CHAPTER IV

ECONOMIC ORGANISATION
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Economics may be briefly described as the study of those broad aspects of human activity concerned with the utilisation of resources and the organization whereby they are brought into relation with human wants. It has sometimes been thought that the simple societies have no economic organization worth of the name. But the study of any society, however simple, will show that the resources of a people are handled in a systematic way with regard to means and ends. And this economic organization is fundamental to their life, being linked with their social structure, their system of government, their technology, their ritual institution (Notes and Queries on Anthropology, 1976; 158)

We are told that in Paleolithic times man was a hunter, fisherman and collector of edible roots, herbs, fruits etc. Later on, with the Neolithic revolution, when animals and plants were domesticated, agriculture and pastoralism become the foundations of prehistoric economies. Still later, with the discovery of metals, the organization of economic life underwent radical changes, the consequences of which are generally summed up as urban economics. Contemporary primitive economies are very similar to those of pre-historic times. This will be clear when one looks at the various types of economic life listed by Thurnwald (Majumdar and Madan, 1976:189)

This chapter gives a detailed account of the economic life of the Idigas including the occupations they follow, income and expenditure. It also describes the possible changes that have taken place in their economic
Man is really inventive when it comes to the full exploitation of plant food. As soon as one area has been exhausted, new areas are taken up, until the whole Forest region, sometimes covering several miles, has been totally exhausted. The gathered products change with the change of the seasons. For the collection of food, people have developed certain occupational patterns according to their tradition and convenience. Basing on their profession and work the occupation can easily be divided into two types (1) primary occupation and (2) secondary occupation.

For the Idigas Agriculture, Toddy-tapping, Government / private services etc, form the primary occupations. Majority of the families are involved in agriculture. According to seasons and on demand the people change their work.

Table No. 1 gives the details of primary occupations of the Idiga community

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>S.No.</th>
<th>Occupation</th>
<th>No. of House holds</th>
<th>Percentage to total households</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1.</td>
<td>Agriculture</td>
<td>100</td>
<td>31.25</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2.</td>
<td>Toddy tapping</td>
<td>92</td>
<td>28.75</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3.</td>
<td>Government/ private service</td>
<td>56</td>
<td>17.50</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4.</td>
<td>Labour</td>
<td>50</td>
<td>15.62</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5.</td>
<td>Tailoring</td>
<td>12</td>
<td>3.75</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Total</td>
<td>320</td>
<td>100.00</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

These occupations are discussed in the succeeding paras under the broad areas viz. agricultural economy and non-agricultural economy.
AGRICULTURAL ECONOMY:

Agriculture in the technology of farming with the help of a plough and draft animals. The use of plough distinguishes agriculture from horticulture. Usually agriculture is a more intensive form of cultivation than that of horticulture. Field are permanent and kept fertile using farm manure, grains, rather than root crops are likely to be planted. Man does the ploughing and usually assisted by the members of his family in planting and harvesting.

Agriculture forms the major occupation of most of the Idiga household. There are no good irrigation facilities like river, cannaal, etc. near the village. Mainly wells cater to the needs of the irrigation, that too under deplorable condition. The dry lands are mainly irrigated by rains. Their agricultural land are close to the settlement.

The land immediately around the settlement is very fertile. This portion of the land is suitable for the cultivation of irrigation crops. The red variety of soil, which is found in limited quantity in this village, is the next best and fertile land in the village. The rest of the land is fallow and covered with toddy trees. A few varieties of dry crops are also cultivated in these soils.

Agriculture activity is mostly conducted with the help of water from the wells. In summer season the water level in these wells goes down. Most of the wells used for irrigation are fitted with electricity driven motor pumps. For dry land cultivation is done using rain water. Accordingly crops are cultivated only during rainy season.
AGRICULTURAL IMPLEMENTS:

The Agriculture implements used by the Idigas are similar to those used in other rural areas of this region. Both conventional and modern implements are being used by the Idigas. A few families often a tractor from the neighboring villages for tilling the soil.

The common implements used by the Idigas are plough (nagali), iron plough, keaver, knit (kathi), spade (para), crow-bar (gaddapara), sickle (kodavali), bullock – cart (eddula bandi), yoke (kadimanu) and a small hone (tollika). They also use a leveller (manu or dandi manu).

Among the Idigas agriculture is the primary occupation for 100 households out of 320 households. This followed by 92 household, 56 households, 50 households, 12 households and 10 households depend mainly on toddy-tapping, Government/private services, labor, tailoring and business respectively. Though the land owing households are plenty in number, but households having a small area of wet land and dry land have resorted to occupations stated above, other than agriculture. For such families agriculture becomes a subsidiary or secondary occupation.

There is a clear distinction between dry and wet lands. Compared to dry land, wet land is less in area. According to village revenue officials the amount of tax collected varies according to the crop that is grown on the land. The following table reveals the particulars regarding the land holding of the Idiga community.

85
Table 4.2

EXTENT OF OWNERSHIP OF CULTIVABLE LAND

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>S.No.</th>
<th>Range</th>
<th>Wet (in acres)</th>
<th>Dry (in acres)</th>
<th>Total</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1.</td>
<td>0-1</td>
<td>40</td>
<td>64</td>
<td>104</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2.</td>
<td>1-2</td>
<td>48</td>
<td>54</td>
<td>102</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3.</td>
<td>2-3</td>
<td>38</td>
<td>30</td>
<td>68</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4.</td>
<td>3-4</td>
<td>20</td>
<td>32</td>
<td>52</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5.</td>
<td>4-5</td>
<td>30</td>
<td>20</td>
<td>50</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>6.</td>
<td>5-6</td>
<td>12</td>
<td>40</td>
<td>52</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>7.</td>
<td>Above 6</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>32</td>
<td>32</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Total</td>
<td></td>
<td>188</td>
<td>272</td>
<td>460</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Slowly, due to decentralization the Idigas are purchasing agricultural lands from the caste neighbours and start cultivation with a humble beginning.

The Crops raised by the Idigas are paddy, sugarcane, groundnut, ragi, jowar (sorghum) and hams-gram (ulavaku). Paddy is cultivated twice or thrice in a year. Though they are unable to purchase improved agricultural implements and necessary inputs connected with agriculture, they show much interest in

Paddy cultivation:

Paddy is the main wet crop. The varieties of paddy that are cultivated here include Byravadi, Masur, Kaveri, Jaya, Ratna, Tekla Hamsa, IR 20, IRL6, Motlagulkulu etc. Byravadiu is a drought resistant variety and hence the
Idigas grow this variety as a rain-fed crop. The other varieties are grown using water from the well. The hybrid varieties are fast growing crops I.R.20 and I.R.8 are four-month crops and Masuri variety is a 160 day crop. Molagolkulu variety needs more time than this.

The paddy plots are prepared to the necessary condition by ploughing the same twice or thrice. Than the land is manured and watered properly. Seeds are soaked in water and when they start germinating, the same are spread by broadcast method into the prepared nursery bed. The nursery bed is watered carefully and at optimum quantities. The seedlings are allowed to grow for a month and by then they reach a height of 4" to 6" and facilitate in transplantation. At the same time the field is prepared by ploughing four to six times in wet condition. The land is levelled with the help of a levelling blade (Maddimanu). Then the seedlings are transplanted.

For a fortnight the field with transplanted seedlings is watered carefully to avoid partification of seedlings. Later the field is watered every day and uniform water level is maintained. 30 to 40 days after transplanting the weeding operation is undertaken. Weeding is done carefully and with the help of laborers to avoid damage to crop. Ten days earlier to harvesting the paddy, the water in the paddy plots in removed so that the land will dry and facilitate an easy and clean harvesting.

November – December and January are rainy month. If the rains are good the lands are irrigated with rain water and no need to lift water from the wells. Otherwise the farmers lift water from the wells to irrigate the field. When rains are scanty in a year the farmers will not be in a position to raise second crop since the wells are not charged with ground water. Like this depending
on the availability of ground water in the wells the farmers go for second and even third crop. Raising of the summer crop is more expensive than rabi crop since lot of labour has to be put into lift water. Prices of paddy in the market varies according to demand and supply. Often the farmers may not succeed in even raising the annual average owing to lack of water supply, diseases etc.

Sugar cane:

Sugar cane is one of the commercial crops raised by the idigas. Sugar cane is cultivated by using water from wells. To plant sugar cane, plots of field are ploughed during the month of April and the same is repeated 6 to 7 time and made ready for planting during the month of June. During ploughing the field is applied with cattle - shed manure. Later trenches are made with the help of a plough or hand tools at 30" to 40" apart.

Matured sugar cane stocks or stalks are selected for planting and their tops are removed. Then, they are cut into pieces each measuring to a length of 2" and bearing two to three buds. One day earlier to planting the fields are watered properly. Next day the seeds are planted horizontal in the ground and covered with the soil. By two or three week the shoots come up. After two months weeding tools are opened to remove the weeds and also to push soil with base of the seedlings. Top dressing is given to push high the growth of the crop. The crop is watered freely when the crop is of 4 months, the cattle shed manure is applied and trenches are made and weeds are removed. Hence forth it becomes different for any or generally Indian since the sugar cane was grown supplementally. During summer months such as April the farmers use motor pumps to lift water. By this time monsoon sets in
and crop grows to its maximum height (during July to October). Sugar cane is a tall growing crop. To make it withstand the strong winds, the plants in the adjacent rows are tied together using its own leaves, sometimes if the plots are small in diameter the whole crop is tied with a thick rope, around the stalks of the canes. The flowering of the crop indicates the cessation of growth and maturity.

The crop is harvested after 11 to 12 months after planting. By this time the leaves of the sugar cane also turn yellowish. Sugar canes are harvested by putting at ground level and top and leaves of each cane are removed with the help of a sickle. The canes so harvested are shifted to the place of crushing. The juice is removed by crushing canals between rollers, vertically fixed on a metal platform and turned by a pair of bullocks. The crusher consists of three rollers namely king roller, crushing roller and extraction roller. The sugar canes are first passed and crushed between the king roller and the extraction roller.

The extracted juice is led into a big vessel. Later the juice is poured into a big pan (made with big iron sheets and internally coated with tin to avoid rusting) kept over a big hearth. This pan will be about 2½ feet deep and 6 to 9 feet wide and lifted from the bottom using the bogos. Lime sucrate (one part of time in five parts of water) is added to the juice to neutralise it, for better results. The mixture is boiled continuously till it reaches a point. Then it is removed from the pan and made into balls or cakes of jaggery. Most of the families sell their yield of sugar cane to the sugar factories located at chittoor, Tirupati and Nandyal to save the operational costs of making jaggery.
No household among the idigas owns the sugar cane roller. The same is hired from the owners in the near by village on daily payment basis.

The average profit per acre varies depending upon the fluctuation of the market price of jaggery.

Ragi:

Black millet (ragi) is the staple food crop of the idigas. This is one of the major crops that is grown in the dry land. It is also cultivated by a few families in the irrigated land. Almost all the families cultivate ragi.

When ragi cultivated as an irrigation crop, it is raised through transplantation. The dry land farming is made using rain water and by sowing the seeds in linear form. In such cases it is raised only during rainy seasons.

To grow ragi crop the soil is treated 2 or 3 times. Then cattle shed manure is added and levelled. The seeds are drilled through the seed dritter and covered. In case of dry lands, the land is ploughed soon after the rains. Seeds are sown in properly tilled dry lands. This crop depends purely on rains. The dry land crop is sown in the month of July and harvested in the month of November.

In the case of wet land, the land is wetted and then tilled. The land is levelled and small trenches are arranged into which ragi seedlings are transplanted. The crop is raised in the mouth of may and harvested in the month of September. Weeding is necessary in both the methods of cultivation.

As ragi happens to be a rainfed crop, the farmers incur heavy losses if there are no sufficient and timely rains.
Groundnut:

Among the cash crops grown by the Idiga people groundnut is the most important one. It can be raised both as a monsoon and summer crop. In the neighboring villages, it is raised using irrigation facilities during summer. It is a crop of four months period.

After the first monsoon rains (in June), the Idigas plough the land marked for groundnut cultivation deep. After applying manure, the soil is levelled with the help of a leveller. When the appropriated period comes i.e. during the month of July the seeds are sown through a seed drill. Seeds can also be dropped into lines made by ploughing and levelling. July to December are monsoon months and no need to water the crop artificially. One month after sowing, weeding operation is made with the help of a tool. If necessary weeding may be repeated. Groundnut is four months crop. During late advancing and late retreating monsoons bring heavy showers and thus help pull the crop off the ground. Later the nuts are separated from the plants and dried in the sun. Green gram and harse gram can be grown as inter crops with groundnut. These crops are harvested one or two months after, the first crop is harvested. When compared to other commercial crops grown in the area, groundnut is much easier a crop to grown. In terms of investment and labour, it costs less. In terms of profit also it is good. But it is a highly disease prone crop and when attacked by diseases yield goes down drastically. However now a variety of pesticides have come and been used by the farmers. A portion of the harvest produce or yield is carefully preserved and it will be used as seeds during the next season. Rest is sold in the market.
Sorghum (Jorina):

Sorghum is another food crop grown by the idigas as a raised crop, often it is also raised through irrigation and in that case it is during summer months. These are usually two varieties of sorghum namely white (tell Jonnalu) and black (peccha Jonnalu) sorghum. Sorghum cultivation is comparatively an easy method. After a heavy shower, the land is tilled with the help of a plough and manure is sprinkled. Later it is levelled and allowed to ripe till the month of June. With the coming of adequate rains, seeds are sown. Weeding with the help of a tool is made once. By the end of December or January, the crop comes for harvesting. When grain formation starts during November and December, the area of crop should be watched against birds. The whole plant is harvested and dried. Later the corn heads are separated and parched to separate the grain.

The idigas raise garden crops like chillies, brinjal, ladies finger, tomato, coriander, beans etc., depending upon the irrigation facilities near the wells. Generally they never buy any vegetables. They get them from their kitchen garden depending upon the seasons.

Uses of Fertilisers:

The idigas generally use cattle shed manure to get good crop. So a few families who own land also own sufficient number of cattle such as cows, bullocks, sheep and goats. The dung is collected and stored in manure pits. In addition to cattle dung and urine, any material is also dumped in the pit. The green leaves of a few plants are also dropped in the pit to enrich it. These paddy fields are cultivated by irrigation.
The farmers also use chemical fertilizers such as urea, phosphate, sulphate etc. to get a good yield of paddy and sugarcane, to control pests. Pesticides are also used.

Cattle economy:

Animal husbandry is the practice of breeding and raising domesticated animals. Such animals require constant attention. Animals may be used as beasts of burden for ploughing, lifting, water transportation. They are also dairying animals and often used for meat. Animal husbandry, as an occupation is not well developed among the Idigas. But a few families keep cattle (bovine) sheep, goats and hens.

Non-agricultural economy:

Under non-agricultural economy, the toddy-tapping, services in government or private organisation, wage labour, tailoring and business can conveniently be discussed.

Toddy-Tapping:

The traditional occupation of the Idigas is toddy tapping. In the past, the entire community earned its livelihood by tapping toddy. They took pride in their profession and also considered it as second to none. A few years ago 51.75% of the Idiga people, earned their livelihood by toddy tapping. Now it has been reduced to 28.75% households. This shift in the occupation is attributed to many reasons including the introduction of modern education and the employment opportunities it brings, lack of demand for toddy, occupational hazards and so on. However, in these villages, as many as 92 (28.75%) families (take to) or (adopt) or accept toddy-tapping as their primary occupation.
implements needed by a toddy drawer or toddy-tapper are a ladder a 
leather waist band which is used round the body, some length of rope, a 
sickle and of course palm trees. The toddy-tapper wears a rough dress to 
protect his body against thorny leaves. He also carries one or two body pots 
and a leather bag to put his tools such as knives and chisels. First, the toddy- 
topper chooses a matured tree and places the ladder (6'-8' in length) against 
it in a slanting position to facilitate climbing. The juice of palmyrah tree is 
tapped from the flower-spathe, and a date-palm from an incision made in the 
shape of 'V' close to the crown of the tree. During day time they make all 
these arrangements and by evening tie the pots to the trees. During night 
when the weather is cool, the juice drops into the pots and the same is 
emptied early in the morning. To save the drink from evaporation. The inner 
walls of the pots are applied with a paste of lime. The wages paid for toddy- 
tapping vary according to the distance from the places of normal residence 
and work, age and experience of the person and son on. Generally the 
contractors who hire them pay Rs.2000 to 3000/- per month, if the work is 
nearer to their village. If they are taken to far-off place, their payment ranges 
from Rs.3000/- to Rs.4000/- per month for a skilled worker. They are also 
employed on daily payment basis to attend to job of shorter duration. 

In and around villages and as a matter of fact, all over this area there 
are plenty of coconut, toddy and date palms. This abundant presence of the 
palm trees provides full employment to the idigas through out the year. The 
tapping of palm toddy is a skilled work. First they select a tree for tapping. 
On the coconut tree. The idigas make tree deep-cuts on the upper most 
place with the help of a chisel. In the evening a toddy pot is tied below the
cut spot with the help of a string, rolled around. The next day, early in the morning, they go around the grove to bring down the toddy filled pots and also tie an empty one in its place. Depending upon the season they can also replace this pot in the evening. Like this they can tap toddy two or three times in a day. The palm juice collected up to ten in the morning is considered less intoxicating and is locally known as ‘neera’ as the sun begins to rise it begins to ferment and becomes toddy (kallu) intoxicating the consumer. If they want to broven toddy early in the morning, little toddy ferment is put into the pots before they were put on the tree during the previous evening itself.

Often the job of a toddy topper is to collect the palm juice from all the trees and deliver it to the toddy contractors. They store the toddy in barrels and transport to their places for sale. The normal price of toddy at the consumer level is Rs.2.50 per liter.

The coconut leaves are woven and sold for price. The fibre of the coconut is made use of in the preparation of ropes that are used in day to day works. The coconuts have a good demand in the market and a hundred coconuts will be sold at one hundred rupees. Sometimes each coconut will be sold at four to five rupees. The stems of the coconut trees are used in the construction of house and sheds. Each stem will be sold at Rs.100/- to Rs.150/-. The coconut trees plays a vital role in the life of Idigas. The life span of a coconut tree is about thirty years. The tree used for taping loses its life early.

A few toddy tappers are also employed by contractors to go to far off places into adjacent state like Karnataka and Tamil Nadu, to draw the toddy. Demand for toddy depends upon the season. More toddy is sold during the
summer month. To get regular supply of toddy, the drawer adopts a
technique of tapping the trees on alternative days. The gap is necessary to
help the tree to accumulate adequate sap of the next tapping. Another
important useful palm tree in toddy (Palmyrah) tree. The same method
adopted in the case of coconut tree is employed here also to tap the juice.

If they want to get ‘neera’ a new pot is coated in the inner side with lime
is attached to the tree top where the deep cuts are made. ‘Neera’ is the
sweet sap of sugar yielding palm. It is nutritious as it contains useful
minerals. It keeps human system cool, improves digestion and acts as a mild
laxative. Even non-drinkers (alcoholists) use the neera as a soft drink. It
fetches good remuneration to drawers. The tapping of date-tree is also similar
to that of coconut and toddy-trees and mentioned earlier.

During leisure time the toddy tappers use to weave the coconut and
date leaves into mats, are sold for roofing the cattle sheds and to store
jaggery respectively.

Non- agricultural and commercial economy:

New-a-days the idigas are found employed in Government and private
establishments. The data show that 17.5% of the families desire their total
income by working in various organizations like Road Transport Corporation,
Electricity Board, Schools, Revenue Offices and Private Lorry Transports and
Conductors, Drivers, Cleaners, Clerks, Teachers etc.

Labour:

The idigas who own little land and do not have the skill to tap toddy
and fail to get employment in offices, go for wage labour. For this they go
both within the village and outside also. 15.62% the families have daily
wages as their source of income. Their daily income ranges from five to ten rupees depending upon the nature of work. An agricultural labourer is also provided with a mid-day meal in addition to his wages. During lean months such as October and December agricultural labourers do not get adequate work and so it becomes difficult to make a decent living.

Tailoring:

Twelve out of 320 households follows tailoring as their source of income. The tailors only stitch clothes and do not sell ready-made garments or raw materials. They accept their tailoring charges both cash and kind, but mostly customers pay in cash. During the festival and wedding seasons, they get more work and income. The idigas who want to have a new dress, purchase the required cloth material from the neighboring towns like Chittoor, Yadamarli, Rajampet, Kodur and Nandyal and pass it on to their tailors for making the required dresses. The tailor too gets their stitching materials such as thread, needles from the towns referred above.

Business:

There are ten business establishments in the village. They sell and buy household provisions needed by the villagers. Their business also includes seasonal purchase and selling of the agricultural products like paddy, jaggery, groundnut and chillies. A few business men have sub-contract from the contractors, for the retail selling of the toddy in the village. It is a profitable business according to them.

Secondary Occupations

It is normal for a family to have any number of secondary occupations when their primary occupation fails to provide them with sufficient income to make a comfortable living.
The following table shows the details about secondary occupations.

**Table -4.3**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>S. No.</th>
<th>Name of the occupation</th>
<th>No. of Households</th>
<th>Percentage</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1.</td>
<td>Agriculture</td>
<td>78</td>
<td>39.58</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2.</td>
<td>Toddy tapping</td>
<td>12</td>
<td>6.25</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3.</td>
<td>Tailoring</td>
<td>8</td>
<td>4.16</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4.</td>
<td>Business</td>
<td>24</td>
<td>12.61</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5.</td>
<td>Cattle-herding</td>
<td>52</td>
<td>27.06</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>6.</td>
<td>Food-gathering</td>
<td>20</td>
<td>10.42</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Total</strong></td>
<td></td>
<td><strong>192</strong></td>
<td><strong>100.00</strong></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**Occupational Mobility:**

As long as the traditional order ruled, the old occupational system worked well. Over the years changes came into the economic life of the Idigas in the form of new avenues for employment, education and so on. This new occupational mobility has weakened the old system. Urban contacts, modern education and attraction of the cash payments have brought significant impact on the younger generations. They refuse to take up their traditional occupation with a family to which they were attached. Most of the Idiga people prefer Government employment in towns like Chittoor, Madanapalle, Tirupati etc., this occupational shift has brought a chain of changes. Now the young people have to shift their residence to their place of work, live away from caste and community members and "home" culture. Over the years, due to the campaign on prohibition and social and moral consciousness, the Idiga
youth have developed an aversion towards their primary occupation. This has led to change at their occupation. The table below shows the shifts that have taken place in the occupation of the Idigas over the years.

Table - 4.4

Occupational shifts

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>S. No.</th>
<th>Occupation</th>
<th>No. of householders</th>
<th>Percentage to the total households</th>
<th>No. of households in the previous generation</th>
<th>Percentage of households in the present generation</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1</td>
<td>Toddy tapping</td>
<td>166</td>
<td>51.87</td>
<td>92</td>
<td>28.75</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2</td>
<td>Agriculture</td>
<td>84</td>
<td>26.25</td>
<td>100</td>
<td>31.25</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3</td>
<td>Labour</td>
<td>44</td>
<td>13.75</td>
<td>50</td>
<td>15.62</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4</td>
<td>Services</td>
<td>18</td>
<td>5.63</td>
<td>56</td>
<td>17.50</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5</td>
<td>Weaving</td>
<td>8</td>
<td>2.50</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>-</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>6</td>
<td>Tailoring</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>12</td>
<td>3.75</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>7</td>
<td>Business</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>10</td>
<td>3.13</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>8</td>
<td>Total</td>
<td>320</td>
<td>100.00</td>
<td>320</td>
<td>100.00</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Originally, the Idiga people followed their traditional occupation i.e. toddy-tapping to the extent at 51.87% of the total households, whereas it has now come down to 28.75% thus, showing a sizeable number of families (23.12%) changing their occupations. The shift is toward agriculture, labour and employment in government and other agencies. Two more avenues open are, tailoring and business, which too are followed by other caste members. Tailoring is a secondary profession with substantial income. Business including toddy selling is a profitable business.
Income, Expenditure and Indebtedness:

In the survey conducted among the idigas it is found the primary sources of income are from agriculture, toddy-tapping, wage labour, and services. The economy of the idiga people is a mixed one. Cultivation of land and wage earning are the two lined source of income.

The expenditure pattern among the idiga caste people is simple and it mainly pertains to the basic needs. In the survey it is revealed that in general the expenditure incurred by the idiga people is more than their income and as a result most of the households become indebted in varying degrees. This is due to the underlying fact that they do not attend the economic activities if they are provided with the necessities sufficient for one day. They donor think of tomorrow. When they get yield from their lands, they simply consume the produce till their food grains are exhausted. The items of expenditure for them are food materials, clothing, smoking festivals, fuels, travelling etc.

Indebtedness and Household Budgets:

The main cause for indebtedness is that their income from labor and agriculture is not assured owing to natural calamities and market conditions. During the years of drought there will be hardly any agricultural work on the farm and naturally any work to labor force or folk. Even if there is any work the wages offered will be much lower when compared to normal years.

The Idigas borrow money needed for their day-to-day use from friends, caste people and kinsmen. When they want larger sum, get the same from money lenders in the village and near by towns on a very high rate of interest which ranges from Rs.2/- to Rs.5/- per one hundred per month. The later will
be the commission agents in the towns. Often groundnut seeds for sowing are
taken from the rich landlords from neighboring villages on the condition that
they will repay them after harvest. But in many cases the yield will be less
owing to failure of rains. After repaying the principal amount and interest, they
will hardly be left with any money. Many a time they will not be even that
much lucky any may not even return the principal. This and interest on it will
go on swelling indebtedness. Similarly the food grains produced by them will
not be sufficient for the entire year. This also calls for raising of loans to feed
the family.

Further this government has not brought any effective programme to
save the Idiga people from the clutches to money lenders and land-lords.
Often the Idigas complain that the loans sanctioned by the nationalised banks
are not sufficient to meet their needs. so they are force to take loans from
money lender to meet their needs.