K. Mahadevan

Family Size Norm in Rural South India

FAMILY size norm has been broadly used in several studies in two ways (1) as a means of extending cohort fertility to make birth projections (Freedman *et al,* 1959) and (2) as a substitute or approximation of completed family size in studies of differential fertility (Mishler and Westoff, 1955). A number of conceptual models of fertility behaviour, with family size norm as a major component in the overall process of family formation have been advanced by scholars in the recent past (Freedman, 1967; Fawcett, 1970 and Shults, 1973), The concept of family size norm has acquired over the years, wider applicability. Ryder (J973) has pointed out that normative patterns play an important role, although the patterns may be difficult to identify and measure.

Opinions differ about the feasibility of studying the family size norms. Accuracy of family size norm, as an indicator of fertility performance, has been found to be highly dependable (Westoff, *et al.* 1957). In a study (by Westoff) of 145 college educated protestant couples who were followed up for 20 years to assess the changes in their fertility, the desired number of children was found at the aggregate level to be an extremely accurate predictor of actual number of children. Actual and desired fertility differed by less than 5 percent only. Michigan Mathematical Psychological Group **(MMPP,** 1973) felt, "It is not the concept of norm which is defective but the way how it is measured". Kirk (1972) argues that ideal family size questions are invalid because while "Norms indeed influence behaviour , . . behaviour also changes norms". Criticisms are also levelled against the methodological feasibility in the measurement of ideal family size norm by Hauser (1976) and Ryder (1973). Hauser is skeptical

of the value of using this concept among people who believe that the number of children is determined by nature, spirit or God. Nevertheless, Freedman and others (1963) have found it as a useful concept in Taiwan. Freedman reports that "norms about various aspec tsof sex$_T$ and reproduction and marriage are foun din all societies and profoundly affect fertility. They may be based on-superstition or on soundly based scientific knowledge".

Family size norm in the study of fertility behaviour assumed importance as early as during the period of the Indianapolis Study. Clare and Kiser (1951) analysed ex-post-facto statements by married couples in the Indianapolis Study on how important the desire for a child of each sex was in their decision to have their last child. Tfley found it important among a small group at each parity. In the Princeton Study of two-child couples in large metropolitan areas, Westoff (1959) found sex preference to be important to Protestants but not to Catholics or Jews in their desire for another child. In the Growth of American Families Study, Freedman and others (1959) found that for most of the respondents, sex preference was the most important reason for wanting additional children. A recent study of Freedman (1974) in Taiwan showed the existence of normative behaviour and the importance for son in Taiwanese society. He found strong effect of desire for son on fertility behaviour. Most of the respondents (90-95%) wanted at least two sons, with 72-77 percent preferring two. Preference for son is a common cultural characteristic found among Chinese, including Taiwanese, other Asians and also in many parts of Latin America.

Freedman writes that one reason for the ideal number of three or more children may be to increase the probability of getting the preferred number of sons. He reports that "stated preference for sex of children (personal ideal) varies considerably among populations. Even in European countries where the mean desired family size is low, individual preferences range from none to as many as four or more sons. In Hungary, for example, the model preference is one son. West Malaysia in 1966-67 presents another extreme : less than 1% ted no sons; 12% prefer four or more; and 31 responded either that a boy or a girl is all right or indeterminate on the question". Regarding ideal family size, again, writes Freedman (1974) "those with a model preference for two sons include India in general, Calcutta, Delhi, Rural East Jawa, Jakarta, Korea, West Malaysia, the Philippines and Taiwan, and those countries with a model preference for one son include Belgium, Hungary, and the United States—Ideal number of children ranges widely as does ideal number of sons. In Taiwan almost no one wants one child, while 63% want four or more. In Belgium, the

corresponding figures are 12% wanting one child and 18% wanting four or more. Preference for a specific number of sons is related to preference for total size of family, and it is only when we examine them in combination that evidence for the preference for a son can emerge". In many respects India falls in line with many other Asian countries for family size and value of sons. India, Korea and Taiwan are considered to exhibit a fairly strong preference for son. Even within a country, cities reflect a different system of family values and son preference from the country as a whole.

So far the largest volume of fertility research has dealt with stratification variables because stratification is important for both social and economic theory (Freedman, 1963). Among the important stratification indicators considered in various studies are : occupation, income, wealth, education, power, prestige, class and caste. In India one of the most important stratification variables even today is the caste. But very little importance has been given to this social variable. However, a few important studies where caste has been used as a stratification variable and family size norm as dependent variable are : Mysore Population Study (1961), Calcutta Study (1970), Kumudini Dandekar (1959), Delhi Study (1968-69), Driver (1963), Agarwala (1970) and Mahadevan and Namboothiri (1972). In fact, one of the major reasons for not getting definite trend and differentials in fertility studies conducted in India can be traced to the defective selection of stratification variables.

The 1972 study by Mahadevan and Namboothiri on fertility differentials among a cross section of caste groups in a rural population of Tamilnadu revealed variations in vital events related to caste. The caste groups which showed significant differences in fertility included the Gounders and the Harijans and a few other numerically smaller caste falling in between them in the caste hierarchy. The Gounders, who happen to be on the top of the socio-economic status, have the lowest crude birth rate of 24.5 per thousand; whereas the Harijans, an impoverished caste, have a very high birth rate of 37.5 and the other 'miscellaneous castes' also have a fairly high crude birth rate. Their infant and child mortality also varies in the same direction. The present study is an extension of that study.

Method and Data

The major objective here is to examine the differentials and determinants of family size norms among different social strata. The intention is also to use

family size norms for projecting future fertility. The three measures of family size norms considered here are : (i) additional, and (ii) maximum number of children expected, and (iii) ideal family size. **By** 'Ideal number of children' is meant the number of children desired, in general;, by a female respondent for her family. 'Additional number expected' refers to the answers to the question : "How many more children do you want in addition to what you already have?" The "maximum no. expected" refers to the largest number of children thought of at the point of survey by the respondent. While 'maximum no. expected' and 'ideal family size' reflect total fertility; 'additional no. expected' projects the requirement of children into the future.

The data for this study are taken from a second survey carried out on the satne sample frame of a stratified rural population in one Community Development Block in Madurai District, Tamilnaxlu. The initial survey (1970) focussed on the current level of fertility, while the present (1972) is a retrospective independent resurvey.

A two stage sampling procedure was followed for the selection of the sample. All the 151 villages from Block were listed. These villages were first stratified into four groups on the basis of population size : 500 or less, 501-1000, 1001-2000 and 2001 and above. A total number of 28 villages or 20 percent of the entire Block, were selected at random with probability proportionate to population size from all the four strata. This percentage was fixed to get the sample size required for computing fertility and mortality rates.

In the second stage household with at least one ever married woman formed the sampling unit. In the selected villages, enumeration of households was carried out to get the total number of households and their caste identity. All the households were grouped into three caste groups—the Gounders, the Harijans and Others. This pattern of groupings* was resorted to for two reasons. The Gounders and the Harijans are the two extreme groups having differences both in their social structure and also in all the vital events. Secondly, they together constitute about 75% of the population of the Block. All the other numerically small and less diverse group of castes form the third group, referred to

***The Gounders** profess mostly of agricultural occupation and own **land** whereas the Harijans are mostly **agricultural** labourers. The **'Others'** constitute a numerically small **and comparatively homogeneous** group of caste Hindus who fall in between the Gounders and **the Harijans in the status hierarchy,**

in the study as 'Others'. In the total population of the selected villages, the Gounders constituted 60 percent and the Harijans 15 percent. The distribution of the sample households by caste was more or less similar to that of the total population in the Block.

A total of 3300 ever married women were thus selected, from the three caste strata, for interviewing in the first survey. However, only 3032 respondents could be contacted during the survey for the purpose.

Among the selected ever married women of first survey, only currently married women in the age group of 15 to 49 were included as respondents in this study. On the whole, 2100 wives satisfying the stipulated criteria were available on the initial sample list and all of them were considered for the present study. However, only 1912 could be interviewed and the rest could not be contacted due to temporary migration, refusal and death.

Findings

Family Size Norms and Live Births. The additional and maximum no. expected, and ideal family size vary significantly between the Gounders and the Harijans, as shown in Table 1 below. This implies that their fertility differences are likely to continue to be in the same direction unless organised effort is made to change them. Others have an intermediate level in all the measures of family size norms lying in between the two extreme groups. It is interesting to note that ideal number of children mentioned by all of them shows a similar trend across different strata as in the case of expected family size.

TABLE 1—MEAN LIVE BIRTH, ADDITIONAL EXPECTED, MAXIMUM EXPECTED AND IDEAL FAMILY SIZE NORMS ACCORDING TO DIFFERENT CASTE STRATA

Measures of family size norms and live births	*Gounders N = 856*	*'Others' N = 514*	*Harijans N = 542*
Live births	3.62	4.23	5.12
Additional no. expected	1.61	1.96	2.82
Maximum no. expected	4.14	4.34	4.77
Ideal family size	3.74	4.81	5.61

According to the expectation of additional births in future, wives of the Gounders and others are likely to increase their fertility at least by one-third and the Harijans, by one half of their existing fertility. Even at the present level of family size the Gounders have a crude birth rate of 24.5 as against a higher birth rate of 37.3 for Harijans (Mahadevan and Namboothiri, 1972). On the basis of the reported additional expectation of births, the Harijans expect to have, on an average, 1.21 births more than corresponding figure for the Gounders. This analysis excludes 9 to 11 percent of respondents from the Gounders for want of clear answers. The corresponding proportion of exclusion was 10 to 12 for non-Harijans and 18 to 24 percent for the Harijans. The details are given in Table 1 in the Appendix.

Value of Sons

In a patrilineal society like the one discussed here many roles are expected from sons and so measures of family size norms are likely to be influenced by the number of male children borne and desired by the couple. In fact, 81 percent of all the wives had at least one son. While none of the remaining 19 percent had any. Apparently, the value of son is deep-rooted in their culture.

All the three measures of family size norms—additional no. expected, maximum no. expected, and ideal family size—are significantly and consistently influenced by the number of sons borne and hence support the hypothesis that value of sons is a major determinant of family size norms (Table-2). Number of living sons, as expected, is inversely related to the additional expected family size in all the three strata; excepting for the fact that all the three values are some what higher for those with three or more children both among Gounders and Harijans. Additional expected births are maximum (three and more) among those who did not have any male child. The number of male children for Gounders and the Harijans are directly related to maximum no. expected and ideal family size.

The desire shown for number of male children in future is yet another variable representing the value of sons which has a direct relation with additional and maximum no. expected in all the strata and with ideal family size only in respect of the miscellaneous group ('Others'). Highest family size norms are related to those who have left the choice of son to God or want a maximum of three or more children. Nevertheless, the desire for the number of sons seems

TABLE 2—MEAN ADDITIONAL EXPECTED, MAXIMUM EXPECTED AND IDEAL FAMILY SIZE NORMS FOR WIVES ACCORDING TO THE NUMBER OF SONS LIVING IN DIFFERENT CASTE STRATA

Number of living sons	number of wives			Measures of family size norms								
				Additional expected			Maximum expected			Ideal family size norms		
	Gounders % & N	Others % & N	Harijans % & N	Gounders	Others	Harijans	Gounders	Others	Harijans	Gounders	Others	Harijans
Currently no male living child	21.03 (180)	22.18 (114)	20.66 (112)	3.04	3.44	3.57	4.05	4.40	4.48	2.80	5.01	4.70
One	41.35 (354)	34.82 (179)	31.55 (117)	1.54	2.03	2.94	4.05	4.21	4.67	4.58	4.82	4.87
Two	26.17 (224)	22.76 (117)	25.28 (137)	0.87	1.49	2.19	4.21	4.42	4.83	5.29	5.61	5.45
Three and above	11.45 (98)	20.24 (104)	22.51 (122)	0.97	0.75	2.65	4.48	4.43	5.12	5.92	5.33	5.50

to be less among the Gounders compared to the Harijans in all the measures of family size norms (See Appendix Table 2).

Taking together both the already achieved number of sons and the desire for sons, it may be assumed that there is significant differential in the value for sons among the three strata. The Gounders have the lowest preference for sons among the three groups. The differential in the number of sons between the Harijans and the Gounders might be related to a number of cultural and economic functions performed by sons in their respective families. The role of son(s) for old age support is, for example, reported to be a significant factor for Harijans but this is not observed quite so strongly among the other two groups. Further the Harijans experience a very high infant and child mortality compared to the Gounders, and might therefore desire to have more sons to assure the survival of at least a few.

Demographic Variables

Major demographic variables considered here are : age, age at marriage, and duration of marriage. The influences of these variables on the measures of family size norms are shown in Tables 3, 4 and 5.

(i) *Age.* There is no significant variation in age difference of wives in all the strata of the sample. The proportion of wives in the age group 25 to 34, who are at the peak of the reproductive period, constitute an equal proportion of 42 percent among all the strata. For the rest, the distribution favours the younger age group of 15-24 years in the case of Harijans and others and the higher age group of 35 and above in respect of the Gounders. This difference in age distribution suggests relatively greater incidence of younger age marriages among the Harijans and 'Others'.

There is an inverse relation between additional expectation and age in all the social strata. However, the size of the family expected additionally is significantly greater for the Harijans than for Gounders ; and for 'Others' the corresponding value lies in between those of the two groups, irrespective of age.

Maximum no. expected and ideal family size have similar relationship with age in different strata. While among the Gounders, age shows a somewhat inverse relationship with maximum no. expected and ideal family size, among the Harijans and 'Others' the younger and older age groups show lower values as

TABLE 3—MEAN ADDITIONAL EXPECTED, MAXIMUM EXPECTED AND IDEAL FAMILY SIZE NORMS ACCORDING TO AGE OF WIVES IN DIFFERENT CASTE STRATA

Age of wives	Number of wives			Measures of family size norms								
				Additional expected			Maximum expected			Ideal family size norm		
	Gounders % & N	Others % & N	Harijans % & N	Gounders	Others	Harijans	Gounders	Others	Harijans	Gounders	Others	Harijans
15−24	11.33 (97)	17.12 (88)	18.27 (99)	3.67	3.69	4.34	4.23	4.33	4.55	4.04	4.76	5.27
25−34	47.71 (355)	41.83 (215)	41.51 (225)	2.18	3.68	3.68	4.20	4.50	4.88	3.88	4.83	5.79
35+	46.96 (402)	41.05 (211)	40.22 (218)	0.61	0.50	1.23	4.07	4.19	4.78	3.56	4.81	5.58

TABLE 4—MEAN ADDITIONAL EXPECTED, MAXIMUM EXPECTED AND IDEAL FAMILY SIZE NORMS ACCORDING TO AGE AT MARRIAGE AMONG DIFFERENT CASTE STRATA

Age at marriage	Number of wives			Measures of family size norms								
				Additional expected			Maximum expected			Ideal family size norm		
	Gounders % & N	Others % & N	Harijans % & N	Gounders	Others	Harijans	Gounders	Others	Harijans	Gounders	Others	Harijans
17 years or less	44.28 (379)	65.56 (337)	81.73 (443)	1.46	1.82	2.57	4.17	4.35	4.80	5.13	5.07	5.23
18 years	15.30 (131)	12.84 (66)	10.15 (55)	1.80	2.14	4.20	4.20	4.46	4.73	4.90	5.42	4.66
19 years	15.89 (136)	9.92 (51)	4.80 (26)	1.57	2.12	3.81	4.09	4.26	4.96	5.10	5.51	4.77
20 years and above	24.53 (210)	11.67 (60)	3.32 (18)	1.79	2.40	3.22	4.07	4.27	4.06	4.61	4.93	4.78

TABLE 5—MEAN ADDITIONAL EXPECTED, MAXIMUM EXPECTED AND IDEAL FAMILY SIZE NORMS ACCORDING TO AGE AT MARRIAGE AND DURATION OF MARRIED LIFE AMONG DIFFERENT CASTE STRATA

Age at marriage	*Duration of married life*	*Measures of family size norms*			*9 years*								
					Additional expected			*Ideal family size norms*			*Maximum expected*		
		% & N *G*	% & N *O*	% & N *H*	*G*	*O*	*H*	*G*	*O*	*H*	*G*	*O*	*H*
<	17	44.28 (379)	65.57 (337)	81.74 (443)	1.69	1.58	1.72	3.30	3.65	4.45	4.10	4.16	4.26
	18	15.30 (131)	12.84 (66)	10.15 (55)	1.47	1.22	1.64	2.96	3.30	4.00	4.19	4.10	4.05
	19	15.89 (136)	9.92 (51)	4.80 (26)	1.29	1.83	1.67	3.07	2.80	4.93	3.98	3.78	4.75
	20+	24.53 (210)	11.67 (60)	3.32 (18)	1.57	2.00	2.00	2.85	3.36	5.00	3.97	3.96	3.75
					10 years and above								
<	17				1.42	1.44	1.43	2.74	3.87	4.52	4.06	4.21	4.64
	18				1.45	1.00	1.00	2.86	3.39	4.73	3.99	4.32	4.71
	19				1.40	1.40	1.80	2.71	3.55	4.38	4.01	4.42	4.51
	28+				1.48	3.00	1.33	2.73	3.56	4.18	3.94	4.19	3.93

G = Gounders O = Others H = Harijans
N = Number of wives

compared to the middle age group of 25 to 34. Why do older wives prefer small family size ? It may be that they have already experienced the difficulties of maintaining a big family and hence might wish to have a small family size norm. In the context of the present rate of growth of population in India, women in 25-34 age group in all the castes, irrespetive of number of births, preferring a high family size norm pose a serious problem.

(ii) *Age at Marriage*. Age at marriage varies significantly among all the three social strata : while most of the Gounders (56%) marry at the age of 18 or more, the Harijans (82%) and 'Others' (66%) marry at younger ages of 17 and below. Median age at marriage of the Gounders, 'Others' and the Harijans are 18, 17 and 16 respectively. Median age at marriages of the entire group is at 17. Whelpton (1966) stated that age at marriage influences fertility in two ways : "First, women who marry at younger ages are more likely to belong to socio-economic groups with higher fertility. Secondly, the earlier the women marry, the longer the period they will have during which they can bear children before the onset of menopause or the development of premature fecundity impairments". This observation of Whelpton applies equally to all our strata here.

Women who marry at higher ages expect more additional births compared to those who marry at ages 17 or below in all the three strata (Table 4). This may be because the wives married at higher ages would not have attained the number of births they wanted at the time of survey on account of their shorter durations of marriage. But even this difference is highly significant for the Harijans and 'Others' but not for the Gounders (see Table 4).

Ideal and maximum expected family size norms among the Gounders and the Harijans reveal that wives married at the age of 20 or more have a significant lower level of family size norm as compared to those who married at any of the younger ages, but the difference is more pronounced between ages at marriage of 17 or below and 20 or above. However, for others the trend is the same but it is neither consistent nor statistically significant. These findings reveal that higher age at marriage has influenced the Gounders to have a lower fertility level than the other two groups. We may assume, therefore, that age at marriage is an important variable for explaining the inter-caste and also intra-caste variations in fertility.

However, when age at marriage is considered, controlling the duration of married life, the pronounced trend reflected in Table 4 is either reduced in vary-

ing degrees or disappears altogether for certain strata. This indicates that age at marriage *per se* is important only as a contributing factor in explaining the differences in duration of marriage among the three strata. Incidentally, the Gounders have a shorter duration not only due to age at marriage but also due to other reasons like widow-agamy, separation and longer postpartum abstinence (Mahadevan, 1979).

(iii) *Duration of Married Life.* Duration of married life shows a pronounced and consistent inverse relationship with additional no. of expected births in all the three strata. Why is the family size norm higher among wives with shorter duration of married life than those with longer durations ? It is possible that the latter group is influenced by the experience they already had while in the former group, young women, are yet to see many of the problems of family and to realise the number of children they wanted in life.

Maximum no. expected and ideal family size have also similar relationship both with duration of married life and age of the wives in all the three strata. However, the trend and direction of relationship are more pronounced in duration of married life than in age.

The difference in family size norm between the Gounders and the Harijans is more pronounced when the duration is related to ideal family size norm than when it is so related to the maximum no. expected. This shows that there is a built-in difference in family size norm at least in the two extreme groups (the Gounders and the Harijans). The duration varies among them mostly on account of the higher age at marriage, divorce, practice of widow-agamy and prevalence of temporary separation found more among the Gounders (see Tables 5 and 6).

Socio-Economic Status Variables

Under the socio-economic status variables, only annual income, education of the husband and modernisation are considered. Occupation of wives does not vary among all of them and is almost synonymous with the characteristics of caste. Most of the wives are illiterate; hence education and occupation of the wives are not considered.

Economic Status. Income categories have an inverse relationship with additional and maximum no. expected in all the strata. But ideal family size appears

TABLE 6—MEAN ADDITIONAL EXPECTED, MAXIMUM EXPECTED AND IDEAL FAMILY SIZE NORMS ACCORDING TO AGE, DURATION OF MARRIED LIFE AND CASTE STRATA

Duration of married life Age/Caste	*Upto 9 years*			*10-14 years*			*15 years and above*		
	Gounders	*Others*	*Harijans*	*Gounders*	*Others*	*Harijans*	*Gounders*	*Others*	*Harijans*
Additional expected									
15–24	3.68	3.74	4.29	——	——	4.75	3.00*	——	——
25–34	2.81	2.64	3.21	2.27	2.76	4.19	1.18	2.61	3.21
35+	——	1.83*	4.00*	1.84	——	1.83*	0.53	3.22	1.19
Maximum expected									
15–24	4.24	4.35	4.46	——	3.00*	5.17	3.00*	——	——
25–34	4.18	4.15	4.35	4.27	4.52	5.07	4.10	4.76	4.91
35+	3.20*	3.33*	4.50	4.20*	3.80*	4.19*	4.07	4.22	4.80
Ideal family size norm									
15–24	4.04	4.79	5.18	——	2.00*	5.92	4.00*	——	——
25–34	3.80	4.15	5.86	3.98	4.78	5.80	3.79	5.47	5.71
35–49	3.20*	3.33*	7.00*	4.12	5.20*	5.00*	3.52*	4.84	5.58

*Sample size is less than ten wherever star mark is indicated.

to have a 'U'-shaped relationship with income for Harijans, i.e., it is large for both the low and high income groups and smaller for the middle income groups (Table 7).

The inverse relation of income is more pronounced in respect of additional no. of children expected. Possible explanation is that the additional no. expected is of immediate concern for the wives and their expectation might be based on the circumstance in which they are placed and the number of children already they have. The rich are comparatively more educated and more modern. Further mortality is also less among them. They are status conscious and so conscious also that more children might undermine their status and the privileges they enjoy in the community. In fact the Gounders, in general, have been generationally privileged with better income and status which they may not like to see reduced even for the sake of children. On the other hand, the Harijans have nothing to lose if they have a few more children as they are already under-privileged in many respects. In fact, more children may be seen as providing social security by the Harijans.

Education. Educational status significantly varies between the Gounders and the Harijans. Greater number of the Gounders and 'Others' are literates whereas most of the Harijans are illiterates. However, higher education beyond school final is negligible among all of them (Table-8).

In this analysis educational level shows an inverse relationship with additional no. expected, confirming the fact that education has universally indicated a definite inverse relationship with fertility. However, when maximum no. expected is considered inverse relationship is not as strong in all the three strata while the ideal family size reveals an inverted 'U'-shaped relationship with education for the Gounders and 'Others' but an inverse relationship for the Harijans. Generally speaking the influence of education on additional and maximum no. expected and ideal family size do not indicate any pronounced trend. In any case educational status is quite so generally poor in all the strata (See Table 8).

Modernization. For wives who are characterised as more modern by virtue of their possession of one or more of modern articles of family use, the maximum no. expected and ideal family size are lower than for those who do not possess any of the modern items. However, for additional no. expected, modernization has a significant influence among the Gounders leading to a small family norm. A similar effect of modernization is found among the Harijans and 'Others' too. The importance of modernization found here cannot be attributed to edu-

TABL 1 7—MEAN ADDITIONAL AND MAXIMUM EXPECTED AND IDEAL FAMILY SIZE NORMS ACCORDING TO ANNUAL INCOME AMONG DIFFERENT CASTE STRATA

Annual Income/ Caste	*Number of wives*			*Measures of family size norm*								
				Additional expected			*Maximum expected*			*Ideal family size norm*		
	Gounders (*N*=856) %	*Others* (*N*=514) %	*Harijans* (*N*=541) %	*Gounders*	*Others*	*Harijans*	*Gounders*	*Others*	*Harijans*	*Gounders*	*Others*	*Harijans*
⩾ 1000	5.37	10.31	16.05	2.52	2.49	3.58	4.20	4.47	4.90	4.63	4.62	5.25
1001—3000	65.30	77.43	82.47	1.60	1.90	2.67	4.16	4.33	4.76	5.05	5.16	5.10
3001+	29.32	12.26	1.48	1.47	1.89	2.75	4.11	4.34	4.73	4.85	5.51	5.63

TABLE 8—MEAN ADDITIONAL AND MAXIMUM EXPECTED AND IDEAL FAMILY SIZE NORMS ACCORDING TO EDUCATION OF HUSBAND AMONG DIFFERENT CASTE STRATA

Educational status of Husbands	*Number of wives*			*Measures of family size norms*								
				Additional expected			*Maximum expected*			*Ideal family size norm*		
	Gounders % & *N*	*Others* % & *N*	*Harijans* % & *N*	*Gounders*	*Others*	*Harijans*	*Gounders*	*Others*	*Harijans*	*Gounders*	*Others*	*Harijans*
Illiterates	37.50 (321)	32.10 (165)	75.35 (403)	1.54	1.51	1.61	3.67	4.30	4.62	2.75	2.61	4.53
1-5th class	50.12 (429)	51.17 (263)	20.11 (109)	1.53	2.00	1.68	4.05	4.17	4.33	3.75	3.60	4.42
6th class and above	12.38 (106)	16.73 (86)	5.54 (30)	1.42	1.77	1.31	4.03	4.05	4.14	2.91	3.14	4.31

cation, since the level of education in all the three strata is very low as noted earlier. In this context, modernization seems to explain the variance of fertility within each stratum and also between the two extreme groups of the Gounders and the Harijans, as the Gounders as a group are more modern than the Harijans (See Table 9).

Freedman (1974) felt that as "modernization proceeds, some countries in which preference for larger families prevails, will probably reduce size preference. But if this occurs without a corresponding decrease in the preference for sons, the son preference would influence fertility decisions even more often since fewer couples would have the number of sons they want simply by chance as would be the case with larger number of children". In the present situation, modernization is more among the Gounders and perhaps their level of modernization might have brought down their desire for son from many to one or two, whereas such impact of overall modernization is absent among the Harijans and 'Others'.

Occupation. Occupational influence on family size norm does not differ much from that of the caste. Most of the wives attend only to their traditional work. While greater number of Gounders (61%) are engaged in agriculture, Harijans (89%) do manual work and 'Others' are engaged in miscellaneous jobs, like business, trade, carpentry and daily manual work.

Considering all the socio-economic status variables together including modernization and their impact on fertility variations among different strata, it may be assumed that, the Gounders are comparatively more modern than the Harijans and 'Others' owing to their higher literacy level, better economic position and their overall modernization. It is difficult to say whether income or education *per se* has an independent effect on family size norms, apart from their joint contribution to modernization; independent relationship of these variables with all the measures of family size norms was not as strong as that of modernization when measured after controlling all other variables.

Implications

The findings warrant certain changes in policy and strategy of the ongoing population control programme. (1) To meet differential family size norm and fertility found among differential caste groups, the present programme input needs to be rationalised to provide 'special effort' among the high fertility group,

TABLE 9—MEAN ADDITIONAL EXPECTED, MAXIMUM EXPECTED AND IDEAL FAMILY SIZE NORMS ACCORDING TO POSSESSION OF MODERN GOODS AMONG DIFFERENT CASTE STRATA

Possession of modern goods	*Number of wives*			*Measures of family size norms and caste*								
				Additional expected			*Maximum expected*			*Ideal family size norm*		
	Gounders % & *N*	*Others* % & *N*	*Harijans* % & *N*	*Gounders*	*Others*	*Harijans*	*Gounders*	*Others*	*Harijans*	*Gounders*	*Others*	*Harijans*
Not possessing any modern goods	57.83 (495)	65.56 (337)	93.91 (509)	1.59	1.50	1.59	4.06	4.29	4.56	2.95	3.93	4.41
Possessing modern goods	42.17 (361)	34.44 (177)	6.09 (33)	1.31	1 .73	1.60	3.95	3.99	4.09	2.64	3.61	4.00

like the Harijans, so as to bring down the overall fertility level in the country. (2) Since value of number of sons happens to be a major determinant of higher family size norm, necessary social security measures may be initiated to minimise the effect of this variable on fertility behaviour. Value of sons is linked with the roles that they play in the family like old age support, work in agricultural field, doing ritual functions and continuity of lineage in the family etc. (3) Age at marriage has a strong effect on family size, as such. Therefore, the age at marriage of girls has to be raised through suitable interventions. This policy decision could be successful only if adequate social and economic security is introduced along with a rigorous social education of the community at large; compulsory free education for girls up to pro-university level or till the age of 18 or more and an incentive to those girls who marry late etc. may be considered. (4) Determinants of family size norm, like other fertility variables, are many and varied and hence development of small family size norm will only be successful if all their determinants are identified and manipulated to reach the goal.

Acknowledgement

I express my gratitude to the management of the Gandhigram Institute for the facility offered for conducting this study, to Dr. C.T. Tharakan, Reader, Department of Statistics, Kerala University for providing computer assistance, to Dr. R.S. Kurup for offering suggestions, to Mr. S.P. Ramalingam for rendering tabulation assistance and to the interviewers of the Institute for their sincere service in data collection.

References

1. Fawcett, T. *i^et al.* (Ed.), 1973, *Psychological Perspectives on Population,* Basic Books Inc., and *Psychology and Population : Behavioural Research Issues in Fertility and Planning,* The Population Council, New York, 1970.
2. Freedman, R. and C. L. Coombs, 1974, *Cross Cultural Comparisons, Data on Two Factors in Fertility Behaviour,* An occasional paper of the Population Council, pp. 9-44,
3. Freedman, R.,ff/ *al.,* 1969, *Family Planning in Taiwan : An Experiment in Social Change,* Princeton University Press, Princeton.
4. **Freedman R. *el at.,* 1968,** Norms for family size in under developed areas. **ID : Charles, B. Nam (cd.) *Population and Society,* pp.** 214-240.
5. **Goldberg, D. 1959, The stability** and reliability **of expected family** size data, ***The Milbank Memorial Fund Quarterly..* XXXVI,** 370-385.
6. **Hill, R-) Mayone, J. Stycos and Kurt, W. Back, 1965,** *The Family* ***and Population Control:***

A Puerto Recan Experiment in Social Change. University of North Carolina Press, Chapel Hill.

7. Misbler, E. and Wcstoff, C., 1955. A. proposal for research on social Psychological factors affecting fertility : concepts and hypotheses. In : *Current Research in Human Fertility,* New York, Milbank Memorial Fund.
8. Nag, Moni, 1968, *b'actors Affecting Human /•'crtHify in Nan-Industrial Societies : A Cross Cultural Study,* Yale University Publications in Anthropology, No. 66, U.S.A.
9. Mahadevan, K. and Namboociiri. 1972, Caste, status and fertility in a rural area of Tamil Nadu, *Bulletin of CIRHand FP, Gandhigram,* VII, 1-55.
10. Mahadevan, K. *et al,* 1974, Induced abortion : A cross-sub-cultural study, *Bulletin, GIRH and PP.,* 1-17.
11. Mahadevan, K., 1979, *Sociology of Fertility : Determinants of Fertility Differentials in South India,* Sterling, New Delhi.
12. Stycos, J. M.; 1979, Social class and differential fertility in Peru. In ; Charles B. Nam. (ed.), *Population and Society.*
13. U. N-, 1961. *The Mysore Population Study,* Report of a Field Survey carried out in selected areas of Mysore State, India.
14. Whelpton, K. P. *et al.,* 1966, *Fertility and Ft",ii.\ Planning in the United States,* Princeton University Press.

APPENDIX

TABLE 1—TABLE SHOWING THE FATALISTIC RESPONSES/UNCERTAIN RESPONSES WHICH WERE NOT INCLUDED FOR ANALYSIS

Measure of family size norms	Caste Groups								
	Gounders N = 856			'Others' N = 514			Harijans N = 542		
	Left to God or no limit	No information	Total	Left to God or No limit	No information	Total	Left to God or No limit	No information	Total
Additional expected	(68) 7.94	(3) 0.35	(71) 8.29	(49) 9.53	—	(49) 9.53	(97) 17.90	(1) 0.18	(98) 18.08
Maximum expected	(73) 8.54	(6) 0.70	(79) 9.24	(58) 11.28	(5) 0.97	(63) 12.25	(128) 23.62	(1) 0.18	(129) 23.80
Ideal family size norm	(75) 8.77	(5) 0.58	(80) 9.35	(53) 10.89	(3) 0.58	(56) 11.47	(121) 22.32	(1) 0.18	(122) 22.50

TABLE 2—MEAN ADDITIONAL EXPECTED, MAXIMUM EXPECTED AND IDEAL FAMILY SIZE NORMS FOR WIVES ACCORDING TO THE DESIRE FOR SONS IN DIFFERENT CASTE STRATA

Number of living sons	Number of wives: Gounders % & N	Others % & N	Harijans % & N	Measures of family size norms: Additional expected: Gounders	Others	Harijans	Maximum expected: Gounders	Others	Harijans	Ideal family size norm: Gounders	Others	Harijans
Do not wish to have only son but a child, son or daughter	27.69 (237)	18.87 (97)	13.84 (75)	1.08	0.88	1.00	2.62	2.65	2.61	5.11	4.96	4.99
Wish to go till get 1 or 2 male children	26.05 (223)	27.24 (140)	22.69 (123)	0.77	1.12	1.13	3.12	3.26	2.99	4.86	4.89	5.67
Till get 3 or more male children	4.21 (36)	4.28 (22)	3.88 (21)	1.08	1.55	1.95	2.83	3.59	3.19	5.83	5.18	5.81
No limit to get a male child, depend upon our wishes/God etc.	42.06 (360)	49.61 (255)	55.59 (323)	2.54	2.87	3.94	3.55	3.76	4.02	4.85	5.35	4.92