



The Economic Development of the Indian Community

SOME interesting facts pertaining to the economic development of the Indian Community in South Africa and its participation in various sectors of the national economy are revealed in a sample tabulation of the 1970 population census undertaken by the Department of Statistics and published in its Report No. 02-01-04 and in the Annual Report of the Department of Indian Affairs.

According to the Report the Indian population in South Africa at the time of the Census was distributed as follows:

	Male	Female	Total
Cape Province	10 970	10 660	21 630
Natal	254 790	257 270	512 060
Transvaal	40 370	39 870	80 240
Total for Republic	306 130	307 800	613 930

Of these the following numbers of persons were economically active:

	Male	Female	Total	%
Cape Province	5 410	1 840	7 250	33,5
Natal	119 930	26 140	146 070	28,0
Transvaal	20 260	5 260	25 520	30,9
Total	145 600	33 240	178 840	29,0

Participation of the economically active population in the various sectors:

AGRICULTURE

6 550 or 3,7% of the economically active population are engaged in this pursuit. 98% of those active in agriculture are resident in Natal and they are regionally distributed as follows:-

Durban-Pinetown	35,8%
Lower Tugela	32,7%
South Coast	13,6%
Midlands	7,9%
North Coast	3,6%
Western Natal	2,9%
North-Western Natal	1,5%

MINING

Only 610 persons representing 0,3% of the economically active population are employed in the mining industry. Participation among Indians in this industry is confined mainly to Natal, where 98,3% of the Indians who are economically active in the industry are resident. The majority of them (46,7%) reside in the North-Western Natal Coast Mining areas, while other concentrations are found in the Durban-Pinetown region (30%) and on the South Coast (13,7%).

MANUFACTURING

63 140 Indians i.e. 35,3% of the economically active Indian population of the Republic are engaged

in the manufacturing industry.

88,6% of the Indian population engaged in this field reside in Natal. The Cape Province accounts for 2,5% and the Transvaal for 8,9% of the total.

The Indians economically active in manufacturing in Natal are distributed as follows over the various regions:

Durban-Pinetown	80,2%
Natal Midlands	8,7%
Lower Tugela	3,4%
South Coast	3,1%
Western Natal	2,5%
North Coast	1,3%
North-Western Natal	0,8%

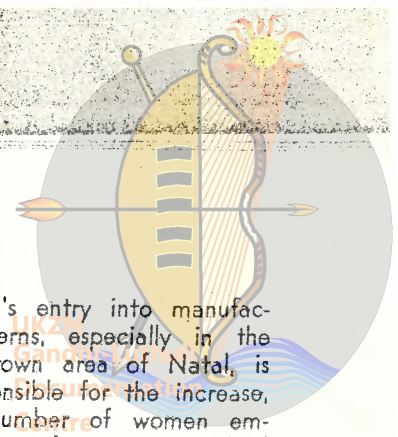
ELECTRICITY

Indian participation in the electrical industry is practically non-existent. Only 180 persons are engaged in this activity — less than 0,15% of the economically active population.

CONSTRUCTION

9 530 Indians or 5,3% of the economically active population are engaged in this activity.

93% of those engaged in construction work are resident in Natal and of these 92% are in the building division of the industry. The largest concentrations are found in



the North-Western Natal where 15,4% of the economically active Indians are involved in construction; in Western Natal (12,7%) and the South Coast (11,1%). In the Cape Province most Indians employed in construction work are found in the Port Elizabeth-Uitenhage areas, while in the Transvaal they are best represented in the Johannesburg area.

COMMERCE

(Wholesale and retail trading etc.) 50 710 Indians, or 28,4% of the economically active population are engaged in commerce.

The greatest participation in commerce in the various provinces is found in the Transvaal where 58,5% of the economically active population are involved in this sector. Second is the Cape Province with 51,4% and third Natal with 21,9%. Broken down further into regions of the provinces, the greatest participation in commerce is found in the rural areas of the Transvaal (76,9%) of the economically active population and in the Pretoria area — 71,3%.

TRANSPORT

Altogether 7 520 Indians — 4,2% of the economically active population — are engaged in this activity, 99% of whom reside in Natal and of these 77,9% are employed in the Durban-Pinetown area.

FINANCING

Financial institutions, insurance, real estate and business services are the most prominent divisions under this heading.

2 820 or 1,6% of the economically active population are engaged in this sector.

SERVICES

The expression "Services" include the following activities: Public Administration, Educational Services, Medical and Health Services, Motion pictures and entertainment services, Amusement and recreational

services, Laundries and dry cleaning services and Domestic services.

23 030 or 12,9% of the economically active Indian population of the Republic are engaged in these services.

In addition to the activities mentioned above 12 050 Indians are engaged in other activities which are not adequately defined. These represent 8,2% of the economically active population.

Indian population's participation in manufacturing:

If the results of the sample tabulation are compared with the distribution of the economically active population in 1960 (the previous census), as shown below, the most interesting phenomenon is that the Indian population's participation in manufacturing increased by more than 10% over this ten-year period against the 5% increase in commerce which was at one stage the dominant economic activity of the Indians in the Republic. There has, further, been a very marked decline in participation in agriculture and "services" which would indicate a swing away from those activities to manufacturing, commerce and construction, the last being an activity in which participation has nearly trebled since 1960.

ACTIVITY	1960	1970
Agriculture	8,6%	3,7%
Mining	0,5%	0,3%
Manufacturing	25,1%	35,3%
Electricity	0,2%	0,1%
Construction	1,9%	5,3%
Commerce	23,0%	28,4%
Transport	3,0%	4,2%
Services	18,7%	12,9%
Financing	not stipulated	1,6%
Other	19,0%	8,2%

The Indian woman in the economy

While the percentage of economically active Indian males has increased slightly from 47,3 in 1960 to 47,6 in 1970, that of economically active Indian women has more than doubled from 4,9 in 1960 to 10,8 in 1970. It would seem that the In-

dian woman's entry into manufacturing concerns, especially in the Durban-Pinetown area of Natal, is mainly responsible for the increase, since the number of women employed in manufacturing increased by 435,5% in the period 1960-1970 — from 3 091 in 1960 to an estimated 13 460 in 1970. In fact, in 1970 more women were employed in manufacturing than there were economically active women (11 559) in 1960.

Employer — Employee relationship

Another interesting feature of the sample tabulation is the projection of the employer-employee relationship in the Indian economically active community. The findings of the projection are an indication of how many Indians in the various sections of the economy have their own factories, business undertakings etc.

The following table reflects the position as disclosed by the sample tabulation:-

Division	No. of Indian Employers	No. of Indian Employees
Agriculture	2 140	4 520
Mining	—	620
Manufacturing	1 650	61 800
Electricity	—	180
Construction	730	8 900
Commerce	10 850	40 130
Transport	1 060	6 480
Financing	290	2 540
Services	980	22 250
Other activities not adequately defined	50	12 120
TOTAL	17 750	159 540

From the above it would appear that commerce is still the major field for the Indian entrepreneur; but the fact that already 1 650 Indians have the status of employer in the manufacturing industry points to a promising development in the diversification of the economic activities of the Indian population. Furthermore, the statistics indicate that thousands of Indians are employed by persons, organisations and enterprises other than Indians. □