

ECONOMIC SCENARIO OF SANTINIKETAN DURING FESTIVAL AND NON- FESTIVAL PERIODS

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ABSTRACT

This paper tries to analyze the economic status of various earning groups in Santiniketan during festival and non-festival periods. The main earning groups in Santiniketan are rickshaw pullers, lodges, hotels, handicraft shops, mobile food shops (mainly fast foods), mobile shops for selling earthen crafts and guides of Santiniketan. The earning groups may further be subdivided into two categories; one is higher income earning groups (lodges, hotels and handicraft shops) and other is lower income earning groups (rickshaw pullers, mobile food shops, mobile shops for selling earthen crafts and guides). Here two statistical methods have been applied to analyze their economic character. One is Coefficient of Variation to show the income disparity between festival and non-festival periods among the different income groups and other is Chi-square test to find out the income status during both festival and non-festival periods among different earning groups. Great disparity of income can be found both in lodges and handicraft shops between festival and non-festival periods and rest of other groups have low to moderate income disparity. Significant differences in income can be found in higher income earning groups in between festival and non-festival periods due to huge demands of lodging and fooding during the time of festivals. On the other hand there are no significant differences of income in lower income earning groups because as a tourist spot as well as a educational centre Santiniketan helps to stabilize their income throughout the year. Hence a mutual understanding economy is found out among the different income groups in Santiniketan.

Key words: Festivals, earning groups, income disparity, mutual understanding economy.

INTRODUCTION

Santiniketan is a great cultural place not only in West Bengal but also in India as well as in whole world. The great personality Rabindranath Tagore made Santiniketan as a miniature of Indian culture. Therefore, Rabindranath Tagore is celebrated in many cultural festivals in Santiniketan in different seasons. The main aim of organizing such kind of cultural festivals was to unite all kinds of people under one cultural frame and to create a space for the local people to enjoy economic royalty through the making of own creative products. But at present, a competitive economy has been set up at Santiniken. Various earning groups try to earn more money during the time of festivals as well as during non-festival periods because a large number of people visit Santiniketan during the time of different festivals and non-festival periods to take the essence of Rabindranath Tagore. So a large part of economy of Santiniketan is determined by the visitors of Santiniketan both in festival and non-festival periods.

OBJECTIVES

In this present study, an endeavour has been taken to outline the economic scenario of the Santiniketan with special reference to different festival and non-festival periods.

LOCATION

Absolute location

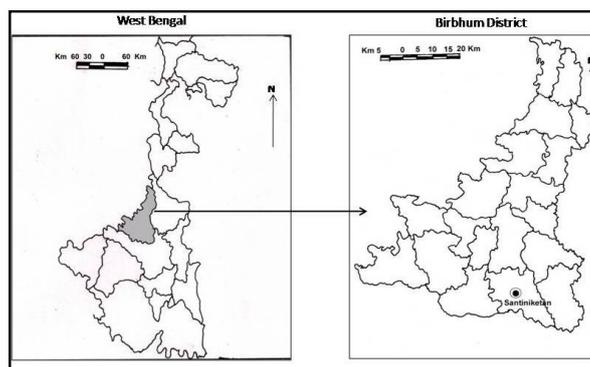
Latitude- 23^o43'N

Longitude-87^o38'E

Relative location: Santiniketan is 1 Km north of Bolpur town in Birbhum district which is 154 km away from Kolkata.

DATABASE AND METHODOLOGY

To prepare the present paper, the data has been mainly collected from the primary sources i.e. from direct interview of the earning groups. To show the economic scenario of earning group, both in festival and non-festival periods, coefficient of Variation method has been applied to measure the income disparity during festival and non-festival periods and Chi-square method has been applied to test the relationship of different earning groups during festival and non-festival periods.



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$$\text{Coefficient of Variation (C.V.)} = \frac{\sigma}{\bar{x}} \times 100$$

$$\chi^2 = \sum \frac{(O_{ij} - E_{ij})^2}{E_{ij}}$$

ECONOMIC EARNING GROUPS IN SANTINIKETAN

Various kinds of earning groups are present to earn profit from the market. The most important earning groups with their absolute number are given in the following table:

Table 1: Earning Groups in Santiniketan

Earning groups	Absolute number
Rickshaw Pullers	80
Lodge	14
Hotels	29
Handicraft shops	150
Mobile food shops(mainly for selling fast foods)	22
Mobile shops for selling earthen craft	10
Guides	15

Source: Field Survey

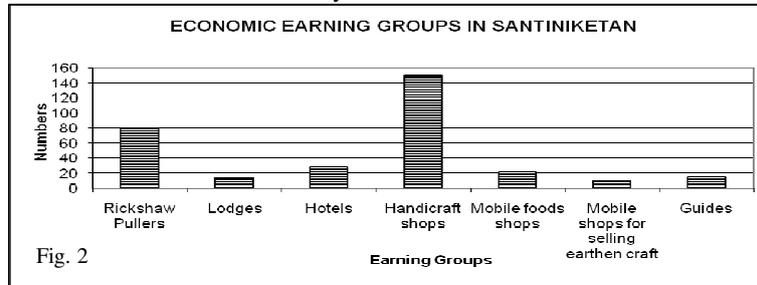


Fig. 2

RENOWNED FESTIVALS IN SANTINIKETAN

In Santiniketan, various cultural festivals have been arranged by Visva-Bharati University authority, but the most attractive and most traditional festivals are *Basanta Utsava*, *Magh Mela*, *Poush mela* and others festivals like *Celebration of Rabindranath's birthday*, *Halakarshana*, *Bikya Rapana* etc.

Festival periods and economic scenario

Various festival periods are the peak periods to enjoy a huge profit from the pockets of visitors who come to enjoy the festivals. Festivals mainly the Poush Mela brings the breath of economic revival to the local economy (Bhattacherya, 2005). Therefore, all the economic earning groups eagerly wait for the festival periods. The average income scenarios of different earning groups are tabulated below-

Table 2: Income of Earning Groups during Different Festivals

Name of the festivals	Duration	Avg. Income in Rs.						
		Rickshaw Pullers	Lodge	Hotels	Handicraft shop	Mobile food shop	Mobile shop for selling earthen craft	Guide
Poush Mela	3 days	1200	95000	10000	35000	2070	1800	1700
Basanta Utsava	2 days	290	70000	3000	18000	450	460	750
Magh Mela	3 days	180	35000	1000	8000	280	300	600
Others	---	130	20000	1000	5000	200	240	550

Source: Direct interaction with the earning groups

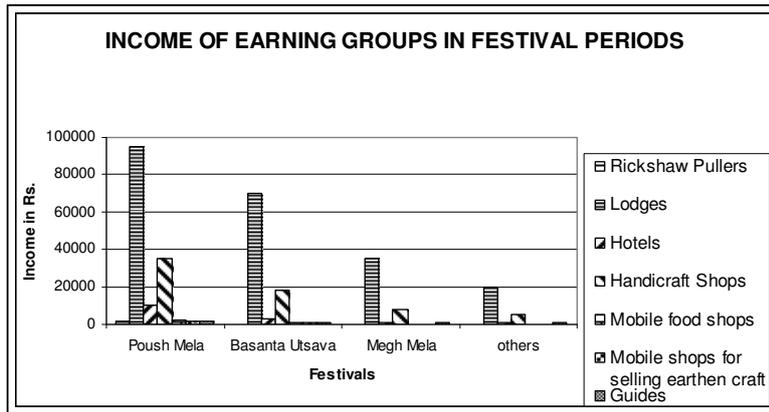


Fig. 3

Among the various income groups, Lodge owners and owners of the handicraft shops get much more profit than the other groups because the former helps to meet a huge accommodation problems during the time of Poush Mela and Basnata Utsava and the latter is world famous for making handicraft products.

Non-Festival periods and economic scenario

At the time of non-festival periods, the earning groups also enjoy reliable economic profit because Santiniketan is a famous tourist spot in West Bengal as well as India and a number of tourists visit the Santiniketan throughout the year. Following table reveals the nature of monthly income during non-festival periods.

Table: 3 Income of earning groups during different non-festival periods

Earning groups	Monthly income in Rs. during non festival periods
Rickshaw Pullers	3000
Lodges	60000
Hotels	12000
Handicraft shops	15000
Mobile food shops (mainly for selling fast foods)	3500
Mobile shops for selling earthen craft	25000
Guides	4200

Source: Direct interaction with the earning groups

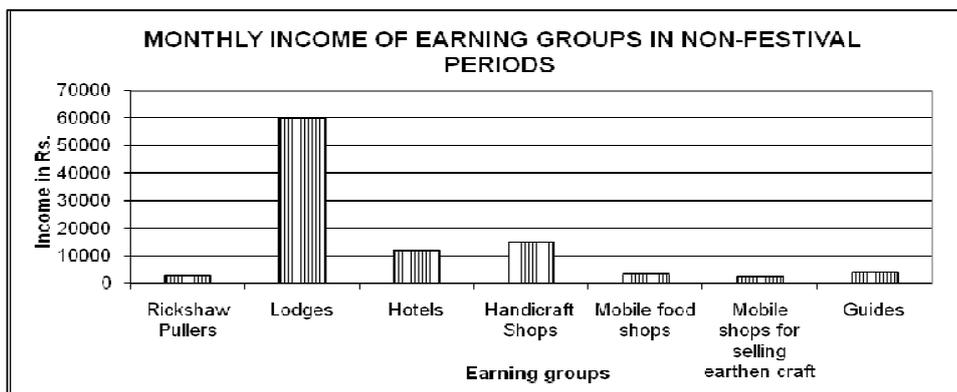


Fig.4

Likewise the festival periods, lodge owners as well as the owners of handicraft shops enjoy more economic profit during non-festival periods due to arrival of tourists from different sides of the countries.

SUB-DIVISIONS OF EARNING GROUPS

On the basis of the income as mentioned above, we can categorize earning groups into two groups:

- I. *Higher income earning groups* whose average income is above Rs. 20000 per month i.e. lodges, hotels and handicraft shops.
- II. *Lower income earning groups* whose average income is above Rs.2500 but below Rs. 10000 per month i.e. rickshaw pullers, mobile food shops, mobile shops for selling earthen materials.

QUALITATIVE ANALYSIS OF ECONOMIC STATUS OF EARNING GROUPS

a) Analysis of income dispersion of each earning groups between festivals and non-festivals period:

Income dispersion of each group can be analyzed with the help Coefficient of Variation (C.V.), which is tabulated below:

Table 4: Income dispersion of each earning group

Income group	Rickshaw pullers	Lodges	Hotels	Handicraft shop	Mobile food shops	Mobile shops for selling earthen craft	Guides
C.V. (%)	33.17	80.8	15.71	80.04	10.17	8.00	10.9



Fig.5

The dispersion bar graph (Fig.5) shows that lodges and handicraft shops have high degree of income dispersion i.e. above 80% between festival and non-festival periods which indicates that their income is not uniform throughout the year. In festival periods, they earn more than the non-festival periods. On the other hands, the other earning groups like rickshaw pullers, hotels, Guides, mobile shops for selling earthen crafts, mobile food shops have moderately low to very low degree of income disparity that indicates the uniform income throughout the year.

b) Relational analysis of income of higher income earning groups during both festival and non-festival periods:

For the relational analysis of higher income earning groups during both periods we can apply Chi-square method has been applied.

Table 6: Relational analysis of income of high income earning groups

	Income in '000 Rs.			χ^2
	Lodges	Hotels	Handicraft shops	
Festival periods	220	15	66	8.39
Non-festival periods	60	12	15	

RESULTS AND ANALYSIS

Chi-square value= 8.39

Degree of freedom (d.f.) = (r-1) (c-1) = (2-1) (3-1) = 2

The table value of chi-square for 2 degree of freedom at 5% level of significance is 5.99. Therefore, the calculated value of Chi-square is greater than critical value which indicates that there is significant difference of income during festival and non-festival periods among the higher income earning groups.

The major cause behind such kinds of significant differences a huge gathering of people that creates immense pressure to get better lodging and fooding and also they are crazy to buy the handicraft products. So, according to law of economics, with the increasing demands, the charge of lodging and fooding and also the price of

handicraft products will inflate. But in non-festival periods, the rates of fooding, lodging and handicraft products are normal. So, the abnormal rates of fooding, lodging and handicraft products during festivals make significant differences in income during festival and non-festival periods.

c) Relational analysis of income of low income earning groups during both festival and non-festival periods

Table 7: Relational analysis of income of lower income earning groups

	Income in '00 Rs.				χ^2
	Rickshaw pullers	Mobile food shops	Mobile shops for selling earthen craft	Guides	
Festival periods	18	30	28	36	3.15
Non-festival period	30	35	25	42	

Chi-square value= 3.15

Degree of freedom (d.f.) = (r-1) (c-1) = (2-1) (4-1) = 3

The table value of chi-square for 3 degree of freedom at 5% level of significance is 7.82. Therefore, here calculated value of Chi-square is less than critical value which indicates that there is no significant difference of income during festival and non-festival periods among the lower income earning groups.

The major causes behind such kinds of uniformity in income is

- i) Santiniketan is an important tourist spot in West Bengal as well as in India and also it is an important place for Visva-Bharati Univesity. Therefore, a number of people visit to Santiniketan for educational purposes as well as to see the Rabindranath's creativity throughout the year.
- ii) Another cause of uniformity in income is that they cannot inflate their price during the festival periods like higher income groups.

Therefore the above causes stabilize the income among the lower income groups.

MUTUAL UNDERSTANDING ECONOMY

In Santiniketan, a mutual understanding economy is formed by both higher and lower income earning groups. Here, each earning group is directly or indirectly connected to other earning groups. Therefore, a multidirectional web of mutual understanding economy makes the economic character of Santiniketan more interesting e.g. Rickshaw pullers have the mutual economic relationship both with hotels and lodges and consume some few of commission from them.

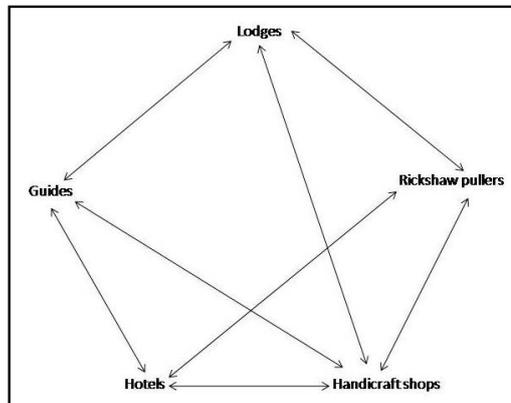


Fig.6. Web of Mutual understanding Economy

CONCLUSION

The economy of Santiniketan depends upon the various festivals, tourism and educational activities of Santiniketan. Therefore, Santiniketan sustains a large number of earning population. But in present time, the economic earning groups are so profit concentric that middle class people cannot access it. Moreover, during the time of festivals, they have the unreasonable demand of money. Therefore, local business authority as well as Visva-Bharati authority should look into the matter with attention and control the unbridled economy especially during the festival periods.

REFERENCES

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