

CHAPTER IV

OCCUPATIONS

Concepts and Definitions

The data on the occupation in Sekinchan have been collected, using the gainful worker approach. By this method, each person is asked about his usual or customary occupation and enumerated as such.

The occupation of a person is defined as the type of work performed or the trade followed. In the case of a person who has more than one occupation, the one in which he spends most of his working time on, is taken to be his main occupation and he is classified accordingly in the Table.

The study of the many types of occupations represent not only the means from which the community draws its livelihood but also serve to remind the readers not to associate Sekinchan with purely farming activities alone. There is a wide range of other economic activities as depicted by the Tables.

The occupational status of the population can be simplified into main divisions.

- a) Economically active.
- b) Economically inactive.

The economically active population

It comprises of persons who are working in the economic sense; working being defined as directly engaged in the production of economic goods and services for sale to the public. It includes:-

1) Self-employed Category

a) Self-employed Farmers Here the farmers works on a piece of land rented or owned under his name. The majority of the farmers in Sekinchan are, however, owner-operator.

b) Household farm labour They refer to all those who do not rent or own land but work on

such land as unpaid family labour¹. Such persons usually are the wives, daughters, sons, daughter-in-laws or relatives who are staying in the house. In certain cases, married women still work for their parents or relatives though they may stay in another house. Numerically, this is the most important group.

The other occupational groups under "Self-employed category" are:-

- c) Hawkers.
- d) Shopkeepers and Stall-holders.
- e) Fishermen.
- f) Taxi-drivers.
- g) Pig rearers.
- h) Tailors.

2) Employed Category

- a) Hired Farm Labour They are those people who hire themselves out to other farmers as paid farm labourers.
- b) Odd-jobbers They refer to those persons who will do whatever sort of job that comes their way. This type of jobs ranges from assisting in the padi fields to performing house-work for other people.
- c) Clerks and Managers.
- d) Service and Sales
- e) Gardeners.
- f) Shop-Assistants.
- g) Miscellaneous Services Under this category are lumped those occupations like contractors, mechanics, watch-makers etc; whose number is considered too small to warrant a special classification. However there are no hard and fast rules in the demarcation of occupation groups.

¹"Unpaid" in the sense that they do not draw regular wages.

In some Graduation Exercises very detailed classification is set up viz:- (c), (d), (e), (f), (g), (h) under the broad classification of "Self-employed" whereas in other Exercise these are lumped under Miscellaneous Services as well. To present a more accurate analysis on adjustment is made in 4.1, I extracted from Miscellaneous Services those occupations that by right should belong to either (c), (d), (e), (f), (g) or (h) and restrict to Miscellaneous Services those occupation groups not found in the main tables i.e. Tables on Distribution of Occupation by Dialect groups and Distribution of Occupation by Sex and Age. Please refer to Appendix 1 for the adjustments made in Table 4.1. It is unfortunate that I am not able to make such adjustments in Tables 4.2. and 4.3 because the writers did not tabulate those under Miscellaneous Service into Dialect groups and into Sex and Age.

Economically Inactive Population

"Economically inactive" in the sense that they do not contribute in any way to the family income. This includes:-

- a) Unemployed Those who are not directly engaged in the production of economic goods and services for sale to the public and at the same time not actively looking for jobs.
- b) Household Workers Included in this category are the housewives as well as any other group of persons who perform domestic work in the house.
- c) Students.
- d) Retired Farmers This group consists of those who have retired from work because of old age.
- e) Children
- f) Unknown This comprises of those whose age or sex had not been disclose, plus some, whose occupational details only are lacking.

Practical Problems

In classifying persons by their occupations certain difficulties are encountered. For example, the household workers, besides her household chores, or students after their school hours, may help in the padi fields. Since the hours spent in the various activities are not specified, such persons have been classified as

household workers and students, being in all probability mainly engaged as such. However if a person states definitely that she works most of the time in the fields or in some specified jobs, and helps in the house in her free hours only, then she is placed in the category of the economically active. Some farmers do take up some other jobs which may be as equally important as farming, but the number of such persons is found to be too small to warrant a special classification.

General Analysis of Occupations

By classifying the population into economically active and economically inactive, we can deduce from Table 4.1 that 46.91% of the population are economically active, and 53.09% economically inactive². The Table also shows that about 40% of the population are engaged in rice farming. The other categories of occupations account for about 7% of the population. There is thus a glaring contrast between the labour embedded in the agricultural sector and those in the other occupational groups. But their minority does not mean they are of no importance. In fact, these occupational groups contribute valuable services to the agricultural economy since they cater the daily needs of the farmers. Such division of labour is vital to the excessive specialisation of agriculture. A probable reason why so few are engaged in trades like contractors, mechanics, taxi-drivers etc. may be that in such a small town there is a lack of training facilities hence the bulk of the population is still centred round the farm. Or, it may be due to pure conservatism to follow the father's footsteps. After all the Chinese on the whole are conservative people.

Under the classification of Economically inactive population we find that Children and Students constitute the bulk of it representing about 69% of this classification. The implication of this is that practically all of the adult population are working. It would be appropriate to say something about part-time farm labourers. Many students and household workers do help in the farm whenever

²We can say that there is an over estimation of the economically inactive population because large proportions of children below ten years old are included. From the Table we see that children form the highest percentage (37%) of the economically inactive population. Strictly speaking, children should be excluded since we simply cannot expect them to contribute to the family income. Another point to be borne in mind is that a considerable portion of those classified under "Occupation Unknown" are children. They are mainly from the age of seven to ten, who are not schooling and not helping in the farm. However we are including these under the Economically inactive category because this will give us a better picture of the dependency problem.

TABLE 4.1
DISTRIBUTION OF OCCUPATION GROUPS*

Occupation Groups	Number	Percentage
<u>Economically Active Population</u>		
Farmer	611	15.90
Hired Farm Labour	48	0.92
Household Farm Labour	1,232	23.16
Odd Jobber	65	1.27
Sales and Service	14	0.27
Trader	19	0.37
Blacker	37	0.73
Fisherman	28	0.55
Shop-keeper	17	0.33
Shop-Assistant	6	0.12
Taxi-driver	4	0.08
Stall holder	1	0.02
Gardener	3	0.56
Pig Rearer	17	0.33
Tailor	9	0.18
Clerk and Manager	6	0.12
Miscellaneous	66	1.29
Sub-total	2,367	46.91
<u>Economically Inactive Population</u>		
Unemployed	132	2.59
Household worker	456	8.94
Student	889	17.42
Retired	40	0.78
Children	990	19.40
Occupation Unknown	201	3.93
Sub-total	2,708	53.96
Total	5,075	100.00

* Since this table depicts the total it is possible for us to make use of the Adjusted Table in Appendix 1 to re-allocate those lumped under Miscellaneous Services. Hence the number under this category does not tally with that in Table 4.2 and 4.3 which shows Distribution of Occupation Groups by dialect and by Sex and Age respectively. It is not possible to make adjustment in these two tables.

After the adjustment made our Miscellaneous Service classification refers only to lorry drivers, laundresses, bicycle repairs/repair apprentices, ice-cream sellers, contractors, mechanics, soybean sellers, cobra dealer, barber, teacher, tea-leaf seller, cinema cashier, vegetable sellers, temple caretakers, electricians, seestress, fruitsellers, porksellers, bakers, trishaw peddlers, goldsmiths and radio repairer. The exact number of each category is not given. From this we see that Sakinchan has a wide variety of occupation groups.

they can.³ As such the number of people working in the farm is actually larger than the figure given in the Table. As shown in the Table only 2.59% of the population is unemployed. This shows that unemployment does not pose as a serious problem here but this cannot be taken as a sign of prosperity considering the fact that agriculture generally creates self-employment to the farm family⁴. As a matter of fact, many people prefer agriculture because it provides family employment so our earlier speculation of Chinese conservatism is quite correct.

Taking the economically inactive population as a whole we find that 53.06% of the total population are dependent on the 46.91% of productive labour force. On the face it the degree of dependency is thus serious. However a more careful analysis shows that the dependency problem is not as formidable as it appears. We have seen in our earlier discussion many students and household workers do lend a helping hand in the farm whenever they can. Except for those who are classified under "Retired" no one is a completely useless dependent. Here a consoling factor is only 0.78% of the population are under the "Retired" category. A closer study shows in actual fact it is the provision of future employment opportunities that planners have to focus their attention. The potential labour force is contained in the large number of children and students. Together they account for about 38% of the population. When this potential labour force comes to the market, the question of employment is such a self-contained agricultural economy will pose a serious problem. Suffice to say that the demand for education, both primary and secondary, the health and medical facilities catering for these young population are matters of urgency.

From the Table we see that 3.93% of the population are under the category "Occupation" Unknown. Field workers have not been able to account for their occupations and their sex and age. They are what is popularly known among us as the "Hard-Nuts"⁵ who are hostile and unco-operative. No information can be extracted from them.

³Even if they do not work on the padi plot they are commonly engaged in vegetable growing on their own house lots.

⁴Though unemployment does not pose as a serious problem here, the problem of under-employment certainly exists. In fact during our field investigation farmers complained to us that there was not enough land to keep the whole family occupied throughout the year. This is no surprise as most of them have only three acre lots. Another point is padi is a seasonal crop.

⁵The percentage of these who are known as 'hard nuts' is actually lower for a considerable proportion of these are children whose sex, age and occupation are not enumerated.

We shall now take a closer look at the Economically active population. The Table shows that as an occupational group farming rank first in the order of importance, constituting about 40% of the total population. Expressed in terms of economically active population about 88% of the economically active population are engaged in occupations centred around the farm⁶. This high proportion of farming activity indicates that the utilization of labour resources is directed mainly in agriculture. Since they constitute about 88% of the economically active population, it is true to say, as put forward by Professor Ungku Asis in his article "The Development and Utilization of Labour Resources in South East Asia", that "Rural Labour means primarily Agricultural Labour".

An important and indispensable source of labour input in the farms is found in the household farm labours. About 23% of the population are in this group. Expressed in terms of economically active population it is about 52%. This is not surprising because almost every member of the farmer's family assist in the farm. This confirms the analysis in Chapter 2 that padi cultivation is mainly a family affair.

Hired farm labour is insignificant (0.92% of the total population). This can be easily explained. Most of the farmers get all the labour they require from their own children or relatives. In fact hired farm labour is prevalent only in farms owned by aged farmers who have no household farm labours to help in the cultivation or in cases where there is absentee ownership of land⁷. Normally hired farm labours are paid in kind. Farmers do not wish to commit themselves to monetary wages for the hired help because of the uncertainty of the harvest and also because liquid assets are generally scarce.

The important people in this analysis are of course the farmers proper i.e. those who own and operate their own lands. The Table shows 15.9% of the population are under this classification representing 33.6% of the economically active population. These

⁶The farmers of Sekinchan practice a system of off-season cropping of brinjals, tobacco, yams and vegetables to occupy themselves with and to substantiate their income during the padi off-season which is from April to September.

⁷Although it is not within our analysis, it can be mentioned that there is a certain amount of exchange labour among the farmers themselves. Strictly speaking, some farmers do hire farm labourers for sowing, weeding and even during the harvesting period. But the labour so hired usually comes from another ethnic group (particularly Malays) who reside in another area. This may be due to the fact that Malay labour are probably cheaper. Other reasons may be due to social status. Normally, the Chinese people are not so inclined to work for others.

people are the pillars of the farming economy. Normally these people are the heads of the family and the major work in operating the farm is in their hands. They direct other members of the family and the important operations such as decision making are left in their hands. Thus in many respects these are the important people of our analysis.

Distribution of Occupation Groups by Dialect

Having given a general analysis of occupations we shall now proceed to study the pattern of occupations among the different dialect groups.

Table 4.2 shows the occupation groups by dialect. Expressed in terms of percentages for the various dialect groups the Hakka and the Cantonese have the highest proportion of farmers about 20% each while the Hinese have the lowest percentage (9.74%). But as we shall see later this is due to the Hinese having a much higher proportion of their population who are in occupations other than farming.

The Hokkies appear to have a relatively large number of children in both absolute and percentage terms. Out of the total Hokkien population 23.45% are children under ten years of age. In absolute terms it is 435. Thus unless the Hokkies can increase their land and capital resources to meet the demands of an increased labour force in the future, serious unemployment and under-employment problem will be encountered.

Turning to the Hakkas and the Cantonese they have a smaller proportion of children relative to the Hokkies - about 16% each as compared to the Hokkies, (23.45%). As far as the student population is concerned these three main dialect groups have about the same percentage about 16% to 17%.

The significant feature in our study of the Hinese group is that comparatively they have the largest student population. 24.66% of the Hinese population are students which seem to indicate that the Hinese are relatively more progressive.

Looking at the economically inactive classification as a whole we see that the Hokkies and the Teochews have the highest percentage about 59% each. This compares rather unfavourably with the 50% for the Kwangsai, and 48% and 43% figures for the Cantonese and Hakkas respectively. The higher Hokkien and Teochew percentage is mainly due to the fact that the Hokkies and the Teochews have the highest percentage of household workers, about 11% and 15% respectively. The Hinese also follow the trend of the Hokkies and Teochews. This can be partly explained by the fact that the Hinese and the Teochews have the highest percentage (about 18% and 10% respectively) of the population who are in occupations other than farming whereas e.g. only 3.32% of the Cantonese are in a similar position. Compared to the Cantonese the figures for the Hokkies is relatively high (5.49%). For men in such occupations

Occupation	DIALECT GROUP								
	Hokkien		Cantonese		Hakka		Kwangsai		No.
	No.	%	No.	%	No.	%	No.	%	
Economically Inactive Population									
Farmer	239	12.85	203	20.25	173	20.41	52	15.80	61
Hired Farm Labour	19	1.02	13	1.00	1	0.12	5	1.52	6
Household Farm Labour	392	21.13	352	27.10	241	28.43	102	30.50	108
Odd Jobber	30	1.62	16	1.23	9	1.05	1	0.30	6
Sales & Service	1	0.05	-	-	1	0.12	-	-	2
Trader	8	0.43	-	-	6	0.70	-	-	2
Hawker	17	0.91	3	0.23	5	0.59	-	-	7
Fisherman	-	-	-	-	1	0.12	-	-	11
Shopkeeper	5	0.27	1	0.08	1	0.12	-	-	1
Shop Assistant	-	-	1	0.08	-	-	-	-	-
Taxi driver	1	0.05	-	-	-	-	-	-	1
Stall holder	1	0.05	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
Gardener	2	0.11	-	-	1	0.12	-	-	-
Pig Rearer	-	-	4	0.31	-	-	-	-	6
Tailor	-	-	-	-	-	-	3	0.91	-
Clerk & Manager	2	0.11	1	0.08	-	-	-	-	-
Miscellaneous	35	1.89	17	1.31	24	2.83	1	0.30	21
Sub-total	752	40.47	671	51.67	403	54.62	164	49.63	232
Economically Inactive Population									
Unemployed	84	3.45	22	1.69	23	2.71	7	2.13	15
Household worker	213	11.48	74	5.70	53	6.25	17	5.17	83
Student	322	17.06	208	16.02	145	16.11	67	20.36	100
Retired	13	0.70	9	0.70	6	0.70	2	0.61	10
Children	435	23.45	202	15.55	135	15.93	61	18.54	114
Unknown	55	2.96	110	8.47	11	1.29	11	3.34	13
Sub-total	1,102	59.10	625	47.93	373	42.99	165	50.15	335
Total	1,854	100.00	1,296	100.00	846	100.00	329	100.00	567

* Please refer to Appendix II for explanation as to why certain total, in this table do not tally with that in Tab

DIALECT GROUPS

Cantonese		Hakka		Kwangsai		Tesch
%	No.	%	No.	%	No.	No.
20.25	173	20.41	52	15.80		61
1.00	1	0.12	5	1.52		6
27.10	241	28.43	102	30.80		108
1.23	9	1.06	1	0.30		6
-	1	0.12	-	-		2
-	5	0.70	-	-		2
0.23	5	0.59	-	-		7
-	1	0.12	-	-		11
0.08	1	0.12	-	-		1
0.08	-	-	-	-		-
-	-	-	-	-		1
-	-	-	-	-		-
-	1	0.12	-	-		-
0.31	-	-	-	-		6
-	-	-	3	0.91		-
0.08	-	-	-	-		-
1.31	24	2.83	1	0.30		21
51.67	403	54.02	164	49.63		232
1.89	23	2.71	7	2.13		15
5.70	53	0.25	17	5.17		83
16.02	145	16.11	67	20.36		100
0.70	6	0.70	2	0.91		10
15.55	135	15.93	61	18.54		114
8.47	11	1.29	11	3.34		13
47.93	373	42.99	165	50.15		335
100.00	846	100.00	329	100.00		567

by certain total, in this table do not tally with that in Table

DIALECT GROUPS

Cantonese		Hakka		Kwangsai		Tesch
%	No.	%	No.	%	No.	No.
20.25	173	20.41	52	15.80		61
1.00	1	0.12	5	1.52		6
27.10	241	28.43	102	30.80		108
1.23	9	1.06	1	0.30		6
-	1	0.12	-	-		2
-	5	0.70	-	-		2
-	5	0.59	-	-		7
0.23	5	0.59	-	-		7
-	1	0.12	-	-		11
0.08	1	0.12	-	-		1
0.08	-	-	-	-		-
-	-	-	-	-		1
-	-	-	-	-		-
-	1	0.12	-	-		-
-	1	0.12	-	-		6
0.31	-	-	-	-		-
-	-	-	3	0.91		6
-	-	-	-	-		-
0.08	-	-	-	-		-
1.31	24	2.83	1	0.30		21
51.67	403	54.02	164	49.63		232
1.89	23	2.71	7	2.13		15
5.70	53	0.25	17	5.17		83
16.02	145	16.11	67	20.36		100
0.70	6	0.70	2	0.91		10
15.55	135	15.93	61	18.54		114
8.47	11	1.29	11	3.34		13
47.93	373	42.99	165	50.15		335
100.00	846	100.00	329	100.00		567

certain total, in this table do not tally with that in Table

DIALECT GROUPS

Kwangsai		Toochow		Hincanese		Focchow		Hongshah		Others	
No.	%	No.	%	No.	%	No.	%	No.	%	No.	%
52	15.80	61	10.75	15	9.74	2	25	1	10	5	10.13
5	1.52	6	1.06	4	2.60	-	-	-	-	-	-
102	30.30	108	19.04	18	11.68	3	37.5	1	10	3	9.68
1	0.30	6	1.06	3	1.95	-	-	-	-	-	-
-	-	2	0.35	10	6.49	-	-	-	-	-	-
-	-	2	0.35	-	-	-	-	-	-	3	9.68
-	-	7	1.23	4	2.60	-	-	1	10	-	-
-	-	11	1.94	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
-	-	1	0.18	1	0.65	-	-	-	-	-	-
-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	1	10	-	-
-	-	1	0.18	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
-	-	6	1.06	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
3	0.91	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
1	0.30	21	3.70	9	5.84	-	-	2	20	3	9.68
106	49.63	232	40.90	64	41.55	5	62.5	6	60	14	45.17
7	2.13	15	2.64	2	1.30	-	-	1	10	4	12.90
17	5.17	63	14.63	13	8.44	-	-	2	20	1	3.23
67	20.36	100	17.63	38	24.68	-	-	1	10	8	25.80
2	0.61	10	1.70	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
61	18.54	114	20.10	36	23.36	3	37.5	-	-	4	12.90
11	3.34	13	2.29	1	0.65	-	-	-	-	-	-
65	50.15	335	59.05	90	57.41	3	37.5	4	40	17	54.63
29	100.00	567	100.00	154	100.00	8	100.00	10	100.00	31	100.00

not tally with that in Table 4.3

not tally

OCCUPATION BY DIALECT GROUPS*

DIALECT GROUPS

Kwangsat		Teochew		Hinnese		Focchow		Hengwah		Others		A77
No.	%	No.	%	No.	%	No.	%	No.	%	No.	%	No.
52	15.80	61	10.75	15	9.74	2	25	1	10	5	16.13	611
5	1.52	6	1.06	4	2.60	-	-	-	-	-	-	48
102	30.80	106	19.04	18	11.68	3	37.5	1	10	3	9.68	1232
1	0.30	6	1.06	3	1.95	-	-	-	-	-	-	65
-	-	2	0.35	10	6.49	-	-	-	-	-	-	14
-	-	2	0.35	-	-	-	-	-	-	3	9.68	16
-	-	7	1.23	4	2.60	-	-	1	10	-	-	37
-	-	11	1.94	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	12
-	-	1	0.18	1	0.65	-	-	-	-	-	-	9
-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	1	10	-	-	2
-	-	1	0.18	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	2
-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	1
-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	3
-	-	6	1.06	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	10
3	0.91	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	3
-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	3
1	0.30	21	3.70	9	5.84	-	-	2	20	3	9.68	112
104	49.63	222	40.90	64	41.55	5	62.5	6	60	14	45.17	2,387
7	2.13	15	2.64	2	1.30	-	-	1	10	4	12.99	132
17	5.17	83	14.63	13	8.44	-	-	2	20	1	3.23	456
67	20.30	100	17.63	38	24.66	-	-	1	10	8	25.80	888
2	0.61	10	1.76	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	40
67	18.54	114	20.10	36	23.36	3	37.5	-	-	4	12.90	990
11	3.34	13	2.29	1	0.65	-	-	-	-	-	-	201
65	50.15	315	59.05	90	57.41	3	37.5	4	40	17	54.63	2,708
29	100.00	567	100.00	154	100.00	8	100.00	10	100.00	31	100.00	5,095

* Not tally with that in Table 4.3

Age	Fuechow		Hengshah		Others		All Groups	
	No.	%	No.	%	No.	%	No.	%
9.74	2	25	1	10	5	16.13	811	15.98
2.60	-	-	-	-	-	-	48	0.92
11.68	3	37.5	1	10	3	9.68	1232	23.16
1.95	-	-	-	-	-	-	65	1.27
8.49	-	-	-	-	-	-	14	0.27
-	-	-	-	-	3	9.68	19	0.37
2.60	-	-	1	10	-	-	37	0.73
-	-	-	-	-	-	-	12	0.24
0.65	-	-	-	-	-	-	9	0.18
-	-	-	1	10	-	-	2	0.04
-	-	-	-	-	-	-	2	0.04
-	-	-	-	-	-	-	1	0.02
-	-	-	-	-	-	-	3	0.59
-	-	-	-	-	-	-	10	0.20
-	-	-	-	-	-	-	3	0.59
-	-	-	-	-	-	-	3	0.59
5.84	-	-	2	20	3	9.68	112	2.20
1.55	5	62.5	6	60	14	45.17	2,367	47.31
0.30	-	-	1	10	4	12.90	132	2.58
1.44	-	-	2	20	1	3.23	456	8.94
0.68	-	-	1	10	8	25.80	888	17.42
-	-	-	-	-	-	-	40	0.78
0.36	3	37.5	-	-	4	12.90	990	19.40
0.65	-	-	-	-	-	-	261	5.13
0.41	3	37.5	4	40	17	54.83	2,708	53.06
0.09	8	100.00	10	100.00	31	100.00	5,085	100.00

like taxi-driver, clerk and manager, their wives can hardly be of any help except in looking after the house.

Unlike in "self-employed" occupations like farming, family workers cannot be utilized. This deduction is supported by the Table which shows that the Hokkiens, Teochews and the Minanese have a relatively low percentage of those classified under "self-employed farmer" - 12.85%, 10.75% and 9.74% respectively. This is to be compared with the Cantonese and the Hakkas who have 20.25% and 20.41% respectively under the "self-employed farmer" category.

One common feature among all the dialect groups is the high percentage of household farm labour. It cannot be over emphasized that unless sufficient land is available under-employment is a matter of urgent concern for planners.

Apart from farming and a few other occupations like fishing⁸ taxi-driver and the keeping of small businesses, there seem to be few secure jobs. Besides fishing is something that is carried on by the young only. From the Table it seems to be further confined to just one dialect group, the Teochews. This partly accounts for the relatively high percentage of Retired persons under the Teochews - 1.76% as compared with the other dialects which are below 1%.

As for taxi-driving and the keeping of small business, they are occupations which need capital usually available only in middle ages. Thus, the fairly young seem to be only left with odd jobs and others like the peddling of goods and being employed as shop assistants. As has been mentioned, this may be due to lack of training facilities.

In concluding our analysis of the occupations of the various dialect groups several observations may now be made. In the first place we find that the larger portion of the population of all the dialect groups is involved in farming and that the labour employed is derived mainly from Familial Sources. This conclusion is supported by the fact that only 0.92% of the population are classified as hired farm labour. Secondly although in all the dialect groups there is a high proportion of students, children and household workers the problem of dependency is by no means serious as household workers and students after school hours normally lend a helping hand in cultivation. In fact in rural economies children who are from seven and above are an asset and not a liability. Very often they stay behind to look after their younger brothers and sisters while their parents go to work in the field. They are thus rendering useful services.

Thirdly, Unemployment, as we have seen need not cause concern as yet. But if employment opportunities cannot be increased and land and capital resources has to remain as it is with the majority of the farmers owning a three acre piece of land, then in time to come

⁸In fact fishing is concentrated in a village called Kitau. The populace here is mainly Teochew.

unemployment may pose as a grave problem. Hence, the objectives of future planners should be the provision of training facilities and the increase in land and capital resources to meet the expanding labour force contained in the large number of children and students. It is not labour but capital that is deficient.

Occupation Groups by Age and Sex

In order to study the contribution of males and females at various age ranges to agricultural production, we compute the distribution of occupation groups by age and sex. This is given in Table 4.3.

As I have divided the population in Sekinchan under the two broad category of economically active population and economically inactive population I shall here pursue the analysis along this line.

Leaving aside the "unknown" category, Table 4.3 shows that out of the total population about 28% of the male population are economically active and about 24% economically inactive. By comparison, the females have about 18% of the total population within the category of economically active population and about 26% economically inactive. The role play by the females in this agricultural economy is thus considerable.

From the Table we see the distribution of males and females occupation groups in various age groups. The proportion of "Farmers" for males and females under 20 years old is very low, eleven for males and fifteen for females. The majority of the "Farmers" is found in the older age groups i.e. 55-64 years. I think that the 243 "Farmers" found in this age group are the pioneers of the Sekinchan farming area. Considering the fact that the Sekinchan padi cultivation scheme was opened about sixteen years ago it is not surprising to find a concentration of "Farmers" in this age group. These were the people who came over to Sekinchan in their mid-thirties to plant and they were the people responsible in large measure for the success or failure of the Resettlement Scheme. Also within this age range, 55-64, the number of farm workers (i.e. household farm help and hire-help) and odd-jobbers are relatively scarce as compared to the number of self-employed farmers. One feature to note is the relatively small proportion of female farmers only 174 as compared to the 599 male farmers. This is partly due to the Chinese custom of female submission to men. Therefore land titles are in the husband's name. Some of the females own land because the husband has more than one piece of land. As one person is entitled to only one piece of free state land, additional piece (s) can only be obtained through using the wife's name. However, most of the females who own and operate the land are widows who have acquired the title of the land on the deaths of their husbands.

This small number of female farmer is to be contrasted with the large number of female household farm help. They certainly outnumber their male counterparts. This can be explained. In the first, those women who get married live with their husbands or in-laws



Age Group In Years	Economically Active																			
	Farmer		Hire help		Household Farm help		Fisherman	Shopkeeper	Taxi driver	Stall holder	Bar tender	Shop assistant	Hunter	Odd Jobber		Service Sales		Trader		
	M	F	M	F	M	F	M	M	M	M	M	M	M	F	M	F	M	F	M	F
0 - 4	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
5 - 9	-	-	-	-	2	4	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
10 - 14	1	2	1	1	30	39	-	-	-	-	-	-	1	2	-	-	-	-	3	-
15 - 19	10	13	5	3	207	165	1	-	-	-	1	-	3	-	10	2	1	-	3	-
20 - 24	29	7	4	3	183	110	5	1	-	-	-	-	3	-	8	3	2	1	1	-
25 - 29	39	8	2	1	70	57	3	1	1	-	1	1	4	-	2	1	3	-	-	-
30 - 34	36	9	3	1	28	35	-	-	-	-	-	-	4	-	9	-	-	-	2	2
35 - 39	35	13	2	-	7	44	1	1	-	-	-	-	4	-	3	1	2	-	1	-
40 - 44	31	12	1	-	8	30	1	1	-	1	-	-	4	1	-	-	-	-	2	-
45 - 49	47	21	1	2	6	40	-	1	1	-	1	-	3	-	1	3	2	-	2	-
50 - 54	80	33	1	2	8	45	1	2	-	-	-	-	3	-	2	-	-	-	1	-
55 - 59	109	29	1	-	6	40	-	1	-	-	-	-	3	1	3	-	1	1	-	1
60 - 64	109	17	2	-	5	18	-	1	-	-	-	-	1	-	4	1	1	-	1	-
65 & over	63	8	2	1	11	14	-	-	-	-	-	-	1	4	2	-	-	-	-	-
Age Unknown	4	2	-	-	3	10 ^(S)	-	-	-	-	-	1	-	1	3	-	-	-	-	-
Total	599	174	25	14	574	453^(S)	12	9	2	1	3	2	32	5	49	16	12	12	16	3

¹ Although the upper limit for the classification of children is 14 the majority under this category is below

MS. = Unknown Sex

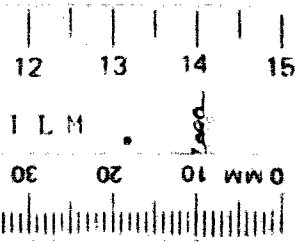


TABLE 4.3

OCCUPATION GROUPS BY AGE AND

OCCUPATION GR

Economically Active

Economically Active

Economically Active												Economically Active																													
Farmer		Shop assistant		Hacker		Odd Jobber		Service Sales		Trader		Pig rearer		Farm help		Fisherman		Shopkeeper		Taxi driver		Stall holder		Gardener		Shop assistant		Hacker		Odd Jobber		Service Sales									
M	F	M	F	M	F	M	F	M	F	M	F	M	F	M	F	M	F	M	F	M	F	M	F	M	F	M	F	M	F	M	F										
-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-										
-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	4	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-										
-	-	-	1	2	-	-	-	3	-	1	-	30	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	1	2	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-										
1	-	3	-	10	2	1	-	3	-	1	1	105	1	-	-	-	1	-	3	-	10	2	1	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-										
-	-	3	-	8	3	2	1	1	-	-	-	110	5	1	-	-	-	-	3	-	8	3	2	1	-	-	-	-	-	-	-										
1	1	4	-	2	1	3	-	-	-	-	-	57	3	1	1	-	1	1	1	4	-	2	1	3	-	-	-	-	-	-	-										
-	-	4	-	8	-	-	-	2	2	2	-	35	-	-	-	-	-	-	4	-	8	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-										
-	-	4	-	3	1	2	-	1	-	-	-	44	1	1	-	-	-	-	4	-	3	1	2	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-										
-	-	4	1	-	-	-	-	2	-	-	-	30	1	1	-	1	-	-	4	1	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-										
1	-	3	-	1	3	2	-	2	-	4	-	40	-	1	1	-	1	-	3	-	1	3	2	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-										
-	-	3	-	2	-	-	-	1	-	1	-	45	1	2	-	-	-	-	3	-	2	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-										
-	-	3	1	3	-	1	1	-	1	1	-	40	-	1	-	-	-	-	3	1	3	-	1	1	-	-	-	-	-	-	-										
-	-	1	-	4	1	1	-	1	-	-	-	18	-	1	-	-	-	-	1	-	4	1	1	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-										
-	-	-	1	4	2	-	-	-	-	-	-	14	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	1	4	2	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-										
-	1	-	1	1	3	-	-	-	-	-	-	10(3)	-	-	-	-	-	-	1	-	1	1	3	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-										
3	2	32	5	49	18	12	2	16	3	10	2	105(3)	12	9	2	1	3	2	32	5	49	18	12	2	16	3	10	2	105(3)	12	9	2	1	3	2	32	5	49	18	12	2

en is 14 the majority under this category is below seven the classification of children is 14 the majority under this cate

TABLE 4.3

OCCUPATION GROUPS BY AGE AND SEX

TABL
GROUPS

Economically Active													Economically Inactive												
Marital Status	Odd Jobber		Service & Sales		Trader		Pig rearer		Tailor		Clerk & Manager		Miscellaneous		Unemployed		Home workers		Student		Retired		Childless		Total
	F	M	F	M	F	M	F	M	F	M	F	M	F	M	F	M	F	M	F	M	F	M	F	M	
-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	292	22	-
-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	183	131	-	-	224	18	-	
1	2	-	-	-	3	-	1	-	-	-	-	3	5	30	26	2	28	201	175	-	-	6	-	3	
-	10	2	1	-	3	-	1	1	-	-	-	12	6	9	8	2	37	90	17	-	-	-	-	3	
-	8	3	2	1	1	-	-	-	-	-	-	13	3	-	-	-	65	3	2	-	-	-	-	1	
-	2	1	3	-	-	-	-	1	1	-	-	14	-	2	-	-	52	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	
-	9	-	-	-	2	2	2	-	-	-	-	8	-	1	1	-	59	-	-	-	-	-	-	2	
-	3	1	2	-	1	-	-	-	-	-	-	6	2	1	-	-	29	-	-	-	-	-	-	1	
1	-	-	-	-	2	-	-	-	-	-	2	6	3	-	-	-	33	-	-	-	-	-	-	2	
-	1	3	2	-	2	-	4	-	-	-	-	4	4	1	1	-	29	-	-	-	-	-	-	2	
-	2	-	-	-	1	-	1	-	-	-	1	4	1	3	2	-	23	-	-	-	-	-	-	1	
1	3	-	1	1	-	1	1	-	-	-	-	5	1	5	4	2	16	-	-	3	12	-	1	-	
-	4	1	1	-	1	-	-	-	-	-	-	4	-	2	3	-	22	-	-	13	11	-	-	1	
1	4	2	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	4	1	1	-	1	31	-	-	12	12	-	-	-	
1	1	3	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	3	-	20	33	8	7	7	-	3	6	22	-	-	
2	5	49	16	12	2	10	3	10	2	1	3	87	25	75	70	15	431	584	325	31	41	544	2	16	

majority under this category is below seven.

category is

TABLE 4.3

GROUPS BY AGE AND SEX

										Economically inactive														
										Unemployed		Homeworkers		Student		Retired		Children			Unknown			
										H	F	H	F	H	F	H	F	H	F	US.	H	F	US.	
2	23	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	282	235	7	-	-	-	
4	10	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	183	131	-	-	224	181	3	2	1	-		
6		3	-	1	-	-	-	3	5	30	26	2	28	291	175	-	-	6	9	-	2	4	-	
		3	-	1	1	-	-	12	5	9	8	2	37	88	17	-	-	-	-	-	5	3	-	
		1	-	-	-	-	-	13	3	-	-	-	65	3	2	-	-	-	-	-	4	1	-	
		-	-	-	1	1	-	14	-	2	-	-	52	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	
		2	2	2	-	-	-	8	-	1	1	-	58	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	1	-	-	
		1	-	-	-	-	-	6	2	1	-	-	29	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	
		2	-	-	-	-	2	8	3	-	-	-	33	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	
		2	-	4	-	-	-	4	4	1	1	-	29	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	
		1	-	1	-	-	1	4	1	3	2	-	23	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	
		1	-	1	1	-	-	5	1	5	4	2	16	-	-	3	12	-	-	-	-	-	-	
		1	-	-	-	-	-	4	-	2	3	-	22	-	-	13	11	-	-	-	-	-	-	
		-	-	-	-	-	-	4	1	1	-	1	31	-	-	12	12	-	-	-	-	-	-	
22		-	-	-	-	-	-	3	-	20	33	8	7	7	-	3	6	22	20	3	66	64	48	
44		2	10	3	10	2	1	3	87	25	75	78	15	431	584	325	31	41	544	445	13	80	73	48

category is below seven.

Economically Inactive

Stock & Manager	Miscellaneous		Unemployed		Newspapers		Student		Retired		Children			Unknown			All Groups		
	M	F	M	F	M	F	M	F	M	F	M	F	US.	M	F	US.	M	F	US.
	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	292	235	7	-	-	-	292	235	7
	-	-	-	-	-	-	183	131	-	-	224	181	3	2	1	-	411	317	3
	3	5	30	26	2	28	291	175	-	-	6	9	-	2	4	-	371	290	-
	12	5	9	8	2	37	98	17	-	-	-	-	-	5	3	-	350	255	-
	13	3	-	-	-	65	3	2	-	-	-	-	-	4	1	-	256	195	-
	14	-	2	-	-	52	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	144	120	-
	8	-	1	1	-	59	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	1	-	-	92	109	-
	6	2	1	-	-	29	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	63	89	-
	8	3	-	-	-	33	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	57	79	-
	4	4	1	1	-	29	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	70	104	-
	4	1	3	2	-	23	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	112	107	-
	5	1	5	4	2	16	-	-	3	12	-	-	-	-	-	-	130	106	-
	4	-	2	3	-	22	-	-	13	11	-	-	-	-	-	-	143	72	-
	4	1	1	-	1	31	-	-	12	12	-	-	-	-	-	-	98	70	-
	3	-	20	23	8	7	7	-	3	6	22	20	3	66	64	48	138	146	54
3	87	25	75	79	15	431	584	325	31	41	544	445	13	80	73	48	2,736	2,294	64

and work for them as household farm assistants. Secondly, most of the wives follow their husbands to the fields to work, that is, they are household farm assistant first and housewives second. The highest number of female household assistant are found in the age group 15-19. They are normally those who had just left school and are in the "interim" period of marriage.

The Table shows very clearly that household farm labourers are concentrated mainly in the younger age groups. Between the ages of 15-24, 665 people are classified as household farm labourers. Out of these 390 are males and 275 females. In the total it is the females that outnumber the males this shows the females are spread over a greater age range. The fact that a large portion of the household farm labourers are in the younger age group poses an interesting question. These people are in the prime of life and as such their labour potentialities are definitely high. The question therefore arises - are the labour potentialities of this group of economically active population fully utilised? It is rather a misfortune that a large number of the active population should be confined to padi-planting because "padi farming is characterised by small farms, high rents, low yields and much indebtedness as well as price exploitation by traders. The income of many of the padi farmers is nearer \$50 a month than \$100".⁹ If this be the case then surely these young people would be more economically employed elsewhere. However, this is not a ready solution owing to the scarcity of employment opportunities and the traditional reluctance of the Chinese to live away from the family.

Consequently, one would conclude that under-employment exists in Sekinchan. The farmer has a limited three acre piece of land, and members of his family provides the necessary labour to cultivate it. The question is whether too much labour is being utilized on that piece of land. If the acreage of the farmer could be increased then perhaps an important step in the direction of increasing farm incomes could be made. As our analysis has shown, the problem is not one of whether there is sufficient labour but rather on of whether the existing labour supply could find sufficient outlet for its potentialities.

We see that the majority of those classified under "hire-help" and "odd-jobber" are males. This reflect a certain traditional Chinese attitude towards female labour. Female labour seems to be used either on the farm or in the home. For example, the rearing of pigs seem to be the preserve of the females. Very few go out to work for others but another speculation is there are not such employment opportunities. Similarly with minor exceptions all those classified under "sales and service", "hawker" are males whereas

⁹ Ungku Aziz: "Facts and Fallacies about the Malay economy - in retrospect with new footnotes - Ekonomi - Volume 3, No. 1, December, 1962.

occupations like "taxi-driving", "fishing", "shopkeeper", "shop-assistant", are strictly the preserve of men. In the "miscellaneous" category there are only 25 females compared to the 87 males. In the "unknown" category nearly an equal number of males and females have their occupation unknown.

The small number of people who are engaged in occupations other than farming lends support to the statement that in Sekinchan occupations are centred round the farm. This leads one to speculate if increased employment opportunities would benefit the population.

Coming to the "student" category we see that children in Sekinchan receive only elementary education lasting for about five to six years. Inevitably they end up on the farm as farm-help and this fact would make one think that little progress will be achieved in the life of the community. If parents do not make plans for their children to find alternative and more lucrative occupations, and if there is no increased in their land resources, eventually as the labour force increases serious problems would arise.

From the Table we also see that male students greatly outnumber their female counterparts. This is not in the least surprising. The Chinese are conservative people. They attach greater importance in the education of sons than daughters. It is quite surprising we see that in the age group 20-24 we have three male students and two female students. It is likely an error in enumeration or they may be from quite well to do families who can afford to send their sons and daughters for higher education outside Sekinchan. In our instruction sheet, we are not to enumerate people staying away from home but some enumerators might have made the mistake.

Another feature is there are only ninety-seven students in their late teens (15-19). It is an unfortunate feature that children have only a formal education spending about five to six years in school. Under such circumstances is there any hope that the child would find employment outside the farm?

Farmers normally do not believe in higher education for their children and this coupled with the fact that farm incomes are too low for the farmers to send their older children to schools has been largely responsible for the educational backwardness of the Sekinchan population. Education is mainly through the Chinese-medium. Again lack of educational facilities may be responsible for the educational backwardness. There are very few schools in Sekinchan and there is only one secondary school - the Yoke Kuan Chinese Secondary School. It is obvious that there is much room for the improvement of education facilities and this would go a long way in eradicating the tradition prejudice towards education.

From the Table we see that there are 1002 children who are by definition economically inactive. In terms of percentages it is about 20% of the population. But as we have said earlier, children in rural areas do render valuable services. They are an asset not

a liability. It would not be surprising to find a child between 8-10 years of age helping to keep birds from the fields or in sorting out the padi. Thus they do not in any way aggravate the dependency problem.

Leaving out the "unknown" category, household workers is the second highest class of dependents. But the term economically inactive is used in the relative sense, for these people besides doing housework do help in the farm. This further reduces the dependency problem.

In concluding our analysis of occupation groups by age and sex, we find that the main occupation are centred round the farm with land titles mainly in the age group of 55-64. Household farm labour is the majority occupation group with females outnumbering males and concentrated in the age group of 15-24. Children receive only an elementary education, this being due to the inability of parents to provide them with further education and a tendency to overlook the benefits of a sound education. Also a lack of educational facilities may be responsible for the fact that few children go to school.

The unemployment problem appears to be of small significance with only 3% of the population classified under this group. I do not think that in Sekinchan the problem is one of unemployment. People can find work to do on the farms. The problem is whether the labour is fully utilised or not and in this sense I think at present under-employment is the problem and not unemployment.

Finally, the scope of employment opportunities is apparently limited as indicated by the fact only a small proportion of the population is employed in occupations outside the farm. In the farming process extensive use is made of family labour and this leads to the suggestion that an increase in land and capital resources would go a long way towards increasing the farm incomes. I do not mean that farm incomes are insufficient to maintain the farmer and his family at reasonable subsistence levels - rather what I mean is that farm incomes could be increased and with a higher level of income the standard of living of the Sekinchan farmers could be raised.