedom exercised by the individuals within the institutional frame-work of tribal communities. Though these internal factors have control over the economic actions of the individuals, these controls are not direct. The hierarchical system on the basis of these internal factors controls the economic activity of the individual members of the community to maintain social cohesion. The present study, therefore, is an attempt at analysing the relationship between the internal factors and tribal development by measuring individual freedom for economic actions among the tribes.

### **Tribes in World Development Scenario**

The World Development Reports during the last few years indicate tremendous achievements that were made by various underdeveloped countries. But these achievements magnify certain gloomy pictures that reality stands in stark contrast. Economic and social development is merely a distant myth propagated by political classes and international technocracies in these poor countries<sup>10</sup>. After fifty years of experiments in development and billions of dollars of aid, the majority of them are still found not developing. While the overall development of different countries indicates positive signs,

the economic situation of the subalterns, like women, tribes etc., are rather deteriorating. Among the subalterns, the living standard of the tribes is the poorest.

The situation of tribes in India also follows suit. Though the administrators claim that the economy has already been in the taken off stage, many groups of the tribes are still underdeveloped. To face the challenge of development of tribes, many programmes were implemented through the Five-Year Plans. Fifth plan onwards, Tribal Sub Plan was designed to promote the development of the Scheduled Tribes<sup>11</sup>. Even after the constant efforts of the Central and the State Governments to uplift the tribes, the economic condition of certain tribes became worse day by day. The present study targets to probe into the problems related to the development of tribes, the most underdeveloped among the subaltern groups.

Though many social scientists claim that the economy of Kerala is a model for the whole world in its human development achievements, the situation of tribes in Kerala is similar to that of the other tribes in India. This paradox of underdevelopment of tribes in a state where the economy in general is achieving international standards of human development motivates one to concentrate on the state of Kerala as the geo-physical area. Moreover, the human development of the tribes in Wynad is the lowest in comparison to the tribes in other districts of Kerala<sup>12</sup>. Since the inter-group and intra-group differences are prominent among the tribes in Wynad, where 37% of the total tribal population in the state of Kerala is concentrated, Wynad District is selected as sample area for conducting this study. Furthermore, the study is

aimed at analyzing the determinants of the inter-group variations in the development achievements of tribes. To analyze this, a selection from a wide range of communities from the least developed to the most developed is necessary. A population that exhibits a wide spectrum of data is available from Wynad.<sup>13</sup> Since a wide spectrum of tribes who represent the tribes in general inhabits in Wynad, the said district is taken as the area of study of this work.

### **The Problem**

The current scenario of underdevelopment among tribes raises an important question, viz., why did the efforts of the state government to uplift the tribal community fail to raise the living standard of the tribes at par with the non-tribes? It is because of the poor linkage between the internal and external factors arising out of particular dynamics of these development efforts that broke the traditionally existing institutional frameworks of the economic activity of the tribes. Again, the development failures may have some connectivity with the manner in which the external interventions lead to the formation of counter productive forces in the institutional frameworks of the tribes. The presence of counter productive factors existing in the tribal economic institution may retard the pace of the development brought about by the external agencies and malign the interaction between tribal and non-tribal dynamics. A close diagnosis of the institutional framework within which the economic activities are performed among the tribes may throw light into the development crisis among the tribal community.

A study of the ineffectiveness of socio-cultural linkages between internal and external factors of economic development may raise the following issues. Are there any significant intra-group and inter-group differences in development achievements of tribes? Is there any considerable difference in the value added while their production and consumption structures are compared? To what extent does this difference lead to the drainage of tribal resources to the non-tribal sector? Do the tribes confront any social dilemmas due to the absence of institutional frameworks suitable for changing their production structure? Therefore, the present enquiry seeks to analyse the lack of synchronization between the internal and external factors of development efforts as well as the other related factors responsible for the leakage of funds in the development efforts of the state government.

### **Objectives of the Study**

The following are drawn as the main objectives of the study:

- (i) To evaluate the socio-economic status of the tribes in Wynad District of Kerala and to compare the inter-group variations in their development.
- (ii) To assess the structure of the production and consumption behaviour of the tribes.
- (iii) To evaluate the influence of the internal factors of economic actions on the level of Human Development Index of tribes.
- (iv) To identify built-in internal constraints of the tribes which restrict their development.

## **Review of Literature**

The tribal studies can be classified mainly under two categories. The first group of scientists maintained the opinion that tribes had a golden and egalitarian state of existence and so they should be kept isolated from the rest of the society. Another group of scientists considered that the primitive state of underdevelopment equilibrium was only one of the stages of social development and that all the societies have had a primitive mode of production of their own.

Most of the anthropologists and sociologists were in the first category. Branislav Malinowski<sup>14</sup>, Elvin Verrier<sup>15</sup> and Karl Polanyi<sup>16</sup> found no fault in the internal dynamism of tribal societies. They maintained the view that tribes had a golden past. Malinowski made the first systematic approach to analyse the problems of the tribes. He added fuel to the controversy whether economic theories had universal applicability or not. He rejected the idea of applying traditional economic principles for analysing tribal societies and stated that many a time the application of principles of neo-classical theories led to false conclusions. He had also proposed the idea that the contacts of tribes with alien culture led to the social death of tribal communities and argued that the peace and harmony of the innocent tribes had been broken as they contended the penetration of non-tribes in the tribal areas through invasion, immigration and missionary work<sup>17</sup>.

Not many studies have been conducted about the tribes with the assumption that tribal economy constitutes one of the initial stages of modern economic system. However, a few anthropologists, sociologists and

economists have made some significant contributions in this field. Economists like Adam Smith<sup>18</sup>, Karl Marx<sup>19</sup>, and W. W. Rostow<sup>20</sup> considered the primitive stage as one of the epochs in the social formation of all the communities.

### **Tribal Studies in India**

Very few studies about tribes by economists have been made in India before Independence. Most of them were made by administrators rather than academicians. The British Government had followed a policy of isolation of tribes from alien culture. Consequently, they had not taken up any studies or implemented any development projects for the tribes.

Tribal studies got new impetus with the establishment of the Asiatic Society of Bengal in 1784. E. T. Dalton was the pioneer in the field of tribal studies in India<sup>21</sup>. He analysed the life styles of different tribes in Bengal. Since then, scholarly administrators had been writing general works on the land and people of different regions.

One of the earliest studies by an Indian in this field was done by S. C. Roy<sup>22</sup>. His work on the agrarian structure of Chotta Nagpur tribes gave us a detailed picture of agrarian system of the Mundas.

The earliest information about the tribes in South India was obtained from the works of Edgar Thurston<sup>23</sup>. He made a detailed study of tribes. His study gave us a vivid picture of the cultural milieu of tribal setting. The knowledge of their customs, beliefs, manners and way of life is useful as a raw material for analysing inter temporal variations in the development of

tribes. Thurston revealed that the Kurichiyans and Kurumans developed socially and economically, chiefly as a result of their contact with alien culture.

Elvin Verrier<sup>24</sup> had made an exhaustive study about the tribes in India. He divided the tribes into four classes according to the stage of their social development. The forest tribal groups comprising about two or three millions had been placed in the first class. The second category of tribes, according to his classification, has been experiencing contact with the plains and consequently has been undergoing change. The tribes belonging to the third category constitute the largest sections of the total tribal population, i.e., about four-fifth of it. They have been exposed to the influences of economic and socio-cultural forces of Hindu society. They have been also subjected to missionary influences. The tribes of the fourth category according to Elwin consists of the old aristocracy of the country represented today by great Bhil and Naga chieftains, the Gond Rajas, a few Bisheshwar and Bhuya landlords, Kurku noblemen, wealthy Santhal and Uraon and some highly cultured Mundas.

Ajith K Danda<sup>25</sup> questioned the validity of classifying the tribes according to their occupation. He observed that ecological condition influenced the choice of livelihood and achievement of the people. With the passage of time, the changes in ecological setting regulate the style of life of the people. So he found disturbance in ecological setting as one of the prime determinants of the development achievements of tribes.

Salil Basu<sup>26</sup> identified that the food habit is one of the main reasons for ill health among the tribes. Various aspects like food habits, infant feeding, maternal nutrition, nutrition during diseased condition and dietary intake are taken for analysis in his work. Consequently, he observes that the cultural factors determine the health status of tribes.

B. B. Kumar<sup>27</sup> analysed the tribe-caste-continuum in Indian society. The comparative study of the society and culture of various tribal groups revealed the hidden thread of unity among various tribes. The relationship between the political and economic structure of tribal society is identified in this work. The nature of chieftainship is also properly analysed. Five types of chieftainship is observed by him and they are: a) Authoritarian b) Republican c) Ultra republican village polity d) Theoretical anarchy, and e) Borrowed agencies.

V. T. Rajashekar<sup>28</sup> brought out the reasons for the lack of group consciousness among the ethnic groups. Because of an intense self-hatred, the low caste people, particularly, the untouchables, do not even disclose their castes. He opined that as they get educated, they gradually move away from their '*jathi*' and get despising their own kith. He raised a very pertinent question as to how such self-hating lot could take the responsibility of liberating the masses from slavery. This study brings out the reason, why cultural transformation necessary for economic development is not taking place among the tribes in India.

Awadesh Kumar Singh<sup>29</sup> conducted a detailed study about the impact of development projects on tribal life. Development administration, land holding pattern, causes of land alienation, land use patterns and self-

employment avenues are analyzed in detail. He found land alienation as the major cause of deterioration of the living standard of the tribes. Among the major causes for land alienation, chronic shortage of land records has been the most important one for the poor tribal community ever since they came into contact with the civilized world and its monetary institutions. He emphasizes that exploitation by non-tribal communities is the main cause of the land alienation of tribes. In this process money lenders are considered the chief exploiter class.

O. P. Malhotra<sup>30</sup> examined the different aspects of British Policy, which promoted the educational status of tribes in Andaman & Nicobar Islands. He argues that the British Policy was to utilise the strategic advantages of Andaman & Nicobar Islands for the British Navy. This compelled the colonial government to invest more for pacifying the hostile tribes in the Island. Due to the above fact, the Nicobar tribes are more educated than the other tribes in India. This has influenced the economic status of the tribes. The relationship between educational standards and improvement in socio-economic status is discussed in this work.

K. K. Singh and S. Ali<sup>31</sup> examined the prospects and failures in the different strategies designed for the development in rural areas in India. This work is analysing the traditional methodology put forward by growth theories. The orthodox ideas, encapsulated in what has come to be termed a modernisation approach, stressed the injection of capital inputs from outside which would result in “take off” and the eventual spread of benefits throughout the system are criticised as disillusionment. This work concluded that in the context of the rural poverty, the process of development faces

many unforeseen obstacles. They suggest that these obstacles can be eradicated only by evolving a new developmental strategy, which allows the participation of the rural poor in the modern economic institutions through education and community development programmes. This study also provides different steps for functional planning for integrated rural development.

Nandini Sundar<sup>32</sup> analysed the dual political nature of the tribal life in Jharkhand. Her article identified that pre-colonial tribal life had a clear organisational structure based on lineage. Each village had a head-man who represents it to the outside world. But when the Panchayaths were established in these areas, it came into conflict with the traditional structures. The conflict between the traditional political structure based on customs and modern political structure based on constitution created an impossibility to implement development projects in scheduled areas where tribal density is very high.

### **Tribal Studies in Kerala**

L. K. Anantha Krishna Iyer<sup>33</sup> focused his attention on hill tribes of Cochin. He lays emphasis on socio-cultural and linguistic aspects of tribal life. He provides enough records to prove that the castes and tribes were once the dominant forces of power in the country.

C. Gopalan Nair<sup>34</sup> narrated the traditional life styles of tribes in Wynad. Ancient history of Wynad, the conquest of Kottayam Raja, the initial attempts of the British for introducing plantation crops are given in this book. Detailed analysis of the different categories of people in Wynad is given. The life styles of (a) Chetties (b) Hill tribes (c) Aborigines and (d) Forest

Dwelling Aborigines are given in detail. Their socio-economic status is also given and the possibility of the break-down of tribal economy is predicted in the work.

L. A. Krishna Iyer<sup>35</sup> had done an ethnographic work in Travancore and Cochin area. He tries to prove that the hill tribes are pre-Dravidians. Valuable information about the cultural setting of the Kanikkar, the Malakurumbars, the Malapulaya, the Malavedan, the Malayarayan and the Malayar is obtained from his works.

A. Aiyppan<sup>36</sup> was a scholar who made systematic approach to the problems of tribes of Kerala. He emphasised the socio-economic condition of tribes of Malabar.

A. A. D. Luiz<sup>37</sup> made a detailed study of various tribes of Kerala. He discusses the diverse beliefs and taboos behind their rituals in the community life.

P. R. G. Mathur<sup>38</sup> had made an inter-temporal analysis of socio-linguistic aspects of tribes. He gives much valuable statistical information regarding the important problems faced by tribes. However, the approach is narrative rather than diagnostic.

K. Saradmoni<sup>39</sup> brought out the nature of slavery in Kerala. She explores the ways in which the rulers exploited the lower castes. The political process through which the land is taken away from the lower caste is explained in this work. The role of Sri Narayana Guru in consolidating the

lower castes is considered as one of the chief determinants of socio-economic development of slaves in Kerala.

C. T. Paul<sup>40</sup> probed into the reasons for the inter-spatial variations in the responsiveness to development programmes. He proposes that exogenous pulls are necessary for development of tribes. But, these pulls are effective only if the system creates effective linkages with its environment. He considered both inter communal and intra communal variations in the tribal development. He is the pioneer among the economists who gave emphasis on the analysis of the internal problems of tribes in Kerala. Since he laid more emphasis on the analysis of inter-communal variations, the main perspective of the study has been shifted to the analysis of external factors, which influence the economic structure of tribal societies. Even though he has mentioned the internal contradictions within the tribal societies, no attempt has been made to probe into the internal factors responsible for intra-communal variations of the tribes.

M. Kunhaman pursued a distinct form of socio-economic approach<sup>41</sup>. He made a serious attempt to trace the reasons for the inter-spatial difference in the development of different tribes. He put forward the hypothesis that the policy of isolation and protection is the cause of development of different tribes. He tries to validate the argument of Malinowski that those tribes, which come into contact with alien culture, face social death, and others, which remain isolated, do not do so. He attempts to analyse the dynamics of the external influence, which leads to socio-economic changes in the tribal communities. In the tribal/ non-tribal dynamics, initiating the non-tribal way

of production pattern by the tribal farmers compelled them to enter into the play of market forces. One such economic compulsion was the prevalence of the debt-credit nexus facing the tribal farmer (the borrower) to cultivate the kind of crops preferable to the non-tribal creditor. For Kunhaman, the sequence of the social death of tribes is as follows: poverty, land alienation, debt trap, imitation of production pattern of non-tribes and death. In this dynamics, the above study did not analyse the internal factors, which are responsible for the failure of the tribes as whole in the transition of subsistence economy to market economy. Yet, his identification of a context of tribes in transition in India is very relevant for our study. The contradictions within the tribal society in transition, however, have not been addressed in his work.

Later, Kunhaman<sup>42</sup> had further brought out the need for a separate discipline to analyze the transitional nature of tribal society, which is seldom reflected in the anthropological or sociological studies. The impact of globalization on the socio economic conditions of tribes are analysed in this work.

Filippo Osella and Caroline Osella<sup>43</sup> exposed the conflict between the social structures of a community with modern life practices is analysed through explaining the life of Ezhavas. As a struggle to escape from the traditional identity, Ezhavas attempt to move towards the higher strata of the society. Mobility is defined as a trajectory through social space, which can be mapped on in two other time trajectories; that of the human life cycle and that of historical linear time. Four areas for mobility are discussed in this work.

Marriage and mobility, mobility through exchange, religion and mobility, mobility and power are analysed in detail. They conclude that the attempts of the lower castes to enter into higher strata of society failed and have not led to a crumbling of caste or class hierarchies and discriminations, nor have such hierarchies shown them to be mere superstructures.

P. G. Padmini<sup>44</sup> analysed the various facets of the exploitation of the tribes by the non-tribes. The cultural and religious undercurrents in the economic activity of the tribes in Wynad are exposed in this work. The influences of the religious leaders and tribal *moopans* (tribal chief) in the socio- economic actions of the tribes are analysed. The substantive nature of tribal agriculture is considered as the unique behaviour of tribes. The influence of the tribal hierarchy in marriage, agriculture, health, education and communication is probed into. A merit of the work that has to be stressed in this context is the attempt to analyse the problems faced by the tribes in transition.

V. Anitha <sup>45</sup> explained the changes in the land use patterns and its impact on the social life of tribes. The problem of land alienation is analyzed in detail. This work also keeps silence about the internal factors in the economic dynamics of tribal life, which lead to the depletion of the resources of the tribes.

The Institute for Management in Government, in collaboration with the State Planning Board, has published a handbook on tribal development for organising development projects for People's Planning Programme<sup>46</sup>. This work concentrates on the deficiencies in the administrative set up and

suggests different methods to rectify the leakage in development programmes organised by the state government. This work too fails to identify the factors within the tribal setting that act as counter productive agents in the development dynamism of tribes.

P. K. Muralidharan, C. Renuka, K. K. Seethalakshmi, and N. Sasidaran<sup>47</sup>, in their study developed a model of participatory management programme for conservation of biodiversity and sustainable use of Non-Wood Forest Products (NWFP) in Kerala. This study brings out the role of forest in providing the livelihood basis for tribes. They indicate that in the absence of proper management of non-wood forest produce, tribes may be starved to death. To this situation they suggest a method of new management system of NWFP.

Bindu P. Varghese<sup>48</sup> analysed inter communal differences in the human development achievements of different communities in Kerala State. It also focuses its attention on the interspatial difference in the human development of tribes in various districts of Kerala. She observes that the economic condition of tribes in Wynad is more pathetic than the tribes settled in other parts of Kerala. She identified low level of income and alienation of land as the two factors, which lead to the low economic status of Wynad tribes.

Indian Institute of Management, Kozhikode<sup>49</sup> brought out the heterogeneous character of tribal development in Wynad. The study reveals that alternative Government measures to address tribal issues did not provide intended results. In order to improve the efficiency of interventions, the study suggests that social preparation is necessary. Social preparation includes skill

development particularly those skills required for farm and non-farm activities. The report outlines the direction in which the social preparation is to be undertaken in order to build the capacity of the tribes so that they can face the changing world around them with greater confidence.

### **Significance of the Study**

The foregoing review of literature shows that various sociologists, anthropologists, and economists contributed much to studies on tribal development. These contributions in general highlighted (1) life style, (2) linguistic aspects, (3) conflicts between tribal culture and non-tribal culture, (4) conflict between tradition and modernity, (5) loss of tribal resources, like land and forest, (6) determinants of inter-communal and interspatial difference in the economic development of tribes, (7) socio-economic status, (8) social structure, (9) new methods for the management of forest resources, and (10) exploitation of the tribes by the non-tribes.

While acknowledging the positive contributions of the above works, it can be stated that none of these works took up the central issue of the role of internal structure of tribal society in their economic development. Moreover, those economists who have made valuable contributions in probing into the different factors hindering the economic development of tribes in Kerala appear to have laid overemphasis on factors external to the tribal society. In terms of economic epistemology, development has been defined as growth plus structural change, which compels us to consider earlier studies as lopsided. It is in this context that the present study proposes to focus its thrust on the role of internal structure of tribal community in economic development.

We know from natural science that any organism, both of the vegetative and of the animal world, grows spontaneously. But, this happens through two factors - external stimuli and internal vitality. A seed remains unproductive if it does not come into contact with the water and sunlight. However, even if the external stimuli exist, if the internal life structure of the seed does not function responsively, the growth process will not be initiated. Likewise, it is a common saying that man is not self-sufficient. His personality grows by the contact of the others. So, traditionally man is categorised as social being as only the social contact is considered to help him to develop his potentialities. But, the result of the interaction may, of course, be either positive or negative. Such responses in growth depend not only on external factors but also on the internal behaviour or responsive pattern.

Similarly, by extension, one may say that none of the societies in the world is self-sufficient. The fullest development of the potentialities of each group of people depends on the interaction with other groups. As in the case of different entities in the biological world, both external stimuli and internal organisation influence the development phase of the growth of the societal organism<sup>50</sup>.

Moreover, the history of Kerala state during the last hundred years witnessed tremendous changes in the development status of various communities except the tribes. The development experience of these communities shows that attempts to eradicate the cultural and institutional rigidities within the system of each community were taken up. The history of Pulayas, Ezhavas, Nairs, Brahmins, Christians and Muslims narrates the role

of certain leaders who initiated the rectification of those communities from within<sup>51</sup>.

The proposed study is significant both in theoretical and practical contexts. Since Adam Smith, the importance of capital formation, market and institutional framework has been considered as the major factor, which influences the economic well-being. Classical and neo classical theories give much emphasis on capital. Later, accessibility to market came to be considered as the main determinant of growth and development. During the last decades of 20<sup>th</sup> century the emphasis has been shifted to, the formation of economic institution as one of the reasons for the differences in the economic performance of the different communities. The influence of the institutional factors can easily be observed among tribes<sup>52</sup>.

In theorising of evolution of the economic structure, both Adam Smith and Karl Marx considered tribal existence as the first stage of modern capitalist system. Though Adam Smith considered the traditional tribal mode of existence as the primary stage of capitalist mode of economy, he did not analyse its dynamics in the evolution process. Later, Karl Marx, in his economic interpretation of history using the concept of 'mode of production' analysed the dynamics through which primitive economy developed to modern capitalist form. But, in Asiatic societies, this methodology is found to be inappropriate.<sup>53</sup> So the identification of the internal factors that exist in tribal development dynamics may prove to be supportive to a novel and unique theoretical schema for the analysis of evolution of economic systems.

In terms of practice, one of the objectives of economic planning in India is eradication of poverty. The percentage of tribal population below the poverty line being higher than that of non-tribal population in India, this target cannot be achieved without eradicating poverty among the tribes<sup>54</sup>. For centuries, Scheduled Tribes were under the tyranny and exploitation of the non-tribes. One of the directive principles of state policy in the Constitution of India enjoins “the state shall promote with special care the education and economic interests of weaker sections of the people in particular of the Scheduled Castes and Scheduled Tribes”<sup>55</sup>.

This, therefore, necessitates a careful analysis of the internal organisation of tribal economy in order to pinpoint the internal factors of tribal development. Since anthropologists, economists and policy makers have been entertaining an assumption that tribal communities once upon a time lived in a golden and egalitarian situation, most of the studies came to focus their attention on external factors, which seem to cause the deterioration of the living standards of tribes. Due to the influence of the existing studies on economic policy and planning, development efforts did not attempt to eradicate the contradictions within the internal structure of tribal societies. Possibly, this accounts for the difference in the socio-economic status among the tribes on the one hand and the non-tribes on the other. So the present study, which focuses on the internal problems of tribal organisation, is deemed a necessity.

## **Chapter Design**

The objectives are analysed through the following chapters. The thesis begins with an introductory chapter, which explains the problem, objectives, review of literature, relevance of the study and the subsequent chapter design.

The second chapter, “the theoretical frame-work and methodology”, presents a suitable theoretical model and empirical framework to analyse tribal problems.

The third chapter, “Economic evolution of tribes in Wynad”, examines the production potentialities of tribes in Wynad. Their resource base in forest, land and labour are analyzed.

Chapter four, “Dimensions of tribal development”, deals with the various efforts taken by the government to uplift the tribes and economic achievements of the tribes. Inter-group and intra-group variations in the human development of different tribes in Wynad are taken into account.

Chapter five, “Production and consumption behaviour of tribes”, discusses the shifts in the production and consumption structure of the tribes.

Sixth chapter, “Internal factors of development”, brings out the influence of internal factors in the human development achievements. The relationship between Human Development Index and Freedom Levels of the economic actions related to income generation, education and health are also taken up. The influence of cultural factors is also analysed in this chapter.

Seventh chapter provides the major observations made in the foregoing chapters and enlists creative suggestions.

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productivity. This is one of the reasons for the delicacy of Malinowsky in accepting and applying the traditional economic theories to analyse tribal situation.

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Kerala/ India		38 <sup>th</sup> round (1983)			50 <sup>th</sup> round (1993-94)			55 <sup>th</sup> round (1999-2000)		
		ST	SC	ALL	ST	SC	ALL	ST	SC	ALL
Rural	Kerala	---	62.3	39.1	37.3	36.3	25.5	24.2	14.6	9.4
	India	63.8	58.1	45.6	52.2	48.1	37.1	45.8	36.2	27.1
Urban	Kerala	---	62.6	48.7	1.1	31.7	24.5	---	24.2	20.3
	India	52.5	54.5	40.4	40.9	48.4	32.4	34.8	38.6	23.7

Source (i) *Sarvekshana*, vol. 12 (3)

(ii) *Sarvekshana*, vol. 21 (1)

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# THEORETICAL FRAME-WORK AND METHODOLOGY

Francis K.M. “Tribal development- A study of internal factors ” Thesis.  
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## **Chapter II**

### **THEORETICAL FRAME-WORK AND METHODOLOGY**

The general acceptability of any observation made out of research-oriented inquiries relies upon the theoretical base of the attempt undertaken. After introducing the problem and objectives of the present study in the first chapter, we may, now, turn to examine the theoretical aspects in support of the inquiry.

Discussions on the question of tribal development have been fashionable among the politicians and social activists, though the subject has not received the attention it deserves from social scientists and economic thinkers. The central axiom that dominated the tribal studies during the last century was either the notion that the culture, ecology and life styles of the tribes have to be preserved, protected and allowed to continue within the Indian national and cultural scenario since they represent a pristine and ideal stratum of culture, or the notion that the tribes should be encouraged to emulate the life styles of the non-tribes, economically developed society outside the tribal context. These ideas may be basic to a common understanding of the tribal situation as they are articulated mainly by anthropologists, folklorists, social activists and economic planners. However, it may be asserted here that the really important larger theoretical issues

remain unaddressed. So in this chapter we attempt to construct an empirical framework based on the theories related to tribes and economic development.

### **Concepts and Assumptions**

Before we proceed with the analysis it is better to define certain concepts and assumptions used in the analysis.

#### **(a) Formal Economy**

Formal economy is an economic system in which the actions of the economic agents like individual, household, firm etc. are independent of the social and political structure in which the economy exists.

#### **(b) Substantive Economy**

Substantive economy is an economic system in which the actions of the economic agents are influenced by the social and political structure in which the economy exists. Here the decisions of the economic agents based upon the cause-effect relationship are modified by the hierarchs in the social and political structure.

The substantive economy can be further divided into pro-producer and pro-consumer. Pro-producer economy is an economy in which the actions of the economic agents for production are comparatively freer than the actions for consumption. This is manifested in the production structure. Here, it is assumed that if the production decisions are freer than consumption it will be reflected in the dominance of the higher order commodities (commodities

with high value added) in the production structure and the dominance of lower order commodities in the consumption structure.

Pro-consumer economy is an economy in which the action of the economic agents for consumption is comparatively freer than the actions for production. This is reflected in the dominance of higher order commodities in consumption and dominance of lower order commodities in production.

#### (c) Order of Commodities

Classification of commodities according to the value added is defined as order of commodities.

#### (d) Consumption Structure

Consumption structure is defined as categorisation of expenditure of tribes according to the order of commodities they consume.

#### (e) Production Structure

Production structure is defined as categorisation of occupation or income of tribes according to the order of commodities they produce.

#### (f) Development Needs

Fundamentally four factors are found influencing development process. They are: 1) resource base and technology, 2) growth of surplus, 3) formation of advantageous market, and 4) institutional framework suitable for promoting production.

### (g) Social Dilemma

Since man is a social animal with conscious life activity, human beings have two basic features, *viz.*, freedom of choice and social existence. Freedom of choice is expressed through liberalism in economic relations whereas social existence is expressed through social interventions of the hierarchs in the economic relation. Liberalism is expressed through private choices of the individuals. Social interventions are expressed through social choices. Negation of freedom negatively affects creativity and negation of social existence creates anarchy. The perfection of an economic system lies in the harmony between individual choice and social choice. Institutions are framed to avoid conflicts between individual choice and social choice. Conflict between individual choice and social choice is defined as social dilemma.

### **Tribes in Transition**

As we have seen in the review of literature, the tribes in India are in a transitional stage from a socially controlled community to a formal and market oriented community. During this transition their economic behaviour has shown certain specific characteristics. As noticed by Kunhaman, a shift from need-based economy to want-based economy has taken place in the tribal scenario of Kerala as they came into contact with non-tribes, especially in the first half of the 20<sup>th</sup> century<sup>1</sup>.

In their primitive form of existence, the society as a whole conducted their economic activities. The responsibilities for the social welfare were looked after by social hierarchs. During the integration process with non-

tribes, the tribes dismantled many of the social mechanisms for meeting contingencies. Even though they dismantled the old institutions in the tribal-non-tribal interactions, they could not develop new institutions to perform the duties of the old ones.

Therefore, to analyse the cases of drain of tribal resources, indebtedness and lack of investment, we need a theory suitable to explain an economy in transition. Development theories argue that initially the surplus is used to purchase consumer goods as part of demonstration effect. But later new production techniques are also introduced to restructure production. Empirical investigations reveal that this process is not working among certain societies. So a unique theoretical model is necessary for analysing tribes in transition.

As observed by Kunhaman, the conventional development models, designed to explain the function of the capitalist economy, cannot be used in explaining the evolution or transformation of an economic system through successive levels. This may be taken as the birth of a new theoretical emphasis which maintains that the problems of the under developed countries required an approach altogether different from that required by the developed countries. It was correctly maintained that while in the case of the developed countries the question is as to how development took place, in the case of the developing countries the relevant question is as to why development did not take place<sup>2</sup>. The ensuing discussion below is an attempt to develop a model for analysing problems faced by a community during its transitional stage

from socially controlled substantive economy to market based formal economy.

### **Formal v/s Substantive Economies**

Theoretical discussions for formulating a new methodology to analyse the tribal situation should start from the criticisms raised by anthropologists against economists. When we consider the tribes as a group of people who are at the primary stage of economic evolution, an important question that immediately arises is whether we can/cannot use formal economic principles for analysing their economic behaviour. Polanyi<sup>3</sup> argues that formal economic theories of neo-classical economics are not applicable to analyse the tribal political economy. He distinguishes the formal and substantive meanings of the term economics and he rejects the use of formal economics in the analysis of primitive communities. The substantive meaning of economics derives from man's dependence for his living upon nature and his fellows. The latter refers to the mutual exchange/influence of his natural and social environment, in so far as this results in supplying him with the means of material satisfaction.

The formal meaning of economics is derived from the logical character of the relationship between means and ends. It refers to a definite situation of choice between different uses of means, which are scarce in supply. As envisaged by the classical and neo-classical writers, this principle is applicable only in a society where the influences of government and religion are affected least. But, in traditional societies, the economic decisions are

highly influenced by government and religion. Thus the formal economic principles appear to have no direct applicability in primitive communities.

Therefore, as Polanyi has observed:

The human economy, then, is embedded and enmeshed in institutions, economic and non-economic. The inclusion of the non-economic is vital. For, religion or government may be as important for the structure and functioning of the economy as monetary institutions or the availability of tools and machines themselves that lighten the toil of labour<sup>4</sup>.

### **Nature of Tribal Economy**

The tribal communities in India show certain features of substantive economy, which distinguish them from the non-tribal communities. Among the tribes in Kerala, even though family is the basic unit of the tribal communities, the family has no decision-making power to determine the economic behaviour. This decision-making is restricted by four factors, viz., (1) property ownership, (2) religious beliefs, (3) sanction from the tribal hierarchs, and (4) the social norms or customs. Indeed, an indigenous form of political structure exists among the tribes. Above the family head, the tribal chief determines the activities of individuals. The individuals have no right to communicate their ideas with the non-tribes. In addition to this, each agricultural operation is related to religious ceremony. The sanction of the religious head is also necessary for conducting agricultural operations<sup>5</sup>.

As observed by Sathya Narayana Murthy in his studies on tribes, there is the functional influence of religion and society in the working of the tribal economy. "In performing rituals such as these related to economy and other

periodical festivals, the group as a whole feels ensured of a good fortune in the future”<sup>6</sup>. If interpreted objectively from the point of view of an outsider, the economic wastage involved in the ritual practices in the form of destruction of personal property along with the dead is dysfunctional to tribal society in that such wastage undermines economic growth. But from the angle of tribesman himself religious practices are definitely functional<sup>7</sup>. Therefore, as observed by Polanyi, formal economic theories are not applicable in the case of tribes since formal economic theory is based on the assumption that choices of individuals are free from controls external to the individual. The need for the study of the influence of non-economic factors in determining the economic status of the tribes in Wynad has already been observed by economists<sup>8</sup>.

In case of non-tribes, the formal economic theory seems to hold good. For them, economic decisions are absolutely at the freedom of the individual. Thus, while discussing the economic behaviour of a community that entertains both tribal and non-tribal interaction, a fusion of substantive and formal economic theories is necessary.

The transition from substantive economy to formal economy can be analysed by a framework that focuses the transition from an absolutely controlled substantive economy to zero intervention type formal economy. This sheds light into the internal dynamics of tribes in transition. For this purpose, the present study begins the analysis by considering socio-religious and political variables as independent and economic variables as dependent.

The changes in the economic behaviour are analysed through the changes in the social variables. Four combinations are envisaged in this fusion. As shown in the Table 2.1, an individual's economic activity can be controlled in two ways: either by controlling the economic assets or by controlling directly the political will of the individuals by authorities.

**Table 2.1**  
**Classification of Economies on the Basis of Freedom Enjoyed**

Type of Economy	Freedom for Economic Activity	Freedom for Social, Religious and Political Activity	Control of Non-Economic over the Economic Activity
Substantive	No	No	Absolute control
Substantive	No	Yes	Partial
Substantive	Yes	No	Partial
Formal	Yes	Yes	Absolutely free

If the property is owned collectively, the individuals are not free to decide the manner, type, pattern and system of cultivation in the land. This indicates the substantive character of an economy. Similarly, if the individuals are to wait for the sanctions of the religious and political hierarchies, they will not be free in the economic operations<sup>9</sup>. Such a situation is termed as substantive form of economy. But in formal type of economy, each individual is free to choose among various opportunities, without the sanction of religious or political hierarchs<sup>10</sup>.

## **Different Approaches to Growth and Development**

The theoretical perspective developed in this chapter may be prefaced with a discussion of the existing theories of growth and development. Different theories of growth and development have been evolved by academicians to explain the process of development. The classical theory based primarily on the work of Adam Smith is taken as the first attempt to explain economic growth. According to his theory, growth is the result of expansion of productive inputs and improvements in technology. For him investment in physical and human capital is the key to economic growth. Adam Smith identified three main factors, which determine development viz., productivity of labour, markets and zero political interventions.<sup>11</sup> However, in the articulation of the theory of growth, the neo-classical economists, too, assumed that individuals in the economy are independent of political control. Solow<sup>12</sup>, the best exponent of neo-classical theory, included the productivity of labour and its reinvestment as the two determinants of growth.

The second category is the geographic and location theory largely popularized by Jeffrey Sachs<sup>13</sup> and Diamond.<sup>14</sup> This theory suggests that climatic conditions and access to market are the primary determinants of development

The third approach emphasizes substantive nature of the economy. It is known as the institutional approach and stresses the importance of creating an institutional framework and policy environment conducive for the smooth operation of markets, realization of gains from trade and entrepreneurial

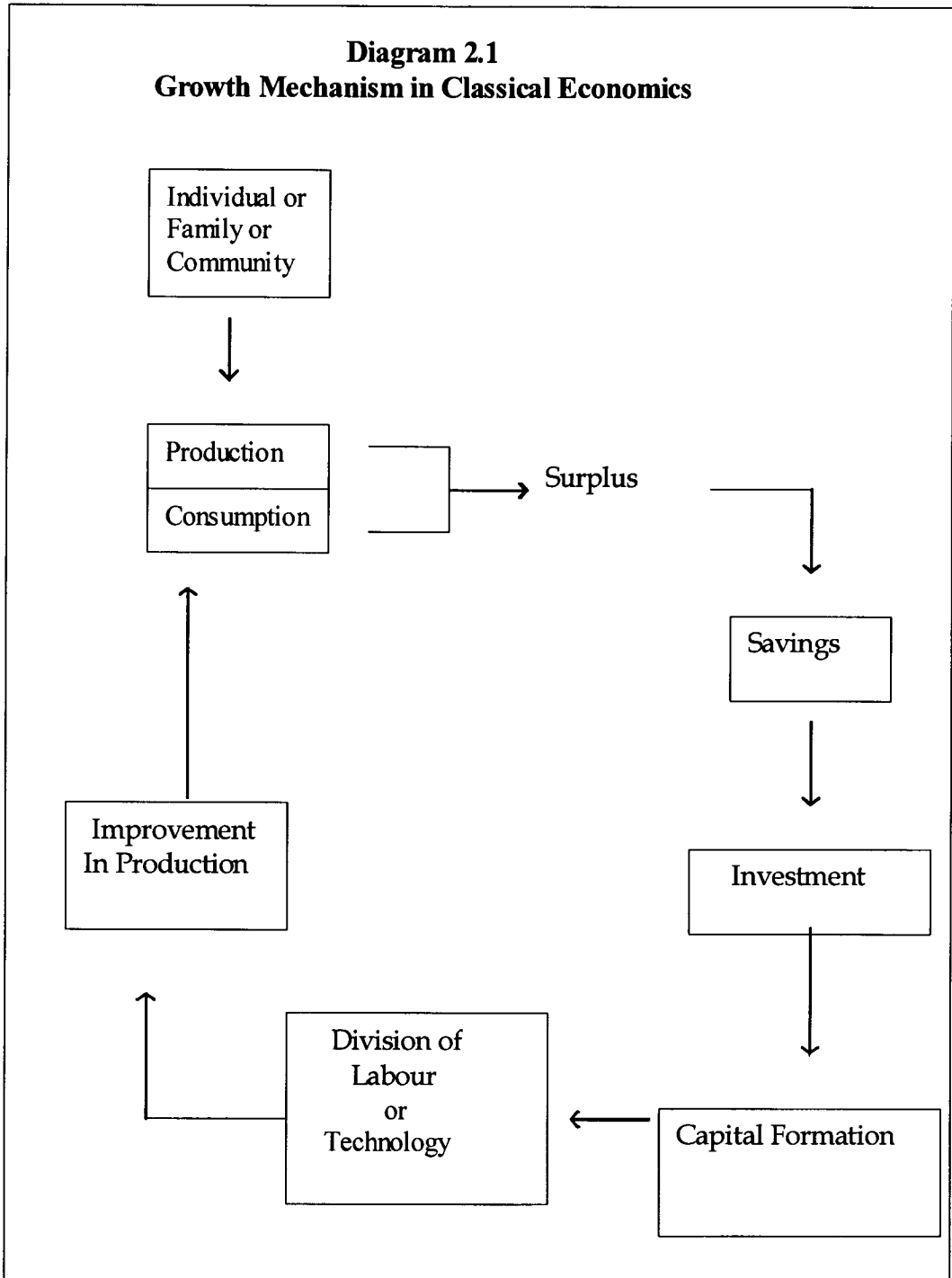
activities. Douglass North<sup>15</sup> and Peter Bauer<sup>16</sup> are the main proponents of this theory.

### **Surplus and Growth Process: Formal Economic Approach**

All the approaches cited above on the growth process identified the role of surplus as the fuel in the growth mechanism. Growth is explained as the outcome of investment of surplus. The surplus is generated as the balance after meeting the biologically determined needs of the individuals, family and community. As opined by M. J. Herskovitz, surplus is the key for economic development, money, markets, city and civilisation<sup>17</sup>.

Once this growth mechanism is begun, the exchange of surplus leads to specialization and thus wider exchange relationships, which finally call for the use of money, too, facilitate complex division of labour and ever expanding exchange. As Adam Smith noted, a nation's wealth grows<sup>18</sup> by transforming the surplus for creating new surplus—capital formation. Later, Karl Marx also identified the surplus, the amount over and above the subsistence of the labour, as the chief factor in the evolution of history through different epochs<sup>19</sup>. The foregoing discussion brings out that it is surplus that motivates growth forces, which means that surplus formation is a necessary condition for growth and development. This can be expressed through the Diagram 2.1.

**Diagram 2.1**  
**Growth Mechanism in Classical Economics**



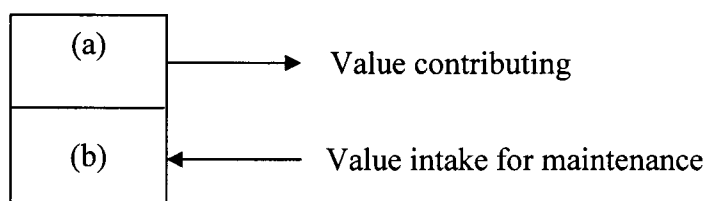
## Surplus Over and Above the Consumption as the Necessary Condition for Growth and Development

Interpreting economic history, both Adam Smith and Karl Marx based their analyses on labour. Both of them contented that the essence in the transition of primitive society to modern society lies in the productivity of labour. The productivity in turn depends on technology and market.

As one of the definitions of productive labour, as Adam Smith suggests, labour is productive only if the labour contributes more than what the labour takes in. “Thus, the labour of a manufacturer adds generally to the value of the materials which he works upon that of his own maintenance, and of his master’s project”<sup>20</sup>. Thus, according to Smith, a labourer has two features as given in Diagram 2.2 below:

**Diagram 2.2**

**Diagram showing productivity of a labourer**



If  $(a) > (b)$ , then that labourer is productive, if  $(a) = (b)$ , then that labourer is barren and if  $(a) < (b)$ , then that labourer is unproductive. A close scrutiny of the definition given above reveals that Smith indicates productive and consumptive elements as contained in a single labourer and that the surplus generated is utilised as the engine for economic growth.

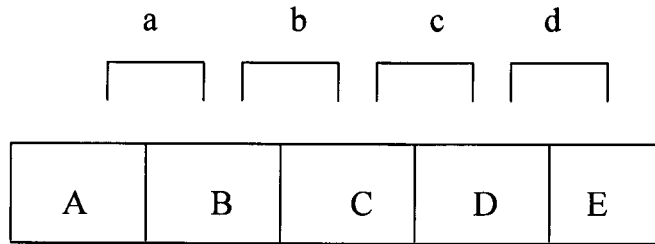
The process of surplus generation is explained by two factors: technology and the extension of market. Technology is further explained in terms of division of labour. Later, Marx combined these two into one term i. e., mode of production. However, Marx could not find a satisfactory answer as to why in Asiatic societies this system did not function. As opined by C. T. Kurien, this process of surplus generation and reinvestment has not been found in Indian villages. Because of the dominance of non-economic variables in the production structure, the distribution of surplus has made pro-consumptive rather than pro-productive. Though the basic growth mechanism is universally valid, certain modifications are necessary for analysing the particular situation in Asiatic societies<sup>21</sup>.

### **Markets, Exchange and Consumption Trap**

In the surplus generating activity, the value added is high in case of commodities, which directly satisfy the consumer. Take the case of a primary product like coconut. Using labour power and technology, coconut can be transformed to coconut milk, coconut oil, sweets, soap, facial cream, etc. Thus, a product has to move through different processes before it attains maximum value. In each stage value is being added to it. The rate of increase in the value added is higher in the case of products, which directly satisfy the consumer. This is the crux behind the classification of commodities according to their order of value added, which will be taken up further in Chapter 5 as we analyse production and consumption behaviour of tribes.

### Diagram 2.3

Diagram showing value addition in a commodity



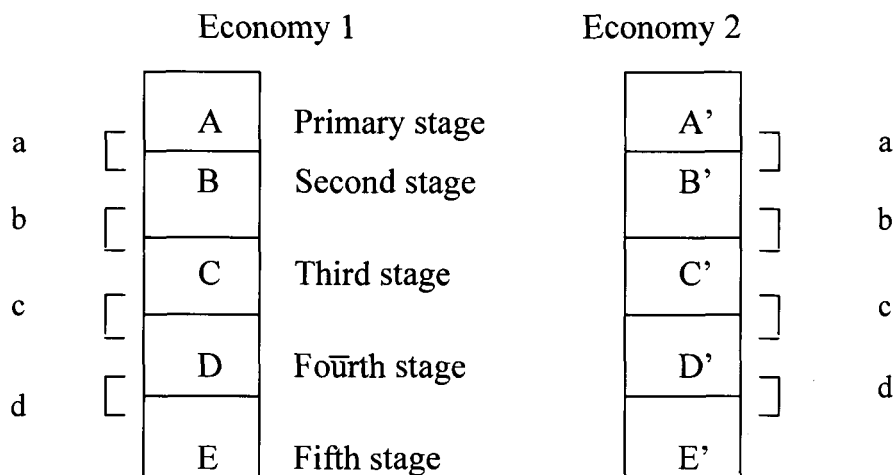
In Diagram 2.3, A is the primary product; E is the product with maximum value addition; and B, C, D, are the various products with different levels of value addition. In this hierarchy of products, 'a', 'b', 'c', and 'd' are value added in each stage of production and the value of 'a' is less than 'b' and 'b' is less than 'c', and 'c' is less than 'd'. Thus, A stands for first order commodities, B stands for second order commodities, C for third order commodities, D for fourth order commodities, and E for fifth order commodities.

Based on the above argument, we can propose that when two types of economies confront in the market—whereof the production is restricted in one and production is free in the other—the market will be disadvantageous to the economy in which production is not free due to the existence of counter-productive variables that control the production behaviour of the economic agents. In those economies where production is not free, there will be the dominance of the lower order commodities in the production structure. If the products of an economy are of the first order with minimum value added and the consumption of that economy is of the goods of higher order with

maximum value added, then, it is impossible to have a surplus creation. This type of an economic situation may be characterised as consumption trap. The existence of consumption trap denies the formation of surplus, which is the necessary condition for growth and development.

The prominent difference in the production structure of the two economies, which interact in exchange, will be detrimental to that economy in which the percentage of first order commodities is high in the production structure. Diagram 2.4 shows the dynamics between two economies.

**Diagram 2.4**  
**Diagram Showing the Exchange Possibilities between Two Economies**



Exchange at the different levels is A A', A B', A C', A D' and A E'. A A' leads to no drain of resources. A E' creates the highest drain of resources. Assume that A is coconut and E' is facial cream produced from coconut. The number of coconuts necessary to get facial cream is more than one. If the economy 1 produces coconut and purchases facial cream from the economy 2, the resources of the economy 1 will flow into economy 2 through exchange.

Consequentially, exchange process through market mechanism will lead to the drainage of resources from economy 1 to economy 2.

In the present study, particular attention is given for analysing the drain of resources of the tribes to non-tribes through exchange mechanism. An analysis of the production and consumption structure of the tribes may shed light on the drain of resources of the tribes. Economists have already explained the continuous deterioration of wealth of underdeveloped economies due to exchange between primary products and industrially finished goods<sup>22</sup>. Since the tribes and the non-tribes follow two distinctive economic systems in a single territory, the above theoretical structure showing the exchange possibilities between two economies may throw light on tribal and non-tribal exchange of goods and services.

### **An Alternative Approach to Underdevelopment**

While theorising the causes of underdevelopment in an economy, which is evolving from substantive to formal, the present study argues that during the transitional stage of an economy, it may move either through pro-consumptive track or through pro-productive track. The evolution from substantive economy to formal economy is a process of dismantling social controls over economic activity. An economy is pro-productive when it dismantles the controls over production and retains its control over consumption in the process of dismantling the social control on the economic agents. On the other hand, if an economy retains its control over production and dismantles its control over consumption, then, such an economy is pro-

consumptive. Thus, all the pro-consumptive economies can be stated to be in the consumption trap.

As the social controls over production exist in an economy, naturally there is no possibility for enhancing its production capacity for producing higher order commodities, because negation of individual freedom curtails creativity. At the same time, as the economy allows more freedom for consumption, it moves towards the consumption of higher order commodities. Consequently, production will be pegged to first order commodities with low value added and consumption will move towards commodities with high value added. This leads to the secular underdevelopment of the economies that are evolving from substantive to formal through pro-consumptive track.

Table 2.2 gives the tracks through which an economy evolves from substantive to formal. The economy can move either through A to C to D or through A to B to D. The evolution through ABD leads to consumption trap and to persistent underdevelopment.

**Table 2.2**  
**Table Showing Possibilities of Freedom for Production and Consumption in Economies that are Evolving from Substantive towards Formal**

Type of Economy	Nature of Economy	Consumption	Production
A) Substantive economy	Neutral to production and consumption	Control	Control
B) Evolving to formal economy	Pro-consumer track	No control	Control
C) Evolving to formal economy	Pro-producer track	Control	No control
D) Formal economy	Neutral to production and consumption	No control	No control

In a substantive economy of tribes, economic activity is not at all free and the surplus is distributed to non-economic functionaries, like religious heads and political hierarchs. Thus, the basic activity of a labourer to transfer the natural endowments into products and services is limited. At the same time, with the expansion of market the consumption has been enhanced. Consequently, the market expansion leads the tribal communities to increase consumption rather than production.

### **Role of Institutions in the Evolution from Substantive to Formal Economy**

The evolution from a substantive form to a formal one leads to the conflict between social choice and individual choice, which is social dilemma. Institutions are formed to harmonize social choice and individual freedom<sup>23</sup>. A primitive village economy exists with certain institutional framework, which controls production, consumption and property relations, and, a formal economy exists with another form of institutions promoting the absolute freedom for the individuals to make decisions on production and consumption. In the evolutionary track of economy—from substantive to formal or primitive to modern or subsistence to capitalist or the need-based to want-based—changes in the institutional framework, which allows freedom for the economic agents, are necessary. Karl Marx observed this as a dependent factor on the surplus. The growing perception that existing social institution is unreasonable and unjust, that reason has become unreason and right wrong is only proof that in the modes of production and exchange,

changes have silently taken place with which social order, adapted to earlier economic conditions, is no longer in keeping<sup>24</sup>.

A systematic approach, which explains the role of institutions in the analysis of neo-classical theory, was first introduced by R. H. Coase<sup>25</sup>. He made the crucial connection among institution, transaction costs and neo-classical theory. Roughly stated, the neo-classical (formal) economics states that market-gains arise when it is costless to transact, and institutions matter when it is costly to transact.

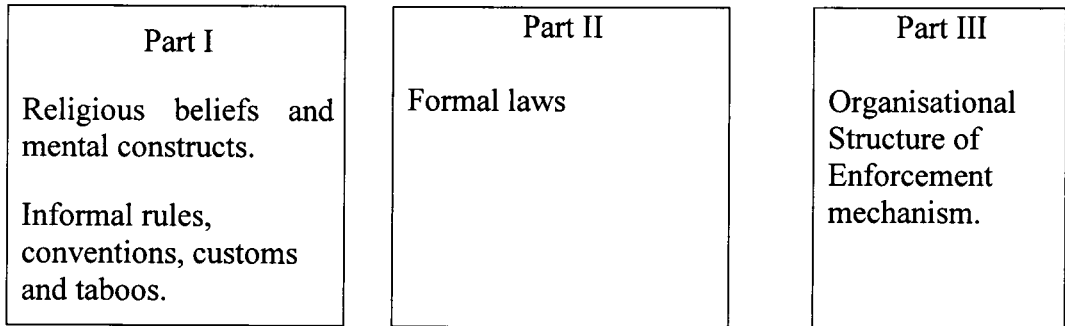
The existence of transaction costs explains the relevance of institutions. “It extends economic theory by incorporating ideas and ideologies into the analysis and the political process as a crucial factor in the performance of economies, as the source of the diverse performance of economies and an explanation for inefficient markets”<sup>26</sup>. Institutions are rules of the game of society, or more formally are the humanly devised constraints that structure human interaction. They are composed of, informal laws, formal laws and the enforcement mechanism of both and they are exhibited in Diagram 2.5.

The difference in the economic development of different communities is due to the difference in the attainment of institutional structures, which bring in market-gains. The complexities of the social structure increases as human beings become increasingly interdependent, and more complex institutional structures are very necessary to capture the potential gains from trade. The absence of proper institutions to resolve the social dilemmas and to

reduce transactional cost will make incompatibility in the production and consumption structure.

**Diagram 2.5**

**Structure of Humanly Devised Institutions**



Since man by nature is unhappy to produce and happy to consume<sup>27</sup>, any obstruction to production creates damage to production .At the same time, man tries to overcome the obstructions to consumption. Thus, the social controls affect more on production than on consumption. As a consequence, the absence of economic institutions to resolve social dilemmas compels the evolving societies to move through pro-consumptive track.

**Institutional and Non-Economic Factors as Independent Variables**

It may be made clear at this stage that the inclusion of non-economic factors in economic analysis is not new and an attempt is done here to formulate our framework on the basis of earlier studies on this line. In the analysis of Adam Smith, human motives are considered as independent variables. He says that economic development is ultimately a function of the human motives. He considers six human motives as the basis of all human actions. Marginalist school of economics has based their analysis on the concept of utility, which is purely a psychological variable. The Keynesian

system has also its footing on non-economic factors. He used the concepts of fundamental psychological law, transaction motive, precautionary motive, speculative motive and expectation as the independent variables.

The selection of cultural factors by trained economists is significant but not startling. In his early work, W. W. Rostow suggested that variations in the behaviour of people relevant for economic growth could be summarised in a number of propensities, propensities to develop science that is to apply the science to the world about them<sup>28</sup>.

A more generalised socio-cultural framework surrounding development was presented by Irma Adelman and Cythia Taft Morris, in their work *Society, Politics and Economic Development: A Quantitative Approach*<sup>29</sup>. E. E. Hagen holds that change in cultural personality is the basic explanatory variable in economic development<sup>30</sup>. He regards economic variables as mere parameters or conditioning circumstances within which cultural change of a particular sort brings about a change from economic stagnation to growth. J. Dreze and A. K. Sen opine that:

The role of the social variables in the fostering of economic progress has recently received much attention in the development literature. But, of course, the subject is of some antiquity, and classical political economists such as Smith or Turgot or Condorect or Mill or Marx would have seen the recognition of this role as quite non-controversial<sup>31</sup>.

This functional relationship of economics and social variables has been attested by Max Weber. In fact, one may argue that achievement of even limited objectives of the current economic reforms will depend crucially on

conscious and organised pursuit of the social means on which economic performance and results are frequently conditioned.

### **Towards a Model for Analysing Tribal Development**

The forgoing analysis about the separate nature of tribal and non-tribal economies compels one to develop a modified version of formal economic theory in order to make it suitable for tracing the development mechanism of an economy from the tribal (substantive) nature into non-tribal (formal) nature.

As discussed in the earlier sections, the surplus of an economy depends on the productivity of labour, which is production over and above the consumption. Consequently, when the amount of surplus produced by productive labour exceeds the amount of the deficit made by the unproductive labour, the society as a whole generates a net surplus. As was observed by Smith and Marx, this net surplus is increased by changes in the forces of production, i.e., technology. Does the formation of the surplus lead automatically to the reinvestment of the surplus for the enhancement of existing output?

The classical economists assumed that with the expansion of market economy surplus formation would automatically lead to economic development. Thus, they considered expansion of market as a motivating cause working as the fuel for the engine of growth of an economy. The studies about the tribal economy in Kerala, however, show that as and when the tribes

are exposed to market, they are under the clutches of debt trap through the market dynamics<sup>32</sup>.

The above analysis suggests that market expansion need not necessarily lead to economic development. On the other hand, if the economy is pro-consumer then the market expansion may lead to depletion of economic resources. Consumption brings enjoyment and production brings risk and pain. Since the normal tendency of human beings is to reduce risk and increase enjoyment, any socio-religious and political barrier existing in a community for production results in a market which will be utilised only for consumption and not for production. In the terms of trade, the pro-producer communities will gain economically and pro-consumptive communities will suffer loss. The tribal economies are substantive and their productive operations are highly controlled by social variables. On the other hand, in the non-tribal situation, productive operations are comparatively free from control by the religious and political authorities<sup>33</sup>. The expansion of the market will give opportunity for both consumers and producers. In such a situation the wealth and surplus of pro-consumer tribal economy will be drained to pro-producer non-tribal economy.

### **Hypothesis**

The theoretical arguments presented above lead us to the conclusion that during the transitional process of tribal economies from substantive to formal, they might have used more freedom for consumption than for production. That might have paved the way for the drainage of tribal resources

to the hands of non-tribes and caused underdevelopment. The study of the relationship between freedom exercised and development is the core of this analysis<sup>34</sup>. To establish the above theoretical conclusion, the following prepositions are tested.

- (i) Human development is related to the individual's freedom for actions related to income generation, education and health.
- (ii) Human development is related to individual's freedom for consumption.

## **Methodology**

The main target of our analysis is to identify the internal factors of tribal societies that cause underdevelopment. The foregoing discussions about the development theory have revealed that formation of surplus and the establishment of the institutional arrangements for the reinvestment of the surplus are two basic ingredients of development process. In the light of the above observations, one may frame a method of procedure for the conduct of the study. The relationship between the freedom enjoyed and its influence in the development achievements of various tribes are analysed to understand the influence of internal factors of tribal society in economic development.

The target mentioned above is accomplished through the following steps.

- (1) Measurement of the differences in the development achievements of various tribes.

- (2) Identification of tribal track of evolution. Through which track are the tribes evolving? Are they moving through the pro-producer track? Or are they moving through the pro-consumer track? Analysis of production and consumption behaviour of tribes is done to identify the siphoning out of tribal surplus, which is the necessary condition for economic development.
- (3) Measurement of freedom enjoyed by various individuals for income generating activities, education, health care and consumption.
- (4) Estimation of the influence of internal factors of tribal societies on the differences in the development achievements of various tribes.

### **Source of Data and Location of the Sample**

Wynad, as its name signifies, is the land of forests. The original name was *Vana nad* (Forest Country), which is now spelt in its anglicised form as Wynad. It is a district of Kerala nestled among the mountains of Western Ghats<sup>35</sup>. This green paradise is located at a distance of 76 Kilometres from the seashore of Kozhikode, and lies at a height of 700 to 2100 meters above the sea level. The present district of Wynad was carved out from parts of Kozhikode and Kannur districts and came into being on 1<sup>st</sup> of November, 1980 as the 12<sup>th</sup> district of Kerala. The District is situated in the north-eastern part of Kerala with its geographic location in between 11° 27' N and 15° 58' N latitude and 70° 27' E and 75° 47' E longitude. The area is 2,126 square Kilometres of which 544 Square Kilometres are reserve forests.

Historians are of the view that organized human life existed in these parts at least ten centuries before Christ. Evidence about new Stone Age civilization can be seen on the hills of Wynad. According to tradition, Wynad was under the rule of *vedar* kings. They were conquered by the *Kottayam* and *Kurumbaranad* Rajas who portioned the country into *Wynad* and *Parakkumeethil*. Later the Kottayam Raja secured the sovereignty of *Parakkumeethil* also. In 1786 Tippu Sultan of Mysore captured the right over Wynad. On the fall of Sreerangapatanam in 1799, Wynad became part of the British Empire. Kerala Varma Raja of Kottayam revolted against the British power and was killed in 1805, after which the British exploited the natural resources of the district. This was interrupted by a revolt by Kurumans in 1812 but the revolt was quelled. In 1877 Wynad became a part of Nilgiri District of Madras Province. After Independence, it was made part of Kerala State and in 1980 it became an independent district of Kerala.

Primary and secondary, qualitative and quantitative data are used in this analysis. Census Reports of 1991 and 2001, the *Economic Review* of the State Planning Board, Kerala, *Survekshana* of Central Statistical Organisation, and the reports published by the Integrated Tribal Development Officer, Wynad, are depended for the collection of secondary information. Since the secondary data regarding many of the variables used in the analysis are not available, primary data are collected through a household survey using scheduled questionnaire (See Appendix 1). The survey is conducted in the month of August 2005.

To facilitate comparison, tribes from different categories are selected. Traditionally, the tribes in Wynad are classified under three groups: hill tribes, aboriginals or pre-dial slaves and forest dwelling aboriginals. Since our study focuses on the analysis of differences in the development of various tribes, groups which are included in the different stages of development are selected. Here, the hill tribes are more advanced than the forest dwelling aboriginals, but in matters of development the pre-dial slaves are in between the hill tribes and forest dwelling aborigines<sup>36</sup>.

Among these three groups, the Kurichiyans from the hill tribes, the Paniyans from the aboriginals, pre-dial slaves and the Kattunaickans from the forest dwelling aborigines are selected. The Kattunaickans are the most primitive tribes while the Kurichiyans are more advanced ones. Traditionally the Kurichiyans are cultivators, the Paniyans are slave labourers and the Kattunaickans are forest dwelling group who collect and sell non-wood forest produce (NWFP). The Table 2.3 shows the distribution of sample households.

**Table 2.3**  
**Distribution of Sample Households**

Tribes	Particulars	Development Block			
		Sultan Battery	Mananthody	Vythiri	Total
Paniyan	Panchayath	Noolpuzha	Panamaram	Kottathara	
	Total Households	1151	1215	750	3116
	Sample Households	30	30	30	90
Kurichian	Panchayath	Ambalavayal	Thavinjal	Kottathara	
	Total Households	14	937	725	1676
	Sample Households	14	38	38	90
Kattunaikkan	Panchayath	Noolpuzha	Thirunelli	Meppadi	
	Total Households	627	713	106	1446
	Sample Households	30	30	30	90
Total No of sample households					270

Different panchayaths from three development blocks of Wynad District are selected as the geographical space of the sample. 15793 Paniyans and 5048 Kurichiyans and 3948 Kattunaickan households are there in Wynad<sup>37</sup>. The total number of the sample is 270 households. Samples of 90 are selected from each group. The total number of the sample is divided into three and is selected from Panchayaths of different Development Blocks. The number of households taken from a Panchayath is 30. Since 30 Kurichiya households are not available from any one of the Panchayaths of Sultan Battery Development Block, the Panchayath where the maximum number of Kurichiya families is concentrated is selected. So 14 Kurichia households are selected from the Ambalavayal Panchayath of Sultan Battery Development Block and the remaining 76 out of 90 are equally divided and taken from the Panchayaths of Mananthody and Vythiri Development Blocks. The sample is randomly collected from the Panchayaths where these communities are highly concentrated. Survey is conducted by using a questionnaire, which is provided in Appendix 1

### **Tools of Analysis**

A few statistical and mathematical tools are used to analyse the various issues, which help to derive fruitful conclusions:

- (1) Human Development Index.
- (2) Categorisation of expenditure, occupation and income of the tribes according to the order of commodities.
- (3) Economic freedom index for consumption.

- (4) Economic freedom index for production.
- (5) Freedom mobility matrix, and
- (6) Multiple Regression.

### **Economic Freedom Index**

By economic freedom we mean freedom enjoyed by the individuals to perform economic operations.<sup>38</sup> This indicates the freedom allowed by the hierarchy to the individuals in the society. The hierarchy of the tribes that influence economic decisions are identified as (a) Individual (b) Family head (c) Joint family head (d) Tribal chief, and (e) Religious leaders. The economic activities selected are (i) income generation activities, (ii) education, (iii) health, and (iv) consumption. To measure the freedom levels, *ad hoc* scale is used. The value for minimum freedom is given as 3 and the maximum freedom is valued as 15. It is assumed that a respondent, who performs economic actions on the basis of his own motivation and decision, exercises maximum freedom. The value 3 in the scale indicates the maximum social constraint on economic actions of the individual. The process of scaling is detailed in Chapter 6 that deals with the measurement of economic freedom.

### **Human Development Index**

Human development index<sup>39</sup> is calculated for each individual household. The formula given by the UNDP is taken as the basic formula. Income, education and health are the three variables taken for estimating the HDI.

Because of the lack of availability of data related to all the variables included in the formula used by the UNDP, certain modifications are made to the variables to suit the context. Instead of annual per capita income, monthly per capita income is considered. To measure the health status instead of life expectancy, number of meals per day and the number of working days in a month are taken.

$$H D I = 1/3(\text{capability index} + \text{educational index} + \text{health index.})$$

To construct the Index, fixed minimum and maximum values have been established for each of these indicators.

- (1) Monthly per capita household income: 600 and 6000.
- (2) Adult literacy: (age 14 and above) 0%and 100%.
- (3) Combined enrolment ratio: 0%and 100%.
- (4) Number of meals per day: 0 and 3
- (5) Number of working days in a month: 0 and 24.

### **Freedom Mobility Matrix**

Freedom mobility matrix is used to explain the evolution of various tribal communities from substantive nature to formal nature. This matrix exhibits the changes in the freedom exercised by the respondents from the freedom levels exercised by their ancestors. It is assumed that a respondent, who performs economic actions on the basis of his own motivation and decision, exercises maximum freedom, which is given in the category 'A'.

The respondent's freedom diminishes as and when he moves from category 'A' to category 'E'. The Table 2.4 shows the freedom mobility matrix.

**Table 2.4**  
**Freedom Mobility Matrix**

Category wise distribution of respondents	Category wise distribution of ancestors					Total
	A	B	C	D	E	
A	Xaa	Xab	Xac	Xad	Xae	YA
B	Xba	Xbb	Xbc	Xbd	Xbe	YB
C	Xca	Xcb	Xcc	Xcd	Xce	YC
D	Xda	Xdb	Xdc	Xdd	Xde	YD
E	Xea	Xeb	Xec	Xed	Xee	YE
Total	XA	XB	XC	XD	XE	N

A = Number of respondents whose basis of economic action is on himself.

B = Number of respondents whose basis of economic action is on family

C = Number of respondents whose basis of economic action is on joint family.

D = Number of respondents whose basis of economic action is on tribal chief and social norms.

E = Number of respondents whose basis of economic action is on religious norms and religious leaders.

Column totals give the number of ancestors of the respondents in each category.

Row totals give number of respondents in each category.

$X_{ij}$  = Mobility values that indicates the number of respondents in the  $i$ th category whose ancestors were in the  $j$ th category.

$i = A, B, C, D, \text{ and } E$

$j = A, B, C, D, \text{ and } E$

$(X_{ij} / X_j) 100 = \text{mobility percentages}$

$N = \text{total number of respondents}$

## Multiple Regression Equation

A multiple regression equation has been fitted with HDI index as the dependent variable and freedom index for production and consumption as independent variables. The functional equation fitted is of the following form:

$$Y = a_0 + a_1 X_1 + a_2 X_2 + u$$

Where Y = Human Development Index

$X_1$  = Economic freedom index for production

$X_2$  = Economic freedom index for consumption

$a_0$ ,  $a_1$ , and  $a_2$  are the parameters to be estimated and

u = Error term

Significance of the estimates of the parameters is tested by using t-test.

The foregoing discussions have led the researcher to the following conclusions. From the view-point of economic analysis, tribal existence is one of the stages in the economic and social development of a community. Some economists argue that the formal economic theories are not suitable to explain the tribal situation. They propose that substantive analysis is suitable for analyzing tribal economy. However, the present study proposes that tribal economies are neither substantive nor formal. Instead, they are in a stage of evolution from substantial to formal nature.

Evolution from a substantive nature to formal nature needs certain institutional frameworks to adapt itself to the formal system. In the absence of changes in the informal laws that hinder the formation of institutional framework suitable for the formation of formal economy, it may lead to the

break down of the economy as a whole through the drain of surplus, which is the necessary condition for development.

During this evolution, if the society is moving through a pro-consumer track, there is a possibility for the drain of resources through the exchange of first order commodities for higher order commodities. The absence of sufficient institutions for promoting production leads to the secular stagnation of such economies. The present thesis probes into the internal structure of the tribal communities to identify problems in the formation of institutional structure suitable for economic development. This has been accomplished by measuring the relationship between freedom in economic actions and development achievements of various tribes. The differences in the freedom for making actions related to production and actions related to consumption give the indication that the economy is moving through a pro-producer track or a pro consumer track.

### **Limitations of the Study**

Availability of data is one of the major limitations of the study. First of all, the tribes fear the non-tribes, and this turned out to be a serious impediment in the collection of the data. Secondly, their capacity to articulate the answers for the questions is also limited. Thirdly, since it is for the first time that the methodology used in this analysis is used in the Indian context, the secondary information regarding the variables used in this study is not available. Fourthly, the data regarding the economic behaviour of the ancestors of the tribal respondents are collected from the respondents themselves since no

other form of valid data exist to date. Rigorous mathematical tools could not be utilised in this study.

## Notes and References

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- <sup>3</sup> K. Polanyi, 'The Economy as Instituted Process' in K. Polanyi *et. al.*, ed. *Trade And Market in Early Empires: Economies in History and Theory*, (Glencoe: The Free Press and The Falcon's Wing Press, 1957), pp. 243-270.
- <sup>4</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 250.
- <sup>5</sup> The influence of socio-religious and political leaders on the tribal of Kerala has been well articulated by Dr. P.G. Padmini. For details see, P. G. Padmini, *Kattujivithathinte Spandana Thalangal* (Malayalam) (Thalassery: Akam Samithi, 2001).
- <sup>6</sup> A. S. N. Murthy, *Religion and Society: A Study of Koyas* (New Delhi: Discovery Publishing House, 1991), p.180.
- <sup>7</sup> *Ibid.*, pp.180-81.
- <sup>8</sup> S. Harikumar, P. Ibrahim and E. P. Balakrishnan, 'Land Ownership, Occupation and Income among Tribals of Kerala - An Inter-Community Analysis' *Indian Journal of Agricultural Economics* July-September 1992 Vol., XVII, No., 3, p. 423.
- <sup>9</sup> The World Bank, *World Development Report 2006: Equity and Development* (New York: Oxford University Press, 2006), p. 107.
- <sup>10</sup> This does not mean that all non-tribal economies are formal economies. This is a theoretical extreme.
- <sup>11</sup> Adam Smith, *The Wealth of Nations*, Books 1-111 (London: Penguin Books, 1986).
- <sup>12</sup> Robert M. Solow, 'A Contribution to the Theory of Economic Growth', *Quarterly Journal of Economics*, 70, 1:65-94, 1956
- <sup>13</sup> Jeffrey D. Sachs, *Tropical Underdevelopment* NBER Working paper No.W8119 February (New York: National Bureau of Economic Research, 2001).
- <sup>14</sup> Douglass C. North, *Institutions, Institutional Change and Economic Performance* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1990).
- <sup>15</sup> Peter T. Bauer, *Economic Analysis and Policy in Underdeveloped Countries* (Durham, NC: Duke University Press, 1957).

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--- *Dissent on Development: Studies and Debates in Development Economics* (Cambridge: Harvard University Press, 1972).

<sup>16</sup> Friedrich A Hayek, 'The Use of Knowledge in Society' *American Economic Review* 35, 4 (September): 519-30, 1945.

<sup>17</sup> M. J. Herskowitz, *Economic Anthropology* (New York: E. P. Button and Co., INC, 1952), chapter XVIII.

<sup>18</sup> According to Smith, accumulation of capital begins from the productivity of the labourers. The surplus over and above the maintenance of labourers is the source of accumulation of capital, economic growth and development. For more details see, Adam Smith, *op. cit.*, pp. 429-449.

<sup>19</sup> F. Engels, *Anti-Dühring* (Moscow: Progress publishers, 1977), p. 38.

<sup>20</sup> Adam Smith, *op. cit.*, p. 429-435.

<sup>21</sup> C. T. Kurien, *The Economy: An Interpretative Introduction* (New Delhi: Sage Publications, 1992), pp. 45-73.

C. T. Kurien, *Poverty Planning and Social Transformation* (Delhi: Allied Publishers Private Limited, 1978), p. 54.

<sup>22</sup> Walter Elkan, *An Introduction to Development Economics* (London: Richard Clay Ltd, 1973), pp. 40-58.

<sup>23</sup> The process of accumulation of surplus in the form of savings, the transformation of savings into investment, the accumulation of capital and the absorption of technology needs certain institutional frameworks. As observed by George Stigler, Economic organization has probably been as important as technological change in historical development. Since man values social security than personal growth, in primitive societies people distribute surplus among the individuals of the community through different social festivals. More over in the absence of storage facilities and marketing facilities, the only way to store the things is to distribute the surplus among the members of the community as an investment in the society. For the transference of the surplus into savings, first the surplus has to be marketed for a thing, which has store of value. This process itself has different steps. Value is stored in valuable metals and jewels, in landed property, in the form of money, then in banks. All these steps need many other supporting institutions. The savings in the form of different assets needs institution of private property. Private property in land needs the maintenance of records, protection of property rights and the maintenance of boundaries similarly savings in the form of money needs banking system. So the evolutionary process of the economy from the subsistence level to a capitalist free economy, with capital formation and technology absorption warrant the formation of institutional arrangements necessary for the existence of such system.

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- <sup>24</sup> F. Engels, *Socialism: Utopian and Scientific*, reprint (Moscow: Progress Publishers, 1978), p.58.
- <sup>25</sup> R. H. Coase, 'The Problem of Social Cost', *Journal of Law and Economics* 3, 1:1-44, 1960.
- <sup>26</sup> Douglass C. North, 'The New Institutional Economics and Third World Development' in John Harriss, Janet Hunter and Colin M. Louis eds., *The New Institutional Economics and Third World Development* (London: Routledge, 1997), p.19.
- <sup>27</sup> Karl Marx, *Economic and Philosophical Manuscripts of 1844*, reprint (Moscow: Progress Publishers, 1982), p. 66.
- <sup>28</sup> W. W. Rowstow, *The Stages of Economic Growth* (London: Oxford University Press, 1960), pp. 80-108.
- <sup>29</sup> Irma Adelman and Cynthia Taft Morris, *Society, Politics and Economic Development: A Quantitative Approach*. (Baltimore: John Hopkins, 1967).
- <sup>30</sup> E. E. Hagen, *On the Theory of Social Change: How Economic Growth Begins* (Illinois: Dorsey Homewood, 1967).
- <sup>31</sup> J. Dreze and A. K. Sen, *India: Economic Development and Social Opportunity* (Delhi: Oxford University Press, 1996), p. 13.
- <sup>32</sup> M. Kunhaman, *Development of Tribal Economy* (Delhi: Classical Publishing Company, 1989).
- <sup>33</sup> Earlier we found that the non-tribes certainly had a tribal existence and they evolved from a primitive form of existence to the present capitalist form of existence. Though Adam Smith and Karl Marx identified primitive communist society as a system before the appropriation of land and accumulation of capital, they have not considered the religious and political hierarchy inside the primitive system. It is K. Polanyi who identified that the traditional economy exists in a religious and political framework. However, Adam Smith in his work of theory of moral sentiments distinguished two types of economies: (i) an economy based on man made laws and on intervention in economic activity of the individuals and, (ii) an economy without external control over the decision making of the individuals. He advocated the second type and considered it as economically productive. Later, Marx developed a methodology to explain the transition of primitive economy into capitalist form through various stages. He considers economic variables as independent and non-economic variables as dependant. But his methodology fails to explain the Asiatic type of societies. Polanyi considered formation of forces of production (economic variable) as dependant variable just as political and religious variables are dependent. This was considered really a theoretical advancement over the static interpretation by Adam Smith and Karl

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Marx Asiatic mode of production shows a clear evidence of existence of primitive communism within the framework of political and religious system influencing the economic activities.

- <sup>34</sup> For more details see, The World Bank, *World Development Report 2006 Equity and Development* (New York: Oxford University Press, 2006), Chapter 6.
- <sup>35</sup> C. Gopalan Nair, *Wyanad: Its Peoples and Traditions*. reprint (New Delhi: Asian Educational Services, 2000), p. 3.
- <sup>36</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 49.
- <sup>37</sup> This information is collected from Project Officer, Integrated Tribal Development Project, District Headquarters, Kalpetta, Wynad, 2005.
- <sup>38</sup> James Gwarterry and Robert Lawson, *Economic Freedom of the World* (New Delhi: Academic Foundation, 2004).
- <sup>39</sup> U N D P, *Human Development Report 2000* (New Delhi: Oxford University Press, 2000), pp. 269-272.

# ECONOMIC EVOLUTION OF THE TRIBES IN WYNAD

Francis K.M. “Tribal development- A study of internal factors ” Thesis.  
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## **Chapter III**

# **ECONOMIC EVOLUTION OF THE TRIBES IN WYNAD**

Economic performance of any society depends on the way in which its labour force utilises the natural endowments for satisfying human wants. In a primitive type of economy, how labour and land are used for the betterment of the society is highly significant. The rationale behind such an exercise can be found in the common understanding that man's relationship with nature for subsistence is the basic form of economic activity. Prior to the examination of such relationship, an analysis of the available resource base will be an important step in the process of evaluating the existing situation of any community. This part of the study concentrates on the forces of production, i.e., the relationship of tribes mainly with land and forest resources.

The academicians and the policy makers have identified that the absence of resources or the depletion of the existing resources as the main factor which inhibit the economic development of tribes. Majority of the members of the tribes earn their livelihood as agricultural labourers, and collectors of forest products<sup>1</sup>. This, in turn, depends on the quality of labourers, accessibility and availability of forest resources and the possession of landed property. An analysis of these potentials and the method of management of these resources may enlighten one on the internal factors influencing the development dynamics of tribes. The present chapter analyses

the historical process through which the tribes in Wynad reached the current state of affairs.

### **The Tribe**

The tribes are the autochthonous people of the land who are the earliest settlers in the Indian peninsula. They are generally called *Adivasis*, which implies original inhabitants of the land<sup>2</sup>. Webster's Dictionary gives an adequate definition of a tribe. "The term 'tribe' commonly signifies an endogamous social group held to be descended from a common ancestor and composed of numerous families, exogamous clans, and bands of villages that occupies a specific geographic territory, possesses cultural, religious and linguistic homogeneity and is commonly united politically under one head or chief"<sup>3</sup>.

From the viewpoint of economic theory, all the inhabitants in the world have a common tribal heritage. Adam Smith considered this as a primitive hunting stage without the appropriation of land and accumulation of capital and without any surplus. Karl Marx viewed it as the first stage of social evolution and characterised it as Primitive Communism<sup>4</sup>. W. W. Rostow also maintained the same view regarding the tribal existence as one of primitive stages in human history<sup>5</sup>. From the above understanding of history, non-tribes can also be *Adivasis* though by now, they have evolved themselves into different but sophisticated form of socio-political and economic organisation of society. This suggests that among the *Adivasis* certain tribes are

economically advanced while others are not. The economically advanced tribes are categorised as non-tribes and the rest as tribes.

### **Indian Tribes**

While enumerating the tribes in India, the primitive mode of production behaviour was considered as an important factor, which differentiates the tribes from the non-tribes. The British Government started enumeration of tribes in India. J. A. Bains, the Commissioner of Census, classified castes according to their traditional occupations, in 1891. Under the category of 'agricultural and pastoral castes', he formed a subheading called 'Forest Tribes'<sup>6</sup>.

At the time of identifying the tribes and classifying them under the category of Scheduled Tribes, economic performance is considered as a basic criterion. It may also be mentioned in this context that though only Hindus and Sikhs are categorised under the category of Scheduled Castes, no religious bar has been specified for listing tribes under the category of Scheduled Tribe.

The main criteria adopted for specifying communities as Scheduled Tribes include (i) traditional occupation of a definite geographical area, (ii) distinctive culture which includes a whole spectrum of tribal way of life, i.e., language, customs, traditions, religious beliefs, arts, crafts, etc., (iii) primitive traits depicting occupational pattern of traditional economy, and (iv) lack of educational and techno-economic development<sup>7</sup>.

Thus, while categorising a group of people under the head 'tribe', the concept of a tribe as a political unit seems to have lost its meaning. Instead, the tribes are treated as a group of people identified with underdevelopment and backwardness. This may be the reason for using the term 'Scheduled Tribes' instead of *Adivasis* by the formulators of constitution. As explained by Dr. B R Ambedkar, Chairman of the Drafting Committee of the Constitution, the term *Adivasi* is really a general term, which has no specific legal *de jure* connotation<sup>8</sup>. From the point of view of Economics, this categorisation as Scheduled Tribes based on the economic performance, instead of visualising them as *Adivasis*, is consistent. Long years of political suppression by the 'other' tribes over the Scheduled Tribes may lead to the performance of economic advancement of some tribes over the other. Long years of such political/economic exploitation must have confined them into the traditional way of production pattern, which is flanked by only religious beliefs and customs.

### **Tribal Policy of India**

No attention had been paid by the British Government for the socio-economic development of the tribes during their regime. They followed a policy of isolation. The British forest policy alienated the tribes from their natural habitat. In this connection, Elvin Verrier opined that the British Policy did much harm than good to the tribes<sup>9</sup>.

While framing a national policy for the tribes, our national leaders consider them not as an entity, which is entirely different from non-tribes.

However, the academicians and activists were in two camps viz., preservationists and assimilationists. While formulating a national policy for tribes in the post-Independent India, our national leaders rejected both these approaches. The first approach, of treating the tribal people as museum specimens to be observed and written about, was to insult them. The tribal people could not be left cut off from the world as they were. It was not possible or desirable to isolate them. The second approach of allowing them to be engulfed by the masses of Indian humanity was also rejected. Instead of these two approaches, Government of India put forwarded a policy of integrating the tribal people with the mainstream Indian society, of making them an integral part of the Indian nation while maintaining their distinct identity and culture. Our national policy envisages that the tribal areas must progress but they must progress in their own way. In other words, the development and integration should come from within<sup>10</sup>.

### **Tribal Population in India**

Apart from Africa, India has the largest concentration of tribes in the world, numbering about 102.64 million in 2001. Table 3.1 shows the trend in the tribal population in India.

**Table 3.1**  
**Trend in the Tribal Population in India**

Year	Population India			Population Kerala		
	Total	Scheduled Caste	Scheduled Tribes	Total	Scheduled Caste	Scheduled Tribes'
1971	5481	800	380	213.47	17.22	2.69
1981	6834	1047	516	254.50	25.49	2.91
1991	8463	1382	678	290.32	28.87	3.20
2001	10264	1666	836	318.40	31.22	3.64

Source: Government of India, *Census Reports* (Population in Lakhs)

Tribes are spatially distributed across the country. A unique feature of the geographical distribution of the tribes in India is simultaneous occurrence of high density and their existence as a minority of the regional population.

### **Tribes in Kerala**

Compared to the percentage of tribal population in the total population of India, the percentage of tribal population in Kerala is rather low. The percentage of tribal population in Kerala is only 1.13 per cent of the total population of the state. Though the Scheduled Tribes constitute a minority in Kerala state, their density is very high in Wynad District. The percentage of Scheduled Tribes in Wynad district is 16.66 per cent of the total population of the district, which is more than the percentage of tribal population at the national level. A comparative analysis of the tribal population in India, Kerala and Wynad, is given in Table 3.2.

**Table 3.2**  
**Tribal Population in Kerala**

Region	Total Population (in Lakhs)	Tribal Population (in Lakhs)	Percentage Share
India	10264	836	8.19
Kerala	318.4	36.4	1.13
Wynad	7.8	1.36	16.66

Source: Government of India: *Census Report*, 2001.

Table 3.3 shows the growth rate of Scheduled Tribes in the state. The table reveals that the growth rate of tribal population is also declining. According to 1991 Census, population of tribes in Kerala state was 3, 20,967. It was 1.33 per cent of the total population of Kerala. But in 2001 the tribal population has increased to 3, 64,189 which is 1.13 per cent of the total

population in the state. In Wynad District also, there is a reduction in the percentage of the tribal population. In 1991 the tribal population in Wynad was 17.70 of the total population in Wynad. But in 2001 the tribal population in Wynad increased to 1, 36, 062. It is 16.66per cent of the total population in Wynad. Thus, both at the state level and at the district level there is reduction in percentage of tribal population to the total population.

**Table 3.3**  
**Decennial Growth Rate of Population of Scheduled Castes and Scheduled Tribes in Kerala (1971-2001)**

Year	Scheduled Caste	Scheduled Tribes	Total Population
1971	20.00	26.29	26.33
1981	48.02	2.97*	19.2
1991	13.26	22.61	14.3
2001	8.14	13.75	9.45

\*The significant difference is due to the exclusion of certain tribes from the list of Scheduled Tribes.

Source: Government of India: *Census Reports*

The percentage of tribal population in Wynad to the total tribal population in the state is estimated as 37.36 per cent in 2001. The concentration of Scheduled Castes and Scheduled Tribes in various districts of Kerala is given in Table 3.4. It shows that the concentration of Scheduled Tribes is high in Wynad and low in Alappuzha District.

As given in the *Census Report*, of 1991 the largest in number among the tribes are Paniyans and the smallest are the Malakuravan and majority of them inhabit in the forest. According to the survey conducted by the Forest Research Institute, 17,156 tribal families are settled in forest<sup>11</sup>. The largest concentration of tribes is in Wynad District. The tribal population in Wynad is

equally distributed in Vythiri, Mananthody and Sultan Bathery Blocks of the district.

**Table 3.4**  
**District-wise Concentration of Tribal Population in Kerala**

Sl. No.	District	Percentage to total tribal population	
		Scheduled Caste	Scheduled Tribes
1	Kasargod	2.88	8.33
2	Kannur	3.17	5.48
3	Wynad	1.07	37.36
4	Kozhikode	6.43	1.63
5	Malappuram	9.14	3.36
6	Palakkad	13.85	10.89
7	Thrissur	11.34	1.33
8	Ernakulam	8.44	2.76
9	Idukki	5.1	14
10	Kottayam	4.81	5.04
11	Alappuzha	6.37	0.86
12	Pathanamthitta	5.19	1.8
13	Kollam	10.34	1.43
14	Thiruvananthapuram	11.87	5.74
	Total	100.00	100.00

Source: Government of India, *Census Report*, 2001

### **Types of Tribes in Wynad**

In Kerala, thirty-nine groups are considered as Scheduled Tribes. In Wynad district ten groups of people are listed as Scheduled Tribes. According to the *Census Report* of 2001, only seven groups in the district are categorized as Scheduled Tribes. They are

- (1) Paniyans
- (2) Adiyans

- (3) Kattunaickans
- (4) Urali Kuruman
- (5) Kurichiyans, and
- (6) Kuruman
- (7) Malayarayan

In the Scheduled Castes/Scheduled Tribes Amendment Order issued by the Kerala Government on 7-1-2003, four more groups are included in the list of Scheduled Tribes. According to the notification on 15.7.2003 in *Kerala Gazette*, Thachanadan Moopan, Wynad Kader, Mavilan and Karimpalan are enumerated as Scheduled Tribes. A detailed list of the number of tribal households in different Panchayaths of Wynad District in the year 2001 is given in Appendix 2.

### **Economic Status of the Tribes: A Historical Overview**

Economic status of different tribes recorded in the various narrations of their customs and traditions are helpful for the understanding of the contemporary economic behaviour of different tribes in Wynad. While framing the sample, three categories of tribes are selected, namely Kattunaickans, Paniyans and Kurichiyans.

#### **Kattunaickans**

Kattunaickans are classified as aboriginal tribes. They speak Canarese and their ancestors migrated from Mysore. They cultivate raggi in the forest clearings. Different types of edible yams were an essential part of their consumption. In the reserve forest they were employed as elephant mahouts.

Their acquaintance with the forest helped them to become collectors of minor forest products. Kattunaickans are primitive tribes without a written history and their ancestors found happiness with the means of subsistence available from the forest in the form of edible roots.

A *Moopan* controls the economic operations of the Kattunaickans. *Moopan* is called as *Muthali*. On certain occasions, he assumes the role of oracle. For them, there is no differentiation between political leader and religious leader<sup>12</sup>.

### **Paniyans**

Paniyans are the largest tribal group and they outnumber all other tribes in Wynad. These dark skinned and curly haired tribes of Negreoid type are found in all the development blocks of Wynad. Their tradition begins with the story of how they became slaves of cultivators in Wynad. Ippimala, a hill that no one in Wynad could locate, is said to be their ancient dwelling place. They were savage tribes living in thick forests coming out occasionally in search of food. The landowners caught them and used as slaves.

The major economic events of Paniyans are related to festivals and religious ceremonies. The oracle has a prominent place in their community. In all festive occasions, they use liquor. They make offerings to god and ancestors on *ucharal day* (harvest festival). On this occasion, they hear the words of the oracle. Liquor is freely supplied to all the members of the community.

The influence of feudal system and slavery has been more exceptional on Paniyans than on any other community in Wynad. Among the Kurichiyans and Kattunaickans, their leaders are selected without having any external influence. But, for the Paniyans there were two *sthanas* (titles): *kuttan* and *moopan* which are conferred on them by the feudal lord.

The landowners advance money for their festivals. They provide them with certain quantity of paddy to the Paniyans. This is considered as a contract. A Paniyan who is receiving paddy on the day of *Vishu* is not expected to leave the master for the year<sup>13</sup>.

### **Kurichiyans**

Kurichiyans are traditionally classified under the category of hill tribes. The name 'Kurichiyans' was given by the Kottayam Raja as a recognition of their excellence in archery. The traditional account of the Kurichiyans' advent into Wynad is that Kottayam Raja brought them for fighting the 'vedar' rulers in Wynad. Their festivals are related to harvesting. Their deities are *Malakari* and *Muni Daiwam*. The oracle has a prominent role in the socio-economic performance of Kurichiyans. They claim the superiority of their tribe among other tribes and follow the practice of untouchability.

Liquor consumption is a part of their religious ceremonies. The Kurichiyans are paddy cultivators, raising paddy in wetland and raggi on hills. With the advent of 20<sup>th</sup> century, many of them fell as the victims of moneylenders. A slow decay of their economic status can be observed by analysing their history. As observed by C. Gopalan Nair, the Kurichiyans

were brought into the country as soldiers, settled here as agriculturists, and their race, which a century back had the temerity to defy the British power, has sunk so low that the Kurichiyans find themselves compelled at the beck and call of every one, as unambitious, illiterate and uneducated, they will be dragged lower and lower down, unless something providential happen to help them out of their slough of despond<sup>14</sup>.

### **Tribal Sources of Income**

At present the main source of income of the tribes are related to agriculture and allied activities. But certain groups of tribes, especially Kattunaickans, earn their livelihood from forests. Three major areas of sources of income of the tribes are identifiable in the district. The main sources of the livelihood of the tribes are:

- a. Non-wood Forest Products
- b. Cultivation, and
- c. Agricultural Labour

### **Appropriation of Forest Products**

Historically, two hundred years ago the main source of income of the tribes was the forest resources. Hunting, fishing, collecting minor forest products and shifting cultivation were the main resources of their livelihood. In olden days, the tribal communities in India used the forest resources base without destroying it. Initially, the collection was solely for self-consumption. However, from 17<sup>th</sup> century onwards, tribal communities began to trade the collected products by barter system. Items such as black pepper, ginger,

turmeric, cinemon, honey, bee wax, gooseberry, lemon grass oil etc. were the main important non-wood forest products (NWFP) collected for barter. Tribal communities followed subsistence extraction of non-wood forest products, which was a sustainable practice and policy<sup>15</sup>.

Before the advent of the British in India, there were only customary regulations of the people's rights over forestland and forest produce. To establish government control over the forest, the Forest Act was passed in 1865. Like land, forest also becomes a source of revenue for the imperial power. The state tried to obtain more and more revenue from the forest and at the same time it treated forest dwellers that lived in the forest for centuries as enemies of forest resources. Their economy, culture and life were inextricably linked to the forest. The Forest Act not only alienated the tribes from the forest but also alienated them from their natural habitat<sup>16</sup>.

More constraints were added to the national forest policy again in 1894. These are of considerable significance to the tribes: (1) withdrawal of concessions of the release of forest land for cultivation, (2) establishment of village forests for meeting the forest based needs of the villagers, (3) bringing the private forests under the state control, (4) withdrawal of facility of free grazing in forests and introduction of grazing fee, and (5) making efforts to wean the tribes from the traditional practice of shifting cultivation. As a result of the new policy, the tribes who considered the masters of the forests became their subjects<sup>17</sup>.

The commercial exploitation of the forest products by the British changed the relationship of the tribes with the forest. They are compelled to exploit the forest as a source of income rather than a habitat for their livelihood. These created a shift in the life style of the tribes and in the history of collecting minor forest products. When the British Government identified forest as a source of revenue, they allowed private contractors also to collect Non-Wood Forest Products (NWFP). At the turn of the twentieth century, the collection of forest products was, however, left to private contractors. In return for the contract payment of money to the state, the contractors used tribal labour for collection of NWFP. The private contractors sold the product directly in the market. This practice introduced competition among the tribes to collect more and more quantity of forest produce expecting more income. However, when income rose, the living standards of the tribes did not rise. Instead, they increased their consumption of liquor, tobacco etc. in a manner of luxury<sup>18</sup>. The tribal life was also disturbed by the transformation of forests into plantations. For this purpose vast tracts of the Western Ghats are now turned into eucalyptus and tea plantations, which have really disturbed the communal solitude of the tribes in Kerala<sup>19</sup>.

### **Collection of Non-Wood Forest Products since Independence**

After Independence, the local people were also allowed to collect products like bamboo, reeds, manure leaves etc. under the cover of *seigniorage* permits. The commercial exploitation of the forest resources accelerated the depletion of NWFP, which affected the primary resources of

the livelihood of the tribes. This might have pushed the tribes out from their traditional source of income to other type of occupations.

However, in 1970, the Government gave the monopoly to the tribes to collect the NWFP. From 1978 onwards, Tribal Co-Operative Societies were started to collect NWFP. The Kerala State Scheduled Caste and Scheduled Tribe Development Co-Operative Federation Limited was established in 1981, which has since been working as an apex body of tribal societies.

### **Tribal Participation in the Collection of NWFP**

In Wynad district, there are five cooperative societies, which collect NWFP. They are in Thirunelly, Sultan Battery, Thavinjal, Meppadi and Pulpally. The total number of the tribal households that participated in the activity of the tribal societies in the collection of NWFP as on 29-2-2004 is given in Table 3.5.

**Table 3.5**

#### **Tribal Participation in the Collection of NWFP in Wynad**

Name of Tribal Societies	No. of Tribal Households	No. of Member Households	No. of persons who collect NWFP
Thirunelly	2252	1294	150
Sultan Battery	3820	1404	350
Thavinjal	1580	1060	300
Meppady	4225	1430	535
Pulpally	714	661	1750
Total	12591	5849	3085

Source: Kerala State Scheduled Caste and Scheduled Tribe Development Co-Operative Federation Ltd., 2005.

Out of 12591 tribal households in the jurisdiction of the co-operative societies, only 3085 are now continuing to depend on forests. The declining dependence of forest indicates the problem related to the collection of NWFP. There are 119 commercially important NWFP and among them only 29 species are collected for sale in Wynad.

Though the items collected by the tribes from the forest have high commercial value, the price actually awarded to the tribes is very low. It has been pointed out that what they obtain as the price is less than 60 per cent of the market price. This is due to the fact that the tribes are unaware of any value addition processes and they sell the products, even without grading them properly<sup>20</sup>. In the absence of any value addition process to generate income from the collected NWFP, the tribes increase the physical quantity of output to increase their income. This, in turn, reduces the supply price and an increase in quantity of the materials collected, so that they can generate an income necessary for their own subsistence. This is one of the reasons for the depletion of NWFP resources in the forest and the reduction in the number of persons engaged in the collection of NWFP as a source of income.

### **Historical Background of Tribal Land Alienation**

Traditionally, tribes used the land as common property. Each tribe resides in a particular locality and individual families are allowed to cultivate areas allotted to them by the community as a whole. So long as family remained within the tribal organizations and cultivated the plot, its occupancy or operational right over the plot remained undisturbed. Thus, while the

ownership right was in the community, the individual tribal family enjoyed operational right<sup>21</sup>.

The community subsisted on food gathering and hunting in the area under its control. An average family had a fair size of the land holding which supported it even with primitive methods of cultivation. Most of the tribes followed the method of shifting cultivation. Shifting cultivation helped them to maintain the fertility of the land. Shifting cultivation might have also helped them to escape from diminishing marginal returns.

The restrictions on shifting their cultivation caused by political invasion, enactment of forest laws and commercialisation of agriculture imposed pressure on the tribal life and this led to land alienation. With the opening of tribal areas, the tribal land is alienated to the non-tribes. Consequently, large number of cultivators turned into landless labourers. The economists are of the opinion that alienation of land is the main cause of poverty among the tribes<sup>22</sup>. The problem of land alienation in Wynad is more severe than in any other district in the state.

Table 3.6 exhibits the extent of land alienation faced by the Scheduled Tribes in Kerala. The highest percentage of people who do not own even a piece of land is in Wynad. The per cent of the tribes without having any piece of land is 60.33. Moreover, among the tribal landowners, 37.92 per cent holds the land by the size, below one acre, which is not sufficient for generating an income to meet their daily expenditure.

**Table 3.6**  
**District-wise Details of Landless Tribals and Those who Own Less than 1.00 Acre of Land**

Sl. No	District	Number of Landless	Percent of Landless	Number with Less than 1 Acre	Percent with less than 1 Acre
1	2	3	4	5	6
1	Kasaragod	226	1.02	171	0.53
2	Kannur	1395	6.33	2249	7.00
3	Wynad	13303	60.33	12184	37.92
4	Kozhikode	318	1.44	889	2.77
5	Malappuram	339	1.54	2224	6.92
6	Palakkad	5389	24.44	2637	8.20
7	Thrissur	271	1.23	840	2.61
8	Ernakulam	132	0.60	888	2.76
9	Idukki	190	0.86	5436	16.92
10	Kottayam	153	0.70	1340	4.19
11	Alapuzha	117	0.53	568	1.77
12	Pathanamthitta	68	0.3	1032	3.21
13	Kollam	138	0.63	572	1.78
14	Thiruvanthapuram	13	0.05	1101	3.42
<b>Total</b>		<b>22052</b>	<b>100.00</b>	<b>32131</b>	<b>100.00</b>

Source: *Economic Review 2003*, State Planning Board, Thiruvananthapuram, 2004.

In order to trace the reasons for underdevelopment of the tribes, one should start from the search for the cause of land alienation. The important questions are whether they had legal right/ownership over the land they lost, and if so, the reasons for such loss of land. Indebtedness and loopholes in the land laws are the two factors identified as the reasons for land alienation<sup>23</sup>. A

close scrutiny of the history of Wynad reveals that political invasion also has an important role in the land alienation of the tribes.

### **Political Conquests and Land Alienation**

The problem of land alienation of tribes in Wynad began by the middle of the 17<sup>th</sup> century when Wynad came under the rule of the Raja of Kottayam<sup>24</sup>. The supremacy of the external authority was recognised by the primitive tribes, who, in turn, gave gifts and tributes to the Raja mainly in the form of honey. These payments show that tribes were still at the state of food gathering and subsistence level of cultivation. Since forestland was plenty in relation to the tribal population, we can assume that tribes in Wynad also followed a shifting cultivation for subsistence.

Once the land was conquered by the Raja, two types of distribution of land were made. One was the distribution of forest to the warriors and the other to the temples. Thus, due to the conquest of the Raja of Kottayam, plainsmen entered into the territory of Wynad and the land distribution system prevalent in other areas of Malabar also was introduced in Wynad<sup>25</sup>.

Under this system of distribution of land, the ownership of land came into the hands of the upper class. Since the upper class considered cultivation a menial activity, the land was handed over to the *Sudras*. They utilised the labour power of the tribes. As a result, a class of *Jenmies* emerged in Wynad. Thus, the breaking of tribal serenity could be traced back to the 17<sup>th</sup> century while the Raja of Kottayam conquered Wynad.

## **Commercial Exploitation of Forests and Land Alienation**

During the process of the evolution of the *Jenmi* system in Wynad, the tribes might not have felt any difference in their life. Such changes might not have hindered their movements in forest, collecting forest goods and practicing shifting cultivation and hunting to maintain their subsistence.

Since Kozhikode was one of the centres of export of forest goods, the traders among the plainsmen found the potential of Wynad as a source of commercial gain. Thus, by 18<sup>th</sup> century, there was further immigration of plainsmen into Wynad and consequently there occurred a considerable spread of settled agriculture in the valley of the region. For settled agriculture, labour force was necessary. As in the other parts of Kerala, the people of Wynad became the slaves of the plainsmen. The newcomers confiscated the fertile regions and enslaved the tribes<sup>26</sup>.

### **Slavery in Wynad: A Historical Sketch**

Land alienation of tribes cannot be explained totally on the basis of economic reasons. The fact that the land holding system prevailed much before the British does throw light into the slave system. The upper caste, as already stated earlier, considered the manual work as menial. So the Brahmins, *Kshatriyas*, *Vaisyas* and *Sudras* were not expected to do manual work in land. The *Panchamas*, the untouchables for the upper caste, were treated like slaves. The people belonging to tribal communities and Scheduled Castes did agricultural operations like ploughing, weeding and harvesting.

The slaves could be sold or purchased in the market. There were three systems of marketing slaves, viz., *Jenmom*, *Kanom* and *Verumpattam*. *Jenmom* is the system of selling the slave for his full value. *Kanom* was the system of mortgaging the slave and *Verumpattam* was the system of selling the service of the slave for a rent.

The British government abolished slave trade in 19<sup>th</sup> century. This political decision made the slaves free to work in the plantations. Emancipation of tribes was accentuated by the selling of lands by *Jenmies* to plantation owners, due to increase in the cost of production. Expecting commercial gain, many foreigners invested in huge amounts in plantations. Later, when plantations became uneconomic the tribes lost their job too. When slavery existed, they had been treated as animals. However, minimum existence was guaranteed. It may be well assumed that the history of tribal poverty had started after the abolition of slavery and the breakdown of the plantations.

### **Tippu's Invasion and Changes in Land Tenure**

The invasion of Tippu Sultan paved the way for more changes in the land ownership pattern. The Brahmins and many members of the family of Raja of Kottayam left Wynad under a fear of proselytisation. So the entire land was transferred into the hands of warrior class among the *Jenmies*. During the invasion of Tippu Sultan, many of the *Jenmies* and priests left Wynad, and Tippu compelled to collect the tax from the real cultivators instead of the traditional landowners, the *Jenmies*.

In the new pattern of land revenue introduced by Tippu, the revenue was collected from the actual cultivators instead of collecting it from the *Jenmies*. At this time, many Chetties and Gowndans from the eastern part of the Western Ghats immigrated to Wynad. They extensively started permanent cultivation in forest lands. They brought with them large number of Adiyans and Paniyans as slaves. So, before the advent of the British regime itself the tribes had lost their autonomy in land and life.

Though the tribes in Wynad lost the land in the 17<sup>th</sup> century due to the invasion of the Raja of Kottayam, Kurumans and Kurichians regained cultivable land, particularly by participating in the political process of the Malabar. To confront the invasion of Tippu, Pazhassi Raja of Kottayam rendered the service of Kurichians and Kurumans. The services of both of these tribes were utilised by Pazhassi Raja to defend the invasion of Tippu and in return for their service the tribes were allowed to possess and cultivate land.

### **British Land Reform and Land Alienation**

After the British defeated Tippu Sultan, they considered Wynad as the property of the British Government. According to the existing law of the country, the land ownership had to be conferred to the person who conquered the area. When the British claimed the ownership of Wynad, Pazhassi fought against them and he was at last defeated in 1805. In spite of the defeat of Pazhassi in 1805, the tribes who were given land by him for cultivation continued as peasants, while others continued to exist as slaves<sup>27</sup>.

The foregoing analysis brings us into the following conclusions. The tribes, the indigenous people of Wynad, lost their economic basis, viz., the land, in the 17<sup>th</sup> century itself. Only Kurichiyans and Kurumans regained the cultivable land as a reward to their services in the army of Pazhassi Raja. The remaining tribes inhabited the contiguous forest areas and were treated as slaves.

While the Paniyans and Adiyans and other Scheduled Tribes remained in the forest as landless, they earned their livelihood by selling their labour power and collecting forest produces. Since their land was totally alienated, they could not develop skills in agriculture to meet the requirements of the market and the advancements in the society.

When immigrants invested in plantations, the local agriculturalists like Kurumans and Kurichiyans stuck on to the traditional type of cultivation. The British treated both the immigrants and local inhabitants in the same manner and collected tax in cash. This shift of taxation system in terms of cash rather than in kind deteriorated the economic condition of the local tribal landowners. Since the plantation owners could sell pepper, cardamom, tea, etc. in the international market, their marketed surplus was very high and they could pay tax in money. In 1812, when the British insisted on payments of the land revenue in money, instead of in kind, the Kuruma and Kurichiaya peasants rose in revolt. This was the first peasant revolt against the British rule in India.

## **Land Alienation after Independence**

The system of maintaining ownership records of land is another reason for the land alienation of tribes. Traditionally, when the land was surplus nobody claimed *de jure* ownership of land. But when land became scarce and its asset value increased, the institution of private property and legal ownership came into existence. During this transition, because of the unsatisfactory state of land-records the tribals were not legally recognised as the owners of the land. He cultivated and simply occupied it till a superior claim got enforced. Since the new legal system gradually superseded the traditional system, the tribal as an individual was unable to withstand the mounting pressure of the outsiders. The ownership of land, actually recorded in favour of the tribal cultivator in a settlement operation, depended largely on the knowledge or sensitivity of the revenue officers responsible<sup>28</sup>.

This same mistake was repeated during the implementation of the land reforms in 1970 and is considered as one of the reasons for the land alienation of tribes. The administrators considered non-tribes as cultivators and the tribes as landlords, consequently the tribes lost their land.

The foregoing historical overview makes it clear that centuries of oppression weakened the ability and skill of the tribals to improve their traditional economic operations. This is reflected in their low level of technological advancements in agricultural operations and stagnation in economic development.

## **Tribal Agriculture**

We have seen that both the forest policy of the Government and depletion of the forest resources compelled the tribes to seek other areas of livelihood. In terms of social evolution, it is a shifting stage from food gathering to cultivation. The recorded history of tribes in our country also indicates this evolution. Since they were in the primary stages of economic evolution, they also were depending on agriculture and land was the only tangible asset of a tribal family. The primary stage of this cultivation was done in the form of shifting cultivation. Shifting cultivation is possible only in a situation where land is plentiful and movement in land is free. Political invasions and enactment of forest law restricted the movement of tribes. This compelled the tribes to change their style of cultivation. The change from shifting cultivation to settled agriculture needs certain institutional structures and technological know-how.

Agricultural practices in India after Independence have undergone many changes. These changes have improved the total availability of food and created surplus in rural areas and provided basis for acquiring necessities for an improved life. On the other hand, tribal agriculture faces various problems. The age-old problem of land alienation of tribes has been aggravated by the institutional rigidities. The main issues of tribal agriculture can be analysed under the following heads.

- (1) Institutional factors
- (2) Cropping pattern
- (3) Marketing and finance, and
- (4) Investment and technology

## **Institutional Factors**

Field survey reveals that institutional factors play a major role in determining the development of agriculture in the tribal context in Wynad. Instead of individual farming, joint farming was the prevalent mode of cultivation among the tribes. The whole community jointly owns the property and conducts the agricultural operations under the guidance of the tribal chief. The decision making process at different steps of cultivation is related to religious ceremonies.

Furthermore, the harvesting and distribution of the proceeds are made according to the decisions of the hierarchs. The tribal institution, which collectively decides and acts socio-economic operations on behalf of the community, is generally termed as *Urukootams*. While the Paniyans and Kattunaickans are organised under a community leader, the Kurichiyans conduct these operations under their joint family head. Kinship relationships are more prominent among the Kurichiyans while community relationship is seen prominent among the Paniyans and Kattunaickans. These systems are now changing to a cultivation based on individual proprietorship as in the case of the non-tribes. The institutional factors that cause hindrances in economic operations are taken up in detail in Chapter 6.

## **Cropping Pattern**

The cropping pattern in Kerala indicates the dominance of commercial crops in agriculture. During the last decade, the area under cultivation of crops like paddy, raggi, etc. was reduced and the commercial crops like

rubber, coffee, cardamom etc. increased. But these changes are not observed in the tribal scenario. From the field survey, it is observed that the tribal farmers do not keep pace with the non-tribal cultivators in changing the cropping pattern. The data reveal that the share of area under the cultivation of commercial crops is below fifty percent of total cultivable land of tribes. Table 3.7 provides the percentage distribution of area under cultivation of different crops by the tribes in Wynad.

**Table 3.7**  
**Percentage Distribution of Cultivable Land under Various Crops**

Tribes	Crops							Others
	Food crops			Commercial crops				
	Paddy	Tapioca	Total	Coconut	Pepper	Areca nut	Total	
Kattunaickans	46.32	20.43	66.75	8.25	5.0	4.0	17.25	16.00
Paniyans	44.80	17.40	62.40	8.60	6.80	8.70	24.10	13.50
Kurichiyans	48.70	7.80	56.50	18.40	9.10	12.20	39.7	3.80

Source: Survey data

The Paniyans and the Kattunaickans utilize only 24.10 per cent and 17.25 per cent of their total area respectively for the cultivation of commercial crops. On the other hand, the Kurichiyans have utilized 39.70 per cent of their total cultivable area for cultivation of commercial crops. It is suggested that the absence of technical know-how and the lack of investment are the reasons for this rigidity. The rigidity in the institutional structure of the tribal society also influences the cropping pattern.

## **Agricultural Marketing**

Literature on the marketing of agricultural products of the tribes in Wynad indicates that the main reasons for the drain of resources are (1) the lack of effective communication with the other tribes due to cultural barriers, (2) the distance of tribal households from the main market centres, and (3) lack of information due to illiteracy. The traditional practice of marketing the tribal products is known as *Chanta*, in which the trading is done through intermediaries. *Chanta* is a temporary market for certain specific days in a week. In a *Chanta*, the tribal is really a buyer than a seller<sup>29</sup>.

Academicians have recorded the exploitation of intermediary traders in the *chanta*. The traders advance loans to the tribes in off-seasons. As these loans are tied to crop, the tribes are obliged to sell their products immediately after the harvest at pre-determined prices. Once indebted, a vicious circle develops from which they seldom escape<sup>30</sup>.

## **Investment in Agriculture**

The tribes are reluctant to make investments in their land holding. The cause of the reluctance of the tribal cultivators is usually identified with the lack of surplus after consumption. Apparently it is true. But the field investigation has revealed that the institution of joint-ownership is one of the main reasons for lack of investment behaviour. It is revealed that many members fear that the risk of investments is not rewarded individually. So individual initiatives in improving the agricultural fields are not present among the members of those tribal families that own the property jointly.

Earlier, the practice of shifting cultivation also prevented the tribes from making permanent improvements in land.

### **Labour Participation**

The forest laws, depletion of minor forest products, and alienation of land have thrown out the tribes from traditional sources of earning their livelihood. Due to the loss of traditional occupations, large number of tribes comes into the labour market. Without having any educational qualification and technical skill, most of the tribes in Wynad remain as agricultural labourers.

According to Census Reports, the work participation rate of Scheduled Tribes is high compared to Scheduled Castes and other non-tribes. A study conducted by the Institute for Management in Government as part of Peoples Plan Project reveals that most of the tribes are working in those areas where the work is hard and remuneration is low. Among the Scheduled Tribes, 46.04 are workers in 2003. Among them, the main workers constituted 40.28 per cent and marginal workers 5.76 per cent. The majority of main workers (55.47 per cent) among the Scheduled Tribes are agricultural labourers.<sup>31</sup>

## Notes and References

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- <sup>2</sup> R. C. Verma, *Indian Tribes Through Ages* (Delhi: Publications Division, Ministry of Information and Broadcasting, Government of India, 1995), p. 1.
- <sup>3</sup> *Webster's Third New International Dictionary*, vol; 3, U. S. Encyclopedia Britannica, Inc. 1981, p. 2240.
- <sup>4</sup> For a brief account of the classification of history by Adam Smith, and Karl Marx see, Eric Roll, *History of Economic Thought* (Calcutta: Oxford University Press, 1988), pp. 142-172, 251-297.
- <sup>5</sup> W. W. Rostow, *The Stages of Economic Growth* (London: Oxford University Press, 1960), pp. 80-108.
- <sup>6</sup> There is some conceptual ambiguity, particularly as to who the tribes in the country are. J.A. Baines, the Commissioner of Census, 1891, included all pre-Aryans of India under the category of "Hill Tribes". They were the remnants of primitive communities, which have, so far, modified but still distinguishable shape, their independent tribal existence. For details, see, Census of India, 1891, report, p. 112,113. In the successive Census reports the hill-tribes were enumerated under various categories as shown below:-
- | <u>Census</u> | <u>Category</u>    |
|---------------|--------------------|
| 1901          | "Animism"          |
| 1911          | "Animism"          |
| 1921          | "Tribal Religion"  |
| 1931          | "Primitive Tribes" |
| 1941          | "Tribes"           |
| 1951          | "Scheduled Tribes" |
| 1961          | "Scheduled Tribes" |
| 1971          | "Scheduled Tribes" |
| 1981          | "Scheduled Tribes" |
- Till 1901, the tribal people of Kerala were enumerated along with the Hindu. They began to be separately enumerated only from 1901 Census. For details, see, *Census of India*, 1901, Travancore, p. 94.
- <sup>7</sup> R. C. Verma, *op. cit*, p. 6.
- <sup>8</sup> R. C. Verma, *op. cit*, p.7.
- <sup>9</sup> Elvin Verrier, *A New Deal for Tribal India* (New Delhi: Ministry of Home Affairs, 1963), p. 70.

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- <sup>10</sup> Bipan Chandra, Mridula Mukherjee and Aditya Mukherjee, *India After Independence 1947-2000* (New Delhi: Penguin Books, 2003), pp.107-108.
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- <sup>17</sup> R. C. Verma, *op. cit.*, p. 93.
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- <sup>21</sup> M. Kunhaman, *op. cit.*, p.59.
- <sup>22</sup> Awadesh Kumar Singh, *Dynamics of Tribal Economy* (New Delhi: Serial Publications, 2003), pp. 66-94.
- <sup>23</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 69.
- <sup>24</sup> A. Sreedhra Menon, *A Survey of Kerala History* (Trivandrum: National Book Stall, 1967), p. 203.
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- <sup>26</sup> William Logan, *Malabar Manual*, Vol.1, reprint (Trivandrum: Charitram Publishers, 1981), p. 324.
- <sup>27</sup> C. T. Paul, 'Tribal Economy of the Hill Tribes of Kerala with Special Reference to Wynad' (Unpublished PhD Thesis, Department of Economics, University of Calicut, 1988), p. 61.
- <sup>28</sup> R. C. Verma, *op. cit.*, p. 82.
- <sup>29</sup> C. T. Paul, *op. cit.*, p.149.
- <sup>30</sup> M. Kunhaman, *op. cit.*, p. 74.
- <sup>31</sup> Government of Kerala, *Economic Review 2003*, (Thiruvananthapuram: State Planning Board), p. 324.

# DIMENSIONS OF TRIBAL DEVELOPMENT

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## **Chapter IV**

### **DIMENSIONS OF TRIBAL DEVELOPMENT**

In economic terms, the improvement of living conditions that has taken place in Kerala during the last five decades since Independence is quite remarkable. As a whole, the life expectancy has increased, the literacy level improved, and the percentage of people who have been under the poverty line got reduced. However, the pace of development has been quite uneven among different groups of people in Kerala. This difference is highly evident in the case of various tribes of Kerala. This disparity in the economic performance of tribes and non-tribes has received the attention of researchers and administrators after Independence. It was to reduce this disparity that both the Central and the State Governments have adopted several development programmes and thus to bring about their economic development.

Since Independence, the issue of economic development of tribal people has been one of the chief concerns of policy makers. Various development programmes have been introduced by the state and central Governments. This chapter looks into the constitutional protection given to the tribes by the Government, various development programmes of the Government, the money spent by the State Government through various Five Year Plans, and current status of poverty among the tribes. The development achievements of the tribes and their income, education, health, housing, sanitation facilities, availability of drinking water are also analysed. Finally,

the Human Development Index for various tribes has been estimated to measure inter tribal variations in development.

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### **Constitutional Provisions and Efforts of Central Government**

The Indian Constitution endows all citizens with equal status for economic, social, cultural and political opportunities. The Article 46 gives special emphasis on the role of the state to protect the weaker sections in the country. To accomplish this target, Directive Principles are given in the Constitution. Various safeguards relating to the protection and development of Scheduled Castes and Scheduled Tribes have been made in the Constitution as Directive Principles. The following are the different safeguards of protection for development given in the Indian Constitution<sup>1</sup>.

#### **(1) Protective Safeguards**

- (a) Social Safeguards: Articles 17, 23, 24 and 25(2)(b).
- (b) Educational and Cultural Safeguards: Articles 15(4) 29 and 46.
- (c) Political Safeguards: Articles 164, 320(4), 332, 334, 243D, 243T, 371A, 371B, 371C, 371F, 371G, 371H.
- (d) Service Safeguards: Articles 16(4), 335, and 338.

#### **(2) Safeguards relating to Development**

Articles 275(1) and 399(2) of the Constitution give the provisions for safe-guarding the economic interests of the tribes.

### **Tribal Minister**

A new Ministry of Tribal Affairs was created in October 1999 headed by a cabinet minister for a focused attention on tribal issues and to plan,

administer and supervise the programmes, projects and schemes for the development and welfare of the tribal communities. The central Government is providing grants-in-aid to non-governmental organisations. The National Scheduled Castes and Scheduled Tribes Finance Development Corporation was bifurcated and a new corporation called National Scheduled Tribes Finance Development was established in April 2001. It has an authorized capital of 500 crores. The main function of this corporation is to provide financial assistance for income generating schemes initiated by the tribes.

### **Reservation in Political Bodies**

To ensure the participation of the tribes in political life, reservations to different political bodies have been made. Articles 330, 332 and 334 of the Constitution provide for reservation of seats in the Parliament and State Legislatures for the Scheduled Castes and Scheduled Tribes. This depends on the concentration of tribal population in the States and Union Territories. The Panchayath Raj Bill also made provision for reservation to the SC and ST communities in the elections to the local bodies.

This reservation does not make any vital change in the political life of certain tribes. The tribes have a parallel governing system. They depend more on their internal political system than on the formal political system developed in the country. Tribes are more interested in their community leaders than making decisions individually to participate in political bodies developed on the basis of the Indian Constitution<sup>2</sup>.

## **Development Strategies under Five Year Plans**

The National and State Governments have adopted different strategies for economic development of tribes. The first attempt was made in 1954, and 43 special projects were implemented. During the subsequent plans, tribal development blocks were constituted and the programmes for economic development, education, health and communication were implemented. During the final years of 4<sup>th</sup> Five Year Plan, a task force on 'Development of Tribal Areas' was constituted by the Planning Commission and this task force recognised the malfunction of various schemes implemented by the Government. They recommended Tribal Sub-Plan Strategy. The main programmes of the strategy are the following:

- (a) Integrated credit cum marketing
- (b) Marketing of agricultural and minor forest produce
- (c) Supply of inputs and essential consumer commodities
- (d) Credit for production purposes.
- (e) Redemption of past debts
- (f) Programmes for preventing land alienation, and
- (g) The review of excise and forest policies<sup>3</sup>.

The Tribal Sub-Plan concentrated on area development. Instead of community development, family development programmes are framed. Integrated Tribal Development Projects (ITDP), Modified Area Development Approach Pockets (MADAP), and Primitive Tribal Group Projects (PTGP) are the three components of the Tribal Sub-Plan strategy. Seventy-five per cent of the tribal families in India are brought under this scheme in the Sixth

Plan. During the Seventh Plan, the remaining 25 per cent of the tribal population are also covered under the Tribal-Sub Plan<sup>4</sup>.

After the implementation of the Tribal Sub Plan (TSP) strategy, the percentage of fund allocated for tribal development in the total plan outlay has increased tremendously. However, there are various problems related to the allocation of funds. The fund allocated for the tribal development areas are not benefiting the tribes. The expenditure on major or medium irrigation projects and power projects comprise more than 30 per cent of the total Tribal Sub-Plan fund. The benefits of these projects are obtained by the non-tribes. The economic situations of the tribes are not developing to the extent that the facilities provided through these projects are utilised<sup>5</sup>.

### Government Expenditure under Plans

State Government spend crores of rupees for the betterment of the tribes. The amount spent for the development of the tribes in Kerala State during the period 1997 to 2004 is given in Table.4.1.

**Table 4.1**  
**Allocation of Funds under Tribal Sub Plan (1997-98 to 2003-04)**

Annual Plan	Plan Grant to Local Self Governments (Rs. in Crores)		
	Special Component Plan	Tribal Sub Plan	Total
1997-98	194.00	39.00	233.00
1998-99	195.00	39.00	234.00
1999-00	200.00	40.00	240.00
2000-01	162.75	32.25	195.00
2001-02	136.50	-	136.50
<b>Total (Ninth Plan)</b>	<b>888.25</b>	<b>150.25</b>	<b>1038.50</b>
2002-03	201.37	-	201.37
2003-04	263.33	44.43	307.76
<b>Total (2002-2004)</b>	<b>464.70</b>	<b>44.43</b>	<b>509.13</b>

Source: *Economic Review 2003*, State Planning Board, Thiruvananthapuram

## **Development Programmes in Kerala**

The development programmes of the State Government are implemented through the Department of Scheduled Tribe. The total fund allotted by the Government through various plans are equally divided and distributed through integrated tribal project and through local self-Government. The various schemes for the development of Scheduled Tribes are concentrated on the assistance of education, health, housing, infrastructural development in tribal areas and distribution of land for landless tribes.

The Government has established various departments and institutions for the development of Scheduled Tribes. Kerala State Development Corporation for Scheduled Castes and Scheduled Tribes is the most important institution in providing economic assistances for the tribes in the state. The Corporation implements various employment-oriented programmes for making the tribes self-reliant. The major schemes among them are margin money deposit scheme; transport schemes, micro credit schemes, personal computer loan, assistance for agricultural purchase, assistance to start self-employment ventures, assistance for pursuing higher education etc.

Kerala Institute for Research, Training and Development Studies (KIRTADS) is an agency instituted by Government of Kerala to conduct research on the Scheduled Castes and Scheduled Tribes in the State. They conduct various training programmes for the wardens of the tribal hostels, tribal leaders and tribal extension officers. They also develop suitable methodology to identify the various tribes in the state. This has helped the officers in the revenue department to issue community certificates to genuine claimants.

## Educational Programmes

The main emphasis of the development efforts is on educational support to the tribes. The department provides educational concessions, scholarships and other types of assistance to tribal students from the pre-primary level to the post-graduate level. Under the department, 14 model residential schools, 4 *ashram* schools and 104 pre-metric hostels are functioning. There are 38 single teacher schools for providing pre-primary education to tribal students living in very remote and inaccessible areas. Apart from these, 58 kindergartens are functioning under the department to provide training to scheduled tribes. District-wise details of the institutions for the development of tribes are given in Table 4.2. It shows the number of institutions in Wynad District in comparison with other districts<sup>6</sup>.

**Table 4.2**  
**District-Wise Details of Institutions under Scheduled Tribe Development Department (As on August 2003)**

District	Bala Wadies/ Nursery Schools		Boys Hostels		Girls Hostels		Model Residential Schools		Others
	OB	RB	OB	RB	OB	RB	OB	RB	OB
(1)	(2)	(3)	(4)	(5)	(6)	(7)	(8)	(9)	(10)
Thiruvanthapuram	7	--	--	1	1	--	2	--	6
Kollam	2	--	2	--	2	--	1	--	4
Pathanamthitta	1	--	--	1	1	--	1	--	3
Alapuzha	--	--	--	--	--	1	--	--	--
Kottayam	4	--	--	--	2	--	--	1	4
Idukki	8	--	7	1	3	3	2	--	10
Ernakulam	--	--	1	1	--	1	--	--	1
Thrissur	2	--	2	1	1	--	1	--	--
Palakkad	6	--	12	1	4	--	2	--	5
Malappuram	3	--	1	5	2	1	1	--	3
Kozhikode	2	--	2	1	1	--	--	--	--
Wynad	17	--	11	11	8	--	5	--	13
Kannur	2	--	1	6	3	--	1	--	4
Kasaragod	4	--	1	1	--	--	1	--	1
Total	58	--	40	30	28	6	17	1	54

OB- Own building; RB- Rented building

Source: Directorate of S.T. Development Department, Thiruvananthapuram.

A comparison of the number of various institutions in Wynad and Kerala state is given in Table 4.2. It shows that out of the total 234 institutions, 65 are in Wynad district.

### Housing Scheme

The survey conducted by the Scheduled Tribe Development Department reveals that there are 9374 houseless Scheduled Tribe families in the state<sup>7</sup>. Through various departments, Government is trying to construct houses for the tribes. During the year 2002-03, the Scheduled Tribe Department constructed 1114 houses and out of this 222 are in Wynad district. The district-wise details of houses constructed by the department are given in Table 4.3.

**Table 4.3**  
**District-wise Details of Houses Constructed by S.T Development Department, 2002-03 & 2003-04**

Sl. No	Name of District	2002-03		2003-04*	
		No. of Houses constructed	Amount Spent (Rs. in lakhs)	No. of houses Under Construction	Amount Disbursed (Rs. in lakhs)
1	Thiruvanthapuram	181	32.06	19	1.60
2	Kollam	14	33.97	39	7.50
3	Pathanamthitta	17	38.41	34	15.00
4	Alapuzha	--	12.67	57	7.50
5	Kottayam	159	91.52	145	27.79
6	Idukki	54	106.32	383	10.00
7	Ernakulam	13	64.41	22	9.91
8	Thrissur	2	84.96	169	20.00
9	Palakkad	188	105.43	105	7.16
10	Malappuram	111	34.70	3	5.50
11	Kozhikode	11	21.93	46	8.00
12	Wynad	222	190.27	263	69.74
13	Kannur	--	111.43	46	--
14	Kasaragod	142	187.36	436	21.50
<b>Total</b>		<b>1114</b>	<b>1115.44</b>	<b>1767</b>	<b>211.20</b>

\*Upto August 2003

Source: Directorate of S. T. Development Department, Thiruvananthapuram.

## **Medical Facilities**

Better medical facilities are provided through the Scheduled Tribe Development Department for improving the health condition of tribes. The Department runs 63 Primary Health Centres in the state. The Department operates four midwifery centres to give better care for tribal women. The department has 17 Ayurveda dispensaries and 5 Allopathic clinics, one Ayurveda hospital, 2 mobile medical units and one Allopathic hospital. Moreover, Homeo dispensaries are also functioning in tribal areas under Tribal Sub Plan (TSP)<sup>8</sup>.

In spite of these efforts on the part of the State Government, many tribes still remain below the poverty line. Many had already predicted this situation years ago. The evaluation committee on the welfare of the Scheduled Castes, Scheduled Tribes and other backward communities constituted by the Government of Kerala in June 1961 had observed way back in 1962 that “unless this state of affairs is rectified immediately, it will lead to a very disastrous situation reducing the poor, innocent and illiterate tribes whose mainstay is agriculture, to abject poverty and misery”<sup>9</sup>.

## **Incidence of Poverty among Tribes**

Poverty indicates deprivation. The high incidence of poverty among the Wynad tribes indicates that they fail to attain certain basic needs for a healthy and productive life. According to the survey of Rural Development Department, there are nearly 17.23 lakh families below poverty line in the state. Out of this, 3 per cent of families belong to Schedule Tribes. There is a huge concentration of families below the poverty line among these tribes. Table 4.4 shows distribution of tribal families below poverty line. The

proportion of tribal population not able to attain the specified level food intake is categorized as poor. It is estimated that 46,847 Scheduled Tribe families are below the poverty line as on August 2003. Out of this, 19502 families are in Wynad district. This means that out of 33521 tribal families in Wynad 58.23 per cent families are below the poverty line. This comprises 41.62 per cent of the total tribal families coming below the poverty line in the State. This reveals the extent of poverty of tribes settled in Wynad in comparison with the tribes in the other parts of the state<sup>10</sup>. The district-wise distribution of families below the poverty line is given in Table 4.4.

**Table 4.4**  
**Distribution of Tribal Families Below the Poverty Line**

Sl. No	District	Number of BPL Families			Total		
		SC	ST	Others	No. of Families	No. of BPL Families	% of BPL Families
1	Thiruvananthapuram	38816	2629	146865	481223	188310	39.13
2	Kollam	41166	1532	132919	446630	175617	39.32
3	Pathanamthitta	21364	1401	52091	226435	74856	33.06
4	Alappuzha	23415	1235	131501	339857	156151	45.95
5	Kottayam	8139	1149	49894	326926	59182	18.10
6	Idukki	5810	3856	24769	225177	34435	15.29
7	Ernakulam	20306	805	78410	374728	99521	26.56
8	Thrissur	42957	1516	114488	473916	158961	33.54
9	Palakkad	51595	2812	150198	392461	204605	52.13
10	Malappuram	32738	2128	145509	438016	180375	41.18
11	Kozhikode	22882	1215	107684	378224	131781	34.84
12	Wayanad	4068	19502	41224	1291927	64794	49.87
13	Kannur	10201	3174	108692	314171	122067	38.85
14	Kasaragod	11823	3893	57185	163981	72901	44.46
	State Total	335280	46847	1341429	4711672	1723556	36.58

Source: *Economic Review* 2003, State Planning Board, Thiruvananthapuram.

Among the families below the poverty line many families are destitute. Destitute families are those families that are totally or absolutely poor and who need continuous support arrangements to enable them to lead at least a life of bare minimum comfort.

### **Development Achievements**

In the contemporary development discourse, the methodology followed by United Nations Development Programme (UNDP) in preparing the *Human Development Reports*, income is considered as the best standard for measuring the well-being of different nations and communities. Apart from income, education, health, housing facilities, availability of pure drinking water and sanitary conditions are also used for measuring the development achievements of a community. The present chapter utilizes the above-mentioned variables with some adaptations to analyze the tribal situation in Wynad. In Wynad, there is a considerable difference in the level of attainment of tribes in various aspects of well-being. The health status, educational attainments and command over resources are different for different sections of the tribes.

### **Per Capita Income**

The economic attainments of individuals and their well-being have conventionally been expressed through indicators like the per capita income of the economy. Income facilitates other attainments of individuals and society at large. For analysing the development status of the tribes in Wynad, the per capita household monthly income of the tribes is taken up first. The average monthly income estimated for the different sections of the tribes is

given in Table 4.5. It shows that the percentage of households below rupees 2000 is very high among the Paniyans and the Kattunaickans than among the Kurichiyans.

It also shows that 77.77 per cent of Paniyans and 72.22 per cent of Kattunaickans are getting monthly income below Rs. 2000. Only 23.33 per cent of the Kurichiyans belong to this category. An income in between Rs. 2000-3000 is obtained by 64.45 per cent of the Kurichiyans. This indicates that in terms of monthly income the economic status of the Kurichiyans is better than that of the other two tribes.

**Table 4.5**  
**Category-wise Distribution of Tribes Based on Average Monthly Income**

Income Group	Tribes		
	Paniyans	Kattunaickans	Kurichiyans
1000 & below thousand	7 (7.78)	6 (6.67)	0 (0)
1000-2000	63 (70.00)	59 (65.55)	21 (23.33)
2000-3000	18 (20.00)	21 (23.33)	58 (64.45)
3000 & above	2 (2.22)	4 (4.45)	11 (12.22)
Total	90 (100.00)	90 (100.00)	90 (100.00)

Figures in the brackets show percentages

Source: Survey data.

### **Consumption Expenditure**

Distribution of consumption expenditure between food and non-food items also reflects the economic well-being of the population. In general, poor households are expected to spend substantially more on food items as against non-food. One expects the proportion of food to decline with development and economic prosperity. The composition of expenditure on food and non-food items of the tribes in Wynad is depicted in Table 4.6.

It shows that Paniyans spend 72.26 per cent of their income for food while the Kattunaickans spend 70.31 per cent of their income for food. On the other hand, the Kurichiyans spend only 42.70 of their income for food items. Engel's Law states that as income increases the percentage expenditure on food declines. From this it is evident that the Kurichiyans are economically better than the other two tribes in Wynad.

**Table 4.6**  
**Composition of Consumption Expenditure by Tribes**

Expenditure Category	Tribes		
	Paniyans	Kattunaickans	Kurichiyans
Food	106700(72.26) <i>1186</i>	111700(70.31) <i>1241</i>	85910(42.70) <i>954.50</i>
Non-Food	40950(27.74) <i>455</i>	47150(29.69) <i>524</i>	115240(57.30) <i>1280.50</i>
Total	147650(100) <i>1641</i>	158850(100) <i>1765</i>	201150(100) <i>2235</i>

Figures in brackets show percentages.

Figures in italics show average expenditure per household

Source: Survey data

### Quality of Housing

The quality of housing and shelter is evaluated according to the two norms as followed in the *National Census Report*. The first of these norms is the living space available to a household and the second is the quality of the construction of the residence. The households living in one room alone has come down at the national level. The number of the households living in houses with less than two rooms also has been reduced marginally. But among the tribes in Wynad, these indicators show substantial difference with the national level. Table 4.7 shows the distribution of households according to rooms occupied for various tribes in Wynad.

**Table 4.7**  
**Distribution of Tribal Households According to Rooms Occupied**

Category	Tribes		
	Paniyans	Kattunaickans	Kurichiyans
1 room	80 (88.89)	74 (82.22)	5 (5.56)
2 rooms	8 (8.89)	15 (16.67)	22 (24.44)
3 rooms	2 (2.22)	1 (1.11)	45 (50.00)
4 rooms	0 (0)	0 (0)	13 (14.44)
5 rooms	0 (0)	0 (0)	5 (5.56)
Total	90 (100.00)	90 (100.00)	90 (100.00)

Figures in brackets show percentage  
Source: Survey data

The data related to the housing facilities of the tribes in Wynad show significant variations among these different tribes. Among the Kurichiyans 70 per cent are living in houses with more than 2 rooms, which indicates that the Kurichiyans are comparatively better off than the Kattunaickans with 2.22 per cent and Paniyans with 1.11 per cent. Since some of the Kurichiyans follow the joint family system, the size of their houses also becomes bigger.

The quality aspect of the housing is also poor among the tribes in Wynad. Table 4.8 shows the distribution of households according to the materials used in their construction. The houses which are constructed with both walls and roof; with *pucca* materials (see, descriptions of these terms given below in the Table 4.8) are 18.88 per cent among the Paniyans and 20 per cent among the Kattunaickans. But for Kurichiyans the percentage is little high, 48.89 per cent of the houses are constructed with *pucca* materials while 42.22 per cent are *semipucca* and 8.89 per cent are *kutchu* construction.

**Table 4.8**  
**Distribution of Households Based on the Materials Used**  
**for Construction**

Category	Tribes		
	Paniyans	Kattunaickans	Kurichiyans
<i>Kutch</i>	58 (64.44)	55 (.11)	8 (8.89)
<i>Semipucca</i>	15 (16.66)	17 (18.88)	38 (42.22)
<i>Pucca</i>	17 (18.88)	18 (20.00)	44 (48.89)
Total	90 (100.00)	90 (100.00)	90 (100.00)

Figures in bracket show percentages

Source: Survey data

1. *Kutch* – Both walls and roofs are made by using materials like bamboo, mud, grass, leaves, unburned bricks, wood etc
2. *Pucca* - Both walls and roofs are made of materials like burnt brick, G. I. Sheets, cement, stone etc.
3. *Semipucca* - If either walls or roofs are made of *pucca* material, the quality of house is *semipucca*.

### Access to Toilet Facilities

Absence of proper sanitation is identified as one of the reasons for the prevalence of ill health in the country. This situation is very grave among the tribes. Kerala is the state that has highest percentage of households with access to toilet facilities. The tribes in Wynad shows a different picture.

Table 4.9 shows the distribution of households without access to toilet facilities. It is revealing that 86.67 per cent of Paniyans, 83.33 per cent Kattunaickans and 31.11 per cent Kurichiyans do not have access to clean toilet facilities.

**Table 4.9**  
**Distribution of Tribal Households According to the Access to Toilet Facilities**

Category	Tribes		
	Paniyans	Kattunaickans	Kurichiyans
Access to toilet	12 (13.33)	15 (16.67)	62 (68.89)
No access to toilet	78 (86.67)	75 (83.33)	28 (31.11)
Total	90 (100.00)	90 (100.00)	90 (100.00)

Figures in bracket show percentages.

Source: Survey data

Except for Kurichiyans, the other two tribal groups are reluctant to utilise their toilet facilities provided to them by the Government. In general, 67.03 per cent households have no access to clean toilet facilities. Only 32.97 per cent of the households have access to clean toilet facility.

### **Access to Safe Drinking Water**

The quality of water is a critical issue that has to be addressed very urgently. Lack of proper sanitation facilities leads to the bacterial and other types of contaminations of drinking water accessible to the tribal people. The major source of water for the tribes in Wynad is well. But in many places the wells are not protected. Due to lack of maintenance, the protection walls of the wells are either damaged or totally absent. Thus, the impure water from outside, with human waste, is mixed with the well water, which is contaminated in many tribal settlements. This should be considered as one of the major reasons for the frequent occurrence of diseases among the tribes.

The distribution of households with accessibility to drinking water given in Table 4.10 reveals the extent of the accessibility of the tribes to clean water.

**Table 4.10**  
**Distribution of Households with Accessibility to Safe Drinking Water**

Category	Tribes		
	Paniyans	Kattunaickans	Kurichiyans
Well	42 (46.67)	47 (52.22)	58 (64.44)
Taps	10 (11.11)	8 (8.89)	17 (18.89)
Cholas	38 (42.22)	35 (38.88)	15 (16.67)
Total	90 (100.00)	90 (100.00)	90 (100.00)

Figures in bracket show percentages.

Source: Survey data

Table shows that the predominant source of drinking water is well. This does not mean that each household has their own well for water. Many households jointly share a well near their hamlet.

### **Health Status and Food Intakes**

A life free from illness and ailments and achievement of reasonable life span are crucial attributes of personal well-being. Similarly, for achieving social transition from high incidence of morbidity and mortality to a state where people generally enjoy long and disease-free lives is considered as achievement desirable and valued for social change. Better health contributes directly to economic growth as it reduces production losses on account of illness of workers.

Better health, in turn, depends directly on the nutritional level. Poverty is one of the determinants of an individual's health. The food intake of tribes in Wynad is entirely different from that of non-tribes. Among the non-tribal families, three-meal system exists. The Paniyans and the Kattunaickans normally take one meal a day. The absence of kitchen and its management is

one of the main reasons identified in this study as the cause of one-day meal. The number of families with one meal a day is higher among Kattunaickans and Paniyans, while among Kurichiyans they manage to have three meals a day. In almost all the Kurichiyans houses, they maintain separate kitchens and manage the household expenditure in such a manner so as to provide for three meals to the members of the family. The number of families, which have separate kitchens for preparing food, is given in Table 4.11. While 95.56 per cent of Kurichiyans have separate kitchens for preparing food, only 20 per cent of Paniyans and 23.33 per cent of Kattunaickans have separate kitchens. This indicates the limitations in the food habits of the Paniyans and of the Kattunaickans.

**Table 4.11**  
**Distribution of Households with Kitchen Facility**

Category	Tribes		
	Paniyans	Kattunaickans	Kurichiyans
Separate kitchen	18 (20.00)	21 (23.33)	86 (95.56)
No separate kitchen	65 (72.22)	63 (70.00)	4 (4.44)
Kitchen outside the house	7 (7.78)	6 (6.67)	0 (0)
Total	90 (100.00)	90 (100.00)	90 (100.00)

Figures in brackets show percentages

Source: Survey data

The table above shows that only among the Kurichiyans does the system of an organized kitchen exist. Lack of organized kitchen has an influence on their food habit. The percentage distribution of families based on their per day intake of food is given in Table 4.12. Among the Kurichiyans, 93.33 per cent have the practice of three meals a day. On the other hand, only

3.33 per cent of the Paniyans and 4.45 per cent of the Kattunaickans are having three meals a day.

**Table 4.12**  
**Distribution of Households with Number of Meals per Day**

Category	Tribes		
	Paniyans	Kattunaickans	Kurichiyans
One meal	72 (80.00)	74 (82.22)	0 (0)
Two meal	15 (16.67)	12 (13.33)	6 (6.67)
Three meal	3 (3.33)	4 (4.45)	84 (93.33)
Total	90 (100.00)	90 (100.00)	90 (100.00)

Figures in brackets show percentages

Source: Survey data

The quantum of food-intake as reflected in the food habits is also significantly different among the different tribes. While majority of the Kurichiyans manage three meals a day, 80 per cent of Kattunaickans and 82.2 per cent of Paniyans are satisfied with one meal a day. But this does not mean that the Paniyans and the Kattunaickans are always subsisting with one meal a day. The able-bodied men and women who work outside manage additional food from the work place either from the respective households where they work or from the hotels near by. Thus, though the general food habit is poor, the male members of the household find their food from outside the family. The income spent for food from hotels is a peculiar feature of the life style among the Paniyans and the Kattunaickans. This issue is taken up for further discussion in Chapter 5.

### **Health Status and Method of Treatment**

The high incidence of illness, reported among the tribes, is related to the method of treatment by the tribes. Generally, the tribes are reluctant to

approach modern medicines. Table 4.12 shows the various types of medicines used by different tribes in Wynad. They depend more on religious leaders than on registered medical practitioners. While 74.45 per cent of the Paniyans and 68.89 per cent of the Kattunaickans prefer tribal medical practices, only 25.6 per cent of the Kurichiyans depend on tribal medical practices. It is strikingly noticed that nearly half of the Kurichiyans (47.78 per cent) rely on Allopathic medicines.

**Table 4.13**  
**Distribution of Households According to the Type of Medicine Used**

Category	Tribes		
	Paniyans	Kattunaickans	Kurichiyans
Allopathy	10 (11.11)	16 (17.78)	43 (47.78)
Ayurveda	13 (14.44)	12 (13.33)	24 (26.67)
Others	67 (74.45)	62 (68.89)	23 (25.55)
Total	90 (100.00)	90 (100.00)	90 (100.00)

Figures in brackets show percentages

Source: Survey data

Another feature of the health scenario of the tribes is the high rate of permanently disabled people due to various types of illnesses and the age-related diseases. Many cases of permanent disability are reported among the Paniyans and the Kattunaickans. Sickle cell anaemia, tuberculosis, diabetics and arthritis are the four major chronic ailments observed among the tribes. The number of disabled is high among the Paniyans and low among the Kurichiyans. Table 4.15 shows the distribution of households with permanently disabled persons. Nearly 7.14 per cent of the Paniyans and 5.72 per cent of the Kattunaickans are disabled due to illness. But such disability is found only among 2 per cent of the Kurichiyans.

**Table 4.14**  
**Distribution of Permanently Disabled Members**

Category	Tribes		
	Paniyans	Kattunaickans	Kurichiyans
Disabled	28 (7.14)	22 (5.72)	8 (1.97)
Total Sample population	392 (100.00)	384 (100.00)	405 (100.00)

Figures in brackets show percentages  
Source: Survey data

Another important feature observed is the number of working days lost due to illness. Physical fatigue is reported as the main illness. This may be because of the absence of food that provides sufficient amount of nutrition. The excessive use of liquor is also noticed as one of the reasons for the high incidence of loss of working days among the Paniyans and the Kattunaickans. Table 4.15 shows the distribution of the number of working days lost due to illness. On an average, they lose 25 per cent of the working days. The number of working days lost is comparatively low among the Kurichiyans.

**Table 4.15**  
**No. of Working Days Lost Due to Illness During a Month**

Category (Days)	Tribes		
	Paniyans	Kattunaickans	Kurichiyans
0	2 (2.22)	3 (3.33)	22 (24.44)
1-3	18 (20.00)	19 (21.11)	58 (64.44)
4-6	55 (61.11)	57 (63.33)	9 (10.00)
6-8	9 (10.00)	8 (8.88)	1 (1.11)
9& above	6 (6.66)	3 (3.33)	0 (0)
Total	90 (100.00)	90 (100.00)	90 (100.00)

Figures in brackets show percentages.  
Source: Survey data

## **Educational Attainments**

Education, in the present day context, is perhaps, the single most important means for individuals to improve personal talents. It builds the capability set of achievement of a community and gives opportunities for achievement. Its achievement is critical as an instrument for bringing about socio-economic development. Only through education can the socially excluded communities be integrated into the main stream of the society.

Various steps have been taken by the Central and State Governments to attain the target of educating the tribes. But due to various reasons many tribes could not achieve the national standards. The gross enrolment ratio and the adult literacy rate are extremely low among the tribes. The number of drop-outs at the primary and secondary levels is significantly high among different tribes in Kerala<sup>11</sup>. The availability of infrastructure facilities and qualitative aspects of education including trained teachers, educational curricula, equipments and training materials are identified as the major reasons for the lack of education among the tribes.

The following observations made below are based on the interactions of the researcher with the members of the various tribes and the social activists in Wynad:

Firstly, cultural and historical factors hinder education among the tribes. Due to the bonded labour system prevailed in tribal areas, children of the tribes are also considered as labourers. Thus, while the children of the non-tribes received opportunities to attend the schools, the tribal children do not.

Secondly, the language used in the tribal households is entirely different from that of the language in the school. The symbols used, the historical persons introduced are totally alien and historically and culturally irrelevant to the tribes. Thirdly, the traditions and customs among the tribes prevent the children from attending school. As reported by social activists, tribes fear that gods punish the families who send their children to school.

Fourth reason is the untouchability that prevails among some tribes. Due to this factor, in the early years of Independent India, parents of tribal children of different tribes hesitated to send their children to school. In Wynad, the Kurichiyans follow the practice of untouchability. Even now, in the view of many Kurichiyans, Paniyans are unworthy to mingle with. It has to be mentioned here that schools are places where social and cultural mingling and interactions take place. Therefore, the untouchability among the tribes proves to be an important factor that culturally hinders attendance in schools.

Lastly, the customs prevailing among the tribes prevent communication of tribes with non-tribes. This creates a sense of hesitation among the tribes to communicate with others. This also might have influenced their children from not communicating freely with people of other cultures. Education is performed through communication with others. So the taboo, which restricts communication with others, also has influenced the educational attainments of the tribes.

## Educational Status

The lack of utilisation of educational facilities provided by the Government is reflected in their literacy level. While the general literacy level of post-Independent period increased tremendously, the literacy levels of the tribes are still significantly low. Table 4.16 shows the educational status of the tribes in Wynad. The percentage of tribal population in between the age group of 4 and 14 attending the schools is the lowest among the Paniyans and highest among the Kurichiyans. While only 64.7 per cent of the Paniyans and 68.05 per cent of the Kattunaickans are enrolled in the various educational institutions, 90.68 among the Kurichiyans are attending schools.

**Table 4.16**  
**Education Status of Different Tribes**

Category	Tribes		
	Paniyans	Kattunaickans	Kurichiyans
Number of children enrolled	110	98	146
Population between the age 4-14	170	144	161
Number of literates above the age 14	38	44	92
Population above the age 14	194	208	225
Total literates	148	142	238
Total population above the age 4	364	352	386
Total population of the sample Households	392	384	405

Source: Survey data

The intertribal difference in the gross enrolment ratio is also seen in the adult literacy rate. Only 40.6 per cent of the Paniyans and 40.3 per cent of the Kattunaickans can read and write. Literacy rate is high among the

Kurichiyans. Among the Kurichiyans, 61.6 per cent can read and write. From the field survey, it is revealed that the reading habit is extremely low among the tribes.

### **Human Development Index**

Income, health and educational attainments of the tribal families have been integrated into a single index for comparing the development achievements of various tribal groups. Following the frame-work of United Nations Development Programme, a Human Development Index has been computed here by considering the extend of healthy life, the capacity to read, write and amass knowledge and the capability to participate in a meaningful standard of living.

A healthy life, free from diseases and ailments is a crucial factor for indicating the development of a person. Similarly, education also plays an important role in improving personal endowments by enhancing the potentialities of the individuals as well as of the community. An individual's command over resources also determines the well-being. "The various indicators of these attainments and composite indices that they support could capture the process of development and well-being of people from two perspectives. The conglomerate perspective captures advances made by the society as a whole and the deprivational perspective assesses status of the deprived in a society"<sup>12</sup>.

The following variables are used to estimate Human Development Index for each household. The estimation methods used here are the same as those used by UNDP<sup>13</sup>.

$$\text{HDI} = 1/3(\text{income index} + \text{educational index} + \text{health index.})$$

- (1) Average monthly per household income
- (2) Number of actual working days
- (3) Number of meals per day
- (4) Enrolment ratio between the age 4-14, and
- (5) Adult literacy

To construct the index, fixed minimum and maximum values have been accepted for each of these indicators.

Fixed minimum and maximum values

- (1) Average monthly per household income: Rs 600/ and Rs 6000/.
- (2) Adult literacy: (age 14 and above) 0% and 100%.
- (3) Combined enrolment ratio: 0% and 100%.
- (4) Number of meals per day: 0 and 3
- (5) Number of working days in a month: 0 and 24.

**Table 4.17**  
**Distribution of Households based on Different Levels of HDI**

Category	Tribes		
	Paniyans	Kattunaickans	Kurichiyans
Below 0.3	13 (14.44)	12 (13.33)	3 (3.33)
0.3-0.4	52 (57.77)	49 (54.44)	13 (14.44)
0.4-0.5	18 (20.00)	19 (21.11)	41 (45.55)
0.5-0.6	6 (6.66)	8 (8.88)	22 (24.44)
Above 0.6	1 (1.11)	2 (2.22)	11 (12.22)
Total	90 (100.00)	90 (100.00)	90 (100.00)

Figures in brackets show percentages.

Source: Survey data

## Analysis of Variance

Analysis of variance is used to test whether the HDI of the three groups viz. Kattunaickans, Kurichiyans and Paniyans are significantly different or not. The F value of the ANOVA exhibited in Table 4.18 is found to be significant at 1 % level. This implies that HDI of the three groups are significantly different.

**Table 4.18**  
**Results of ANOVA of HDI for Comparison among the Tribal Groups**

Particulars	df	Sum of Squares	Mean Square	F
Between tribal Groups	2	0.636	0.318	42.649**
Error	267	1.989	0.007	
Total	269	2.625		

Mean values of HDI and the significance between each pair are given in Table 4.19. The Kurichiyans have high mean HDI, which is significantly higher than that of the other two groups.

**Table 4.19**  
**Mean HDI of Each Tribal Group**

Tribal Group	Mean*	Std. Deviation
Kattunaickans	0.3814 <sup>a</sup>	0.087
Kurichiyans	0.4790 <sup>b</sup>	0.092
Paniyans	0.3714 <sup>a</sup>	0.079
Overall	0.4106	0.099

\*Means having the same superscript are not significantly different

It shows that the overall mean value of the HDI is 0.4106. The mean value of HDI of the Paniyans and the Kattunaickans are below the overall

mean value. On the other hand, the mean HDI of the Kurichiyans are above the overall mean value. This indicates that Kurichiyans are economically better off than the other two groups of tribes.

The result shows that there is no considerable difference in the human development of the Paniyans and the Kattunaickans. However, as is proved in the estimated values of HDI, the Kurichiyans are more developed than the other groups. The substantial difference in the HDI values among the Kurichiyans and that of the others is because of the achievements of the Kurichiyans in education. Moreover, the absence of the 'institution of Kitchen' has an important economic influence in the life styles of the Paniyans and the Kattunaickans. The number of meals per day and the number of actual working days during a month are the two factors, which bring the difference in the HDI of the Paniyans and the Kattunaickans in comparison with Kurichiyans. It is also revealed from the primary investigation that the assistance given to the tribes could not make any change in the educational and health conditions of the Paniyans and the Kattunaickans. This brings us to the following conclusion. The economic assistance given to the tribes does not seem to influence the well-being of the Paniyans and the Kattunaickans. On the other hand, it has positively influenced the economic status of the Kurichiyans.

## Notes and References

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- <sup>1</sup> C. N. Joshy, *The Constitution of India*, 6<sup>th</sup> edn, (New Delhi: The Macmillan Company of India Ltd., 1975).
- <sup>2</sup> Nandini Sundar, 'Custom and Democracy in Jharkhand', *Economic and Political weekly*, October 14, 2005, Vol. XL No. 41, PP. 4430-4438.
- <sup>3</sup> R. C. Verma, *Indian Tribes Through Ages* (Delhi: Publications Division, Ministry of Information and Broadcasting, Government of India, 1995), pp.157-158.
- <sup>4</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 159.
- <sup>5</sup> A. K. Singh, *Dynamics of Tribal Economy* (New Delhi: Serials Publications, 2003), pp. 21-46.
- <sup>6</sup> Government of Kerala, *Economic Review 2003*, (Thiruvananthapuram: State Planning Board, 2004), p. 328.
- <sup>7</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 328.
- <sup>8</sup> *Ibidem.*
- <sup>9</sup> Government of Kerala, *Report of the Evaluation Committee on the Welfare of Scheduled Tribes and Other Backward Communities*, 1962, p.53.
- <sup>10</sup> Government of Kerala, *Economic Review 2003*, p. S 225.
- <sup>11</sup> Government of Kerala, *Economic Review 2004*, (Thiruvananthapuram: State Planning Board, 2005), p. 348.
- <sup>12</sup> Planning commission, Government of India, *National Human Development Report 2001* (New Delhi: Oxford University Press, 2002), p.10.
- <sup>13</sup> Instead of life expectancy, the number of meals per day and the number of working days are taken to measure the health status of tribes. All other variables and methods are same as the formulae used in the technical note of Human Development Report published by UNDP. For more details, see, UNDP, *Human Development Report 2000* (New Delhi: Oxford University Press, 2000), pp. 269-273.

# Production and Consumption Behaviour of Tribes

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## **Chapter V**

### **Production and Consumption Behaviour of Tribes**

An analysis of the development achievements of the tribes in Wynad presented in the last chapter has shown that there is no significant difference between the human development index of the Paniyans and the Kattunaickans. On the other hand, the Kurichiyans are better off than other two tribes in terms of Human Development Index. Since surplus formation and investment are the basis of the development process, this chapter analyses the main causes for the differences in the surplus formation that makes the inter-group variations in HDI.

Surplus being the difference between production and consumption, this chapter focuses its attention to compare the production and consumption behaviour of the tribes. To facilitate the analysis, the production structure, consumption structure, consumption function, and the various ways through which the value added of the tribal communities are drained, are probed into. Production, which is expressed in selling, and consumption, which is expressed in buying, are materialised in the market. In other words, through the analysis of production and consumption structure this study intends to examine the internal dynamics of exchange—which is taken here as buying and selling—through which the tribal resources are drained to the hands of the non-tribes.

As it is widely known, gains from trade are one of the major sources of accumulation of surplus. In a need-based economy, where barter system of exchange is followed, the possibility for surplus formation is limited. But in a want-based and monetised economy, the surplus is accumulated<sup>1</sup>. The present analysis is an attempt at tracing the internal process through which surplus is drained from the tribes to the non-tribes in exchange dynamics. This is done by undertaking a study of the nature of goods produced and consumed. As already explained in the second chapter, the production of lower order goods and consumption of higher order goods lead to loss of surplus in the exchange process and, diametrically opposite to the above situation, the production of higher order goods and the consumption of lower order goods lead to accumulation of surplus. The analysis given below is an attempt at empirically validating the above-mentioned theoretical position.

### **Need Based Tribal Market**

The market of the tribes has certain specific features. Indian villages once were self-sufficient and were categorised under the term 'need-based economy'<sup>2</sup>. In a need-based economy, the production is just sufficient to maintain the consumption of the community. No surplus was produced and the exchange between different communities and with the outside world was absent. The distribution of the social product was made not according to the market considerations but according to social stratification and political ordering. Since production and consumption were done through a process of

exchange within the community, drain of resources from one community to the other was impossible. The transactions in the interior areas were mainly on barter and monetary activities were therefore very little among the tribes of Wynad and naturally there were no organised markets<sup>3</sup>.

Later, a unique institution developed autonomously in the interiors of Wynad district to serve the tribal economy and it was the market known as *Chanta* (fair), which was held in certain villages on fixed days. This institution facilitated interactions between the tribes and the non-tribes whereof the former was exposed to modernisation and change. It also was the channel through which the tribal resources flowed out. With this change from traditional subsistence market to *Chanta*, the tribes of Wynad were exposed to the consumer goods of the non-tribal world<sup>4</sup>.

### **Production Structure of Tribal Economy**

To facilitate the analyses of the drain of surplus, goods produced and consumed by the tribes are ordered into four categories. This categorisation is made on the basis of the assumption that higher order goods have more value added than that of the lower order goods<sup>5</sup>.

#### **First Order Goods**

All primary goods are categorised as first order. Items or goods collected from nature, either by gathering or by cultivation, is categorised under this

group. For example, paddy, *raggi*, banana, honey, fish caught from streams, unskilled labour, etc.

### **Second Order Goods**

Services in private and public nature are included in the second order commodity.

### **Third Order Goods**

All manufactured goods are categorised as third order goods. Clothing, footwear, ornaments and cosmetics are included in this group. The medicines produced by the tribes and the service of tribal medical practitioners and oracles are also included in the third order goods.

### **Fourth Order Goods**

Highest value added is attributed to the goods like liquor, tobacco, hotel-food, entertainments, and interest for the loans from moneylenders.

The primary survey among the tribes in Wynad imparts us a number of interesting observations regarding the nature of inter generational change in the production structure of the tribes. The data regarding the nature of production and consumption of the ancestors are collected from the respondents themselves since no other form of valid data exist to date. In the production and consumption pattern of the ancestors of the respondents, primary goods dominated. The main item of production was food. They collected this either by gathering from the forest or cultivating in the forest. Collecting honey, brewing

indigenous liquor, hunting animals and fishing in streams were some of the sources for meeting the requirements of daily life.

It is evident from Table 5.1 that the ancestors of the respondents concentrated their production mainly on first order primary goods. Very small proportions of the higher order goods were produced by the tribes. Out of a total of 172 earning members of the ancestors of the Paniyans, 93.62 per cent derived income from the production of first order goods. Out of 165, 93.94 per cent of the Kattunaickans also engaged in the production of primary goods, which is a slightly higher than that of the Paniyans.

**Table 5.1**  
**Distribution of Ancestors of Respondents Engaged in the Production**  
**According to its Order**

Name of Tribe	Order of Goods				Total
	I	II	III	IV	
Paniyans	161(93.62)	11(6.38)	0(0)	0(0)	172(100)
Kattunaickans	155(93.94)	10(6.06)	0(0)	0(0)	165(100)
Kurichiyans	143(88.28)	15(9.25)	4(2.47)	0(0)	162(100)

Figures in brackets show per cent  
Source: Survey data

The table indicates that the Paniyans and the Kattunaickans, in their productive activity, concentrated in the production of first order goods. These comprised unskilled labour power, collection of minor forest resources, viz., honey, fish, animals and edible roots of various plants. A very small percentage of people were engaged in the production of items for medicinal purpose and others were servants of estate managers or engaged in government services.

While the Paniyans and the Kattunaickans generated income from the production of first order goods and services, only 88.28 per cent of the total working population of the Kurichiyans derived income from the production of first order goods. In the case of the Kurichiyans, 11.72 per cent generated income from the production of higher order goods. Certain Kurichiya families in Wynad were engaged in the treatment of diseases related to nerves by massaging the patient with specific types of medicinal oils. Since the percentage of production of third order goods was comparatively higher among the Kurichiyans, the value added created by this group was high. This may be one of the reasons for the comparatively better standard of living among the Kurichiyans than among the other two tribes. Table 5.2 shows the distribution of respondents engaged in the production of goods according to its order.

**Table 5.2**  
**Distribution of Tribal Respondents Engaged in the Production of Goods According to its Order**

Name of Tribes	Order of Goods				Total
	I	II	III	IV	
Paniyans	155(95.68)	5(3.08)	2(1.24)	0(0)	162(100)
Kattunaickans	154(94.47)	6(3.68)	3(1.85)	0(0)	163(100)
Kurichiyans	134(85.35)	15(9.54)	8(5.11)	0(0)	157(100)

Figures in brackets show per cent  
Source: Survey data

The production structure of the respondents on the basis of the order of goods does not show any significant change from that of their ancestors. The percentage of persons engaged in the production of higher order goods is higher among the Kurichiyans. Table 5.2 shows that 95.68 per cent of the Paniyans and 94.47 per cent of the Kattunaickans are engaging in the production of first order

goods. Only 85.35 per cent of Kurichiyans are engaged in the production of first order goods.

A comparison between the production structures of the tribal respondents with their ancestors shows that no significant change has occurred in the production structure of the tribes in Wynad. Only 5.11 per cent of the Kurichiyans are successful in entering into the production of third order goods.

### **Consumption Structure of Tribal Ancestors**

Data regarding the actual expenditure of the tribal ancestors according to the order of the goods are not available. However, from the field survey it is revealed that the consumption structure of the ancestors of the respondents shows the dominance of the first order goods. Ancestors of the respondents utilised their income mainly for the consumption of the first order goods. It is reported that till recently tribes practised barter. The barter exchange might have restricted the possibility to enter into the consumer market. The entry into the monetary economy provides them with additional freedom for purchasing goods of the higher order. Moreover, the markets were inaccessible to the ancestors of the tribes because of the absence of transport facilities. This also might have compelled the ancestors of the tribes to restrict their consumption in the first order goods. Furthermore, the non-tribes also lived with limited consumption. Even the traditional landlords of Malabar lived in extreme simplicity<sup>6</sup>.

Since both the production and consumption are concentrated in the first order goods, the possibility of draining of value added through the exchange process is not seen in the traditional tribal economy. If the consumption structure is inclined more towards higher order goods, the possibility of drainage of surplus can be seen in need-based tribal economy. However, a slight inter-group difference in the production structure of the ancestors of the tribal respondents is noticed among the tribes under study.

As is seen in the consumption and production structure, the first order goods dominate. The possibility of accumulation of wealth and drain of wealth is not occurring through exchange. However, a marginal difference in the economic performance of the Kurichiyans can be explained by the existence of higher order goods in the production structure of the said tribes.

### **Rigidity in Production Structure and Drain of Resources**

As pointed out in the earlier discussions, the production pattern of tribes in Wynad was very primitive. The surplus generation through value adding process was also meagre. However, their generated income was just sufficient for the fulfilment of their limited wants.

When the tribes were free from slavery and exposed to the open world, they were, in a way, being thrown into the modern market situations<sup>7</sup>. This has been explained as a change from the need-based economy to want-based economy. In a need-based economy, there is no possibility of formation of surplus and production is organised not for the consumption of the individuals

outside the community. But, in a want-based economy, production is for the market. Consequently, the economic operations have to be manipulated according to the needs of the market. This transition in the production pattern suitable to the market is observed in the life style of the tribes in Wynad<sup>8</sup>. A more plausible reason may however be that the economic compulsions arising out of the new situations in a tribal sector is in close proximity to the non-tribal sector and the former has no existence independent of the latter. One such economic compulsion was prevalence of the debt-credit nexus forcing the tribal farmer (the borrower) to cultivate the kind of crops preferable to the non-tribal sector<sup>9</sup>.

These compulsions from the non-tribal market would not have made significant changes in the production structure of the tribes. This may be due to three reasons: (a) the inability of the tribes in Wynad to organise scientific forms of cultivation, (b) the lack of investment behaviour among the tribes, and (c) the cultural constraints existing in the internal structure of tribal society. The investment behaviour of the respondents shows that very small percentage of the tribal income is utilised for enhancing productivity.

Table 5.3 exhibits the percentage of tribal income utilised for investment by the respondents. It shows that the percentage of income utilised for further enhancement of productive capacity through reinvestment is only 1.5 per cent and 1.47 per cent among the Paniyans, and the Kattunaickans respectively. At the same time, investment expenditure is 6.45 per cent of the expenses among

the Kurichiyans. Since the amount invested for enhancing the productivity is negligible, the possibility for the production of higher order goods is also restricted.

**Table 5.3**  
**Distribution of Monthly Expenditure for Domestic and Investment Purposes**

Expenditure (in Rupees)	Tribes		
	Paniyans	Kattunaickans	Kurichiyans
Domestic	145435 (98.50) <i>1616</i>	156515 (98.53) <i>1739</i>	188175 (93.55) <i>2091</i>
Investment	2215(1.50) <i>25</i>	2335(1.47) <i>26</i>	12975 (6.45) <i>144</i>
Total	147650 (100) <i>1641</i>	158850 (100) <i>1765</i>	201150 (100) <i>2235</i>

Figures in brackets show per cent

Figures in italics show average per household

Source: Survey data

### **Need Based Production and Want Based Consumption**

Though the tribes in Wynad imitated the production and consumption pattern of the non-tribal society, they failed to increase the productivity due to lack of investment<sup>10</sup>. Because of the lack of investment, the tribes of Wynad could not increase the production of goods, which brought them value additions. The production pattern of the goods produced by the different tribes—in terms of the income generated—according to the order of the goods shows that the Paniyans and the Kattunaickans are still occupied in the production of first order goods.

The main sources of income of the tribes in Wynad are derived from the production of first order goods. The percentage distribution of the income

derived according to the order of goods is given in Table 5.4. It gives the percentage distribution of the income according to the sources. Out of the total income of the tribal households of Wynad, 90.83 per cent of the income of the Paniyans, 88.82 per cent of the income of the Kattunaickans and 80.26 per cent of income of the Kurichiyans are derived from the production of goods having primary nature with lowest value added. The production of the fourth order goods does not generate any source of the tribal income.

**Table 5.4**  
**Distribution of Monthly Income Generated by Tribal Respondents from the Production of Goods According to its Order**

Name of Tribes		Order of Goods				Total Tribal Income in Rupees
		I	II	III	IV	
Paniyans	PH	1539.5	119	36.5	0	1695
	TH	138550 (90.83)	10700 (7)	3300 (2.16)	0 (0)	152550 (100)
Kattunaickans	PH	1673	172	39	0	1884
	TH	150600 (88.82)	15450 (9.12)	3500 (2.06)	0 (0)	169550 (100)
Kurichiyans	PH	1934	369	107	0	2410
	TH	174050 (80.26)	33200 (15.31)	9600 (4.42)	0 (0)	201150 (100)

PH = per household, TH = total household

Figures in brackets show per cent

Source: Survey data

The consumption styles of the tribes in Wynad have undergone certain changes as among the other castes in Kerala, which had been once treated as untouchables. As is observed by Filippo Osella and Caroline Osella, slave castes in Kerala are using consumption as an escape route for social mobility. In this change, a shift from food materials to consumer durables can be observed only among the responsible householders. On the other hand, the most excluded

section of village population—ex-untouchable manual labourers—act as the vanguard of certain style of clothing, hairstyles and music<sup>11</sup>.

A change from food materials to consumer durables or to other valuable items cannot be seen among the Paniyans or the Kattunaickans. It is revealed that only the Kurichiyans are consuming the consumer durables like pressure cooker, mixer, television, and video players.

The distribution of income spent by the respondents on the consumption of goods according to different order of goods is given in Table 5.5. In contrast to production structure, the consumption structure indicates the dominance of goods with high value added.

**Table 5.5**  
**Distribution of Monthly Consumption Expenditure According to Different Order of Goods among the Tribes of Wynad**

Name of Tribes		Order of Goods				Total Tribal Expenditure in Rupees
		I	II	III	IV	
Paniyans	PH	821	152	192	471	1641
	TH	73860 (50.03)	13650 (9.24)	17750 (12.03)	42390 (28.70)	147650 (100)
Kattunaickans	PH	893	96	235	541	1765
	TH	80400 (50.61)	8650 (5.44)	21100 (13.28)	48700 (30.65)	158850 (100)
Kurichiyans	PH	1376	269	256	334	2235
	TH	123840 (61.56)	24200 (12.03)	23000 (11.43)	30110 (14.96)	201150 (100)

PH = per household, TH = total household

Figures in brackets show per cent

Source: Survey data

Especially among the Paniyans and the Kattunaickans, the amount spend for 4<sup>th</sup> order goods comprises 28.72 and 30.65 per cent respectively but the

Kurichiyans spend only 14.96 per cent of their income for the consumption of fourth order goods. On the other hand, the consumption of primary goods is higher among the Kurichiyans. While the Kurichiyans spend 61.56 per cent of their income for the purchase of primary goods, the Paniyans and Kattunaickans spend only half of their income for consuming primary goods.

A comparison of the production structure in Table 5.4 and consumption structure in Table 5.5 indicates that the distribution of production is skewed to first order goods and the distribution of consumption is skewed to higher order goods.

### **Higher Order Goods and Drain of Surplus**

In contrast to the changes in production structure, significant changes are observed in the consumption structure of the tribes in Wynad. The most visible change is the movement from the first order goods to the fourth order goods having high value added. The dominance of higher order goods in the consumption structure is due to the expenditure for the following items.

- (i) Liquor and tobacco
- (ii) Hotel food
- (iii) Expenditure in social and religious ceremonies, and
- (iv) Interest rate

A study conducted among the tribal youth by M. Kunhaman reveals the influence of the above items in tribal life. "They unravelled various mechanisms of exploitation such as use of liquor, tobacco, debt, etc."<sup>12</sup>

The above facts reveal that while the tribes of Wynad as a whole failed to contribute to the total value added by changing their production pattern in favour of higher order goods, the consumption pattern seems to have changed in the direction of the goods of higher order. Thus, the production structure reflects the existence of need-based economy and consumption structure exhibits the nature of want-based economy.

Consequently, there is a possibility for the occurrence of a deficit budget for the individual households and the community as a whole. This accumulated deficit in the production-consumption gap may be one of the reasons for the flow of tribal resources in favour of non-tribal sector. The hypothesis that dependent societies which exist as satellites of developed societies perish by imitating the consumption pattern of the developed societies (demonstration effect) is seemed to be valid in the case of the tribes. The expenditure for the higher order goods with high value added might be a cause for the drain of value added from tribal communities to those who are supplying goods with high value added. This, in turn, blocks economic development, by hindering the process of transforming the surplus into savings for investment. The tribes are in consumption trap, which perpetuates debt trap. As properly identified by Arthur Lewis, economic growth needs three things, namely restraint in consumption, willingness to produce as much as possible and a preference for productive investment. He also identifies the impossibility of creating surplus, for people belonging to lower income groups, because of conspicuous consumption. Arthur Lewis opines that,

Unlike the salaried middle classes, capitalists do not have to engage in conspicuous consumption in order to impress upon other people their social importance, since the mere fact of their independent status as profit makers and as employers of other people, combined with their known wealth, assures them some social prestige; the middle and lower classes can never save much, no matter how high their real income may rise, since they are always imitating the consumption standards of those richer than themselves, whereas the rich man can save because their incomes are more than what is adequate for their accepted standards of consumption<sup>13</sup>.

### **Conspicuous Consumption and Household Economy**

In a formal economy, each household is to function like an economy. Food production is an integral part of the household economy. Moreover, the responsibility for organising the medical facilities, educational facilities and protection of the aged and disabled are supposed to be taken up by the household. To accomplish the primary function of a household—food production—the institution of kitchen is essential. Furthermore, storing the surplus as household savings to meet the contingent expenditure is also necessary. Primary data reveal that 74.44 per cent of the Paniyan households and 70 per cent of the Kattunaickan households do not have separate kitchen facility. But only 4.44 per cent of the Kurichiyans are without having separate kitchen facility<sup>14</sup>. Besides, many of the tribal households do not have the practice of preparing food in the household. This may compel them to depend on hotel food, which in turn influenced their expenditure behaviour adversely.

The male members of the Paniyans and the Kattunaickans spend a major share of their income for individual goals, i.e., for personal consumption. But

female members spend their income for family goals. This indicates that the responsibility of managing the household economy is not properly functioning in many of the tribal households. In the life style of the Kurichiyans, the household economy plays a role more important than that of the other two tribes.

While analysing the expenditure pattern, it is observed that the females spend more for family goals than for individual goals. On the other hand, the Paniyan and the Kattunaickan males spend a high percentage of their income for individual purposes. This includes mainly items like hotel food, liquor, tobacco, and for various entertainments like films.

Table 5.6 shows the income share utilised for meeting individual goals and household goals. The amount spent by the male members of the Paniyans and the Kattunaickans for the strengthening of household economy is significantly low. The female members spend more for the household, which indicates that a greater share of responsibility to look after the family is taken by females.

**Table 5.6**

**Tribal Sharing of Monthly Income (in Rs.) for Household and Individual Goals**

Category		Tribes					
		Paniyans		Kattunaickans		Kurichiyans	
		Male	Female	Male	Female	Male	Female
Individual Goals	PH	671	195	783	245	300	256
	TH	60410 (68.22)	17555 (27.43)	70415 (70.38)	22045 (31.72)	26990 (20.4)	23075 (27.31)
Household Goals	PH	313	516	329	527	1171	683
	TH	28140 (31.78)	46445 (72.57)	29635 (29.62)	47455 (68.28)	105360 (79.60)	61425 (72.69)
Total Income	PH	984	711	1112	772	1471	939
	TH	88550 (100)	64000 (100)	100050 (100)	69500 (100)	132350 (100)	84500 (100)

PH = Per household, TH = Total household

Figures in brackets show per cent.

Source: Survey data

The table also reveals that the responsibility for looking after the members of the family is equally shared by males and females among the Kurichiyans families, while among the Kattunaickans and the Paniyans the responsibility is more on the female members. From this it is evident that the Kurichiyans males are more responsible than that of the other two tribes<sup>15</sup>.

**Consumption Function of Tribes**

The consumption function of the different tribes is estimated, which reveals the nature of consumption behaviour of the tribes. The function is estimated by using the specification:

$$Y_i = a + b X_i + U_i$$

where  $Y_i$  = consumption expenditure

$X_i$  = income, and

$U_i$  = error term.

The results reveal the high propensity to consume among the different group of tribes and the tribes in general.

#### **Consumption Function for the Paniyans**

$$Y_i = 68.95 + 0.92 X_i$$

(13.45) (0.007)

5.123 122.717 R Square=0.99

#### **Consumption Function for the Kattunaickans**

$$Y_i = 36.42 + 0.91 X_i$$

(17.19) (0.008)

2.11 106.4 R Square=0.99

#### **Consumption Function for the Kurichiyans**

$$Y_i = 127.13 + 0.87 X_i$$

(26.56) (0.01)

4.78 81.84 R Square=0.98

#### **Pooled Consumption Function**

$$Y_i = 94.94 + 0.894 X_i$$

(11.09) (0.005)

8.55 170.22 R Square=0.99

Based on the propensity to save alone, we cannot conclude that the tribes set apart the saved amount for investment purposes. From the survey it is revealed that the tribes save money mainly for the repayment of their debts.

#### **Internal Factors and Consumption**

The behaviour of tribes to consume with high propensity has certain cultural reasons. It is revealed from the field observation that the ancestors of

the tribes exchange goods for procuring certain implements, which were used to enhance production. They did not have the practice of storing the goods for future consumption. Instead, the surplus is expended within the community. In tribal societies, individual accumulation of surplus is treated as anti-social. They have their own ways of accumulating the surplus, which is embedded in social institutions.

The practice of mutually obligatory sharing, typical of reciprocity, is certainly not conducive to the individually building of surpluses since it insures against the very personal uncertainties, which induce savings<sup>16</sup>.

The redistribution of surplus in the form of mutual sharing is considered as extravaganza from the angle of strict economic principles. But for the tribes, this style of expenditure is a method of creating social capital. So during slack seasons, in the old age and in a condition of permanent disability, the society looks after the needy as a reciprocal behaviour. Thus, social security was an integral part in traditional tribal societies. Reciprocity is the method of social security among the tribes.

The tribal behaviour of extravagant expenditure for social ceremonies to form social capital is observed by many social scientists. Lucy Mair identified that the expenditure of the tribes for socio religious purpose is one of the major impediments in the community development programmes undertaken by government and voluntary agencies for the upliftment of the tribes in India<sup>17</sup>. These extravagant expenditures prevent the tribes to transform the surplus into savings and investment for the capital formation.

The interaction with the non-tribes has changed their social production and social distribution into individual production and individual consumption. In a society where individualism exists, the responsibility to meet the expenditure in contingencies is on the individuals and personal savings can accomplish this.

The tribes dismantled in their social system the reciprocity of meeting the contingencies, which had once met the contingent expenditures like construction of huts, disease, death etc. At the same time, they failed to develop an alternative system suitable to the market economy, that is, the accumulation of surplus through saving to meet the contingent expenditures. As long as they follow the traditional values of reciprocity and redistribution of surplus among the members of the community, they cannot follow the investment behaviour of the non-tribes. The tribes entered into the new consumption structure without having any change in the production structure. Consequently, it leads to the failure of their economic system.

In the absence of both the system of reciprocity and the system suitable to modern the market economy—which fosters individualism—to meet the contingent expenditure, the tribes have to take recourse to different sources of income, mostly loans. In the absence of a saving behaviour, debt repayment becomes an unresolved problem among the tribes of Wynad, especially among the Paniyans and the Kattunaickans. Now, a major part of their surplus is drained as interest payment to the moneylenders.

During the transition from socially controlled economy to free economy, tribes dismantled their social institutions but could not create new institutions to perform economic functions, which were performed earlier by society as a whole. In formal economies, these functions are performed by household economy. But as far as the Paniyans and the Kattunaickans are concerned, they failed to develop a household economy to compensate the gap created by the dismantling of social engineering of economic actions. The tribes still expect the assistance to come from socio-political hierarchs since they were familiar only with that in their old system and this has been the practice in all the socially engineered tribal societies. However, the Kurichiyans are successful in developing the household economy. Consequentially, they are economically better off than the other tribes in Wynad.

### **Debt Management and Payment of Interest**

The absence of the formation of household economy and the extravagant expenditure for social and religious ceremonies have created frequent deficits in the household budget of the tribes in Wynad. In order to deal with the problem of the above-mentioned deficit, the tribes approach the moneylenders. Table 5.7 reveals the purposes for which the tribes utilise their loans.

The percentage distribution of utilisation of loan amounts has shown that very small share of loan amount is spent for investment purpose. The Paniyans utilise 53.33 per cent of the loan amount for personal consumption and 40.74 per cent of the loan amount is utilised for meeting the expenditure for

ceremonial purposes like marriage, festivals, etc. Almost the same pattern is observed among the Kattunaikkans. On the other hand, the Kurichiyans spend comparatively higher percentage for investment. While the Paniyans spend 5.92 per cent of their loan amount for investment purpose, for the Kattunaikkans, it is 7.08 per cent and for the Kurichiyans it is 45.00 per cent.

**Table 5.7**  
**Purpose-wise Sharing of Loan Amount among Different Tribes in Wynad**

Name of Tribes	Purpose of Loan			Total Debt in Rupees
	Personal Consumption	Socio-Religious Ceremonies	Investment Purpose	
Paniyans	98670(53.33) <i>1096</i>	75370(40.74) <i>837</i>	10960(5.92) <i>123</i>	185000(100) <i>2056</i>
Kattunaickans	119600(53.16) <i>1329</i>	89465(39.76) <i>994</i>	15935(7.08) <i>177</i>	225000(100) <i>2500</i>
Kurichiyans	215830(33.46) <i>2398</i>	138890(21.54) <i>1543</i>	290280(45.00) <i>3226</i>	645000(100) <i>7167</i>

Figures in brackets show per cent

Figures in italics give per household sharing

Source: Survey data

From Table 5.6 it is also evident that the tribes utilise the loans mainly to meet the deficit in personal consumption and for spending socio-religious ceremonies. During the days of festivals, they spend without rationality suitable to market economy. The spending for religious ceremonies and festivals are common among all the three tribes. Interestingly, liquor consumption is an essential ingredient of the tribal festivals.

It is revealed that the interest rate is exorbitantly high and it ranges from 24 per cent to 100 per cent per annum. Many of the tribes are aware of the government and co-operative sources of loans. But these sources are

The intermediaries manage to mobilise the marketed surplus of the tribes through the advance of 'kind loans' during the off-seasons. All these loans are often crop-secured and the tribes are obliged to sell the products immediately after the harvest at predetermined prices<sup>19</sup>.

To overcome this difficulty, scheduled banks and cooperative societies have established various schemes of agricultural loans to the tribes. However, the tribes are not participating in the banking system.

The data regarding the sources of loans taken by the tribes reveal that the tribes prefer non-conventional sources of loans. Table 5.8 shows the dominance of moneylenders in providing loans for tribes.

**Table 5.8**  
**Distribution of Households Showing the Sources of Loans**

Tribes	Source of Loan				Total
	Scheduled Banks	Cooperative Societies	Self Help Groups	Money Lenders	
Paniyans	3(3.33)	18(20.00)	5(5.55)	64(71.11)	90(100)
Kattunaikkans	5(5.55)	19(21.11)	4(4.44)	61(67.77)	90(100)
Kurichiyans	23(25.55)	35(38.88)	5(5.55)	27(30.00)	90(100)

Figures in brackets show per cent.

Source: Survey data

### **Liquor Consumption and Drain of Surplus**

Vending of liquor in the tribal areas caused outflow of tribal resources to the non-tribals causing the impoverishment of the tribal families. Brewing drinks for self-consumption was permissible among the tribes. For certain tribes, liquor is essential for social and religious ceremonies. C. K. Janu observed that the Paniyans could easily be cheated by gift of liquor<sup>20</sup>. Realising

the gravity of the situation and the damage caused by liquor vending among the tribes, Government of India issued the following policy guidelines in 1975 for operation of excise policy in tribal areas of all states: -

- (i) Commercial vending of alcoholic beverages should be discontinued
- (ii) Scheduled Tribes shall be permitted to brew their traditional alcoholic beverages for consumption at home and on religious and social occasions.
- (iii) Attempts may be made to wean away the Scheduled Tribes from the habit of drinking alcoholic beverages and for this purpose official and non-official voluntary organisations may be encouraged to work in the tribal areas<sup>21</sup>.

The consequence of the liquor consumption from the economic point of view can easily be identified by observing the difference between the actual production cost and the value added in various stages of its selling. Formerly, the tribesmen could consume liquor by producing it. Now they have to purchase it from the market. Since the income spent on liquor consumption is high, the possibility of drain of resources is also high. Table 5.9 shows the percentage of tribes who use liquor. The number of persons who like to consume liquor is included in the category 'alcoholic' and those who do not like to consume liquor is termed as 'non-alcoholic'. It is interesting that both males and females use liquor. The number of individuals who use liquor is comparatively low among the Kurichiyans. Among males, while 92.85 per cent of the Paniyans and 90.2 per cent of the Kattunaickans use liquor, only 70.9 per cent of the Kurichiyans use alcohol.

**Table 5.9**  
**Distribution of Adult Liquor Consumers among the Tribes in Wynad**

Name of Tribes	Male			Female		
	A	Non-A	Total Adult* Males	A	Non-A	Total Adult Females
Paniyans	91(92.85)	7(7.15)	98(100)	73(76.04)	23(23.96)	96(100)
Kattunaickans	92(90.20)	10(9.80)	102(100)	76(71.70)	30(28.30)	106(100)
Kurichiyans	78(70.90)	32(29.10)	110(100)	22(19.13)	93(80.87)	115(100)

A=Alcohol users, Non-A=those who do not use alcohol

Figures in brackets show per cent

\*Adult means population above the age 14

Source: Survey data.

High percentage of expenditure on liquor consumption and the high percentage of value added that is included in the price of liquor from commercial vending outlets form the channel through which the wealth of the tribes in Wynad flows out into the hands of non-tribes.

Discussion of the production and consumption structure of the tribal economy of Wynad leads to certain conclusions regarding tribal underdevelopment. The dynamics behind the exchange in the market has revealed that the tribal economy of Wynad is in the transitional stage from need-based economy to want-based economy.

The debt tarp occurs mainly due to the gap in the structural deficiency that is created in the transitional process of tribal economy. Though consumption structure has changed in favour of goods, which have high percentage of value added, the production system does not show a proportionate change.

In the transitional process of the tribal economy from a need based to want based one, the incongruence in the production and consumption structure has led to the drain of surplus. Production pegged to the first order goods and consumption of the higher order goods are identified as the main reason for the erosion of tribal resources. In other words, since the growth of production is the main source of surplus, the rigidity to change production structure is identified as the prime factor, which abrogates the life of the tribal communities.

This incompatibility between production structure and consumption structure is significant in the case of the Paniyans and the Kattunaickans. But for the Kurichiyans, their production structure shows slight difference from that of the other tribes. This helped them to prevent the erosion of their resources and allowed them to invest in productive areas like education and health. The change in the consumption in favour of higher order goods have elated debt trap for tribes.

This disproportion is accentuated by the consumption of liquor purchased from the commercial vendors. Further, this drain is accelerated by the high rate of interest on loans and exploitation of the intermediaries who pay only a low price for their meagre forest products and agricultural surplus.

The above analysis leads us to an important question: why is the production structure rigid and consumption structure flexible? For this, the internal factors, which motivate and restrict the production and consumption behaviour, are to be analysed. The next chapter is an attempt to probe into the

internal factors of tribal social organisation, which lead to the erosion of tribal resources through the incompatibility in production and consumption structure and make inter-tribal variations in the development achievements of the tribes.

## Notes and References

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- <sup>1</sup> Karl Marx, *Theories of Surplus Value Part1* (Moscow: Progress Publishers, 1969), p. 309-344.
- <sup>2</sup> C. T. Kurien, *Poverty Planning and Social Transformation* (Delhi: Allied Publishers Private Limited, 1978), pp. 29-88.
- <sup>3</sup> M. Kunhaman, *Development of Tribal Economy* (New Delhi: Classical Publishing Company, 1989), p. 74.
- <sup>4</sup> C. T. Paul, 'Tribal Economy of the Hill Tribes of Kerala with Special Reference to Wynad' (Unpublished PhD Thesis, Department of Economics, University of Calicut, 1988), p. 61.
- <sup>5</sup> A detailed analysis about the rationale behind this classification is already given in Chapter 2 of this thesis. The theoretical argument for this categorization is derived from the classification of goods by Carl Menger. For details see, Eric Roll, *History of Economic Thought* (Calcutta: Oxford University Press, 1988), p. 387.
- <sup>6</sup> K. Saradmoni, *Emergence of a Slave Caste* (Delhi: Peoples Publishing House, 1980), p. 31.
- <sup>7</sup> M. Kunhaman, *op. cit.*, p. 45.
- <sup>8</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 72.
- <sup>9</sup> *Ibidem.*
- <sup>10</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 59.
- <sup>11</sup> Filippo Osella and Caroline Osella, *Social Mobility in Kerala: Modernity and Identity in Conflict* (London: Pluto Press, 2000), pp. 117-20.
- <sup>12</sup> M. Kunhaman, *Globalization: A Subaltern Perspective* (Trivandrum: Centre for Subaltern Studies, 2002), p. 89.
- <sup>13</sup> W. Arthur Lewis, *Theory of Economic Growth* (London: George Allen & Unwin Ltd, 1972), p. 233.
- <sup>14</sup> The Kurichiyans had a settled life and they organised their agricultural activities on the basis of joint family. Household management and preparation of food within the household was a common practice for Kurichiyans. Such formation is not seen in the history of Kattunaickans and Paniyans. Kattunaickans and Paniyans were slaves and still exhibit nomadic nature. This historical background might not have allowed them for living in a household and managing it. This may be a possible reason for the significant difference in the kitchen facilities for various tribes.

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- <sup>15</sup> C. K. Janu, tribal leader, opines that the irresponsibility of male members of various tribes is one of the main reasons for their underdevelopment. For details see, Bhaskaran, *Janu: C. K. Januvinte Jivita Katha* (Malayalam) (Kottayam: D. C. Books, 2003), p. 55.
- <sup>16</sup> Harry W. Pearson, 'The Economy Has no Surplus' in K. Polanyi *et. al.*, ed. *Trade and Market in Early Empires: Economies in History and Theory*, (Glencoe: The Free Press and The Falcon's Wing Press, 1957), p. 336.
- <sup>17</sup> Lucy Mair, *An Introduction to Social Anthropology* (New Delhi: Oxford University Press, 1988), p. 206.
- <sup>18</sup> Kerala State Scheduled Caste and Scheduled Tribe Co-Operative is the single agency in the state authorised to collect Non Wood Forest Products. Presently, the tribes are not allowed to sell the products to outside agencies. Though the Co-operative societies under this agency are ready to purchase the forest products collected by the tribes, the tribes sell these products to private merchants. This is one of the major issues faced by tribal co-operatives in Wynad. From the field survey it is revealed that the prices paid by the private merchants are less than the prices quoted by the co-operative societies. Private merchants advance loans in anticipation of getting forest products from tribes. To get loans from private merchants, tribes collect minor forest products illegally and supply to them.
- <sup>19</sup> M. Kunhaman, *op. cit.*, p. 74.
- <sup>20</sup> Baskaran, *op. cit.*, p. 56.
- <sup>21</sup> R. C. Verma, *Indian Tribes Through Ages* (Delhi: Publications Division, Ministry of Information and Broadcasting, Government of India, 1995), p. 106.

# INTERNAL FACTORS OF DEVELOPMENT

Francis K.M. “Tribal development- A study of internal factors ” Thesis.  
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## Chapter VI

### INTERNAL FACTORS OF DEVELOPMENT

Each human being and the community that he finds himself in have various types of potentials required for economic development. Human beings find their self-fulfilment by developing these potentials. It can be stated that the fulfilment of these potentials for attaining economic well-being of an individual, community and nation is what is known as economic development. The theory of growth and development in Economics suggests that surplus ploughed back into the production through capital formation leads to the economic development of a community.

As concluded in Chapter 5, the drain of resources through the consumption of higher order goods is a major impediment in the transformation of tribal surplus into savings and capital. Analysis of the production and consumption behaviour suggested that the tribes in general could not enter the above process because of the incompatibility in their own production and consumption structure. Production structure suitable to a need based economy and consumption structure of a want based economy are identified as the cause which breaks the path of growth mechanism leading to the under development of the tribes. In other words, the tribes in Wynad are unable to change their production structure.

This chapter inquires into the reasons for the inability of the tribes to change the production structure. The central question that is being addressed here is: What is the precise role of tribal culture, rituals and belief systems,

customs and traditions, and hierarchical structure in determining the variations in the development achievements of the tribes? Why are the tribes not able to change the production structure?

Economic theory suggests that the change in the production structure depends not only on the amount of the surplus created by the community but also on the systems in which the actions of the individuals are performed. This structure in turn depends on the institutional framework of the economy. Culture, religion, belief systems, customs, rituals and hierarchy are the different internal factors, which constitute an institution. The influence of the internal factors in the freedom exercised by the individuals in the society within its institutional framework determines its economic development<sup>1</sup>. The constraints existing in the tribal organisation that prevent the freedom of individuals in participating in the modern forms of institutions of income generation, education, health and consumption are also analysed here.

The influence of freedom exercised and the social controls on economic actions are measured by using an ad hoc scale. The relationship between freedom in the economic action and H.D.I is analysed. Moreover the built-in constraints, which nullify the self-fulfilment of the tribal potential, are also focused here.

### **Internal Organization of Tribal Economy**

Formal Economics depicts man as a solitary being motivated by self-interest. Economic analysis generally begins with an analysis of the economic behaviour of the individual, who looks like Robinson Crusoe on a deserted island where self-interest is paramount. What is often overlooked when this

approach is taken is that individual decision units are usually collective or social in nature. The behaviour observed in a given unit will normally be the result of complex decisions within the context of a group. It is the group dynamics that has so often been neglected in the past<sup>2</sup>. In tribal setting, the competing needs of the individual members are met by social norms and customs. Hierarchs at the different levels of tribal organisation have the power to coerce the decisions based on social norms.

The power of the social custom may persist as a result of a mutually sustaining network of social sanctions to which each individual conforms out of fear of losing reputation through disobedience. In such a system, potential members of breakaway coalition fear that they are doomed to failure and thus, failure to challenge the power becomes a self-fulfilling prophecy<sup>3</sup>.

The hierarchs can suppress private preferences of the individuals in the society by social preferences because of the fear of individual members about excommunication. In the context of tribal non-tribal interaction, the value of individual freedom in economic decision-making burgeoned within the tribes. Thus, private choices began to create conflicts with the social choices of the tribal hierarchs. Only those who succeed to overcome the social dilemmas enter into the opportunities of modern economy.

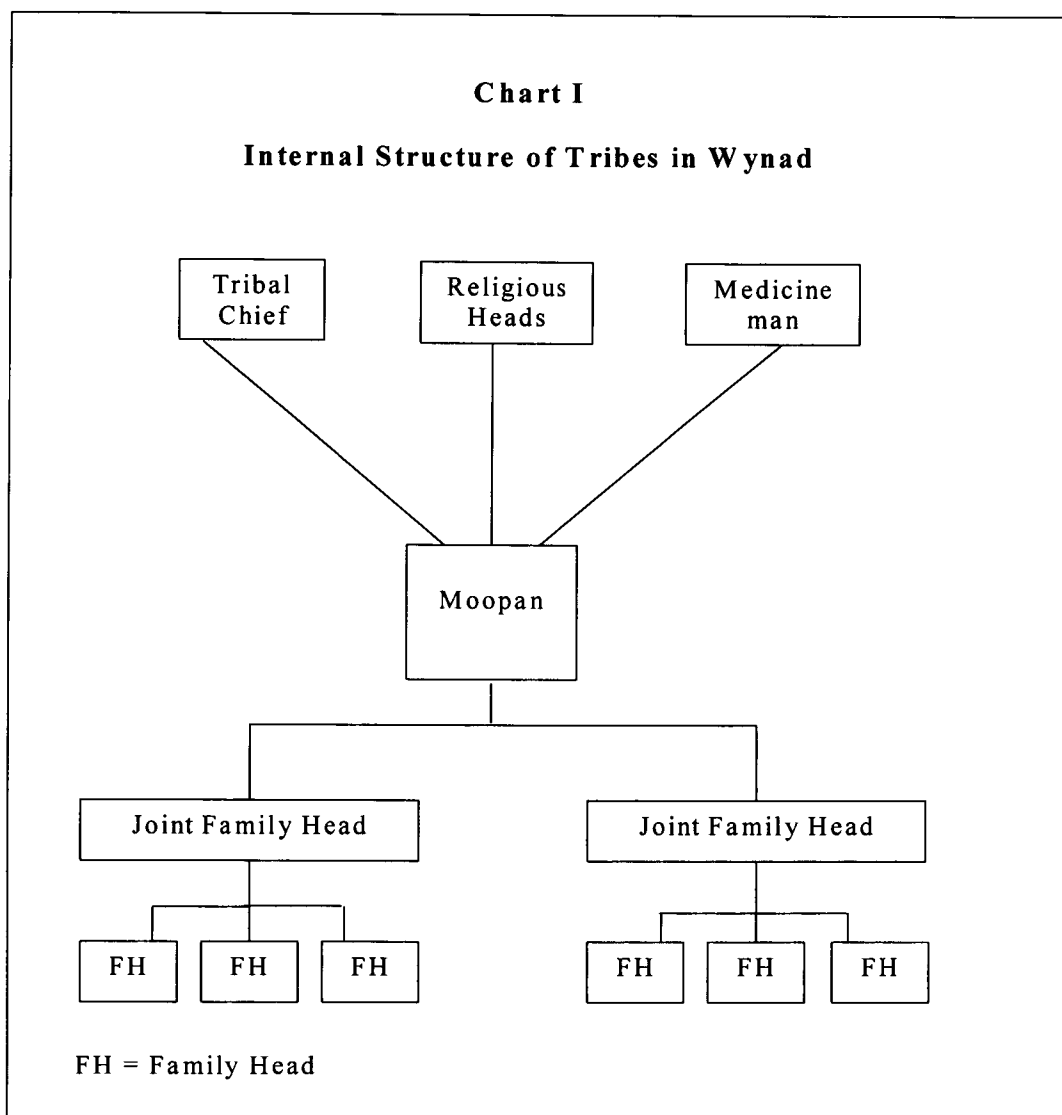
The remnants of traditional organization can still be seen among the tribes of Wynad. The following features are seen among the tribes in Wynad.

- (1) Segmental division of society.
- (2) Hierarchy of groups.
- (3) Restrictions on marriage.
- (4) Allied and religious disabilities and privileges of different sections.
- (5) Lack of the unrestricted choice of occupation.

The field survey revealed that the general organization of the production and consumption and other social activities of the tribes are performed through a rigid hierarchical structure. Chart 1 explains the general form of the internal structure of the tribal societies in Wynad.

It is also noticed that the ancestors of the respondents had no decision-making capacity and personal responsibility to meet the requirements of the other members. The *moopan* and the hierarchs (*Urukootams*) decide and execute the economic activities<sup>4</sup>. The hierarchs collect the proceeds and distribute the proceeds among the members of the society. As a result, the production, distribution and consumption process of the tribes are highly influenced by the motivations, decisions and actions of the hierarchs, i.e., social choice.

In the hierarchical structure of the Kurichiyans, the joint family has an important role. But among the Kattunaickans and the Paniyans, the system of joint family is not an important determinant in the economic action. The difference between this has an important economic reason. While the Paniyans and the Kattunaickans are in a food gathering stage, the Kurichiyans entered into sedentary stage by the eighteenth century itself. For settled agriculture more labour force is necessary. This may be a reason for the high influence of the joint family among the Kurichiyans. Many social scientists have suggested that agricultural life, as opposed to hunting and gathering life, suits extended families among agriculturalists. During certain seasons, the hunter-gatherers may be obliged to divide into nuclear families that further scatter into more nuclear families<sup>5</sup>.



### **Changes in the Internal Organisation of Tribes**

The internal organization of the tribal communities has undergone significant changes due to the interaction with the non-tribes. The major changes that happened among the tribes observed during this study are expressed in Chart 6.2. Traditionally, the motivations, decisions and actions of the tribes were dependent on the hierarchs. Even if one individual in the society tries to follow independent actions, the organizational structure of the society does not provide any space for the individual.

Since the ownership of the means of production was collective in nature, no one can change the production or consumption styles. But the changes from the traditional tribal practice to the modern affect all the areas of tribal life. Now the individuals are apparently free from all the controls of the society.

**Chart 6.2**  
**Changes in the Internal Structure of Tribal Societies in Wynad**

Area of change	Traditional	Modern
Family	Joint family	Nuclear family
Land ownership	Collective, Customary	Private Legal
Agricultural production	Social	Individual
Consumption	Social	Individual, Family
Migration character	Social	Family
Responsibility to meet the requirements	Tribal head	Family head
Communication	Tribal head	Individual
Decision	Social	Individual

Chart 6.2 indicates the areas where the changes have taken place. Formerly, major economic actions were performed socially, but now it is performed individually. The tribes in the past never conducted agricultural operations individually and social and religious ceremonies were integral part of all the agricultural activities.

Most crucial element in the tribal life is the possibility for communication with the non-tribes. Individuals in the tribal communities were not allowed to communicate with members of other tribes or to the non-tribes. Now this behaviour has been changed. However, the tribes generally are hesitant to communicate with those individuals who are not of their own group. This is a clear evidence of the change in the economy from a substantive nature to a formal nature. The execution process of an economic

activity among the various tribes is found to be at different levels in the evolutionary process from the substantive to the formal economy.

In this evolutionary process, many economic institutions suitable to a socially controlled economy have undergone changes. If we define an institution as the totality of religious beliefs, informal laws in the form of social customs, formal laws and formal organisational set up for implementing these formal laws, further investigation is necessary to understand the nature of change that has taken place in the tribal economic institutions. Primary survey reveals that the interaction with the non-tribes did not change the informal part of their traditional institutions, and these informal parts create constraints on the economic actions. A close scrutiny of the tribal life in Wynad does reveal that the informal part in the institutional framework of the tribal economy continues to be rigid as it had been.

### **Informal Institutions and Cultural Constraints**

The first and foremost cultural constraint is the relationship of each tribal group with the other groups. Each tribal group claims that their group has superiority over other groups. There is a hidden norm among the Kurichiyans that they bath seven times to become pure after touching a Paniyan. This prevents them from participating in some modern institutions, which enhance economic development. For example, in the early years after Independence when the Government attempted to provide education to the tribes, many Kurichiyans were reluctant to participate in the educational process. Their fear of violating the social norms imposed on them a constraint in their cultural context. Thus, untouchability restricted their educational

progress during the early years after Independence. This also prevents them from joining the co-operative societies that are exclusively organised for the tribes.

Secondly, as observed among the *Bedouins* of West Asian countries<sup>6</sup>, there are various problems in the attempts of the Government to settle the tribes in a specific area. The Government's attempt to provide housing facilities in an area totally alien to their traditional habitat is not culturally acceptable to the tribes. Nomadic nature is seen among the life style of the Kattunaickans and the Paniyans. The Paniyans are prohibited by custom from possessing a particular piece of land permanently. This is an informal law among the Paniyans. Due to this culturally imposed norm, the tribes have a tendency to sell of their ownership rights even for a poultry sum.

The Government and other agencies for the development of tribes often view traditional ways of life negatively and fail to recognize the old ways of life. We cannot expect them to change certain specific aspects of culture that are central to their lives. It is not that people do not want to change but change is unlikely to take place if it does not integrate well with other aspects of their life style.

Moreover, the tribes, especially the Kattunaickans, consume edible yams and depend on the forest for their daily consumption. These create two constraints: (a) compulsion to live near the forest where the edible roots are available abundantly, and (b) movement from one place to another when the availability of the same is exhausted. Unless they start intensive cultivation of the edible roots and yams that are part of their daily consumption, in the

vicinity of their settlement, they are compelled to move from one place to another or else they have to change the food habits.

Thirdly, the tribes are custom-bound. The estimates from field survey show that the tribes fear to violate social and religious norms. Nearly 82.22 per cent of the Paniyans, 80 per cent of the Kattunaickans and 35.55 of the Kurichiyans fear that violation of social and religious norms do influence their success and failures of economic actions. They fear that breaking of such customs lead to ill health, diseases, and failure in agriculture and financial crisis. To overcome these problems, religious ceremonies are essential. This is found to raise the expenditure for religious ceremonies. They fear that the spirits of their ancestors will punish them, if they violate social norms.

Various sociologists and anthropologists<sup>7</sup> emphasized that internal factors exerts a strong coercive power over the individuals in a society. The members of the community do not feel this as a constraint because they conform to the types of conduct and assume that it is required. Standards or rules about what is acceptable behaviour are termed as norms. The society responds to the individual members when the norm is violated. The developmental programmes of the State Government to uplift the economic status of the tribes are concentrated on making changes in the organisational level or the formal part of the institutional apparatus of the tribal economy.

As observed by Paul, there are two types of tasks in the transformation of the internal structure of tribal economy: soft tasks and hard tasks. Soft tasks are related to the efforts to change the formal structure like roads, houses and educational institutions, while the hard tasks are related to the cultural

changes like motivation, attitudes and culture<sup>8</sup>. The constraints on economic activities by restricting the freedom for economic actions can be observed from the decision-making patterns of the different tribes. The levels of freedom exercised by the different individuals in the society reveal the strength of the constraints imposed by the internal factors through hierarchy in the economic actions of the individuals among the different tribal groups.

### **Levels of Freedom in Economic Action**

The relationship between the freedom exercised by the individuals in a community and economic development has obtained increased attention during the last decade. The World Development Report 2006 is an excellent attempt on this topic and states,

We argue that societies prosperous today are so because they have developed more egalitarian distributions of political power while poor societies often suffer from unbalanced distributions<sup>9</sup>.

The subsequent sections of this Chapter analyse the freedom exercised by the different individuals in various tribal communities for understanding the influence of internal factors on economic development.

An economic action passes through different stages. Motivation for action, decision-making and implementation are the different steps through which an action is performed. In the tribal context, these stages face certain institutional rigidities. Economic theory assumes zero intervention of non-economic factors in the economic action. Field survey reveals that the internal organisation of the tribes imposes certain restrictions on the economic actions of the individuals of various tribes. Saradmoni observed that, “The poor people of lower castes were subjected to oppression by aristocracy as well as

leaders of their own caste”<sup>10</sup>. This has been measured by scaling the control of various levels of tribal hierarchy on economic activity of the individual members of different tribes. The various levels of hierarchy are identified as individual, family, joint family, tribal chief and religious head. Those respondents who perform economic actions on the basis of individual freedom are categorized in the category A. The economic actions on the basis of family are categorized in the category B; the economic actions on the basis of joint family are categorized in the category C; the economic actions on the basis of tribal leadership are categorized in the category D; and the economic actions on the basis of religious norms and leaders is categorized in the category E.

### **Freedom Mobility Matrix**

Freedom mobility matrix is used to explain the evolution of various tribal communities from substantive nature to formal nature. This matrix exhibits the changes in the freedom exercised by the respondents from the freedom levels exercised by their ancestors. It is assumed that a respondent, who performs economic actions on the basis of his own motivation and decision, exercises maximum freedom, which is given in the category ‘A’. The respondent’s freedom diminishes as and when he moves from category ‘A’ to category ‘E’. The theoretical model of Freedom Mobility Matrix is given in Chapter 2.

The inter-generational change in the freedom exercised in economic actions like income generating activities, consumption, education and health

reveals the influence of internal structure of tribal organization on economic activity of tribes.

### **Freedom in Income Generation**

The levels of freedom enjoyed by the respondents and the ancestors of the respondents reveal the extent of the change occurred in the exercise of freedom in income generation activities, education, health care and consumption. The coercive powers of the tribal culture over the economic actions of the individuals are exercised through the hierarchical structure.

An evolution from a socially controlled economy to a free economy can be observed from the data given in the tables given below. The Tables 6.1 to Table 6.12 are freedom mobility matrices. These tables can be interpreted as follows. Column totals give the freedom exercised by the ancestors of the respondents. In the Table 6.1, the column totals are A=2, B=2, C=4, D=66 and E=16. This means that 2 out of 90 of the ancestors of the Paniyan respondents depended on themselves for economic action, another 2 performed actions on the basis of family, another 4 on the basis of joint family, the next 66 on the basis of tribal norms, and the remaining 16 on the basis of the religious norms and leaders.

Row totals give the freedom exercised by respondents. A = 8 which means that out of the 90 respondents 8 depend their action on individual capacity. Out of this 8, 2 are from category A, 5 are from category D, and 1 from category E. This reveals the inter-generational change in the freedom exercised in income generational activity.

**Table 6.1**  
**Inter Generational Mobility in Freedom Levels of Income Generation**  
**Activities\*\* of the Paniyans**

Category-Wise Distribution of Respondents	Category-Wise Distribution of Ancestors of Respondents					
	A	B	C	D	E	Total
A	2(2.22) <i>100</i>	0(0) 0	0(0) 0	5(5.55) <i>7.58</i>	1(1.11) <i>6.25</i>	8 (8.88)
B	0(0) 0	2(2.22) <i>100</i>	4(4.44) <i>100</i>	10(11.11) <i>5.15</i>	6(6.66) <i>37.56</i>	22 (24.44)
C	0(0) 0	0(0) 0	0(0) 0	2(2.22) <i>3.03</i>	1(1.11) <i>6.25</i>	3 (3.33)
D	0(0) 0	0(0) 0	0(0) 0	49(54.44) <i>74.24</i>	2(2.22) <i>12.56</i>	51 (56.66)
E	0(0) 0	0(0) 0	0(0) 0	0(0) 0	6(6.66) <i>37.56</i>	6 (6.66)
Total	2 (2.22)	2 (2.22)	4 (4.44)	66 (7.33)	16 (17.77)	90 (100.00)

A= Individual, B=Family, C=Joint Family, D=Tribe, E=Religion

Figures in brackets show per cent

Figures in italics show mobility per cent

\*\*Income generation activities mean all activities, which bring income

Source: Survey data

Similarly, the second row total B = 22 which means that 22 respondents out of 90 are in the category B. That is, 22 respondents perform economic activities on the basis of family. Out of this 22, 8 are from the category B, 10 are from category D and 4 are from category E.

Based on the same argument, row C gives that 2 respondents out of the 90 perform their economic actions on the basis of joint family. Out of this 2, 100 per cent is from the same category C, which is from the joint family.

The row total D = 51 which means that 51 out of 90 respondents are depending on social norms for their exercise of freedom. Out of this 51, 49

are from the same category D, that is, the basis of the action of the respondents and ancestors are same.

The row total  $E = 6$  which means that out of 90, 6 respondents take religious norms and leaders for the basis of their action. Out of this 6, 100 per cent is from the same category. Thus, the values in the mobility matrix indicate the changes in the freedom basis of economic action of the tribes. All the succeeding tables up to Table 6.12 can be interpreted with the same logic, and therefore, the above explanation is not repeated.

The freedom exercised in the income generation activities of the various tribes show significant inter-generational variations. Tables 6.1, 6.2, and 6.3 show that religion and tribal leaders controlled the economic actions of the ancestors of the respondents. But among the respondents, many are individual and family-oriented. Out of 90 respondents, 33.33 per cent of the Paniyans and 41.11 per cent of the Kattunaickans and 74.44 per cent of the Kurichiyans are independent of the tribal and religious influence on actions related to income generation. But among their ancestors, 4.44 per cent of the Paniyans and 13.33 per cent of the Kattunaickans and 10 per cent of the Kurichiyans were independent of social control. It is worth mentioning that among the ancestors of Kurichiyans, joint family was the basic economic unit. Among the Kattunaickans and the Paniyans, joint family had no economic significance. While 70 per cent of the ancestors of the Kurichiyans respondents attach themselves with joint family for income generating activities, only 4.44 per cent of the Paniyans and 2.22 per cent of the Kattunaickans depend on joint family.

**Table 6.2**  
**Inter-Generational Mobility in Freedom Levels of Income Generation**  
**Activities of the Kattunaickans**

Category-Wise Distribution of Respondents	Category-Wise Distribution of Ancestors of Respondents					
	A	B	C	D	E	Total
A	4(4.44) <i>100</i>	0(0) 0	0(0) 0	7(7.77) <i>11.11</i>	1(1.11) <i>7.70</i>	12 (13.33)
B	0(0) 0	8(8.88) <i>100</i>	0(0) 0	10(11.11) <i>15.87</i>	7(7.77) <i>53.85</i>	25 (27.77)
C	0(0) 0	0(0) 0	2(2.22) <i>100</i>	0(0) 0	0(0) 0	2 (2.22)
D	0(0) 0	0(0) 0	0(0) 0	46(51.11) <i>73.02</i>	0(0) 0	46 (51.11)
E	0(0) 0	0(0) 0	0(0) 0	0(0) 0	5(5.55) <i>38.46</i>	5 (5.55)
Total	4(4.44)	8(8.88)	2(2.22)	63(70.00)	13(14.44)	90(100)

A= Individual, B=Family, C=Joint Family, D=Tribe, E=Religion

Figures in brackets show per cent

Figures in italics show mobility per cent

Source: Survey data

**Table 6.3**  
**Inter-Generational Mobility in Freedom Levels of Income Generation**  
**Activities of the Kurichiyans**

Category-Wise Distribution of Respondents	Category-Wise Distribution of Ancestors of Respondents					
	A	B	C	D	E	Total
A	3(3.33) <i>100</i>	0(0) 0	5(5.55) <i>7.94</i>	2(2.22) <i>22.22</i>	1(1.11) <i>11.11</i>	11(12.22)
B	0(0) 0	6(6.66) <i>100</i>	45(50.00) <i>71.43</i>	2(2.22) <i>22.22</i>	3(3.33) <i>33.33</i>	56(62.22)
C	0(0) 0	0(0) 0	13(14.44) <i>20.63</i>	0(0) 0	0(0) 0	13(14.44)
D	0(0) 0	0(0) 0	0(0) 0	5(5.55) <i>55.56</i>	0(0) 0	5(5.55)
E	0(0) 0	0(0) 0	0(0) 0	0(0) 0	5(5.55) <i>55.56</i>	5(5.55)
Total	3(3.33)	6(6.66)	63(70.00)	9(10.00)	9(9.99)	90(100.00)

A= Individual, B=Family, C=Joint Family, D=Tribe, E=Religion

Figures in brackets show per cent

Figures in italics show mobility per cent

Source: Survey data

## Freedom in Education

With regard to the actions related to education also, a movement in favour of the individual and family can be seen. Tables 6.4, 6.5 and 6.6 show the inter-generational mobility in the freedom exercised by the different tribes in actions related to education. In the case of the ancestors of the respondents of the Paniyans and the Kattunaickans, the actions were highly dependent on the social decisions. They thought that the school-going children were acting against the will of the spirit of the dead ancestors. But the ancestors of the Kurichiyan respondents accepted the importance of education and they performed actions independently.

**Table 6.4**  
**Inter-Generational Mobility in the Freedom Levels of Education of the Paniyans**

Category-Wise Distribution of Respondents	Category-Wise Distribution of Ancestors of Respondents					
	A	B	C	D	E	Total
A	2(2.22) <i>100</i>	0(0) <i>0</i>	0(0) <i>0</i>	4(4.44) <i>7.02</i>	2(2.22) <i>8.34</i>	8(8.88)
B	0(0) <i>0</i>	5(5.55) <i>100</i>	1(1.11) <i>50</i>	4(4.44) <i>7.02</i>	1(1.11) <i>4.17</i>	11(12.22)
C	0(0) <i>0</i>	0(0) <i>0</i>	1(1.11) <i>50</i>	0(0) <i>0</i>	0(0) <i>0</i>	1(1.11)
D	0(0) <i>0</i>	0(0) <i>0</i>	0(0) <i>0</i>	49(54.44) <i>85.96</i>	3(3.33) <i>12.49</i>	52(57.77)
E	0(0) <i>0</i>	0(0) <i>0</i>	0(0) <i>0</i>	0(0) <i>0</i>	18(20.00) <i>75</i>	18(20.00)
Total	2(2.22)	5(5.55)	2(5.55)	57(63.33)	24(26.66)	90(100.00)

A= Individual, B=Family, C=Joint Family, D=Tribe, E=Religion

Figures in brackets show per cent

Figures in italics show mobility per cent

Source: Survey data

While 63.33 per cent of the ancestors of the Paniyan respondents and 56.66 of the Kattunaickan respondents are dependent on the society, only 35.55 of the ancestors of the Kurichiyan respondents are dependent on the society for the actions related to education. While only 8.88 per cent of the

Paniyan respondents and 10 per cent of the Kattunaickans exercise their freedom individually, 26.66 per cent of the Kurichiyans independently act in matters of education.

**Table 6.5**  
**Inter-Generational Mobility in the Freedom Levels of Education of the Kattunaickans**

Category-Wise Distribution of Respondents	Category-Wise Distribution of Ancestors of Respondents					
	A	B	C	D	E	Total
A	3(3.33) <i>100</i>	0(0) <i>0</i>	0(0) <i>0</i>	5(5.55) <i>9.80</i>	1(1.11) <i>3.70</i>	9(10.00)
B	0(0) <i>0</i>	6(6.66) <i>100</i>	1(1.11) <i>33.33</i>	3(3.33) <i>5.89</i>	3(3.33) <i>11.11</i>	13(14.44)
C	0(0) <i>0</i>	0(0) <i>0</i>	2(2.22) <i>66.67</i>	0(0) <i>0</i>	0(0) <i>0</i>	2(2.22)
D	0(0) <i>0</i>	0(0) <i>0</i>	0(0) <i>0</i>	43(47.77) <i>84.31</i>	0(0) <i>0</i>	43(47.77)
E	0(0) <i>0</i>	0(0) <i>0</i>	0(0) <i>0</i>	0(0) <i>0</i>	23(25.55) <i>85.19</i>	23(25.55)
Total	3(3.33)	6(6.66)	3(3.33)	51(56.66)	27(30.00)	90(100.00)

A= Individual, B=Family, C=Joint Family, D=Tribe, E=Religion

Figures in brackets show per cent

Figures in italics show mobility per cent

Source: Survey data

**Table 6.6**  
**Inter-Generational Mobility in the Freedom Levels of Education of the Kurichiyans**

Category-Wise Distribution of Respondents	Category-Wise Distribution of Ancestors of Respondents					
	A	B	C	D	E	Total
A	8(8.88) <i>100</i>	2(2.22) <i>16.67</i>	8(8.88) <i>36.36</i>	3(3.33) <i>9.38</i>	3(3.33) <i>18.75</i>	24(26.66)
B	0(0) <i>0</i>	10(11.11) <i>83.33</i>	8(8.88) <i>36.37</i>	9(10.00) <i>28.12</i>	3(3.33) <i>18.75</i>	30(33.33)
C	0(0) <i>0</i>	0(0) <i>0</i>	6(6.66) <i>27.27</i>	5(5.55) <i>15.63</i>	7(7.77) <i>43.75</i>	18(20.00)
D	0(0) <i>0</i>	0(0) <i>0</i>	0(0) <i>0</i>	15(16.66) <i>46.88</i>	0(0) <i>0</i>	15(16.66)
E	0(0) <i>0</i>	0(0) <i>0</i>	0(0) <i>0</i>	0(0) <i>0</i>	3(3.33) <i>18.75</i>	3(3.33)
Total	8(8.88)	12(13.33)	22(24.44)	32(35.55)	16(17.77)	90(100.00)

A= Individual, B=Family, C=Joint Family, D=Tribe, E=Religion

Figures in brackets show per cent

Figures in italics show mobility per cent

Source: Survey data

## Freedom in Actions Related to Use of Medical Facilities

The freedom exercised in the actions related to the use of medical facilities is one of the major problems in the internal dynamics of tribal life. The tribes believe that health is a medium through which ancestors and gods punish their actions against social and religious norms. In comparison with the freedom exercised in income generational activities and education, the tribes depend more on social norms and religious practices for actions related to the maintenance of health. Tables 6.7, 6.8 and 6.9 show the intergenerational mobility in the freedom exercised for using medical facilities.

**Table 6.7**  
**Inter-Generational Mobility in the Freedom Levels of Health Care of the Paniyans**

Category-Wise Distribution of Respondents	Category-Wise Distribution of Ancestors of Respondents					
	A	B	C	D	E	Total
A	3(3.33) <i>100</i>	1(1.11) <i>14.29</i>	0(0) 0	2(2.22) <i>6.45</i>	1(1.11) <i>2.13</i>	7(7.77)
B	0(0) 0	6(6.66) <i>85.71</i>	1(1.11) <i>50</i>	1(1.11) <i>3.23</i>	2(2.22) <i>4.26</i>	10(11.11)
C	0(0) 0	0(0) 0	1(1.11) <i>50</i>	0(0) 0	0(0) 0	1(1.11)
D	0(0) 0	0(0) 0	0(0) 0	28(31.11) <i>90.32</i>	0(0) 0	28(31.11)
E	0(0) 0	0(0) 0	0(0) 0	0(0) 0	44(48.88) <i>93.61</i>	44(48.88)
Total	3(3.33)	7(7.77)	2(2.22)	31(34.44)	47(52.22)	90(100)

A= Individual, B=Family, C=Joint Family, D=Tribe, E=Religion

Figures in brackets show per cent

Figures in italics show mobility per cent

Source: Survey data

Among the Paniyans and the Kattunaickans, the actions related to the use of medical facilities depend on social and religious hierarchs. The inter-generational mobility in the exercise of freedom is little. While 86.66 per cent of the ancestors of the Paniyan and the Kattunaickan respondents depended

on social and religious leaders on the actions related to health, only 47.77 of the ancestors of the Kurichiyans depend on tribal and religious leaders for such decisions.

But among the respondents, 80.00 per cent of the Paniyans and 76.66 of the Kattunaickans depend on hierarchs. Only 32.22 of the Kurichiyans respondents depend on hierarchs.

**Table 6.8**  
**Inter-Generational Mobility in the Freedom Levels of Health Care of the Kattunaickans**

Category-Wise Distribution of Respondents	Category-Wise Distribution of Ancestors of Respondents					
	A	B	C	D	E	Total
A	4(4.44) <i>100</i>	2(2.22) <i>33.34</i>	0(0) <i>0</i>	1(1.11) <i>3.45</i>	1(1.11) <i>2.04</i>	8(8.88)
B	0(0) <i>0</i>	4(4.44) <i>66.66</i>	1(1.11) <i>50</i>	4(4.44) <i>13.79</i>	3(3.33) <i>6.12</i>	12(13.33)
C	0(0) <i>0</i>	0(0) <i>0</i>	1(1.11) <i>50</i>	0(0) <i>0</i>	0(0) <i>0</i>	1(1.11)
D	0(0) <i>0</i>	0(0) <i>0</i>	0(0) <i>0</i>	24(26.66) <i>82.76</i>	0(0) <i>0</i>	24(26.66)
E	0(0) <i>0</i>	0(0) <i>0</i>	0(0) <i>0</i>	0(0) <i>0</i>	45(50.00) <i>91.84</i>	45(50.00)
Total	4(4.44)	6(6.66)	2(2.22)	29(32.22)	49(54.44)	90(100.00)

A= Individual, B=Family, C=Joint Family, D=Tribe, E=Religion

Figures in brackets show per cent

Figures in italics show mobility per cent

Source: Survey data

The data presented above reveal that the Paniyans and the Kattunaickans are not at all evolving towards a formal economy. Their reluctance to perform independent actions reflected in their fear of punishment in the form of diseases. Thus, the coercion of social and religious norms through the fear of punishment of 'social sins' is one of the major impediments in the development of the Paniyans and the Kattunaickans.

**Table 6.9**  
**Inter-Generational Mobility in the freedom levels of Health Care of the Kurichiyans**

Category-Wise Distribution of Respondents	Category-Wise Distribution of Ancestors of Respondents					
	A	B	C	D	E	Total
A	6(6.66) <i>100</i>	1(1.11) <i>7.69</i>	2(2.22) <i>7.14</i>	0(0) <i>0</i>	1(1.11) <i>2.84</i>	10(11.11)
B	0(0) <i>0</i>	12(13.33) <i>92.31</i>	18(20.00) <i>64.29</i>	3(3.33) <i>17.65</i>	9(10.00) <i>34.62</i>	42(46.66)
C	0(0) <i>0</i>	0(0) <i>0</i>	8(8.88) <i>28.57</i>	0(0) <i>0</i>	0(0) <i>0</i>	8(8.89)
D	0(0) <i>0</i>	0(0) <i>0</i>	0(0) <i>0</i>	14(15.55) <i>82.35</i>	0(0) <i>0</i>	14(15.56)
E	0(0) <i>0</i>	0(0) <i>0</i>	0(0) <i>0</i>	0(0) <i>0</i>	16(17.77) <i>61.54</i>	16(17.78)
Total	6(6.66)	13(13.33)	28(31.11)	17(18.88)	26(28.88)	90(100.00)

A= Individual, B=Family, C=Joint Family, D=Tribe, E=Religion

Figures in brackets show per cent

Figures in italics show mobility per cent

Source: Survey data

Compared to the other two groups, the Kurichiyans are more prone to taking decisions regarding matters of health within the household itself. About 46.66 per cent of the respondents perform the actions related to health by family decisions. This shows that many of the Kurichiyans do not fear the punishment by the spirit of the ancestors for violating social norms.

### **Freedom Exercised in Consumption Expenditure**

Levels of freedom exercised in consumption show a different picture from that of the levels of freedom exercised for income generation, education and health. The ancestors of the tribes had a distribution system of their own based on reciprocity. Joint ownership of the means of production as well as the social consumption was a peculiar feature of tribes in Wynad. With monetization, the tribes obtained more freedom to enter into the consumer market of the non-tribes. In the absence of storage and marketing facilities,

the ancestors of the respondents either reduced the production or distributed the surplus product among the various members of the community.

The interaction with the non-tribes exposed them to new opportunities to sell their products for money. They do not know that money brings money. Tribes have only one motive for the use of money, that is, the transaction for consumption. Tables 6.10, 6.11 and 6.12 show the intergenerational mobility in the freedom exercised for consumption expenditure.

**Table 6.10**  
**Inter-Generational Mobility in the Freedom Levels of Expenditure of the Paniyans**

Category-Wise Distribution of Respondents	Category-Wise Distribution of Ancestors of Respondents					
	A	B	C	D	E	Total
A	1(1.11) <i>100</i>	2(2.22) <i>50</i>	1(1.11) <i>16.66</i>	41(45.55) <i>69.49</i>	2(2.22) <i>10</i>	47(52.22)
B	0(0) <i>0</i>	2(2.22) <i>50</i>	1(1.11) <i>16.67</i>	2(2.22) <i>3.38</i>	1(1.11) <i>5</i>	6(6.66)
C	0(0) <i>0</i>	0(0) <i>0</i>	4(4.44) <i>66.67</i>	0(0) <i>0</i>	0(0) <i>0</i>	4(4.44)
D	0(0) <i>0</i>	0(0) <i>0</i>	0(0) <i>0</i>	16(17.77) <i>27.11</i>	0(0) <i>0</i>	16(17.77)
E	0(0) <i>0</i>	0(0) <i>0</i>	0(0) <i>0</i>	0(0) <i>0</i>	17(18.88) <i>85</i>	17(18.88)
Total	1(1.11)	4(4.44)	6(6.66)	59(65.55)	20(24.44)	90(100.00)

A= Individual, B=Family, C=Joint Family, D=Tribe, E=Religion

Figures in brackets show per cent

Figures in italics show mobility per cent

Source: Survey data

While all the other aspects of tribal actions taken up above are highly rigid, the freedom exercised for consumption is very high. Out of the 90 respondents, 52.22 per cent of the Paniyans and 47.77 per cent of the Kattunaickans spend their money on the basis of individual preferences. But the ancestors of their respondents did not use this freedom.

**Table 6.11**  
**Inter-Generational Mobility in the Freedom Levels of Expenditure of the Kattunaickans**

Category-Wise Distribution of Respondents	Category-Wise Distribution of Ancestors of Respondents					
	A	B	C	D	E	Total
A	1(1.11) <i>100</i>	1(1.11) <i>33.33</i>	0(0) 0	39(43.33) <i>67.24</i>	2(2.22) <i>7.69</i>	43(47.77)
B	0(0) 0	2(2.22) <i>66.64</i>	0(0) 0	4(4.44) <i>6.89</i>	2(2.22) <i>7.69</i>	8(8.88)
C	0(0) 0	0(0) 0	2(2.22) <i>100</i>	0(0) 0	0(0) 0	2(2.22)
D	0(0) 0	0(0) 0	0(0) 0	15(16.66) <i>25.86</i>	1(1.11) <i>3.84</i>	16(17.77)
E	0(0) 0	0(0) 0	0(0) 0	0(0) 0	21(23.33) <i>80.77</i>	21(23.33)
Total	1(1.11)	3(3.33)	2(2.22)	58(64.44)	26(28.88)	90(100.00)

A= Individual, B=Family, C=Joint Family, D=Tribe, E=Religion

Figures in brackets show per cent

Figures in italics show mobility per cent

Source: Survey data

On the other hand, the Kurichiyans spend their income on the basis of the decisions taken within the household. The consumption of the ancestors of the Kurichiyans depended on joint family. While 48.88 of the ancestors of the Kurichiyans were dependent on joint family for consumption, 56.66 of the respondents depended on family for their actions related to consumption. The simultaneous existence of the individual freedom exercised in consumption and the social dependence in production among the tribes is a contradiction that we have observed in the economic behaviour of the tribes in Wynad.

**Table 6.12**  
**Inter-Generational Mobility in the Freedom Levels of Expenditure of the Kurichiyans**

Category-Wise Distribution of Respondents	Category-Wise Distribution of Ancestors of Respondents					
	A	B	C	D	E	Total
A	2(2.22) <i>100</i>	0(0) <i>0</i>	0(0) <i>0</i>	2(2.22) <i>11.76</i>	1(1.11) <i>5.27</i>	5(5.55)
B	0(0) <i>0</i>	8(8.88) <i>100</i>	33(36.66) <i>75</i>	6(6.66) <i>35.29</i>	4(4.44) <i>21.06</i>	51(56.66)
C	0(0) <i>0</i>	0(0) <i>0</i>	11(12.22) <i>25</i>	3(3.33) <i>17.65</i>	2(2.22) <i>10.56</i>	16(17.77)
D	0(0) <i>0</i>	0(0) <i>0</i>	0(0) <i>0</i>	6(6.66) <i>35.29</i>	5(5.55) <i>26.31</i>	11(12.22)
E	0(0) <i>0</i>	0(0) <i>0</i>	0(0) <i>0</i>	0(0) <i>0</i>	7(7.77) <i>36.84</i>	7(7.77)
Total	2(2.22)	8(8.88)	44(48.88)	17(18.88)	19(21.11)	90(100.00)

A= Individual, B=Family, C=Joint Family, D=Tribe, E=Religion

Figures in brackets show per cent

Figures in italics show mobility per cent

Source: Survey data

### **Differences in Freedom Exercised for Production and Consumption**

In the previous chapter, we have identified that the production structure of tribes shows a dominance of the first order commodities and in the consumption structure there is dominance of commodities with high value added. Moreover, rigidity in production structure is also identified among the tribes. One explanation for such behaviour is the difference in freedom enjoyed for actions related to production and consumption. The tribes exercise more freedom for consumption than for production.

Table 6.13 exhibits the difference in the freedom exercised for actions related to production like income generation, education and health with that of the freedom exercised for consumption. A question that has to be mooted here is as to why the tribes exercise more freedom for consumption than for

production. The answer to such a question is not analysed here because it is beyond the scope of this thesis<sup>11</sup>.

**Table 6.13**  
**Consolidated Statement of the Distribution of the Tribal Respondents**  
**on the Basis of the Levels of Freedom Exercised**

Categories	Tribes	Economic Activities				
		Income Generation	Education	Health	Consumption	Total
A	P	8	8	7	47	70
	Ka	12	9	8	43	72
	Ku	11	24	10	5	50
B	P	22	11	10	6	49
	Ka	25	13	12	8	58
	Ku	56	30	42	51	179
C	P	3	1	1	4	9
	Ka	2	2	1	2	7
	Ku	13	18	8	16	55
D	P	51	52	28	18	149
	Ka	46	43	24	16	129
	Ku	5	15	14	11	45
E	P	6	18	44	15	83
	Ka	5	23	45	21	94
	Ku	5	3	16	7	31

A= Individual, B=Family, C=Joint Family, D=Tribe, E=Religion

P=Paniyans, Ka=Kattunaickans, Ku=Kurichiyans

Source: Survey data

However, Table 6.13 indicates that 52.22 per cent of the Paniyans and 47.77 per cent of the Kattunaickans are exercising individual freedom for consumption. In contrast to this, only 5.55 per cent of the Kurichiyans are exercising individual freedom for consumption. The dominance of the family in economic action is seen among the Kurichiyans. This indicates the role of household economy in the life of the said tribe. Tribes use more freedom for consumption than for production and this may be one reason as to why the changes in consumption structure are faster than the changes in the production structure as we have explained in Chapter 5. Both the Paniyans and the Kattunaickans use maximum individual freedom for consumption.

The row totals in Table 6. 13 show the dominance of various levels of hierarchy in the economic actions of various tribes. While 49.72 (179/360) per cent of the Kurichiyans depend on family, only 13.6 (49/360) per cent of the Paniyans and 16.11(58/360) per cent of the Kattunaickans depend on family. The dominance of the tribal society on the economic actions of the Paniyans and the Kattunaickans are also seen from the row totals. While 41.38 (149/360) per cent of the actions of the Paniyans and 35.83 (129/360) per cent of the actions of the Kattunaickans depend on society, only 12.5 (45/360) per cent of the Kurichiyans depend on society for economic actions.

An analysis of row A in Table 6.13 indicates that both the Paniyans and the Kattunaickans exercise more individual freedom for consumption than for production. The pro-consumptive nature of the tribal society is more evident in the economic actions of the said tribes. The data regarding the Kurichiyans show a different picture. The Kurichiyans exercise comparatively more freedom for production than for consumption.

### **Consolidated Statement of Inter-generational Mobility in Freedom Levels**

The consolidated statement of inter generational mobility of freedom exercised in economic actions shows that individual freedom exercised is very low among the tribes in general. Table 6.14 shows the consolidated statement of the tribal exercise of freedom in economic actions. While only 3.61 per cent of the ancestral actions were taken by individuals, 17.78 of the tribal respondents are ready to act individually. Formerly, the family took 7.40 per cent of the actions, whereas now it is 26.48. Though the percentage of individual and family actions has increased, there is reduction in the

percentage of actions performed on the basis of joint family, tribal leadership and religion.

**Table 6.14**  
**Consolidated Statement of Inter-Generational Mobility of Freedom Levels for Economic Activity of all Tribes Taken Together**

Category-Wise Distribution of Respondents	Category-Wise Distribution of Ancestors of Respondents					
	A	B	C	D	E	Total
A	39 <i>100</i>	9 <i>11.25</i>	16 <i>8.89</i>	111 <i>22.69</i>	17 <i>5.82</i>	192 <i>17.78</i>
B	0(0) 0	71 <i>88.75</i>	113 <i>62.78</i>	58 <i>11.86</i>	44 <i>15.07</i>	286 <i>26.49</i>
C	0(0) 0	0	51 <i>28.33</i>	10 <i>2.04</i>	10 <i>3.42</i>	71 <i>6.87</i>
D	0(0) 0	0	0	310 <i>63.39</i>	11 <i>3.77</i>	321 <i>29.72</i>
E	0	0	0	0	210 <i>71.91</i>	210 <i>19.44</i>
Total	39(3.61) <i>100</i>	80(7.40) <i>100</i>	180(16.67) <i>100</i>	489(45.28) <i>100</i>	292(27.04) <i>100</i>	1080 <i>100</i>

A= Individual, B=Family, C=Joint Family, D=Tribe, E=Religion

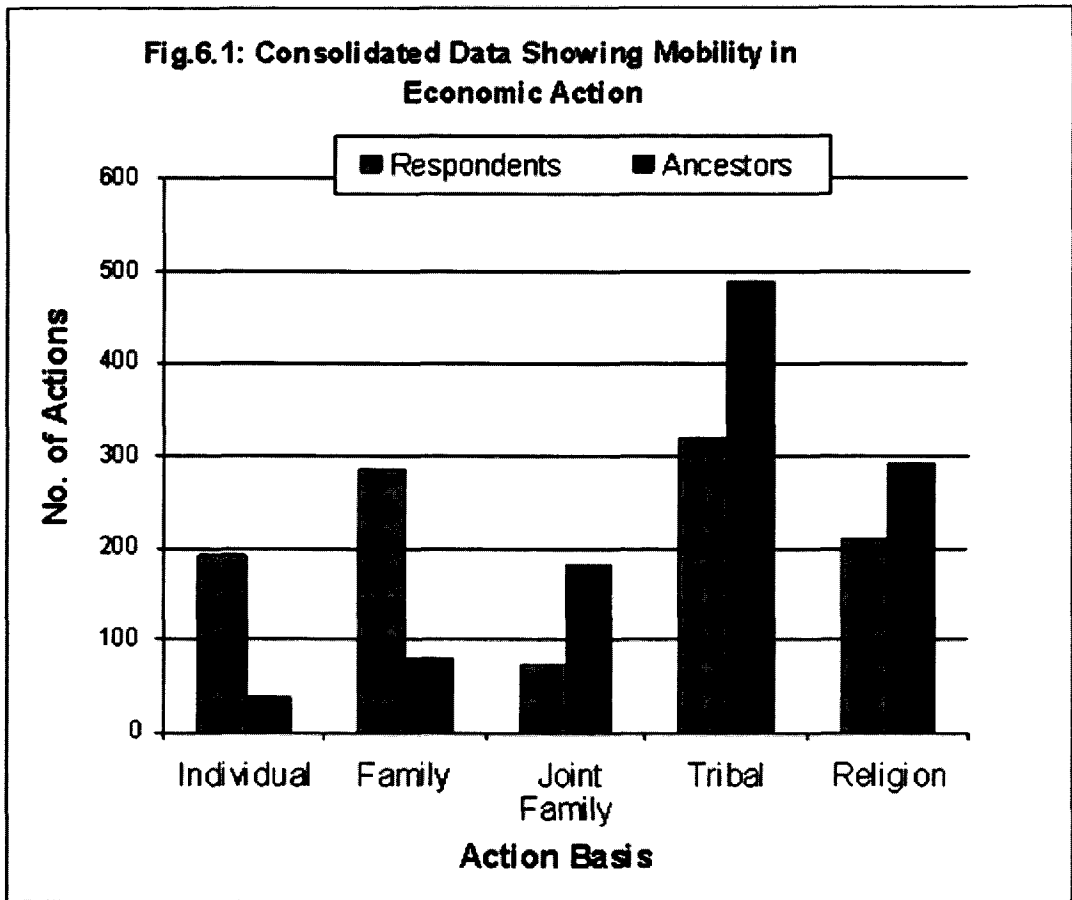
Figures in brackets show per cent

Figures in italics show mobility per cent

Source: Survey data

Though the number of individuals who depend on social hierarchs has come down, 29.72 per cent of the tribal actions are still based on social norms and social hierarchs. Moreover, 19.44 per cent are depending on religious norms for economic actions. This indicates that the tribal economy is still substantive in its nature.

The Fig. 6.1 clearly states the inter-generational changes in the freedom exercised by the tribes in Wynad. Though there are changes in exercise of the economic freedom, many tribals are still depending on the tribal and religious leadership for their economic actions.



The above analysis indicates that inside the tribal community, there exists another government, which is acting through traditional customs and practices, influencing the economic actions of individuals in the tribal communities. The existence of such a parallel government is visible in areas where tribal population is very strong enough to establish their worldview<sup>12</sup>. In Wynad, there are certain tribal groups that are striving for the establishment of traditional form of tribal governance. The ambivalence between the traditional and the modern is seen in the economic actions of the tribes in Wynad.

## **Social Dilemmas in Tribal Economic Actions**

Analysis regarding the levels of freedom exercised by the tribes in economic actions through its institutional apparatus reveals the possibility for conflicts in the institutional framework of the tribal society. While the tribal *moopans*, who act on the basis on the traditional norms, solely take the decision making of the Paniyans and the Kattunaickans, the joint family and the tribal chieftains take the decisions in the Kurichiya tribes. While the tribal chief among the Paniyans and the Kattunaickans jointly possessed the property, head of the joint family possessed the lands among the Kurichiyan tribes. Though the institution of private property was absent in the tribes of Wynad, for the Kurichiyans, private property of the joint family was established, where joint family was considered as an “individual”. Among the Kattunaikkans and the Paniyans, informal laws prohibit the permanent settlement in a permanent place. Since private choices are controlled by the social hierarchs through the above mentioned institution of decision-making and property ownership, conflict arises between those individuals who have the capacity to challenge the social norms. The conflict between the traditional political structure based on customs and the modern political structure based on the Indian Constitution created an impossibility to implement development projects in scheduled areas where tribal density in very high<sup>13</sup>.

## **Conflict in Economic Activities**

The tribes conduct the agricultural operations as a social festival. Various religions rituals are performed during ploughing, sowing, weeding,

fertilising and harvesting. These amount to putting boundary to the private rationality in agricultural operations.

Even if some individuals want to take any decision independently of the tribal society, the possibility for accomplishing this was remote. New initiatives were suppressed by the hierarchs through social out-casting. Those who follow private choices in economic actions different from that of the society should have to take social risk in addition to economic risk.

Many of the respondents reported that while they changed their cropping pattern from paddy and banana to coconut, many-faced opposition from the other members of the joint family and tribal chief. This might have negatively affected their developmental efforts. The analysis of the relationship between levels of freedom enjoyed by different tribes and their H.D.I. may reveal the influence of social hierarchs in the retardation of economic development<sup>14</sup> of the tribes. Since development begins from inside a community, any hindrance to the freedom for economic action negates development. The hindrances to their economic action may come from outside or inside. These hindrances are the lack of freedom. Freedom intrinsically and instrumentally has an influence in the development of a community<sup>15</sup>. Freedom in an economy is determined by the distribution of power<sup>16</sup>.

### **Relationship between HDI and Freedom Index**

The discussion done above has revealed that the economic actions of the tribal households are not free from social constraints. The data regarding the inter-generational mobility of freedom levels exercised by different tribal

groups reveal the changes occurring in the substantive character of tribal economic actions. Our next attempt will be to analyse whether the freedom exercised and the constraints imposed by the tribal hierarchs has any impact on the development achievements of the tribes.

The relevance of freedom and its negation on economic development is analysed by observing the relationship between Human Development Index (HDI) and levels of freedom exercised by the various tribal respondents in performing economic actions. The influence of freedom in the economic activity of different tribes is analysed separately and in general. The levels of freedom enjoyed for income generation, health and education, and consumption expenditure are measured by using scale ranging from 3 to 15.

The process of scaling is given as follows. For scaling purpose, economic action is divided into three parts, namely, motivation, decision and implementation.

If the three steps of an action, motivation, decision and implementation is performed depending on religious norms and leaders, score 3 is given. This indicates that the individual exercises minimum freedom in his action. Here 1 point each is given to motivation decision and implementation.

On the other hand, when the action of the individual is based on the tribal chief and social norms, score 2 is given to each of the three factors in an economic action. Thus, score 6 means that the economic action is totally dependent on tribal chief and the social norms.

If the motivation, decision and implementation depend on joint family, point 3 is given to each. Thus, score 9 means that the economic actions are totally depended on joint family.

If the motivation, decision and implementation depends on family, score 4 is given to each and the total 12 indicates that the economic action depends on family.

If the motivation, decision and implementation is performed on individual capacity, that is treated as maximum freedom. Then, the score 5 is given to each of the various steps in an economic action and results in the value 15. The value 15 in the scale indicates maximum individual freedom in economic action.

The value 3 means motivation, decision and implementation of an economic action that totally depends on the society. This indicates a situation of absolute social control. The value 15 means absolute freedom of the individual for economic action. The higher values for measuring freedom levels show higher freedom.

From the scale values, freedom index is estimated for both production and consumption. For estimating the freedom index, the formula (Actual – Minimum) divided by (Maximum – Minimum) is used. The maximum for estimating production index is 15 and minimum is 3. The freedom index for production is estimated by calculating the average of the indices of the three variables, which positively affect production.

Freedom index for production =  $\frac{1}{3}$  (Freedom index for generating income + Freedom index for education + Freedom index for health).

The rationality for combining these three factors lies in the argument that current income determines the current development, and health and education determine the future development. Moreover, HDI is estimated by integrating the variables of income, health and education. Consequently, to analyse the relationship between HDI and freedom, freedom levels for income generation, education and health are combined together and made into one index.

Scatter diagram of the freedom levels of various economic activities and HDI shows a positive relationship between HDI and freedom levels related to the production and negative relationship between HDI and freedom levels for consumption. Therefore, freedom index for consumption is estimated separately and the relationship between HDI and freedom index for consumption is analysed.

A multiple regression equation is fitted with HDI index as the dependent variable and freedom index for production and consumption as independent variables. The functional equation fitted is of the following form:

$$Y = a_0 + a_1 X_1 + a_2 X_2 + u$$

Where Y = Human Development Index

$X_1$  = Economic freedom index for production

$X_2$  = Economic freedom index for consumption

$a_0$ ,  $a_1$ , and  $a_2$  parameters to be estimated and

u = Error term

Significance of the estimates of the parameters is tested by using t-test.

## Regression Results

Paniyans:

$$Y = 0.359 + 0.179 X_1 - 0.09 X_2$$

$$(0.014) \quad (0.021) \quad (0.015)$$

$$24.42 \quad 8.17 \quad 5.86 \quad R \text{ square} = 0.543 \quad \text{Adjusted R square} = 0.53$$

Kattunaickans:

$$Y = 0.371 + 0.215 X_1 - 0.12 X_2$$

$$(0.01) \quad (0.02) \quad (0.016)$$

$$28.47 \quad 10.01 \quad -7.24 \quad R \text{ square} = 0.59 \quad \text{Adjusted R square} = 0.58$$

Kurichiyans:

$$Y = 0.375 + 0.33 X_1 - 0.190 X_2$$

$$(0.019) \quad (0.03) \quad (0.02)$$

$$19.03 \quad 10.98 \quad -6.57 \quad R \text{ square} = 0.58 \quad \text{Adjusted R square} = 0.57$$

Pooled Regression:

$$Y = 0.356 + 0.256 X_1 - 0.116 X_2$$

$$(0.009) \quad (0.013) \quad (0.011)$$

$$38.32 \quad 19.64 \quad 10.14 \quad R \text{ square} = 0.613 \quad \text{Adjusted R square} = 0.610$$

Regression results show that the argument made by liberal economic thinkers that freedom exercised by individuals in a society has a positive influence on economic growth and development is valid in the case of the tribes of Wynad. The present study finds that the empirical studies conducted by various international agencies on the basis of the argument that freedom influences development by estimating the freedom index is valid not only in the case of developed economies but also in the primitive tribal economies<sup>17</sup>.

Certain differences with the earlier studies should also be mentioned here. Freedom for both production and consumption is treated on the same footing by the earlier studies and the liberal economic policies. This study, on the other hand, indicates that freedom for production and freedom for consumption have opposite effects on development. The variable freedom index for production has positive coefficients and freedom for consumption has negative coefficients. Hence this study indicates the necessity for controlling the freedom for consumption of the individuals in a society.

Regression analysis between HDI and freedom index for production and consumption shows that a relationship exists between these two. Higher the freedom exercised in health, education and in activities which generate income, higher the development. Conversely, higher the freedom exercised for consumption, lower the development. Such a finding leads one to the following conclusions:

- (a) Individual freedom in economic actions is restricted by the interventions of hierarchs in the tribal communities.
- (b) There is inter-generational change in the freedom exercised by the individuals in the tribal communities.
- (c) Exercise of freedom in different communities is different.
- (d) The Kurichiyans exercise more freedom in economic action than the other two communities.
- (e) The freedom exercised for income generation, education and health positively influences the HDI, and
- (f) The freedom exercised for consumption has negative influence on HDI.

Before winding up this exercise in finding out the role of internal factors in the economic development of the tribes of Wynad, it is to be emphasized that the freedom exercised by various tribal households in participating modern economic institutions is also a determinant of the variations in the development achievement of the tribes in Wynad. Since this exercise of freedom depends on the internal organisational structure of the tribes, the restructuring of tribal institutions to allow for more freedom to its members, enabling them to participate in modern economic institutions, is necessary for the economic development of the tribes.

## Notes and References

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- <sup>1</sup> According to Marxian analysis, the economy transforms from one stage into another on the fulcrum i.e., the mode of production. Mode of production has two dimensions, namely (a) Forces of Production (b) Relations of Production. Relations of Production explains the relationship between man and the society. Relations of Production has been interpreted only in terms of class relationships, developed on the basis of property ownership. New institutionalist theories developed formation of social relationships beyond the definition of class relationship based only on property ownership. For the institutionalists, property is only one institution. All the social structures, which help to reduce conflict between private and public choice, are the institutions. The role institutions to create space for individual freedom and its impact on economic development are addressed in the recent World Development Reports. For details see, The World Bank, *World Development Report 2006: Equity and Development* (New York: Oxford University Press, 2006).
- <sup>2</sup> D. T. King and C. D. King, *Economics in Society: a Basic Course* (London: George Allen & Unwin Ltd, 1976), p. 136.
- <sup>3</sup> Pranab Bardhan, 'Some Reflections on the Use of the Concept of Power in Economics' in Kausik Basu and Pulin Nayak ed., *Development Policy and Economic Theory* (Delhi: Oxford University Press, 1994), p. 64.
- <sup>4</sup> This is a common feature of the tribes all over the world. For details see, Amiya Kumar Bagchi, *The Political Economy of Underdevelopment* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1982), p. 9.
- <sup>5</sup> Carol R. Ember, Melwin Ember, Peter N. Peregrine, *Anthropology* (Delhi: Pearson Education, 2003), p. 359.
- <sup>6</sup> In many countries of the Middle East, government wanted the Bedouin people, who had animals, over vast stretches of semi arid grassland to settlement. Governments have tried to settle them down. But the settlements have failed. The Bedouins started to herd animals near newly constructed settlement but such grassing often results in human made deserts near the settlements. Thus the settlements are abandoned. The traditional way of herding depends on mobility. When the animals eat the tops of the grass in particular place the people need to move. So with out changing the traditional method of grazing, permanent settlement are impossible. Mobility is a part of their economic life.
- <sup>7</sup> Carol R. Ember, Melwin Ember and Peter N. Peregrine, *op. cit.*, p. 223.
- <sup>8</sup> C. T. Paul, 'The Tasks of Voluntary Organisations for Rural Development', *The Mysore Economic Review*, Vol.76, No.6&7, June & July 1991.
- <sup>9</sup> The World Bank, *World Development Report 2006: Equity and Development* (New York: Oxford University Press, 2006), p. 108.
- <sup>10</sup> K. Saradmoni, *Emergence of a Slave Caste* (Delhi: Peoples Publishing House, 1980), p., 34.
- <sup>11</sup> Why do tribes use more freedom for consumption than for production? Is it the behaviour of tribes or is it a general behaviour of human kind? The answer for this question needs further in-depth analysis about economic behaviour of human

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beings. An attempt is made by Karl Marx to address questions pertaining to this area of human behaviour. For further details see, Karl Marx, *Economic and Philosophical Manuscripts of 1844*, reprint (Moscow: Progress Publishers, 1982), p. 66.

<sup>12</sup> For more details see, Nandini Sundar, 'Custom and Democracy in Jharkhand' *Economic and Political Weekly*, October 14, 2005, Vol. XL No 41, PP. 4430-4438.

<sup>13</sup> *Ibid*, p., 4434.

<sup>14</sup> The World Bank, *op. cit.*, pp. 107-113.

<sup>15</sup> Amartya Sen, 'Food and Freedom' in Kausik Basu and Pulin Nayak ed., *Development Policy and Economic Theory* (Delhi: Oxford University Press, 1994), p. 16.

<sup>16</sup> Pranab Bardhan, *op. cit.*, p. 74.

<sup>17</sup> The relationship between economic growth and freedom is analysed and the dependency of economic growth on freedom is empirically established by various agencies in the world. The names of various institutes in the world that conduct studies based on this methodology are available. For more details see, James Gwarttery and Robert Lawson, *Economic Freedom of the World* (New Delhi: Academic Foundation, 2004), pp. vi-xvi.

# CONCLUSION

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## **Chapter VII**

### **CONCLUSION**

The extant studies on the development of the tribes have been conducted on the basis of the assumption that problems external to the tribal society i.e., exploitation by non-tribes, caused the underdevelopment of the tribes. Consequently, little importance was given to the study of the problems of the internal structure of tribal organisation. The present study is an attempt to probe into the influence of the internal factors of tribal communities on their development. Since economic development is a process that starts from the internal activity of a community, this inquiry has given more emphasis to look into how the internal factors of the tribal society influence its economic activity.

The main focus of the study has been on the influence of internal factors that come into conflict with the external interventions of the non-tribes, which broke the traditionally existing institutional frameworks of the economic activity of the tribes. Again, the development failures may have some connectivity with the manner in which the external interventions lead to the formation of counter productive forces in the institutional framework of the tribes. The presence of such forces existing in the tribal economic institution may retard the pace of the development brought about by the external agencies and malign the interaction between tribal and non-tribal dynamics.

The main objectives of the study are:

- (A) To evaluate the socio-economic status of the tribes in Wynad District of Kerala and to compare the inter-group variations in their development.
- (B) To assess the structure of the production and consumption behaviour of the tribes.
- (C) To evaluate the influence of the internal factors of economic actions on the level of Human Development Index of the tribes, and
- (D) To identify the built-in internal constraints of the tribes which restrict their development.

Theoretical framework of the study undertaken is formulated by using the various concepts of the theory of economic growth and development. Theory of growth is based on the assumption that surplus formation and its transformation into capital is a necessary condition for growth and development. Surplus being the excess of production over consumption, permanent disability of a community to produce surplus prevents the possibility for economic expansion. The influence of the social structure in which the society organises its economic activity for generating surplus is analysed in this study.

The liberalist economists opined that the economic actions of the individuals of a society should be totally independent of social control. Under

the influence of this argument, development theorists framed their theories on the assumption that economic actions of the individuals are totally independent of the social structure in which the economic agents live.

The studies related to the economic behaviour of the tribes indicate a different picture. The tribes do not have economic actions independent of social decisions. Therefore, the use of formal economic theories, framed on the assumption that the individual's economic actions are independent of social decisions, has been questioned by certain thinkers. To overcome this criticism, this study has framed an empirical methodology by integrating formal and substantive economic theory. The current scenario of the tribes shows that the tribal situation is neither substantive nor formal. One of the initial findings of the study derived from the analysis of secondary information is that the tribes are evolving from a substantive nature and are on a process of getting transformed into a formal nature.

Whatever may be the nature of the economy, it experiences certain problems especially during the period of transition in connection with the transformation of surplus into capital for further development. In a substantive economy, both production and consumption are controlled by the society, but in a formal economy both are free. During the transition, the difference in the level of freedom enjoyed in actions related to production and consumption may lead to the drain of surplus and secular stagnation of the economy.

The lack of freedom for production activities pegged the transition economies into the production of first order goods, for which value added is

very low. If the individuals in the society enjoy more freedom for consumption than production, consumption will move to goods which have high value added. Consequentially, in an economy where production is limited to primary goods with low value added and consumption leaning towards goods that have high value added, there is theoretically little chance for surplus formation and economic development. Since the tribal economies are transition economies, this study is an empirical attempt to find out the relationship between the development and the freedom levels enjoyed for production and consumption.

To validate the above theoretical conclusions, the following prepositions are tested.

- (1) Human development is related to the individual's freedom for consumption.
- (2) Human development is related to the individual's freedom for actions related to income generation, education and health.

This study is conducted about the tribes of Wynad District of Kerala State where 37.36 per cent of the total tribal population of the state is concentrated. Out of the seven categories of the tribes that have been enumerated as Scheduled Tribes in 2001 Census, three tribal groups are selected for this study. While selecting the Kurichiyans, the Paniyans and the Kattunaickans as the three groups, differences in the development achievements are taken as the main criterion. Among these groups, the Kattunaickans belong to the Primitive Tribal Group (PTG). From each group,

ninety (90) households belonging to three Taluks of Wynad district are selected, forming the size of sample respondents as 270.

Freedom levels of each household in participating in production, education, health care and consumption are measured and its relation with the Human Development Index is estimated by using multiple regression method. The incompatibility in the production and consumption behaviour is also analysed by measuring the proportions of goods according to its order in the total income produced and the total income consumed. The inter-generational mobility is also observed. The following tools are used in this analysis: (1) Human Development Index; (2) Categorisation of occupation, income and expenditure of the tribes according to the order of goods; (3) Economic freedom index for consumption; (4) Economic freedom index for production; (5) Freedom mobility matrix; and (6) Multiple regression.

## **Findings**

(1) The extant studies that probed into the problems of the tribes indicate that the depletion in the income sources of the tribes is the main cause of the underdevelopment of the tribes. This study also attests to the finding that there is erosion in the income sources of the tribes like land and forest

(2) The exploitation of the tribes by the non-tribes has been identified as the main reason for the erosion of resources. The political conquest of Wynad by Kottayam Raja in 17<sup>th</sup> century and later by Tippu Sultan caused the marginalisation of the tribes. The British forest policy and the immigration of

plainsmen for commercial exploitation of forest and land of Wynad further marginalized the tribes to the peripheries of economic life.

(3) To overcome the problems generated by the exploitation of the non-tribes, many constitutional safeguards have been formulated for the betterment of the tribes. To fulfil the constitutional safeguards, the Union and State Governments have been helping the tribes through the Five-year Plans. The appraisal committee constituted for evaluating the work done for the promotion of tribal welfare suggested the setting up of a Tribal Sub-Plan, from the Fifth Five-Year Plan onwards. Since the Fifth Five-Year Plan period, a specific proportion of the total plan expenditure has been earmarked for tribal development in the State of Kerala too. This expenditure is incurred both for the development of the tribal areas and for the development of the individual tribal households. The welfare programmes meant for tribes concentrated in education, health care, housing and distribution of land for the landless tribes. However, a large number of the tribes in Kerala are still below the poverty line. The situation of the tribes in Wynad is more pathetic. During the year 2002-03, 64794 households in Wynad district were found below the poverty line. Out of this, 19,502 households belonged to tribal category. Poverty-ridden tribal households in Wynad district formed 58.23 per cent of the total tribal households. This indicates the failure of the programmes implemented by the government to promote the economic well being of the tribes.

(4) Estimates made in this study by using the variables suggested by UNDP for measuring development achievements indicate that certain tribes

are better off than the other tribes in terms of per capita income, expenditure for food, housing, health, sanitation, drinking water, education and literacy. The inter-tribal differences in the development achievements measured through the above variables exhibited significant difference among the three tribes. This difference is highly significant in the case of the Kurichiyans.

(5) Human Development Index is estimated by combining income, health and educational status of each household of various tribes. Analysis of variance is used to test the differences. The results show that the Human Development Index has been significantly different among the different tribes at one percent level of significance.

(6) Among the tribes, the Kurichiyans are found to be more developed than the other two tribes. The overall mean value of H. D. I. is estimated as 0.4106. The mean value of HDI for the Kattunaickans is estimated as 0.3814 and for the Paniyans it is estimated as 0.3714. On the other hand, mean value of HDI for the Kurichiyans is estimated as 0.4790. From this, it is concluded that the Kurichiyans are economically better off than the other two tribes.

(7) Naturally, our analysis proceeded to find out the causes for the differences in the development achievements. To accomplish this, the tribal way of generation and utilisation of income is analysed. A detailed analysis of the production and consumption structure has revealed that there is no inter-generational difference in the production structure of the tribes. At the same time, very significant change is observed in the consumption structure.

The production and consumption structure is analysed by measuring the proportion of income generated and expended from and for the first order goods. It is revealed that among the ancestors of the respondents of the three tribal groups under study, more than 93 per cent of their working population generated income from the production of the first order goods. But data regarding the production structure of the respondents reveal that no positive change happened in the production structure of the tribes. Instead, the percentage of people who engaged in the production of primary goods and services increased from 93 per cent to 95 per cent. However, a slight difference in the production structure of the Kurichiyans has been observed. While 88 per cent of the ancestors of the Kurichiyans were engaged in the production of the first order goods, the percentage of respondents engaged in the production of the first order goods is only 85.

With regard to the production structure of the tribal respondents in terms of the income generated, 90.83 per cent of the income of the Paniyans and 88.82 per cent of the income of the Kattunaickans are earned from the first order goods. But for the Kurichiyans, only 80.26 per cent of their income is derived from the production of first order goods. The tribal households in the sample area are observed as not generating their income from sources that have high value added, i.e., fourth order goods.

On the other hand, the consumption structure reveals that the percentage of total expenditure spent for purchasing first order goods is very low. It is observed that 50.03 per cent of the expenditure of the Paniyans, 50.61 per cent of the Kattunaickans and 61.56 per cent of the Kurichiyans are

expended for the purchase of the first order goods. At the same time, 28.70 per cent of the expenditure of the Paniyans and 30.65 per cent of the Kattunaickans are expended for the goods which have maximum value added like liquor, hotel food and tobacco and for paying exorbitant amount of interest. But the Kurichiyans spend only 14.96 per cent of their expenditure for purchasing goods with high value added. This reveals the fact that the cause of drainage of resources is due to the incompatibility between production structure and consumption structure, i.e., production is pegged to first order goods and consumption is moving towards higher order goods. This incompatibility is manifest best in the production and consumption behaviour of the Paniyans and the Kattunaickans. Production structure suitable to a need based economy and consumption structure of a want based economy are identified as the cause which breaks the path of growth mechanism leading to the under development of the tribes.

Consumption of goods with high value added easily leads to the exhaustion of the household and community budgets. This compels them to raise additional income to meet the requirements of daily necessities and contingencies and has led to the over exploitation of forest resources, selling of property, and loans from money lenders.

(8) Tribes had a unique system of distribution of their products among themselves, which is termed as reciprocity. Under this system, social security is guaranteed in times of contingencies and the tribals need not save for future risks. Due to the interaction with the non-tribes, they dismantled the system of reciprocity. At the same time, they could not develop a new system in the

place of the old one, suitable to the market economy for meeting the risks and contingencies out of personal savings. Due to this, tribes approach money lenders in times of contingencies and fall into the debt trap.

(9) Furthermore, the marginal propensity to consume is very high among the selected tribes. It is estimated as 0.92 for the Paniyans, 0.91 for the Kattunaickans and 0.87 for the Kurichiyans.

(10) The percentage of income spent by the males and females for family goals and individual goals indicate that the female members of the Paniyans and the Kattunaickans allot more income for the welfare of the family. The female members allot 72.57, 68.28, and 72.69 per cent of their income respectively for family goals. On the other hand, the male members of the Paniyan, the Kattunaickan and the Kurichiyans tribes allot 31.78, 29.62, and 79.60 per cent of their income respectively for family goals. This finding validates the necessity of the *Kudumbasree* project to empower women for eradicating poverty.

(11) This study further probed as to why there is incompatibility in the production and consumption structure of the tribes. This has been done by analysing the differences in the level of freedom enjoyed by the tribes in production and consumption. An analysis of the freedom enjoyed for production and consumption indicates that both the Paniyans and the Kattunaickans exercise more individual freedom for consumption than for production. The pro-consumptive nature of the tribal society is more evident in the economic actions of the said tribes. The data regarding the Kurichiyans

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show a different picture. The Kurichiyans exercise comparatively more freedom for production than for consumption.

By analysing how far is the freedom of the individuals to participate in the modern methods of production, education, health and consumption controlled by family, joint family, tribe and religion, we have found that internal factors control the economic development of the individuals through the hierarchical system within the tribal society.

Quantitatively, 82.22 per cent of the Paniyans and 80 per cent of the Kattunaickans and 35.55 per cent of the Kurichiyans believe that the violation of social and religious norms will lead to ill health, diseases, failure of agriculture and financial crisis. They fear to perform an action, which is against the social or religious norms of the tribe. Hence the new initiatives in income generating activities, health, and education need additional effort. In other words, elements of cost for overcoming the influence of the internal factors—cultural cost—also should be included in the cost structure of tribal production. This is observed as the fundamental reason for the rigidity in the production structure of the tribes.

(12) Consolidated data regarding the inter-generational mobility of freedom levels show that only 27 of the tribal actions are on the basis of household. The actions based on household economy are very low among the Kattunaickans and the Paniyans compared to that of the Kurichiyans. 72.22 per cent of the Paniyans and 70 per cent of the Kattunaickans do not have separate kitchen for preparing food in the house itself. But 95.56 per cent of the Kurichiyans have their own kitchen. This reveals that there is serious

handicap in the food production within the household economy, which is not properly developed among the Paniyans and the Kattunaickans.

(13) Regression results show a positive relationship between HDI and levels of freedom exercised by the households to participate in the modern methods of income generation, health, and education. Higher the control of the society and religion, lesser is the HDI. Compared to the Paniyans and the Kattunaickans, the control of hierarchy on individual households is less among the Kurichiyans.

(14) The freedom levels exercised for consumption and HDI exhibited a negative relationship. Higher the freedom exercised for consumption, lesser the development. While the Paniyans and the Kattunaickans consider expenditure as a personal action, the Kurichiyans spend money for the welfare of the household.

(15) Regression results on the relationship between Human Development Index and freedom indices of production and consumption indicate that the coefficient of freedom index for production is positive and the coefficient of the freedom index for consumption is negative. The difference in the signs of the coefficients of the freedom indices of production and consumption is the major finding of this study. It means that freedom for production increases development and freedom for consumption retards development.

(16) Another important finding of this study is that the internal contradiction, socially controlled production behaviour and socially

uncontrolled expenditure behaviour are the contradictions within the tribal society in Wynad, which lead to the drainage of tribal resources through demonstration effect. The social control is not a direct one; instead, it is functioning through the coercive power of internal factors. This study reveals that the internal organisational structure of tribal society has an influence on the variation in the development of different tribes. Rigidity in the internal structure of tribal organisation caused by controlling the freedom to enter into new opportunities of production is observed as the main determinant of tribal underdevelopment. The present study concludes that lack of adaptation of production methods suitable to the market is the cause of underdevelopment of tribes and the internal factors, which prevented the imitation of the non-tribal ways of production suitable to market economy.

### **Policy Recommendations**

The programmes for the economic development of the State Government are concentrated in the areas of education, health care, housing, construction of roads and distribution of food. The funds are distributed through local bodies and Integrated Tribal Development Projects (ITDP). The entitlement to receive this assistance has been shifted from social hierarchy, as had been the case earlier, to individual households, as is now. The study indicates that the male members of the tribes, especially among the Paniyans and the Kattunaickans, do not take up the responsibility of managing the household economy. Majority of these two tribes spend their income for individual purposes of unproductive nature, totally neglecting the development of the household as a whole.

This study suggests that only through the strengthening of the household economy can the government guarantee the development of the tribes. In the light of the present study and the conclusions arrived at, we would suggest the following to strengthen the household economy of the tribes of Wynad.

(1) Tribes are expecting everything from society because in the earlier days every need of the members of the tribes was met by the social hierarchs. Since the social distribution system of reciprocity of the earlier days has already been dismantled, training should be given to the tribal parents to take up the responsibility to act as agents for providing education, health care and food to their wards in the context of the challenges of the market economy.

(2) To strengthen production, training should be given to the tribes about the process of value addition to their primary products.

(3) To strengthen the household economy, the Government should ensure that kitchen is functioning in each tribal household by which alone can the expenditure on hotel-made food be controlled.

(4) The consumption of liquor should be treated as an economic problem rather than a social problem and schemes for the eradication of liquor consumption among the tribes have to be formulated.

(5) In a traditional tribal economy, the contingent expenditure of the members of the tribal societies is met by the society as a whole whereas in the transitional stage, each household leader is responsible for meeting the requirements of the members of that household. In a formal economy, the

contingent expenditure of a household is met from his own personal savings. In the absence of such a practice, the tribes approach moneylenders in contingencies. To avoid such situations, the tribes should be trained at least to save for the future. As an incentive to this, the banks should offer a special rate of interest for the deposits by the tribal groups.

(6) The policy makers assume that as in the case of the non-tribes, the tribes too are familiar with the management of household economy, which is true only in the case of the Kurichiyans. Household management is a part of the learned behaviour of the Kurichiyans, which they imbibed from their joint family system. Training about the responsible household management system should be provided to the tribes, especially to the primitive tribes.

From this study certain policy suggestions for the economy as a whole are given below.

(1) The present study indicates that while providing freedom for economic action, both consumption and production should not be treated on an equal footing. Since freedom for production has a positive relationship and freedom for consumption has a negative relationship with development, the policy makers have to ensure that the freedom provided for production in the country is greater than the freedom provided for consumption. Otherwise, there is the possibility for drainage of the resources of our country to those countries where freedom for production is higher than that of our country and wherefrom we import goods of high value added.

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(2) Various forms of cultural rigidities due to the internal factors prevent the freedom of the individuals to enter into new avenues of production by creating social dilemmas. At the same time, the liberalisation policy of Government of India since 1990 gives more freedom to enter into modern styles of consumption. In this context, the surplus in those regions, where freedom for starting new enterprises is low, may flow into the places where the freedom for entering into production is high. To ensure balanced regional development, institutions for developing economic freedom should be established in the areas where there are transaction costs due to social dilemmas.

### **Areas for Further Study**

The present study brings out the need to evaluate the changes in economic freedom exercised by the economic agents in the country and its influence on economic growth.

Furthermore, Kerala is a state where growth of industrial production is lower than many other states in India. A study about the relationship between the freedom levels exercised by the entrepreneurs and its impact on industrial backwardness is another possible area for further study. A study about the cost created by the social dilemmas, developed by the conflict between individual choice and public choice may throw light into the industrial backwardness of Kerala.

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## Appendix-1

### Survey of Development Status of Tribes of Wynad

1. Name and Address of the Head of the Family:
2. Name of Tribe:     (1) Kurichiyan,         (2) Paniyan,         (3) Kattunaickan
3. Major source of income:
  - a) Head of Family:  (1) Agriculture    (2) Coolie    (3) Minor Forest Products    (4) Government Employee         (5) Others Specify
  - b) Ancestors:  (1) Agriculture    (2) Coolie    (3) Minor Forest Products    (4) Government Employee         (5) Others Specify
  - c) Area of land holding (in cents):
  - d) Area of land holding of Ancestors (in cents):
  - e) Whether enjoy legal entitlement over the land possessed? Yes / No
4. Details of the family:

Sl. No	Name	Sex	Age	Educational status	Marital Status	Occupation	Occupation of ancestors	Permanently Handicapped	Monthly Income
1									
2									
3									
4									
5									
6									
7									
8									
9									
10									

#### 5. Items of expenditure

Sl. No.	Particulars	Amount in Rs.
1	Raw food items	
2	Clothing	
3	Housing	
4	Education	
5	Medicine	
6	Celebrations	
7	Religious ceremonies	
8	Liquor and Tobacco	
9	Hotel food	
10	Entertainments	
11	Interest payments	
12	Purchase of implements	
13	Others	
14		
15		
16		

6. Expenditure by member households for family purpose and for individual purpose (Amount in Rs.)

Sl.No	Name of member	For family	For individual
1			
2			
3			
4			
5			
6			
7			
8			

7. Industry-wise source of income.

Sl.No.	Nature and type of commodity produced / services rendered	Amount in Rs.
1		
2		
3		
4		
5		
6		
7		

8. Ownership of House:  (1) Own  (2) Rented  (3) Others (specify)

9. Status of house:  (1) Good  (2) Serviceable  (3) Dilapidated

10. Type of House:  (1) *Kutcha*  (2) *Pucca*  (3) *Semi pucca*

11. Toilet facility:  (1) Near house  (2) Away from house  (3) No facility

12. Drainage facility  (1) Yes  (2) No

13. Source of water:  (1) Well  (2) Tap  (3) Streams  (4) Others (specify)

14. Number of rooms: -----

15. Whether separate provision for kitchen?  (1) Yes  (2) No

16. Whether electrified?  (1) Electrified  (2) Non-electrified

17. Number of meals per day:  (1) Once  (2) Two times  (3) Three times

18. Number of working days lost during last month due to illness. -----

19. Total numbers of actual working days in the last month: -----

20. The type of medicine used:  Allopathy  Ayurveda  Homeo  Tribal medicine  others (specify)

21. Details of Indebtedness (Amount in Rs.)

Source	Purpose			
	Consumption	Ceremonies	Investment	Total
Bank				
SHGs				
Money lender				
Others (specify)				
Total				

22) Internal Factors

- a) Do you agree with the statement that the current deterioration of the tribes is due to the violation of religious norms by some members  (1) Yes  (2) No
- b) Do you agree with the statement that the current deterioration of the tribes is due to the violation of social norms by some members  (1) Yes  (2) No
- c) Do you agree with the statement that the violation of social and religious norms lead to ill health, financial crisis and failure in agriculture  (1) Yes  (2) No
- d) The number of family members who consume liquor  Male  Female (above the age 14)

e) Control of Hierarchs on Economic Actions (use A, B, C, D, and E)

Sl. No	Particulars	Present Action	Ancestral Action
1	Consumption in general		
2	Income generation activities		
3	Sending the children to school		
4	Selection of medical facility		

A=INDIVIDUAL, B=FAMILY, C=JOINTFAMILY, D=TIBALCHIEF, AND E=RELIGIOUS LEADERS

f) Levels of Freedom Exercised by the Respondents in Various Economic Activities

	Individual			Family			Joint family			Tribal chief			religion		
	M 5	D 5	I 5	M 4	D 4	I 4	M 3	D 3	I 3	M 2	D 2	I 2	M 1	D 1	I 1
Consumption															
Income generation Activity															
Education															
Selection of medical facility															

M=MOTIVATION, D=DECISION, I=IMPLIMENTATION.

The answer 15 gives the maximum value and 3 gives minimum. The above index gives the freedom levels of the individuals related to economic actions.

23) Did you or your ancestors meet any opposition from your community to implement any decisions regarding economic activity?

24) Cropping Pattern

Sl. No.	Name of the Crop	Area under cultivation
1		
2		
3		
4		
5		
6		

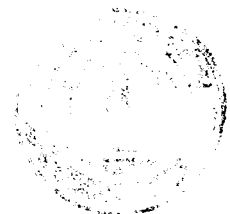
## Appendix 2

## Category-wise Distribution of Tribal Population in Wynad

SL.No.	Name of the panchayath	Paniyan	Adiyan	Kurichiyar	Kattu naickan	Malay arayan	Uralli kuruman	kuruman
Sultan batheri block								
1	Ambalavayal	641		14	104		237	326
2	Meenagadi	633		7	240		83	1115
3	Pulppalli	680	188		480		60	302
4	Mullankolli	360		5	240		102	60
5	Puthadi	717		5	509		117	562
6	Noolpuzha	1151			627		116	877
7	Nenmeni	1047		3	148	4	99	646
8	Sultan Batheri	904			256		29	257
	Total	6133	188	34	2604	4	843	4145
Manathavadi block								
9	Panamaram	1215	408	559	111		162	64
10	Thirunnelli	427	1132	317	713	21	366	4
11	Thavinjal	551		937	42			25
12	Vellamunda	724		628	42			5
13	Thondarnadu	951		261				1
14	Manathavadi	332	451	272		6		21
15	Edavaka	354	32	353			2	
	Total	4554	2023	3327	908	27	530	120
Vythiri block								
16	Vythiri	115			45			
17	Pozuthana	372		72	47			
18	Kaniyampatta	593		158	11		94	243
19	Muttill	599	31	90			12	176
20	Meppadi	294		28	106		7	181
21	Muppanad	85			59			2
22	Padijarethara	561		169	27			
23	Thariyodu	404	1	249	74			2
24	Vengapalli	690		170	15		9	1.
25	kottathara	750		725	20			15
26	Kallpetta	643		26	32		78	
	Total	5106	32	1687	436	0	200	620
	Sum total	15793	2243	5048	3948	31	1573	4885

Source: Office of the integrated tribal Development Project, Wynad.

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