

SOCIO-ECONOMIC SURVEY REPORT 2024



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**Socio-Economic Status Report of Students
St. Thomas College, Kozhencherry-2024**



Foreword

Education serves as the most powerful means of social transformation, and at St. Thomas College, Kozhencherry, we remain steadfast in our mission to make higher education accessible, inclusive, and equitable for all sections of society. The present Socio-Economic Status Report 2024 is a sincere institutional endeavour to understand our students beyond the classroom — their economic realities, social circumstances, and the challenges that shape their educational journeys.

This data-driven study provides a valuable insight into the socio-economic diversity of our student community, revealing that a significant majority belong to economically weaker sections. Such findings reaffirm the relevance of the College's commitment to equity and call for targeted interventions through scholarships, digital access, and skill-development initiatives. It also highlights the urgency of creating a comprehensive support ecosystem which ensures that no student is left behind, due to financial or social constraints.

By aligning our initiatives with the vision of the National Education Policy 2020, we aim to foster a learning environment that not only nurtures academic excellence but also promotes inclusivity, resilience, and self-reliance. I extend my appreciation to the Internal Quality Assurance Cell (IQAC) and all faculty members involved in preparing this report. Their meticulous effort has provided the institution with a strong foundation for evidence-based planning and continuous improvement.

Let this report inspire our collective responsibility to create a campus where opportunity, compassion, and excellence coexist in harmony.

Prof. (Dr) George K. Alex
(Principal)
St. Thomas College, Kozhencherry



Socio-Economic Status Report of Students

St. Thomas College, Kozhencherry-2024

I. Introduction and Methodology

This report provides a data-driven analysis of the Socio-Economic Status (SES) of the student population of St. Thomas College, Kozhencherry, based on the *Fillout Student Profile Update* data set. Understanding the SES is paramount for the college administration to tailor support programmes, scholarships, and academic interventions, thereby fulfilling the core principle of **equity and inclusion** in higher education.

The analysis is based on key SES indicators including **Annual Family Income**, **Caste/Community Group**, and their distribution across various **Courses** and **Gender** categories. The findings reveal the depth of financial need within the student body, which forms the foundation for the subsequent recommendations and strategies.

II. Analysis of Student Socio-Economic Status

The analysis of the provided data reveals a student body characterized by significant financial need, coupled with a diverse social composition.

1. Annual Family Income Distribution

The most critical finding from the student profile data is that the high proportion of students belonging to the **Economically Weaker Section (EWS)**.

Income Category	Percentage of Students
EWS (< 1 Lakh Annual Income)	61.7 %
Middle/Upper (> 1 Lakh)	22.8 %
Unknown	15.6 %

of less than 1,00,000. This demographic reality indicates that **financial hardship** is the single most dominant factor influencing the student experiences at the college. The high percentage of EWS students necessitates an urgent focus on financial aid, fee concessions, and livelihood support to prevent dropouts and to ensure academic focus.

The visual representation below further highlights this severe disparity:

2. Social and Gender Composition

The college exhibits a healthy gender balance and social diversity.

Group	Percentage of Students
Female	56.2 %
Male	43.8 %

Caste Group Percentage of Students

General	52.3 %
OBC	30.7 %
SC	14.6 %
OEC	2.0 %
ST	0.5 %

3. Cross-Tabulation: Caste Group vs. Annual Family Income

The analysis reveals that economic backwardness is not confined to any single caste category but is a widespread challenge:

Caste Group	Students in EWS (< 1 Lakh)	Students in Middle/Upper (> 1 Lakh)
SC	70.8 %	18.6 %
OBC	66.2 %	20.3 %
OEC	68.2 %	13.6 %
General	56.1 %	26.0 %

Observation: The high percentage of EWS students cuts across all major social groups, with the Scheduled Caste (SC) group showing the highest financial vulnerability at **70.8 %** in the EWS category. Even in the General category, over half the students fall into the lowest income bracket. This proves that assistance programmes must prioritize **economic criteria** alongside existing caste-based reservations and scholarships.

4. Course Enrollment and Financial Vulnerability

The distribution of EWS students is most concentrated in the core undergraduate and postgraduate programmes:

Course	Students in EWS (< 1 Lakh)
UG (Undergraduate)	63.2 %
PG (Postgraduate)	60.6 %

Observation: The primary beneficiaries of any new support mechanism must be the UG and PG students, as they represent the largest and most financially vulnerable cohorts.

III. Key Points to Improve Student Conditions

Based on the analysis, a strategic approach focusing on financial aid, life skills, and digital access is required.

1. Financial and Material Support

Establish “Student Opportunity Fund”: Beyond traditional scholarships, create a local college fund, supported by alumni and CSR, to provide small, quick-disbursing grants for immediate needs (e.g., travel expenses, urgent medical care, exam fees) to the 61.7 % EWS students.

Mandatory Digital Access Grant: Since a high percentage of students are economically weak, the college should

implement a scheme to provide **subsidised or free laptops/tablets** and internet data packs, primarily to all students with an income below 1 Lakh. This addresses the digital divide, a major barrier to quality education.

Expand Earn-While-You-Learn Schemes: Increase the number of campus employment opportunities (e.g., library assistants, lab assistants, administrative support) to provide a stable, small income source for the most financially needy students, following the model of the Kerala State government.

2. Academic and Career Support

Targeted Remedial Coaching: Launch free, high-quality remedial coaching classes focused on foundational subjects (English, Mathematics) for students from SEDGs, especially those entering UG courses, to bridge the gap from school-level learning.

Mandatory Career Counseling: Integrate mandatory career and competitive examination counseling from the first year of the UG course. This should focus on state and central government jobs (PSC/SSC/UPSC) and entrance exams for higher studies, providing economically backward students a clear and achievable career road map.

Soft Skills and Interview Training: Establish a dedicated *Soft Skills and Employability Centre* to train students in communication, presentation, and interview skills, which are crucial for jobs but often inaccessible to students from disadvantaged backgrounds.

3. Data Integrity and Monitoring

Standardise Income Documentation: Address the **15.6 % 'Unknown' income** category by making the submission of a valid **EWS/EBC/Income Certificate** mandatory during admission and registration. This will ensure more accurate targeting of resources.

Student Wellness and Mental Health: Form a **free and confidential mental health counseling unit** to support students dealing with the psychological burden of economic hardship.

IV. Scholarship Schemes for Economically Backward Groups

The financial vulnerability of the student body can be mitigated by effectively promoting and facilitating access to existing Central and State scholarship schemes for Economically Backward Classes (EBCs), which include EWS students.

A. Central Government Schemes

The primary central schemes for EWS/EBC students in higher education are managed through the Ministry of Social Justice & Empowerment and the Ministry of Education.

PM-YASASVI: Post-Matric Scholarship for OBC, EBC, and DNT Students

Purpose: Financial assistance for students pursuing post-matriculation or post-secondary courses (UG/PG).

Eligibility (Income): Annual parental income up to **2.50 Lakhs**.

Benefit: Covers academic allowance, which helps with non-refundable fees and maintenance.

Central Sector Scheme of Scholarship (CSSS) for College and University Students (PM-USP)

Purpose: Merit-cum-means scholarship for meritorious students from low-income families.

Eligibility (Income): Annual parental income up to **4.5 Lakhs** (updated limits apply).

Benefit: Financial assistance of 12,000 per annum at the UG level and 20,000 per annum at the PG level.

Post-Matric Scholarship for EBC Students (Economic Backward Classes)

Purpose: Direct financial support for post-secondary education for EBC students.

Eligibility (Income): Annual family income below **₹1 Lakh per annum**. *This is highly relevant for the 61.7 % of students identified in the EWS category in the college data.*

B. State Government of Kerala Schemes (Directorate of Collegiate Education - DCE)

Kerala offers several merit-cum-means and targeted scholarships administered through the DCE.

State Merit Scholarship (SMS)

Purpose: For meritorious UG and PG students.

Eligibility (Income): Family income should **not exceed 1 Lakh per annum**. *This is directly applicable to the vast majority of students.*

Benefit: Financial assistance (e.g., 1,250 per annum for UG).

Student Aid Scholarship from Govt. of Kerala (SAF)

Purpose: Specifically for economically backward students.

Selection: Based on a merit-cum-means approach.

E-Grantz Scholarships

Purpose: Provides financial support, including fee concessions, to students belonging to **SC/ST/OBC/Minority** communities who are pursuing UG, PG, and PhD courses.

Vidya Sammunnathi Scholarship

Purpose: Offered by the Kerala State Backward Classes Development Corporation (KSBCDC) for meritorious students of **forward communities** who are **economically backward** (EWS).

Benefit: Provides educational assistance to EWS students across various categories.

V. Strategies to Improve Academic Quality on the Basis of NEP-2020

The National Education Policy (NEP)-2020 lays a strong emphasis on **Equity and Inclusion** for **Socio-Economically Disadvantaged Groups (SEDGs)**. The college can leverage the policy's framework to specifically uplift the academic performance of its economically weaker students.

1. Curricular and Pedagogical Reforms (Flexibility and Core Skills)

Holistic and Multidisciplinary Education: Implement the NEP-2020's call for **flexible and multidisciplinary learning** by designing interdisciplinary courses. This allows EWS students to select a combination of subjects that are both academic (improving core knowledge) and vocational (enhancing employability), which is crucial for students who need to secure livelihood quickly.

Multiple Entry and Exit (MEE) Option and Academic Bank of Credits (ABC): Adopt the MEE framework aggressively. The **61.7 % EWS cohort** is most likely to drop out or pause their education due to financial crises. MEE/ABC allows them to exit with a certificate/diploma to work to earn money, and to re-enter the system later without losing academic credit, thereby reducing the risk of permanent dropout.

Shift from Rote Learning to Conceptual Understanding: Implement pedagogical practices that focus on **critical thinking and problem-solving** over rote memorisation. This helps to bridge the foundational gap often present in students from resource-poor schools.

2. Technology and Learning Support Interventions

Leverage Digital Learning Platforms (NEAT/SWAYAM): Actively encourage EWS students to use government-

backed free Ed-Tech platforms like **NEAT (National Educational Alliance for Technology)**, which provides personalised, AI-driven learning, and **SWAYAM (Study Webs of Active-learning for Young Aspiring Minds)** for remedial and credit courses. The college must provide free access centres (computer labs) for this purpose.

Personalised Academic and Socio-Emotional Support: As NEP-2020 recommends, establish a strong **mentor-mentee system** where faculty are trained to provide **personalised academic and socio-emotional counseling** to students from SEDGs. This support goes beyond tuition to address underlying factors of stress and lack of confidence.

Regional Language Integration: Wherever feasible, provide academic support materials and supplementary teaching in the students' local languages (Malayalam) to strengthen **conceptual clarity** before transitioning fully to English, which is a key barrier for SEDGs.

3. Institutional Equity and Resource Allocation

Establish a Dedicated SEDG Support Cell: Create a dedicated **Socially and Economically Disadvantaged Group (SEDG) Support Cell** to track the progress of the 61.7 % EWS students. This cell would be responsible for scholarship application assistance, conducting remedial classes, and liaising with the college administration for targeted fee concessions.

Utilise Unutilised Infrastructure (Samajik Chetna Kendra): Following the NEP-2020 principle, use the college infrastructure outside of class hours as a **“Samajik Chetna Kendra”** (Social Awareness Centre). This can host free competitive exam coaching, community skill development workshops, and study sessions for EWS students, extending the college's resources to the most needy groups.

VI. Conclusion

The data for St. Thomas College, Kozhencherry, strongly indicates an urgent need for intervention, with **61.7 % of its student body classified as economically weak with 1 Lakh annual income**). The challenge attaining **sustained participation and academic success**.

By implementing the suggested strategies—focusing on targeted financial aid, leveraging the **flexible and inclusive** tenets of **NEP-2020** (MEE, ABC, digital learning), and rigorously promoting Central and State scholarships—St. Thomas College, Kozhencherry can transform its high demographic need into a success story of true equity and quality higher education.

Sample Data Sheet- SES, 2024

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