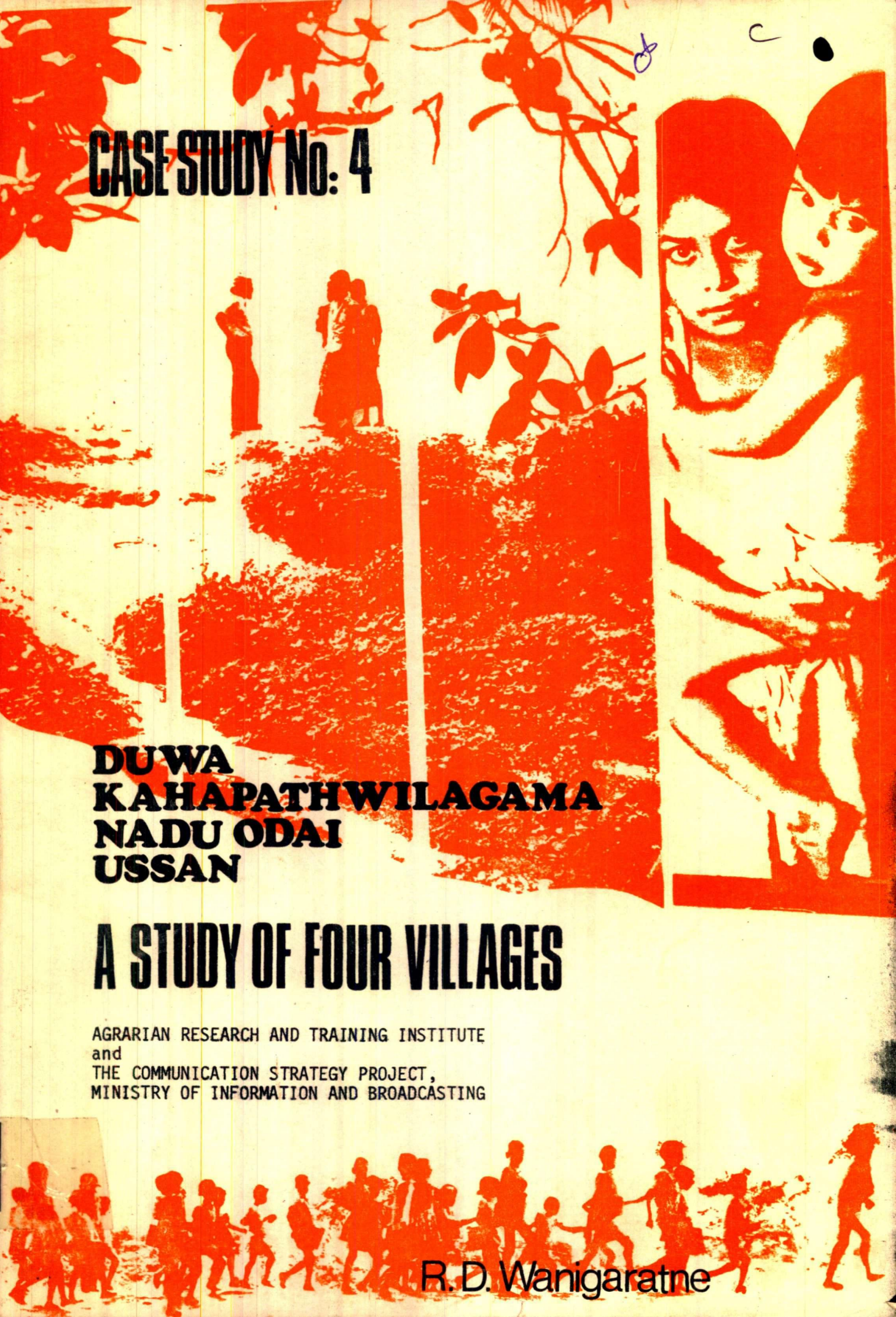




CASE STUDY No: 4

**DUWA
KAHAPATHWILAGAMA
NADU ODAI
USSAN**

A STUDY OF FOUR VILLAGES

AGRARIAN RESEARCH AND TRAINING INSTITUTE
and
THE COMMUNICATION STRATEGY PROJECT,
MINISTRY OF INFORMATION AND BROADCASTING

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THE STUDY OF COMMUNICATION FLOW
IN

SELECTED VILLAGES IN SRI LANKA

DUWA
KAHAPATHWILAGAMA
NADU ODAI
USSAN

CASE STUDY 4

R.D. WANIGARATNE

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F O R E W O R D

The Village Research-Action Project is a joint undertaking of the Communication Strategy Project and the Agrarian Research and Training Institute (ARTI).

The project selected the following areas for its research - viz : Medagama in the Galle district; Colony Unit - 4 (Uhana) in Ampara district; Ambana in Colombo district; Duwa in Colombo district; Kahapathwilagama in Anuradhapura district; Nadu Odai in Batticaloa district and Ussan in Jaffna district.

The work commenced with case studies in each of the selected villages and will be followed by training and multi-media action programmes.

The central purpose of the research-action programme was to evaluate the effectiveness of various communication approaches, to identify the interpersonal paths through which social changes can be introduced and to experiment with the use of certain mass-media materials as tools in developing higher interaction among persons.

Specific studies on adoption-diffusion, evaluation of various mass-media materials, training for the development of effective group leaders and programme personnel will be made during the action programme.

It is hoped that the case studies and action programme will provide useful guidelines for communication and training strategies for development.

Anura Goonasekera,
Director,
Communication
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R. D. Wanigaratne.

*Colombo,
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1978.*

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The names of individuals referred in the monograph are pseudonyms

CHAPTER I

THE SETTING

(a) INTRODUCING THE PROJECT

NATURE OF THE PROJECT

In planning a population education programme for a rural community, an understanding of the audience is essential - their nature, the socio-cultural and economic setting in which they live and the communication paths through which they obtain and exchange information. Towards this end the Agrarian Research and Training Institute (ARTI) in collaboration with the Communication Strategy Project of the Ministry of Information and Broadcasting undertook an empirical study in seven locations purposively selected from different parts of Sri Lanka.

CHOICE OF THE VILLAGES

The following procedure was adopted in selecting villages for the study. The ethnic regions which were considered useful to the study were initially decided upon by the researcher in consultation with the advisors. Subsequent discussions were held with the Government Agents or Assistant Government Agents whose administrative authority extends over the selected ethnic regions, to seek advice on the identification of villages which satisfied the following considerations: population congestion, racial, religious and occupational characteristics; the smallness of the village community; accessibility and the relatively easy definability of the village boundaries.

The research group (consisting of the researcher and the advisors) visited the villages indicated by the regional administrative officers and selected four villages from each ethnic region for an in-depth survey. The four villages were: Duwa, Kahapathwilagama, Nadu Odai and Ussan.

DUWA VILLAGE

A fishing village situated less than half a mile from the city of Negombo, Duwa, is located on a sandy spit (a geomorphic feature) at the mouth of the Negombo lagoon on the western coast of Sri Lanka. The inhabitants of Duwa were predominantly (194 families) Catholic, with the exception of five families. Two of the families were Hindus and three were Buddhists. Many villagers spoke Sinhala and Tamil fluently and some even spoke English. Fluency in Tamil in an essentially Sinhala community came about as a result of their traditional occupation, fishing. Many villagers seasonally migrated to the north-west coast of Sri Lanka where Tamil is the major spoken language. English was taught in a school run by the Duwa Church. The centre of cultural activity in the village was the Duwa Church.

KAHAPATHWILAGAMA VILLAGE

Situated approximately fifteen miles to the south-east of Anuradhapura city in the North Central Province, the Kahapathwilagama village is surrounded by crown forest land. The land varies from undulating to flat lowland underlain by a reddish-brown soil. The village paddy *yayas* are watered by three small, shallow village tanks.

Kahapathwilagama village represented the *purana* village system of the North Central Province of Sri Lanka. It had a *wewa*, a *purana vela* and an *akkara vela* combination, a well defined *Gangoda* and *Gammedda* and a *Bedda* which surrounded the village, showing typical features of a *puranagama*. The people in the village belonged to one *varige*. Of Kandyan origin the villagers are descendents of migrants to the area in the eighteenth and nineteenth centuries. The names of villagers (e.g. Lokubanda, Heenmenika) and customs (e.g. *ek-ge-kema*) were similar to those of the Kandyan villages.

NADU ODAI

Nadu Odai is situated about five miles south of the city of Batticaloa in the Eastern Province on a sandy barrier between the Batticaloa lagoon and the ocean. The terrain is flat and sandy. Cashew nut and mango are grown in the village environs on a commercial scale. Coconut is grown mainly for consumption.

Nadu Odai represented a traditional Muslim community. Textile weaving was the major occupation in the village.

USSAN

Located on the Jaffna-Colombo road, about eight miles due East of the town of Chavakachcheri, the Ussan village falls within the limestone regions of the Jaffna Peninsula, with poor soil, poor surface drainage and arid scrubland. Ussan is more fortunate than many other areas in the Jaffna Peninsula in that it is located besides a large patch of clayey soil on which paddy is grown. Palmyra, coconut, murunga and mangoes are the main tree crops in the village.

Ussan is a traditional Hindu village in Jaffna, with its rigid caste and social mores. It had a high standard of education, which provided an opportunity to observe closely the effect of education on attitudes to population control.

INVESTIGATION PROCEDURE

The field surveys were conducted in Duwa between 10 April and 20 June, 1975 - in Kahapathwilagama between 15 September and 15 November, 1975 - in Nadu Odai between 20 March and 20 May, 1975 and in Ussan between 5 June and 15 August, 1975.

Duwa and Kahapathwilagama had two resident investigators, Ussan three, while a single investigator was used in Nadu Odai. All investigators were trained for one week at the ARTI.

Two weeks were spent on preliminaries such as establishing contacts; transcribing household lists maintained by the Grama Sevakas and cross checking them with lists maintained by the Co-operative Stores; checking land registers, other records and membership lists of village level organisations etc.

A questionnaire was administered to all families¹ in the village who were present during the survey. Information was also collected concurrently through informal interviews. The investigators maintained diary recordings of responses which were arranged under various headings as research directions presented themselves. The recordings were periodically scrutinised by the researcher in the field.

Tabulation of the data was completed in 2 months. A number of subsequent visits were made to the study villages to conduct more spot interviews to investigate further some of the issues that emerged at the data processing stage.

This monograph is a composite study of the aforesaid four villages.

-
1. The husband is usually the head of the family. However, in situations where the husband is permanently removed from the decision-making functions of the family, (e.g. through death, divorce or separation) the wife is treated as the Head of the family. The term 'husband' is defined as the socially accepted conjugal partner of a woman. The usual family unit comprised a husband, wife and children. A single house may have had more than one family. In such a case, the *head* of each family was interviewed.

(b) BASIC POPULATION CHARACTERISTICS

The basic population characteristics of the four villages are set down below :

DUWA VILLAGE

The village had 199 families and a population of 1043 persons, (5.2 persons per family) during the survey period. 64.4% of the population was below 30 years of age and 29.9% below 15 years of age. The Duwa population in specific ages reflect survivors of population cohorts born during specific time intervals in the past. These cohorts have survived the mortality conditions associated with each succeeding age to form the present age-specific populations. If we assume that the vital rates in Duwa generally followed the post-war trends for the Colombo district, then the age-specific population of Duwa identified during the survey reflect the end product of a decline in births since 1955,

For example, the 121 persons in the age group 15-19 identified by the survey are apparently survivors of a larger cohort born in the 1956 - 60 period. From 1960 onwards the population in Duwa seems to have undergone a decline. However, this decline may not show a long-term trend, since the population already in the 15-24 age group would contribute to the marital fertility of the village in the future.

Table 1 Duwa : Age-specific population

<i>Specific age intervals</i>	<i>Born in</i>	<i>Survivors as at 1.1.1975</i>
20-24	1951-55	118
15-19	1956-60	121
10-14	1961-65	108
5-9	1966-70	101
0-4	1971-75	103

Duwa population indicated a sex ratio of 101 males per 100 females, which corresponds to the national ratio.

62.3% of the families had three or more children of below 20 years of age; the proportion having 1-2 children was 30.1%. Fifteen (8.6%) of the families did not have children.

Average age of marriage for males was 26 years and for females 22 years. In the case of Duwa, it was more a preoccupation with the fishing industry than the pursuit of education that placed the average age of marriage of males and females in its present position. Of the 260 persons in ages above 14 years, 26% were unmarried, with a sex ratio of 136 males per 100 females, which may have a bearing on the age-specific marital fertility trends in the village.

The total land extent covered by the village was 13 acres. The population was 1043. In terms of man-land ratio, Duwa had 80 persons per acre, an extremely high density.² An average Duwa family owned an extent of 15 perches (0.09 acres). The land shortage was so critical that almost all of the houses in Duwa were located back-to-back with almost no front or back space. The largest land owner was the Duwa Catholic Church which owned an extent of about $\frac{1}{2}$ acre. In Duwa, when a respondent said that he owned a few perches of land, he in fact meant only the space occupied by the house he lived in. Nearly 30% of the families were truly landless, in the sense that they had no claims to the houses they lived in. In terms of the Duwa Society, land had no real hold on the people. The fact that Duwa was a fishing community and that many of the Duwa families (between 50-65%) seasonally migrated to better fishing grounds on the North-West coast of the island, did not result in an urge among the community to own land and dwellings. The minority who did in fact chose to stay permanently in the village and build permanent houses were usually the *mudalalis* and fishmongers who managed the fishing industry and its marketing aspects.

Although the people of Duwa were not strongly land conscious in spite of the lack of land and houses, they were however, very conscious of a specific side effect - the lack of fresh water. The sandy land abutting the sea did not yield sufficient supplies of fresh water.

Although Duwa is situated about 500 yards from the Negombo town, it had no access to the fresh water pipelines servicing the Negombo Urban Council area. People of Duwa are thus compelled to buy water from a group of *mudalalis* who convey water to the village in 'bowzers' (trucks with water storage tanks) and large barrels. A cheaper and a steady source of fresh water supply is an urgently felt-need in Duwa.

Of the 199 heads of households interviewed 169 (85%) had³ achieved a state of functional literacy through formal education. 31 (15%) persons had not achieved such a state and, of them only 5 were truly illiterate in terms of the definition of functional literacy. 161 (81%) of the heads of households had received between 5 and 10 years of school education.⁴ Almost 50% of the heads of households had received a formal school education of 8 years or more.

2 In comparison the man-land ratio for Sri Lanka was 0.8 persons per acre (1970).

Source : Department of Census & Statistics.

3 Functional literacy is defined as the acquisition of a permanent ability to read. This ability should not slide back to illiteracy after leaving school. It is believed that a child must receive continuous formal education of 3-5 years at a school to achieve such a state. (Hamilton, C. 1975 : p.38).

4 Of the heads of households, 4% did not respond to the queries concerning education.

Of the heads of households who responded to the queries concerning educational status, 94% were found to have received their education in schools run by the Catholic Church.

175 heads of households of Duwa were gainfully employed. Of them, 145 (83%) were employed in the traditional occupation of the village, the fishing industry. The rest were employed in non-traditional occupations like clerical work, teaching, blue collar jobs and so on. The rest of the heads of households were household workers, or were incapacitated due to disease and senility.

KAHAPATHWILAGAMA

The village had a population of 288 persons in 42 families (6.8 persons per family). 71.1% of the population was below 30 years of age, and 32.3% was below 15 years of age. In terms of the cohorts born in specific past time intervals whose survivors are seen in the present specific ages, the Kahapathwilagama community seems to have been subjected to a population decline since the 1960s (See Table below).

Table 2 *Kahapathwilagama : Age-specific population*

<i>Specific age interval</i>	<i>Born in</i>	<i>Survivors as at 1.1.1975</i>
20-24	1951-55	33
15-19	1956-60	52
10-14	1961-65	44
5-9	1960-70	34
0-4	1971-75	15

The population bulge in the 5-24 ages will probably cause an upward movement in population within the next two decades. Yet, if the sharp declining trend after 1970 seen in the number of survivors becomes a set pattern of future growth trend of the village population, an increase in population which could result from more marriages than before may be averted.

The sex ratio of the population was 101 males to 100 females. 124 (78.6%) of the families had three or more children below 20 years of age, and 4 (9.5%) had 1-2 children. 5 (11.9%) of the families did not have children.

Average age of marriage for males was 23 years and for females 21 years, which was low by national standards (23 for females and 27 for males in 1974). The harshness of the environment and the social customs (the people are of Kandyan origin) governing marriage seems to have had a bearing on the relatively lower average age of marriage among both males and females of Kahapathwilagama. Of the persons above 14 years of age, 90 (49%) were unmarried. This relatively higher figure was affected by the larger proportion of unmarried persons who were in the age group of 15-24 years.

No unmarried person was found among both males and females in all age groups beyond 35 years.

A strong sex imbalance in favour of males was found among the unmarried population above 14 years of age. For every unmarried female there were 3 unmarried males. The sex imbalance was strongly effected by the presence of more unmarried males than females in the age group of 15-24 years. The tendency to give girls away in marriage early may have a bearing on this phenomenon.

The total land extent of the village was 220,25 acres. In terms of man-land ratio Kahapathwilagama had 7.7 persons per acre. Most of the families (87%) owned both highland and lowland extents. The lowland holdings of the village were concentrated in the area below the two village tanks, the Kahapathwilagama wewa and the Pallankulama wewa in the *puranawela* and the *akkarawela*. The *puranawela* shows high fragmentation and multiple ownership of parcels of land. Fragmentation and multiple ownership of parcels of land is less prominent in the *akkarawela* which has larger paddy parcels. The existence of such high fragmentation and multiple ownership in single parcels of land and the extension of the traditional *yaya* (paddy stretch) into *akkarawela* may be interpreted as signs of adaptation of the village to its expanding population. Respondents mentioned of migration of some villagers to a few *ola gam* (temporarily abandoned villages) in the Kahapathwilagama environment during certain *Maha* seasons when precipitation conditions are more favourable for paddy. The villagers stay in temporary huts in these *ola gam* cultivating paddy stretches in the vicinity under small village tanks. They come back to the village after harvest.

Besides paddy, all families in Kahapathwilagama involve themselves in *chena* cultivation in the nearby crown forests. Individual plots of 1-5 acres are created by felling and burning trees. Plots prepared in such a manner are planted with dry crops. Since the soil fertility of these plots diminish rapidly in the near absence of attempts to replenish the soil, they are left fallow after 2-3 years of continuous cultivation.

The extent of land (both paddy and highland) operated by the people of the Kahapathwilagama village was thus very much larger than the extent actually owned. This had a bearing on the weight of the population and on the economy of the village. Though the population of Kahapathwilagama was youthful in the sense that 71% of the population was below 30 years of age, the ample availability of land for cultivation in its environment did much to lessen possible ill-effects of an expanding population on resources. In fact a larger family size was perceived by people as an asset to enhance family income during critical periods - e.g. long droughts. In such a period (1974-76 years) the able-bodied males in families worked in tank bund and road reconstruction projects for the Government to be entitled to obtain PL 480 flour and other food items, while the females attended to households and *chena* cultivation work. Thus a large family was able to collect sufficient cash and food supplies to tide over difficult times.

Of the 42 heads of households interviewed, 37 (86%) had achieved a state of functional literacy. Four out of the five persons (among heads of households) who had not achieved a state of functional literacy had received less than 2 years of school education and were true illiterates. Thirty five (83%) had received between 5-10 years of school education. Almost 60% of the heads of households had received their education in Government schools.

Of the heads of households, 86% were gainfully employed in the traditional occupations of the village - in the cultivation of paddy and *chena* crops. Ten percent (10%) were classed as housewives and four percent (4%) were incapacitated due to disease and senility.

Of the able-bodied population of 14 years and above, 97% were permanently settled in the village itself (in the *Gammedde* area). Opportunities within the village environment for economic betterment, and a sense of security emanating from the village society (through close links with people of the same *varige*) were identified to be two of the prominent causes for tying people to the village.

NADU ODAI

Nadu Odai had a population of 379 persons in 72 families (5.2 persons per family). The population in relation to available land was 8 : 4 (persons per acre) land 1 : 6 families per acre.

The sex ratio of the village showed a strong female bias. The sex ratio was 86 males per 100 females. The sex ratios computed for specific age intervals in the Nadu Odai population are given below;

Table 3 Nadu Odai : Age-specific sex ratios

Age interval	Male	Female	Sex ratio
0- 4	22	33	67
5- 9	21	31	68
10-14	22	23	96
15-19	15	28	54
20-24	18	18	100
25-29	18	18	100
30-34	11	10	110
+			
= 35	48	43	112

The age-specific sex ratios show a strong female bias in ages below 20 years. Perhaps it shows an indication of an increasing female bias in birth cohorts after 1945.

No specific reasons emerged during the survey to account for this phenomenon though a number of possibilities like a higher male mortality at infantile ages and relatively more female births may be put forward as causal factors.

70.4% of the population was below 30 years of age, and 40.1% below 15 years of age. The population of Nadu Odai was very youthful. If one interprets that the distribution of population in specific ages as survivors of past birth cohorts, it is shown that Nadu Odai population has been on the increase since early 1950s (See Table below).

Table 4 Nadu Odai : Age-specific population

Specific age intervals	Born in	Survivors as at 1.1.1975
20-24	1951-55	36
15-19	1956-60	43
10-14	1961-65	45
5- 9	1966-70	52
0- 4	1971-75	55

As more and more persons marry, the population of Nadu Odai is bound to increase more rapidly in the future. The average age of marriage for males was 23 years and for females 18 years, a condition conducive to high population growth rates. Early marriage was the norm in the village dictated by customs peculiar to the Moslem communities. Of the 227 persons above 14 years of age, 184 (81.0%) were married. No married person of both sexes were found in all ages beyond 25 years, though a handful of individuals who were divorced, separated, or widowed were present.

Forty five (62.5%) of the families had three or more children of below 20 years of age; 22 (30.6%) had 1-2 children; 5 (6.9%) did not have children.

The total land extent of 45 acres was held by 57 families. Population density was 8.4 persons per acre and 5.3 families per acre. Fifteen (15) families did not own land. Available land per person was 0.12 of an acre and per family, 0.63 of an acre. The village was located in an environment noted for its high rural densities (the Batticaloa-Kattankuddy stretch) and cannot expand laterally because it is hemmed in by equally densely populated neighbouring villages.

Of the 45 acres owned by 57 families only about 1.2 acres could be classed as lowland under paddy. The rest were in highland. The distribution of land among the 57 families are given below (Table 5).

Table 5 Distribution of owned land in the Nadu Odai village

No. of families	Total extent (acres)
4	25.75
53	19.25
Total	57
	45.00

A high degree of maldistribution of lands is seen in the village. For example, as the Table 5 indicates, nearly 58% of the land was owned by only 7% of the families in the village.

The village society has evolved a system of living by which they could most efficiently utilise the available land. This was through a system of community living, with a number of families living in a single household or a compound sharing living quarters and expenses. This feature was quite common among similar Moslem villages in the Batticaloa region.

Unlike the Duwa population, the residents of Nadu Odai were not unusually mobile. Most of them were tied to the principal source of employment in the village - cloth weaving. Men, women and children alike were involved in various chores associated with the cloth weaving industry which is carried on both as a family industry (with small family handlooms) and as a community industry (in large handloom centres). Though the population was large in terms of land available to the village, most of the able-bodied persons both young and old were gainfully employed in the handloom industry, which in the short run at least reduced the burden of population on the village economy. For example, of the 72 heads of households interviewed 67 (93%) were employed in the traditional handloom industry in the village. Three were in non-traditional occupations while two were incapacitated due to disease and senility.

Of the 72 heads of households 42 (58%) had achieved a state of functional literacy. Of the 30 heads of households, who had not achieved a state of functional literacy, 11 were true illiterates - they could not read or write even in the vernacular. Of the functional literates 11 persons had received formal school education beyond 7th grade and only 3 persons had received school education beyond 10th grade. Fifty four (75%) of the heads of households received their education in Government schools.

As with Kahapathwilagama, 97% of the adult population (above 14 years) of Nadu Odai were permanently living in the village. The traditional cloth weaving industry which provided ample employment opportunities to the residents and the low educational standards of the community were factors that were responsible for the inward orientation of the village.

USSAN

The village had a population of 690 persons in 144 families (or 4.8 persons per family). The population density was 1.9 persons per acre, (0.4 families per acre). 61.4% of the population was below 30 years of age and 30.6% below 15 years of age. Of the four study villages Ussan showed the lowest proportion of youths in the population (i.e. below 30 years).

Identification of the distribution of age-specific populations as survivors of past birth cohorts shows that population has been on the increase, since 1965.

Table 6 Ussan : Age-specific population

<i>Specific age interval</i>	<i>Born in</i>	<i>Survivors as at 1.1.1975</i>
20-24	1951-55	36
15-19	1956-60	43
10-14	1961-65	45
5- 9	1966-70	52
0- 4	1971-75	55

The sex ratio of the population was 109 males to 100 females,

The average age of marriage for males was 27 years and for females 23 years. The Ussan society with its highly literate people and the tendency to seek ever higher standards of education for greater competitiveness in employment and marriage it is not surprising that the average age of marriage is high for both sexes. Of the 479 persons above the age of 14 years less than half (48.0%) were married,

Only a sprinkling of unmarried persons (6 persons) were found in the ages beyond 35 years. It may be surmised that the rest (the presently unmarried) of the population above the age of 14 years, may also marry by the time they reach the age of 35. It may therefore, be assumed that the population of Ussan will increase steeply within the next decade or two.

Ninety seven (67.3%) of the families had three or more children below 20 years of age. Thirty three (22.9%) had 1-2 children; 14 (9.8%) families did not have children.

The total land extent owned by the 144 families was 358 acres. The extent of land per family was 2.5 acres and per person .52 of an acre. Thirty five families owned only highland, seven families owned only lowland and seventy four owned both highland and lowland. Twenty eight families (19%) did not own the land they lived in.

Table 7 Distribution of lands in the Ussan Village

Families Owning						
Only highland		Only lowland		Highland + lowland		
No: of families	Total extent (acres)	No: of families	Total extent (acres)	No: of families	Total extent (acres)	
4	24.06	2	4.88	11	148.52	
31	22.06	5	3.88	63	154.60	
Total	35	46.12	7	8.76	74	303.12

The Table indicates that nearly half of the village lands was in fact owned by only 15% of the village families.

The high maldistribution of land has compelled many inhabitants to seek employment outside the village. For example, of the 135 heads of households, who were gainfully employed, 81 (60%) were cultivators (owner cultivators, tenants, wage labourers involved in cultivation activities) while 54 (40%) were in other forms of employment. Of the 54 heads of households who were non-cultivators, 6 were in other traditional employment like toddy tapping, laundry work and indigenous medical practice. Fifty eight (48) heads of households (35.5% of those who were gainfully employed) were in non-traditional occupations away from the village.

Of the four study villages, Ussan recorded the highest proportion of heads of households in non-traditional occupations, especially as Government Servants. A principal reason for the ability of many Ussanians to obtain outside non-traditional employment was their relatively higher level of education.

Only 7 (5%) heads of the households were considered to have not achieved a state of functional literacy, and of them only a single person was found to be truly illiterate. 137 (95%) of the heads of households were functionally literate. Of the literate 91 (66%) had received school education beyond the 7th grade and 30 (22%) beyond the 10th grade.

Of the 144 heads of households, 136 (94%) had received their education in Government schools.

Of the population above 14 years of age, 94% were permanently settled in the village. However, the village exhibited a high degree of mobility involving movements from home to schools, home to work places and so on, with the village as a base. An exceptionally strong feeling present among the people that education should be given high priority in life, may be the pre-conditioning causal factor behind the mobile village society that is Ussan.

CHAPTER II

POPULATION AWARENESS IN THE VILLAGES

In the context of the village society in Sri Lanka, the normal goal of the villager is to use the resources at his disposal to maintain his family. From this orientation emerges many socio-economic implications, one of which is the association of a group of urgently felt population related problems, which has a bearing on the effective maintenance of the family. In the study villages certain respondents were able to make such an association (see table below) especially with regard to village population growth in the last three decades.

Table 8 : Urgently felt problems which are related to Population Growth

<i>Felt problems</i>	<i>Percentage of respondents*</i>				
	<i>Duwa</i>	<i>Kahapath-wilagama</i>	<i>Nadu Odai</i>	<i>Ussan</i>	<i>All villages.</i>
	N = 149	N = 31	N = 38	N = 132	N = 350
Lack of space for housing	93.96	35.48	47.37	71.21	75.14
Lack of space for cultivation	15.44	25.81	34.21	31.82	24.57
Unemployment	14.09	25.81	15.79	50.00	28.86
Cost of bringing up children	42.28	74.19	63.16	34.85	44.57
Food shortages	18.79	54.84	36.84	18.94	24.00
Family health problems	8.72	19.35	36.84	15.91	15.43

* Some respondents quoted more than one problem.

* In case of Duwa, 86 of the 140 who quoted lack of space for housing mentioned the associated problem of water shortage.

Taking the 4 villages as an aggregate, the lack of space for housing and the cost of bringing up children emerged to be the most important felt problems in the villages.

Population growth was little associated with family health problems faced by the villagers. This problem symbolises the inadequacy of national health education programmes. At present, lack of funds and equipment, lack of trained personnel, and insufficient incentives to the already available trained personnel to carry on population education activities in the villages seriously affect the efficiency of the health education programmes in the island.

The association of population growth with specific felt problems in the study villages reflect causal relationships unique to each village. For example in Duwa almost 94% of respondents associated lack of space for housing (averaging about 15 perches per family) and the water shortage with population growth and size. With a very high man-land ratio of 80 persons per acre, such an association would be an inevitable outcome. In Ussan and Nadu Odai - both villages with high population densities and maldistribution of land - a similar association of population with problems of procuring land for housing was observed. A prolonged drought condition which affected Kahapathwilagama for about three years (1972 - 1975) had an effect in making respondents more aware of population size and growth in relation to food supplies and the cost of bringing up children. In Ussan where the residents possessed relatively high educational qualifications, population growth was inevitably associated with unemployment - educated unemployment. However, it is significant to observe that 23% of the total number of respondents in the four villages did not see any association between the common problems they encountered in their villages and the population phenomenon. This group was highest in Nadu Odai (47.22%) and lowest in Ussan (8.30%). 25.13% of the respondents in Duwa and 86.19% in Kahapathwilagama also did not see such an association.

An aptitude for acquiring wider knowledge, and the ability to discern causal relationships between seemingly discreet phenomena has been consistently found to be related to educational standards. This same process may be operative in the study villages. For example, Nadu Odai which showed the highest proportion of respondents who did not discern an association between the population phenomenon and felt problems, also showed the lowest proportion of functional literates (58%), whereas Ussan which recorded the lowest proportion of respondents who did not see an association between the two factors, recorded the highest proportion of functional literates (98%).

In the families interviewed in all four villages, the first two children were born within a period of five years after marriage. In Nadu Odai and Kahapathwilagama the same time span accounted for three children. Child-spacing was little practised in the villages. Only six respondents each from Duwa (3%) and Kahapathwilagama (14%), two (3%) from Nadu Odai and thirteen (9%) from Ussan stated that they consciously adopt child-spacing practices.

A total of 404 (88%) of the respondents from all four villages showed a willingness to speculate on ideal birth spacing intervals most suitable for their families. Of the 404 respondents, almost 96% expressed a view that child spacing is only desirable after the birth of at least two children. Fear notions of high mortality probabilities related to children carried over from past eras, fear notions of a decline in fecundity if spacing was done sooner, psychological, economic and cultural causes associated with the desire to have male children, fear of social ridicule following a situation of childlessness immediately after marriage, were judged to be some of the more plausible of the range of reasons voiced by informants for holding to the particular view of child spacing.

The following table illustrates the responses received from the study villages concerning the suitable time span of the birth spacing after the initial desired number of children (generally 2) were born.

*Table 9 : Suitable time-span of birth spacing
(percentage of respondents)*

Village	No. of respondents		Time-span				
		%	1 yr.	2 yrs	3 yrs	4 yrs	Over 4 yrs
Duwa	187	100	-	14.44	68.45	9.09	8.02
Kahapathwilagama	41	100	-	29.27	60.96	7.30	2.44
Nadu Odai	72	100	-	33.33	52.78	9.72	4.17
Ussan	104	100	-	18.27	33.65	39.42	8.65
TOTAL	404	100		20.30	55.94	16.83	6.93

Of the total number of 404 respondents from all four villages, almost 58% considered as suitable a time-span of 3 years after the birth of the desired initial quota of children, and 76% a 2-3 year time span. Only 24% quoted a time-span of 4 years or more. Village-wise variations in responses were very revealing about the effects of village environs on its inhabitants. For example, a large majority of the respondents (over 80%) of Duwa, Kahapathwilagama and Nadu Odai villages considered a time-span of 2-3 years, after the birth of the desired initial quota of children, suitable. In Ussan the proportion stating such an interval was relatively smaller (52%).

The 404 respondents of the study villages also indicated their reasons for advocating the desirable birth interval. These responses (in percentage form) are given below.

Table 10 : Reasons for advocating a birth interval
(Percentage of respondents quoting reasons)

Village	No. of respondents	Reasons *			
		Economic factors affecting family budget	Health of mother and children	Future welfare of children	Other reasons
Duwa	187	41.18	27.81	24.60	12.83
Kahapathwilagama	41	92.68	53.66	41.46	14.63
Nadu Odai	72	37.50	61.11	29.17	16.70
Ussan	104	32.69	68.27	53.85	18.27
TOTAL	404	31.09	33.39	24.73	10.78

* Some respondents quoted more than one reason.

Health of the mother and children and economic factors affecting the family budget were the most prominent considerations voiced by respondents of all four villages. Kahapathwilagama which recorded the highest proportion of respondents (90.23%) advocating a 2-3 year birth spacing interval, also showed the highest respondent proportion (92.68%) quoting a reason (viz. economic factors affecting family budget) for advocating such a smaller birth spacing interval. The village at the time of the survey was in the throes of a prolonged drought which ironically created more employment/income avenues for children and those between 6-18 years, and for the population as a whole. It was observed that children aged 13-18 years worked alongside most able bodied adult males in cutting roads, reconstructing tank bunds and so on for PL-480 flour and other food items distributed in the drought affected regions in the 1975 period, while womenfolk and children of ages ranging from 6-14 years attended to the family chena plots. In this context having a large family was a distinct advantage. Thus when the respondents stated economic factors affecting family budget as the felt reason for advocating a smaller birth interval, they expressed a time specific need for more children in order to increase the family income.

On health matters affecting the family, most of the respondents in the study villages showed what can loosely be called a 'modern outlook'. Of a total 457 respondents, about 45% preferred western medical cures for ailments. Ayurvedic medical cures singly, or in combination with western medical cures, and in combination with western medical cures and faith healing accounted for about 36% of the responses. Ayurvedic cures as the only preference accounted for only 17% of the total responses

received. Only 18% preferred faith healing methods to other forms of cures. The village variation in preferences for the different curative sources indicate influences of urbanisation, education, easy access to curative sources, and the village cultural background. The following table indicates the responses received in the study villages on preferences for particular curative sources.

Table 11 : Preferred curative sources for ailments

Village	No. of respondents		Only Ayur.	Only Western	Only faith healing	Ayurvedic and Western	Ayurvedic, Western and faith healing
	No.	%					
Duwa	199	100	21.11	46.23	14.07	7.03	11.56
Kahapathwila- lagama	42	100	35.71	26.19	21.43	4.76	11.90
Nadu Odai	72	100	12.50	34.72	29.17	9.72	13.89
Ussan	144	100	9.72	55.56	13.06	1.39	15.28
TOTAL	457	100	17.50	45.51	18.39	5.47	13.13

In Duwa the most sought after curative source was Western medicine. Perhaps the greatest single causal factor for this feature was the proximity of the Duwa village to an urban centre - the Negombo city. The exposure to mass immunisation programmes conducted by the Department of Health and the activities of the Public Health Inspector and the Public Health Nurse in the village may have resulted in the bias towards western medicine in Duwa. The favourable climate for the spread of western medicine in Ussan is probably more a consequence of the higher educational level of its population, resulting in greater acceptance of a system not indigenous to the society, than any closeness to an urban centre - though the Jaffna city is not too far away.

In Nadu Odai and Kahapathwila, traditionality played a greater role in the acceptance of the indigenous forms of medicine. Nadu Odai with its moslem culture and Kahapathwila with its *puranagam* culture continued to retain a trust on Ayurvedic and faith healing methods despite a steady influx of information on western medical cures. Though Kahapathwila had a link with the nearby Anuradhapura city through a motorable road, irregular public transportation hampered travel to a great extent. Even private transport was not easily available as the village did not have a single motor vehicle. Except for a serious ailment (which could not be treated by the Ayurveda physician) villagers rarely went to the Anuradhapura hospital. The village had an ayurvedic physician and several snake-bite specialists who were especially in high demand on account of frequent cases of snake-bite.

Table 12 : Nominal Awareness of methods of contraception knowledge of existence and names

Village	Knowledge of existence				Knowledge of names							
	No. of respon- dents	%	Knew %	Did not know %	No. of respo- ndents*	%	Tubec- tomy %	Vasec- tomy %	Loop %	Pill %	Condom %	Rhythm method %
Duwa	188	100	87.77	12.23	141	100	12.77	7.80	2.13	11.35	36.17	29.79
Kahapath- wilagama	41	100	58.54	41.46	23	100	34.92	7.94	7.94	11.11	22.22	15.87
Nadu Odai	59	100	79.66	20.34	39	100	27.78	11.11	7.41	14.81	35.18	13.70
Ussan	138	100	83.33	16.67	107	100	17.16	11.24	21.30	12.43	25.44	12.43
All villages	426	100	82.39	17.61	310	100	19.67	9.60	11.24	12.18	29.74	17.56

* Some respondents quoted more than one method

Most of the respondents (approximately 80%) in the study villages were aware that methods of contraception existed. Their awareness was judged to be a result of a number of interacting factors; education levels, exposure to mass media and interpersonal source conveying such information; information gained through informal conversation on health and other problems related to population; and the modernising influence of western curative/preventive medicine. Table No. 12 depicts two levels of awareness, namely the knowledge that methods of contraception existed and the ability to identify each method by name.

The Condom was the best known contraceptive method in the study villages. It was usually known by its trade name "Preethi" though some respondents identified it by various colloquialisms, all of which meant "sheath". Tubectomy, the Rhythm method, and the Pill were similarly identified (also through colloquialisms) and were better known than Vasectomy or the Loop.

The Rhythm method was better known in the Duwa village, due perhaps to the major faith (Roman Catholicism) of the villagers which customarily forbade the use of modern contraceptive methods. Tubectomy was quoted by a relatively greater proportion of respondents in Kahapathwilagama on account of a greater awareness arising through rumour generated around the death of a mother who had undergone such an operation.

In Nadu Odai the Tubectomy, the Condom, and the Pill, were better known than other methods due mainly to the active propaganda campaigns conducted by village level workers under the guidance of the Department of Health.

The proportion of respondents who had some knowledge about how contraceptive methods are practised and for what purpose was much smaller. Only about 51% of those who could name one or more contraceptive methods knew how they are practised. In this case too the Condom was quoted by a majority of respondents, followed by the Rhythm method. Only a small proportion of the respondents knew about the Vasectomy and the Loop - how they are practised and for what purposes. The table below illustrates this particular state of awareness about contraceptive methods.

Table 13 : Practical Knowledge of Contraceptives

Villages	No. of respondents		Type of Contraceptive					
			Tubectomy	Vasectomy	Loop	Pill	Condom	Rhythm. method
	No.	%						
Duwa	70	100	9.01	3.60	1.80	11.71	37.84	36.04
Kahapath-wilagama	11	100	22.86	5.71	5.71	17.14	42.86	5.71
Nadu Odai	19	100	30.00	10.00	7.50	7.50	30.00	15.00
Ussan	58	100	11.00	10.00	19.00	21.00	26.00	13.00
All villages	158	100	14.34	6.99	9.99	15.03	33.22	21.33

Of a total of 457 respondents in the study villages, 80% were aware of the existence of methods of contraception, 68% were able to name a method or more and 35% had a practical knowledge of one or more methods. The village-wise variations are given below.

Table 14 : Village-wise Variations in the Proportions of Respondents Quoting Different Levels of Awareness

Villages	No. of respondents		Nominal Awareness		Practical Awareness
			Awareness of existence	Awareness of names	Awareness of applicability
	No.	%			
Duwa	199	100	82.91	70.85	35.18
Kahapath-wilagama	42	100	80.95	54.76	26.19
Nadu Odai	72	100	65.28	54.17	26.39
Ussan	144	100	84.03	74.31	40.28
All villages	457	100	80.42	68.14	35.47

The highest proportions of the village populations which indicated both nominal and practical awareness of contraceptive methods were recorded in the Ussan and Duwa villages, both with relatively higher educational standards. Duwa had the additional advantage of being very close to an urban centre. Both Ussan and Duwa also showed a higher number of respondents quoting preferences for western medical cures than in the other two villages. They were also more mobile than the people of the other two villages. The fact that the Roman Catholic church discouraged the use of most methods of contraception apparently did not deter the Duwa residents from obtaining a knowledge about them.

The gap between the proportion of respondents who were aware of the existence of contraceptive methods and those who knew of the application of the methods was greatest in the Kahapathwilagama village (54.76%) and the smallest in the Nadu Odai village (33.98%). The lower accessibility of the Kahapathwilagama village to urban centres, and the family planning activities of midwives and volunteer workers in the Nadu Odai village are seen as the more prominent causes for the different awareness gaps shown by the two villages.

An attempt was made to inquire about the sources through which the respondents received information concerning family planning and contraceptive methods. The results show that of a total of 270 responses recorded, almost 56% quoted various interpersonal sources as the most important communication channel in obtaining information on family planning and contraceptive methods. Of the mass media sources, the radio was quoted by more persons as being the primary source of information than newspapers, posters and books. Among the various interpersonal sources cited by respondents technical advice emanating from midwives, Public Health Inspectors, family planning volunteer workers, and doctors was most important. Friends, relatives and neighbours were the least important sources of information on family planning and contraceptive methods. The following table depicts the village situation.

Table 15 : Sources of Information on Family Planning and Contraceptive Methods

Villages	No. of respondents.		Mass Media		Interpersonal		
	No.	%	News- papers/ posters/ books	Radio	Friends/ relatives/ neighbours	Health/ medical personnel and volunteer workers.	Others (hearsay and direct observations)
Luwa	133	100	13.41	21.95	7.32	37.80	19.51
Kahapath- wilagama	32	100	13.18	22.73	-	9.09	50.00
Nadu Odai	44	100	12.50	17.36	7.14	46.43	16.07
Ussan	113	100	24.26	28.99	13.61	19.53	13.61
All villages	332	100	19.15	24.99	10.03	27.96	17.93

The higher proportion of respondents in Nadu Odai who quoted health and medical personnel volunteer workers is essentially a result of the village coming under a programme of intensive population education and family

planning activity conducted by volunteer workers. Respondents of Kahapathwilagama did not cite friends, neighbours or relatives as important sources of information on contraception and family planning. The survey was unable to bring out a distinct reason for the phenomenon. The traditional character of the village, its pattern of community living and a strong tendency for social evaluation among families may be contributory factors.

As with the concept of family size, the respondents generally showed an inclination to discourse on the abstract γ about the problem of teaching modern methods of contraception and family planning to people. Nearly 50% of the respondents of all the study villages felt that people should be educated on such methods, whereas 3% opposed such an idea. Nearly 20% were non-committal on the issue. Those who advocated such an education proposed that it should be given to both men and women (preferably to those already married) between ages 15-32 years. The threshold age at which such an education should be given to both sexes was 22 years. The village variation in responses on the subject are given below.

Table 16 : Attitudes Towards the Teaching of Modern Methods of Contraception and Family Planning

Villages	No. of respondents		Attitudes			Age range of the target audience (years)	Threshold age (years)
	No.	%	Positive %	Negative %	Non-committal %		
Duwa	199	100	23.12	58.79	18.09	16-40	24
Kahapathwilagama	42	100	92.86	4.76	2.38	15-25	19
Nadu Odai	72	100	66.67	22.22	11.11	16-35	23
Ussan	144	100	64.58	3.47	31.94	15-27	23
All villages	457	100	49.45	30.67	19.91	15-32	22

Kahapathwilagama recorded the highest percentage of positive responses (93%) despite the fact that only 58% of the respondents knew that contraceptive methods were available (Table 12). The threshold age quoted by respondents was 19 years, by far the lowest among the villages. Two possible factors for this peculiarity are :

- (i) The adverse environmental conditions which affect the health and nutrition of the family may encourage people to adopt a positive attitude towards family health and population education.

- (ii) The concepts of morality held by Kahapathwilagama respondents: The gradual decline of moral standards in respect of pre-marital sex and virginity among the younger generation would have prompted the respondents to opt for population education in the hope of preventing unwanted pregnancies among them. Village informants often spoke of the decline of moral standards among the younger set.

Duwa showed the smallest proportion of respondents favouring population education. The Roman Catholic Church does not favour many aspects of population control. This was reflected in the attitudes of Duwa respondents towards education programmes on population control. In spite of the reservations it must be noted that nearly 25% of the Duwa respondents did in fact favour such programmes. Even those who advocated such programmes recommended a higher age interval of 16-40 years and a higher threshold age of 24 years.

Respondents in the study villages indicated a number of reasons for advocating population education programmes. Almost 49% of the respondents said such an education would be useful for married/to be married persons, while 21% felt that it would be suitable for all adults. Only about 8% felt that it would help prevent unwanted births. It was also considered more useful for married females than for married males though the proportion of respondents stating such a reason was insignificant.

In Ussan an appreciable number of respondents also quoted such education would prevent unwanted births and could help in planning families. The highest percentage of respondents (58%) stating that population education was more useful for married/to be married persons was recorded in Ussan. The following table provides a detailed breakdown of attributed reasons by specific villages.

It is significant to note that not a single respondent from all four villages tied up the need for population education with problems faced by the country as a whole, though of course the reasons they have cited have wider applicability. They were also averse to providing population education for the young unmarried persons of both sexes. People fear that social mores governing pre-marital relationships among the sexes would be disrupted if birth preventing measures are taught to the young. Thus, by the threshold ages and age range of potential target audiences they meant individuals in these ages who were married or who were about to be married.

Table 17 : Attributed Reasons Why Population Education should be given to Villagers

Reasons	V i l l a g e s				
	All villages	Dawa	Kahapath- wilagama	Nadu Odai	Ussan
	N - 226	N-46	N - 39	N - 48	N - 93
	%	%	%	%	%
To plan families	8.92	7.4	2.56	4.88	14.2
Useful for married/to be married persons	45.07	30.95	35.90	39.02	58.24
Useful for young married persons	4.22	4.76	2.56	4.88	4.40
Useful for adults	21.13	23.81	43.59	26.83	7.69
Useful for married males	0.94	2.38	-	2.44	-
Useful for married females	4.69	7.14	10.26	7.32	-
Help prevent unwanted births	7.98	9.52	-	7.32	10.99
Help benefit family economi- cally	3.76	4.76	2.56	2.44	4.40
Help future welfare of the village	3.29	9.52	2.56	4.88	-

CONCLUSION

It is shown that the time is now ripe for initiating population education programmes in the four study villages, though the intensity of the need may vary from village to village. Land for housing and/or for cultivation was found to be decreasing in three of the villages, Duwa, Nadu Odai and Ussan, because of population pressure. Though under adverse environmental conditions as was the case during the survey period, the size of population did not seem as much of a problem in Kahapathwilagama in terms of increasing family incomes, it did have a bearing on the general health and nutritional conditions of the village.

The reasons given by respondents for the desired birth spacing intervals are closely tied to the basic goals of the villagers - namely to use whatever available resources for the upkeep of their families. Economic reasons affecting the family budget and reasons like the need to look after the health of mother and children cited as factors for birth spacing show different aspects of this drive to achieve basic goals : To better allocate resources in order to increase the level of living and to maintain health standards of the family in order to cut down expenses on medical treatment and to maintain a healthy family labour force.

The noticeable preference for western medical treatment among the respondents is a further positive factor for the promotion of population education programmes. Their knowledge of contraception and attitudes towards such programmes strengthen the need for such a course of action. The exposure to mass media, such as the radio, and the use of inter-personal sources especially medical and para-medical personnel for population information in all four villages further indicate the suitability for initiating population education programmes in the above villages.

1. However, the following negative influences are also present :

- (a) Low levels of education.
- (b) Limited perception of problems affecting day to day living.
- (c) Unfavourable cultural norms and religious beliefs etc.

2. A way to circumvent this dilemma is to mobilise the people themselves through their opinion leaders and their organisations so that programmes of population education would prove to be more successful than they do at present.

CHAPTER III

DIFFUSION OF INFORMATION IN THE VILLAGE

The process of information diffusion affecting the villages is considered in this study along two dimensions :

- (a) The relative exposure of persons to information paths.
- (b) The characteristics of village organisations and influentials as mechanisms of information diffusion.

1. MASS MEDIA

In terms of accessibility to mass media about 17% of respondents of the study villages had radios while only 4% bought a daily newspaper. However, a greater percentage listened daily to the radio and read a daily newspaper. In the study villages 34% of respondents read a newspaper every day and 64% listened to the radio every day. The highest radio listenership among individual study villages was recorded in Duwa and Ussan villages. The same villages emerged prominently in daily newspaper readership too (see Table below).

Table 18 : Access to Mass Media

	All villages N=408	Duwa N=166	Kahapath- wilagama N = 42	Nadu Oxi N=61	Ussan N = 137
Radio	%	%	%	%	%
Had a radio	16.85	15.58	19.05	15.28	18.75
Listened daily	64.46	77.30	50.00	50.82	65.47
Newspaper	N=417	N=180	N = 42	N=56	N = 139
Bought a daily	4.16	3.01	4.76	2.78	6.25
Read daily	34.53	23.89	16.67	19.64	59.71

Though the proportion owning a radio or buying a newspaper (every-day) is small in comparison to the non-possessors in the villages, both the radio and the newspaper apparently had an audience generating effect in the study villages.

Radio listener groups and newspaper reader groups often encountered in the village kiosks, the circulation of newspapers bought by one household among neighbourhood groups, neighbourhood radio and listener groups who congregate in certain households during afternoon and evening hours account for the higher proportion of radio listeners and newspaper readers in the four study villages.

The study also attempted to gauge the frequency of exposure to mass media sources in order to determine the proportions of the village populations who are most readily exposed as against those who are less exposed and not exposed. An attempt was also made to find out why people choose to expose themselves to mass media sources. The results, by individual media are described below :

THE NEWSPAPER

Of the 417 respondents in the four study villages who answered specific queries related to the newspaper, almost 35% stated that they read a newspaper daily, while 29% indicated that they read a newspaper once a week especially on Sundays. Only 12% stated that they never read newspapers or that they cannot read newspapers because of illiteracy or physical debility (Table 19).

Table 19 : Frequency of Newspaper Reading

Frequency	All villages N = 417	Duwa N=180	Kahapath- wilagama N = 42	Nadu Odai N=56	Ussan N = 137
	%	%	%	%	%
Daily	34.53	23.89	6.67	19.64	59.71
Once a week	28.78	48.33	02.38	25.00	12.95
Once a month	00.24	00.00	02.38	00.00	00.00
Rarely	24.22	24.44	40.48	19.64	20.86
Never	12.23	03.33	38.09	35.71	06.47

The highest proportion of respondents who stated that they rarely read and never read newspapers were found in Kahapathwilagama and Nadu Odai.

In Kahapathwilagama, both its difficult accessibility (weak transport facilities) inability of most to buy a newspaper and the lack of leisure time may have had a bearing on the high proportion (79%) of respondents who said that they rarely or never read the newspapers. In the case of Nadu Odai, the low literacy level of its population the lack of leisure time, as well as economic factors may have contributed to the poor reading habit. In case of Duwa and Ussan, the greater exposure of the people to the extra-village environment and their higher educational attainments are reflected in the relatively low proportions which indicated that they rarely or never read a newspaper. Both Duwa and Ussan had electricity facilities. Certain households who were more affluent than the rest had extensions to their homes. Some of these households also bought a daily newspaper or a 'weekly'. During the survey it was noticed that many of these households also served as nodes for small neighbourhood. In the evening neighbours and friends trickled in to these households to exchange information. This phenomenon was especially noticeable in the evening hours from about 6.00-8.00 p.m. Households which did not have electricity, were observed to break off early around 7.00-7.30 p.m.

Of the 366 respondents in the study villages who have ever read a newspaper (i.e. those who read daily, read once a week, once a month or rarely), 55% read it at home-- yet only 4% (Table 18) of the respondents of the villages, were found to buy a paper daily.

A common feature observed in all of the villages was the wide circulation of a few newspapers among certain small neighbourhood groups. Residents who do not buy a newspapers usually send out their children to other households to borrow newspapers, which they subsequently read in their own houses. Others trickle in to neighbouring houses, which they identify as their own because of very close consanguineal ties, in order to read newspapers bought by them. These features were identified by the study to be causal factors for the apparent discrepancy shown above.

Among individual villages, Duwa and Ussan showed a relatively higher proportion of respondents who said that they read newspapers at home, while in Kahapathwilagama and Nadu Odai most of the respondents read newspapers in out of home locations like a tea kiosk, grocery store and so on (see Table below).

Table 20 : Newspaper Reading Locations

Locations	All villages N = 366	Duwa N=174	Kahapath- wilagama N = 26	Nadu Odai N = 36	Ussan N=136
	%	%	%	%	%
At home	54.86	60.37	35.62	47.14	79.67
Other locations	45.14	39.63	64.38	52.86	20.33

The survey did not bring out a definite causal factor for this phenomenon.

Among the reasons attributed by respondents as to why in fact they read newspapers, a large majority (64%) stated that they read newspapers in order to understand what goes on in the extra-village environment and nearly 35% stated that they read newspapers to update their already existent awareness about the extra-village environment. Among individual villages the same causal reasons were most prominently displayed, even though relatively more respondents stated so in Duwa and Ussan than in the other two villages. In Nadu Odai almost 25% of the respondents also stated a desire to read cartoon strips and quips while in Ussan 12% of the respondents read the newspapers for commercial advertisements (see Table below).

Table 21 : Reasons Attributed for Reading Newspapers

Reasons	All villages N = 366	Duwa N=174	Kahapath- wilagama N = 26	Nadu Odai N = 36	Ussan N=130
	%	%	%	%	%
To understant extra-village events	64.43	74.42	61.43	51.04	78.06
To improve existing knowledge about extra-village events	25.01	16.16	35.62	35.15	15.83
For entertainment	09.82	08.70	08.34	24.53	01.37
For commercial advertisements	07.24	05.31	08.22	03.03	12.51

* Some quoted more than one reason

THE RADIO

Duwa showed a ratio of one radio per six households, Kahapathwilagama one radio per five households, Nadu Odai one radio per six households and Ussan, one radio per five households.

Of 408 respondents who answered specific queries on the radio, 64% stated that they listen to the radio daily and 23% stated that they rarely listen and 12% that they never listen because they do not own radios.

Table 22 : Frequency of Radio Listenership

Frequency	All villages N = 408	Duwa N=166	Kahapath- wilagama N = 42	Nadu Odai N = 61	Ussan N=139
	%	%	%	%	%
Daily	64.46	77.30	50.00	50.82	65.47
Rarely	23.28	21.69	35.71	14.75	25.18
Never	12.25	06.02	14.29	34.43	09.35

Highest respondent proportions quoting daily listening in to the radio was associated with the Duwa and Ussan villages. A significant proportion of respondents in Nadu Odai (34%) stated that they never listen in to the radio. The survey was unable to discern a significant causal factor(s) for this feature. The entire village appeared to be very industrious devoting their time to cloth weaving. The tea kiosks or a grocery store in the village or its immediate environs did not possess radios. Thus there were no radio listener group either. The village had only 11 receiving sets for a total of 72 households.

Of the 358 respondents who have ever listened to the radio almost 68% listened in at home, while 32% listened-in at other locations - like a neighbour's house, tea kiosks and so on. Radio listenership in the villages was essentially a family affair with very little outsider participation. However as with the newspaper, certain respondents did in fact listen to the radio at the home of close relatives or friends whose houses were adjacent to their own homes. The respondents tended to empathize as normal members of such houses. There was no significant variation among villages about the proportions of respondents quoting "the home" or "other locations" as the most important location for listening-in to the radio (Table 23).

Table 23 Radio Listening-in Locations

Locations	All villages N = 358	Duwa N=156	Kahapath- wilagama N = 36	Nadu Odai N = 40	Ussan N=126
	%	%	%	%	%
At home	67.88	71.79	66.67	67.50	63.49
At other locations	32.12	28.20	33.33	32.50	36.51

The desire to obtain local news emerged as the primary reason for listening-in to the radio, with 56% of the respondents in the four study villages quoting it. Listening for entertainment purposes was also prominent with 42% of the respondents quoting it as a reason. Among individual villages, listening-in for entertainment purposes was relatively more prominent in Duwa and Nadu Odai, while the reverse held true for the other two villages (see Table below). No specific causal factor(s) were identified by the survey to account for this feature.

Table 24 : Reasons Attributed for Listening-in to the Radio

Reasons	All villages N =358	Duwa N=156	Kahapath- wilagama N = 36	Nadu Odai N = 40	Ussan N=126
	%	%	%	%	%
For local/ news	56.52	42.80	53.03	40.67	82.68
For enter- tainment	41.86	52.03	45.45	46.67	20.52
For commercial advertisements	07.62	09.97	05.15	17.33	07.28

* Some quoted more than one reason

THE FILM

People in the study villages were least exposed to the film medium. Almost 41% of the respondents stated that they rarely viewed a film while 34% said that they had never seen a film. The principal reason was the location of film theatres in urban centres and the resultant cost incurred in viewing films. (viewing charges, costs incurred in travelling and refreshments).

Among individual villages Kahapathwilagama (the nearest film hall was 15 miles away) and Nadu Odai (the nearest film hall was 3 miles away) recorded the highest proportions of respondents who had never seen a film (see Table 25). The fact that film viewing was not prominent in the villages makes the film a novel medium of information transfer in the villages. During informal discussions we had with them the respondents showed high enthusiasm about the possibility of screening documentary films in their villages.

Table 25 : Frequency of Film Viewing

Frequency	All villages N = 415	Duwa N=178	Kahapath- wilagama N = 42	Nadu Odai N = 59	Ussan N=136
	%	%	%	%	%
Once a week	9.09	13.48	2.38	13.56	3.68
Once a month	15.79	16.85	16.67	13.56	15.44
Rarely	41.15	54.49	11.90	13.56	45.59
Never	33.97	15.17	69.05	64.41	35.29

Films are viewed mostly for entertainment purposes, rather than with a conscious desire to learn more about the Sri Lankan society. For example, 71% of the respondents who answered the queries concerning film viewing stated that they viewed films for entertainment. Among individual villages the proportion of respondents quoting this particular reason was least prominent in Ussan where an appreciable proportion (34%) also stated that they viewed films to improve their knowledge of the society.

In Duwa, though 84% of the respondents quoted the entertainment factor about 50% of the respondents stated that they view films for their story or artistic value. Impressionistically gauging the Duwa society, it is highly unlikely that the respondents of Duwa do in fact view films for their story or artistic value. Despite their relatively higher educational attainment their wants and desires are mundane, when viewed in the light of the transitory nature of their trade.

The film to them is more a form of emotional release, an escape medium from the dictates of the day-to-day existence. Amidst such environmental conditions their responses concerning story and artistic value in film viewing seem untenable. The proximity to an urban centre and the relatively higher exposure to urban values may have inculcated a higher level of media appraisal capacity among the resident of Duwa.

Table 26 : Reasons Attributed for Viewing Films

Reasons	All villages N = 276	Duwa N=151	Kahapath- wilagama N = 13	Nadu Odai N = 24	Ussan N=88
	%	%	%	%	%
For enter- tainment	70.65	84.11	84.62	54.17	51.00
For music	2.54	4.63	-	-	-
To view popular actors/actresses	7.25	5.96	15.38	4.17	9.09
For artistic value	3.26	5.96	-	-	-
For story value	24.27	44.37	-	-	-
To improve their knowledge about society	17.75	3.31	-	58.33	34.09

* Some quoted more than one reason

2. INTERPERSONAL PATHS

Information about the external environment trickled down into the village society and circulated within it through a complex array of interpersonal information paths.

In terms of what villagers considered to be important on the basis of the messages conveyed, these information paths were classified under two broad sub-types. They are :

(i) Formal Interpersonal Communication Paths

Formal interpersonal communication paths are used when messages are passed down into the village society through persons of authority like the *Grama Sevaka*, the Agricultural Extension Officer, the Public Health Inspector, Police Officers, former and present office bearers of organisations and village-influentials such as school teachers (by virtue of professions) landed proprietors and priests, etc.

(ii) Informal Interpersonal Communication Paths

When messages are circulated by peers (friends, relatives, neighbours) and others (sundry acquaintances) through gossip, it is the informal interpersonal communication paths that come into operation. Of the 424 heads of households who responded to queries concerning the importance of interpersonal communication paths almost 56% identified various informal information paths as being the main source through which they obtain information about incidents within the village and outside the village. Except in Ussan where informal interpersonal sources played a relatively subordinate role as against informal interpersonal channels, informal interpersonal channels were more quoted by respondents to be more important in the other villages (see Table below).

Table 27 : Important Interpersonal Paths Conveying Information to Respondents

Interpersonal paths	All villages N = 424	Duwa N=182	Kahapath-wilagama N = 37	Nadu Odai N = 65	Ussan N=140
	%	%	%	%	%
Formal					
Government officials	19.69	15.49	3.33	14.40	32.58
Other persons of authority	24.32	23.23	35.00	24.80	21.35
Informal					
Relatives	20.46	24.52	25.00	21.60	14.61
Friends	14.48	18.06	8.33	15.20	12.92
Neighbours	14.09	12.90	18.33	17.60	11.24
Acquaintance	6.95	5.81	10.00	6.40	7.30

With regards to formal interpersonal paths a greater reliance was placed by respondents of Duwa, Kahapathwilagama and Nadu Odai on the words of persons of authority other than government officials.

Committee members of village organisations, former *Vel Vidanes* and *Arachchies*, village school teachers (especially the Principal), priests, were some of these non-government authorities who were consulted by the villagers.

People of Ussan treated the official word with a degree of trust not so readily observable in the other villages. Most of the respondents of Ussan educated their children, with one end in view to secure jobs in the government sector usually white-collar occupations. A government official like a *Grama Sevaka* or a Registrar of Births, Deaths and Marriages held a position of high social prestige in the village.

Information emanating through gossip was given very low priority by the villages of Duwa, Ussan and Nadu Odai. The level of credibility with regard to gossip was higher in Kahapathwilagama. Even in Kahapathwilagama it occupied a minor place. The study also attempted to gauge the relative importance of various communication paths in generating an extra-village awareness among the respondents. The responses received concerning what respondents perceived as the most important information paths are given below (Table 28).

Table 28 : Important Information Paths as Perceived by Respondents

Information paths	All villages N = 424	Duwa N=82	Kahapath- wilagama N = 37	Nadu Odai N = 65	Ussan N=140
	%	%	%	%	%
Radio	24.98	31.26	22.22	18.00	28.43
Newspaper	24.05	32.00	17.04	17.00	29.16
Film	5.15	.99	5.93	5.50	8.19
Formal information path	16.36	10.73	18.78	19.01	16.92
Informal information path	23.99	21.27	30.22	29.49	13.00
Hearsay	5.46	3.75	5.81	10.00	4.30

The radio, the newspaper and informal information paths were perceived by respondents to be the most important in conveying information about the extra-village environment. Over-heard information (hearsay) in market places in buses and so on emerged to be slightly more important than the film.

CHAPTER IV

CHARACTERISTICS OF VILLAGE ORGANISATIONS AND INFLUENTIALS

1. DUWA : ORGANISATIONS AND INFLUENTIALS

At the time of the survey the Duwa village was served by 10 village level organisations. The names of organisations, their membership, participation, and the positions held by village influentials in the organisations are given below.

Table 29 : Village Organisations

Organisations	No. of members	No. who regularly participate	Positions held by village influentials				
			R41	R128	R137	R386	R845
Village Benevolent Society (1/20 Grama-dhara Sangamaya)	109	44	Mb	Mb	Mb	Mb	Mb
Fishermen's Co-op Union							
*Madel Samitiya)	67	51	Mb	Mb	Mb	Mb	Mb
*Samudura Samitiya)							
*Sagarika Samitiya)							
Sacred Heart Society	50	28	-	-	-	-	-
Parish Committee	50	34	Pr	Sec	Cm	Cm	Cm
Child Society (Daru Sangamaya)	16	7	-	-	-	-	-
Duwa Dramatic Society (Duwa Savundharya Ranga Peetaya)	26	6	-	-	-	-	-
UNP Branch	10	4	-	-	-	Pr	-
SLFP Branch	18	3	Pt	-	-	-	-
LSSP Branch	6	4	-	-	-	-	-

* Since 1973 these fishermen's societies had been amalgamated under a Fishermen's Union.

Abbreviations : Pr = President
Cm = Committee Member

Pt = Patron
Mb = Ordinary Member

In terms of membership the Village Benevolent Society was the most important, followed by the Fishermen's Union, the Sacred Heart Society, and the Parish Committee. The first two organisations had a direct bearing on the economy of the village. The Sacred Heart Society was a women's religious organisation.

The Parish Society had as its patron the Catholic priest of the Duwa Church and was the most important social organisation in the village. All village influentials held positions in the Committee. The nature of the four main organisations, are described below :

THE VILLAGE BENEVOLENT SOCIETY (1/20 GRAMADHARA SANGAMAYA)

This organisation boasts of a continuous record of activities since 1904. Its functions are :

1. Granting of interest free loans to members - the loan is repayable in one year. A interest is charged only if the sum taken is not paid in full within one year. Non-members are also eligible for loans on interest.
2. Making donations to members at the death of a member of the family. A sum of Rs.150/- is donated to a family at the death of an adult member, and Rs.75/- at the death of a child.
3. Granting a loan of Rs.50/- for baptismal and other church ceremonies.

At the time of the survey the organisation had a bank balance of over Rs.65,000. Funds were obtained through a levy of 1/20 share of profits earned (in the fishing trade) by its members.

The organisation was confined to married adults. Any married adult male is eligible to become a member within 1 year after marriage. Those joining the society after the specified period are required to pay a nominal fee besides the 1/20 levy. Once a married male becomes a member his right of membership can be transferred to his sons and daughters. When the daughters marry their right of membership stands dissolved. In case of the sons the right of membership can be transferred to their male heirs. Each beneficiary in turn has to contribute (if employed) 1/20 share of profits of the trade to the society.

THE FISHERMEN'S UNION

The amalgamated Fishermen's Union was administered by a Board of Directors, consisting of nine members. Of them six were appointed by the Fisheries Ministry and three were nominated from among the member fishermen. The Union had under its control 140 large-size boats and 13-14 fibre-glass boats, and also supplied the tackle, nets and other equipment for each boat. It employed two fishermen per boat. The catch was auctioned and 50% of the proceeds retained by the Union. The remaining 50% was distributed among the fishermen, who manned the boats.

The Union also supplied nylon thread for nets, new nets, boats, engines, and other fishing tackle to member fishermen at subsidised rates. This led to an adverse buying-selling syndrome where members who bought fishing gear, boats, and engines at subsidised rates from the Union, sold the same at higher rates to private businessmen, thereby earning a profit. Around 1975/76 nets valued at Rs.17 lakhs were found to be missing from the Union premises. The non-fishermen cadre in the Union's Board of Directors were found to be insensitive to the complaints and problems voiced by members, causing much discontent among them.

The Fishermen's Union which was created in 1973 was an amalgamation of three different fishermen's organisations which served Duwa prior to that date. They were the Fishermen's Net Society, the Madel Samitiya, the Samudura Samitiya and the Sagarika Samitiya - both fishermen's boat societies.

Madel Samitiya

This was an organisation which catered to owners (both single and part owners) of beach seine nets. The society charged an entry fee of Rs.10 and a membership fee of Rs.250. Besides these fundings it also charged a commission of 20% from the profits of dry-fish production and a commission of 20% from the sales of fresh fish by members. The society on the eve of the amalgamation had to its credit beach seine nets to the value of about Rs.700,000 to Rs.800,000.

An ordinary member could obtain a loan upto Rs.12,000 from this society in order to buy new nets. Members who owned or hired a beach seine nets were eligible for loans upto Rs.18,000. If the initial loans given to members were found to be insufficient additional sums were given as special loans. The society also coordinated the transportation of the catch to the Colombo market.

Samudura Samitiya

This society was created in 1970, with about 10-12 members. An entry fee of Rs.3/- and a permanent membership registration fee of Rs.200 was charged from each member. In addition a monthly membership fee of Rs.25 was levied from each member.

Sagarika Samitiya

This society catered to those owning fishing boats. A certain percentage of the daily catch of members was taken as a levy by the society for its central fund. Prior to 1973 this society annually gave out as loans a sum of nearly Rs.60,000 to buy new boats or for effecting repairs on existing boats. The loans were deducted through a levy of a percentage of the daily catch and dry-fish production.

SACRED HEART SOCIETY

It was set up in 1973. This is a ladies organisation centred around the Duwa Church. The Committee was made up of wives and daughters of fishermen, the sole exception being the priest of the church who was its Treasurer. They organise prayer meetings at the death of members, and rendered assistance in organising church ceremonies, such as the Passion Play during the Easter.

PARISH COMMITTEE

The Parish Committee created in 1965, is the most socially recognised village organisation in Duwa. All village influentials irrespective of their different political and other partisan interests were members of the Parish Committee.

Its Annual General Meetings are attended by almost all members of the village. A number of special meetings are held before Christmas, Easter and the Church Feasts. The Parish Committee consists of 13 members and is changed once in every three years by popular vote.

The Committee is responsible for the maintenance of the Duwa Church premises, for organising the church feasts, and the management of church finances. The Committee organised collections in the village to fund various activities of the church. For example, the Parish Committee between the years 1970-1975 collected Rs. 85,000 from the residents of Duwa to renovate the church.

<i>Type of Donor</i>	<i>Total collection (Rs.)</i>
Boatmen ..	15,000.00
Beach Seine Net (Madel) Owners ..	20,000.00
SubLine (Sulu Panne) Owners ..	5,000.00
Trap Net (Kattudel) Owners ..	5,000.00

The balance funds were collected from the owners of dry-fish establishments. Participation rates were found to be highest in the fishermen's Union which cater to the most basic needs effecting the livelihood of the people. Parish Committee though it had the smallest number of declared members however had a larger following spread throughout the entire village. This organisation catered to the cultural and spiritual needs of the people. Though the Village Benevolent Society showed a relatively lower participation rate, it was quoted by far more respondents than, in case of the Fishermen's Union.

DUWA INFLUENTIALS

The village influentials were partly identified on the frequency of citation and partly through the examination of records of village organisations. In identifying such persons through citation frequency a number of considerations like the citation of persons as guests-of-honour for household functions, persons who were usually consulted for various problems associated with land and production, persons often consulted in case of inter-family problems, persons consulted for information about extra-village incidents were adopted.

Five individuals emerged, of whom three were quoted by more than 50% of the respondents. The relative popularity of the influentials are indicated below (Table 30).

Table 30 : *Relative Popularity of Village Influentials*
(on the responses received)

Ref. No.	Name	Respondents quoting
		N = 186* (%)**
R. 41	B. Mendis	86.36
R.128	L. Pedris	64.65
R.137	J. de Soyza	57.58
R.186	J. Fernando	48.99
R.145	S.L. de Vas	31.82

* 13 did not name a person.

** A number of respondents quoted more than one influential.

Brief descriptions of the influentials are given below :

B. Mendis (R.41)

He is 59 years of age, married, and has three children. He had received four years of formal education at the Duwa Church School. He is fluent in Sinhala, Tamil and English languages.

He owns about 25 perches of land in Duwa (the plot where his home was located), and is involved in the fishing industry. He employs wage labour to do the fishing and fish-drying for him.

He is the President of the Parish Committee, a former Village Council Chairman, the Patron of the Sri Lanka Freedom Party Branch of Duwa, member of the Fishermen's Union and of the Village Benevolent Society. He is a wealthy villager with affiliations (political and personal) with the two major national political parties (the United National Party and the Sri Lanka Freedom Party) operating in the area. Though there was an element of opposition against him among the more volatile youthful sections he is nevertheless highly respected by most members of the Duwa Society. His wealth, and political/personal affiliations lay at the base of his wide acceptability in Duwa.

He is quite aware that the population of the village had expanded during the last decade. He attributes it to the lack of foresight on the part of parents. He indicates acute land and housing shortages, water and sanitary deficiencies, to be the direct results of population growth in recent years. He believes that self control is the key to population control. He is against the use of modern methods of contraception.

L. Pediris (R.128)

He is 44 years of age, married and had 6 children ranging in ages from 4-19 years. He had received 12 years of formal education at a private school and is conversant in both Sinhala and English languages. He owns about 16 perches of land in Duwa on which his house is located.

He is a teacher (English Trained Teacher) attached to the Negombo St. Peter's Central School. He is the Secretary of the Parish Committee (chosen for the post on account of his educational and employment attainments) and a member of the Village Benevolent Society. He is a popular social worker in the village.

He is aware that the population of the village had expanded during the last decade and attributes the same reasons as those indicated by Mendis. He believes that self control is the only acceptable method in population control, since all other methods contravene the norms of the catholic faith.

J. de Soysa (R.137)

He is 56 years of age, married, and has five children. He received 10 years of formal education at a private school in Colombo. He is fluent in Sinhala and English languages.

He is a trader, owning a large grocery store in the Colombo city. He owns about 20 perches of land in Duwa.

He is a popular figure and his word carried much weight in the Duwa society. In terms of political affiliations he is a right winger. He is said to have been throughout very generous towards Duwa folk and is noted for his generosity to villagers in times of need.

Though he was not an office bearer in any village organisation, his past and present social service activities (e.g. helping out in church functions) have made him highly acceptable in the community.

He is aware that the population of Duwa had expanded very much in the recent years. He attributes it to the ignorance of Duwa folk about modern methods of contraception. Shortage of housing, landlessness, and a decline in moral standards are attributed by him to be results of the population expansion.

He believes that villagers should be given proper guidance in population matters by trainers who are catholics. Trainers of other religious denominations, according to him, may not understand fully the limitations which exist in a catholic society.

J. Fernando (R.186)

He is 43 years of age and has 6 children. He received a formal education of 8 years in a church school in Negombo. He is conversant in the Sinhalese language.

He is a fisherman by profession, involved in fishing through beach seine nets and trap nets. He owns several trap nets and is a part owner of a *Madela* (beach seine net).

He owns about 9.5 perches of land on which his house is located. He is the President of the former Trap Net Society (Kattudel Samitiya), a former Village Council member for Duwa, a Committee Member of the Parish Society, member of the Village Benevolent Society, President of the Multi-Purpose Cooperative Society Committee serving Duwa and adjacent villages, and a member of the Conciliation Board.

He is a popular personality in the village. His views are acceptable to the community.

He is well aware of population problems affecting the Duwa society, such as land, housing, water shortages. He, however is against modern methods of contraception on the ground that it contravenes the codes of the catholic church.

S.L. de Vas (R.145)

He is 36 years of age, married and has 4 children ranging in ages from 3-7 years. He has had 12 years of schooling. He is conversant in Sinhala, Tamil and English languages.

He is a clerk attached to an educational centre in Negombo. Earlier, he had been employed in the same capacity at the Port Cargo Corporation, Colombo.

He owns about 25 perches of land in Duwa where his house is located. He is an active member of the Parish Committee, and is especially prominent in organising the annual *Passion Play*. He is adept at organising people to attend to various chores at special occasions like a wedding or a death of a Duwa resident.

CONCLUSION

Of the five Duwa influentials identified by the survey the most important in terms of ability to mobilise the Duwa population are R.41, R.128, and R.137 because of their wider social acceptance by all sectors of the Duwa community.

However, in terms of mobilisation for a programme of population education, which in the context of the church environment is a volatile topic, R.137 is considered to be more suitable especially because he is neutral in his dealings with various factions in the village. Though he is not an office bearer of any village organisation, he is recognised and accepted as a social worker in the village and is a personal friend of other village influentials. These characteristics may prove to be useful in selecting a village influential to act as a liason agent between the villagers and the programme sponsors.

Behind these influentials lie the power of the Duwa church and its catholic priest - who is a *father figure* in the village. Any programme ultimately would need his openly expressed blessings for it to be broadly acceptable to the Duwa folk.

2. KAHAPATHWILAGAMA : ORGANISATIONS AND INFLUENTIALS

The Kahapathwilagama village was served by 11 village level organisations during the survey period. Details about membership, participation and the positions held by village influentials in them are given below :

Table 31 : Village Organisations

Organisation	No. of members	No. who regularly participate	Positions held by village influentials	
			R.16	R.31
Cultivation Committee	39	4	-	Cm
Cooperative Branch Society	36	1	-	-
Death Donation Society	29	8	Mb	Mb
Agricultural Productivity Committee	39	1	Cm	-
Parent Teacher Association	12	4	Sec	-
Rural Development Society	14	6	-	-
Temple Committee	18	10	Aud	-
Village Council	1	1	Vp	-
Peoples Committee	2	2	-	-
Conciliation Board (Sama Mandalaya)	1	1	-	-
SLFP Branch	14	8	Ad	-

All except the Death Donation Society served the adjacent villages of Tirappane, and Nochchikulama as well. Tirappane had a separate Rural Development Society, while the Rural Development Society at Kahapathwilagama also served the Nochchikulama village.

Abbreviations : Ad = Advisor; Vp = Vice President
 Sec = Secretary Aud = Auditor
 Cm = Committee Member
 Mb = Member

The Village Council which covered a large area had a ward member in the Kahapathwilagama who was also the most notable influential in the village. The People's Committee had two representatives from Kahapathwilagama, and the Conciliation Board a single representative from the village. All of them regularly attended meetings of the organisations in which they were members.

Though participation in the *Cultivation Committee* meetings was generally confined to 10 members, almost all of the respondents of Kahapathwilagama attended the *kanna* meetings organised by the *Cultivation Committee* at the beginning of each cultivation season. At these *kanna* meetings water distribution, fertilizer and seed distribution aspects are discussed by farmers and the *Cultivation Committee* and a cultivation calendar is agreed upon by both groups.

Though a majority of the respondents were members of the *Co-operative*, none participated in its activities. The Committee of this organisation were all appointees of the politician for the area and were supporters of the Sri Lanka Freedom Party. In case of the *Cultivation Committee*, too, all of the members were political appointees. But activities like *kanna* meetings arranged by the *Cultivation Committee* did in fact generate a fuller participation of almost all of the respondents, when the *Co-operative* did not even have a single occasion which called for such popular participation.

The Agricultural Productivity Committee had its sittings at the Mihintale Agricultural Service Centre. The problems of the Kahapathwilagama village were communicated to the Committee through R.16 who was one of its members. He frequently intervened on behalf of village folk for their fertilizer, seed and agro-loan requirements.

The Parent Teacher Association (PTA) and the *Temple Committee* were important non-formal organisations in the village though membership was relatively small. The PTA was associated with the activities of the Kahapathwilagama Secondary School, and the *Temple Committee* with a village temple located close to the village.

Meetings of the PTA, and functions like *Pinkama* organised by the *Temple Committee* are well attended by the people of Kahapathwilagama. Meetings are generally held to cater to spontaneous needs which could justify a mobilisation of membership.

The day to day involvement of villagers in agricultural activities (in paddy and *chena* cultivation) leave very little leverage towards the creation of stable organisations with long range developmental objectives. It is difficult to sustain the interest of the people for long periods on specific lines of development because of the more mundane problems (such as agro requirements, water management, personal problems)

associated with their daily existence which require spontaneous solutions. Glimpses of this reality are seen in organisations like the *Death Doration Society*, and the *Temple Committee*. These organisations have Committees which are elected at irregular intervals - e.g. as and when the members or the office bearers require a change. The Committees meet very infrequently, and usually in response to a spontaneous need like the death of a villager or a temple ceremony.

The few villagers who regularly involve themselves in the working of organisations effecting the village are those who are relatively better off than the rest, and who could spare time for active work in organisations or those who had formed sufficiently strong links with politicians and public servants in the outside society. These linkages are exploited by such individuals to ensure rapid social mobility (with attendant economic gains, which could offset the cost in time spent on non-cultivation activities). The survey identified two such individuals, S.B. Basnayake (R.16) and T.B. Tikiribanda (R.31) who are more active in organisations and socially better placed than the rest. Brief account of themselves and their activities, are indicated below.

S.B. Basnayake (R.16)

He is 55 years of age and has thirteen children (three males and ten females), who range in ages from 5-29 years. He married when he was 22 years of age, showing that he had produced a child every 2.5 years of his married life.

He has had 12 years of formal education at a Government School. He is fluent in Sinhala and has a nodding acquaintance in English. He is very outspoken. His educational attainments have had no bearing on the size of his family. The dictates of the frontier like environment of Kahapathwilagama with the availability of apparently unlimited land in the village environment to cater to further expansions of the population, and the economic justifiability of having a large family whose able bodied members could actively contribute towards family income (through involvement in paddy and *chena* cultivation activities) logically favour large families. Basnayake for instance did not consider his large family a burden but rather as an asset (and, *this was a common feeling expressed in the Kahapathwilagama society*).

By profession Basnayake is a farmer, a registered ayurvedic physician and a snake-bite specialist.

He owns about 1½ acres of highland and 5 acres of paddy (mostly in the *akkaravela*). He also has taken 2 acres of highland on a temporary permit, issued by the Assistant Government Agent.

He is Vice Chairman of the Mihintale Village Council. He is the Secretary of the Parent Teacher Association (PTA) of the Kahapath-wilagama school, a Committee Member of the Horowpathana Parent Teacher Association (a larger organisation covering a sub-region) and the District Parent Teacher Council (the apex PTA organisation covering the entire Anuradhapura district), the Advisor of the Sri Lanka Freedom Party Branch organisation serving Kahapathwilagama and adjacent villages of Nochchikulama and Tirappane, a member of the Agricultural Productivity Committee, the auditor of the Temple Committee, a member of the Death Donation Society, and a Justice-of-Peace.

He during the survey period was found to be a dominant personality of the area drawing his authority essentially from his political and personal affiliations with the area politicians. Almost 90% of the respondents quoted him as the most important personality in the village. But many of the younger and some of the older informants privately expressed their resentment. However, they almost always avoided any direct confrontation with him (probably because they feared possible reprisals) and appeared to respect him in public.

He is aware that the village population has expanded in recent years and attributes housing shortages faced by villagers to be a direct result of population growth. He advocates population education for all those above 20 years of age, especially the unmarried. However, about his own large family he believes that he could afford to maintain them and that they are an asset. He stated that large families had a distinct advantage like drawing in government-aid during crop failures, but that generally it affected the economically poorer lot in the village. The principal reason why he advocated a population education for all above 20 years of age, especially the unmarried, was that it could prevent illegitimate births and foster more responsible feelings about children and family life among the adults.

T.B. Tikiribanda (R.31)

He is 68 years of age and has three children ranging in ages from 11-23 years. He had received 8 years of formal education from a government school. He is conversant in Sinhala and can read English.

He has been the local Registrar of Births, Deaths and Marriages since 1926. He was a *Vel Vidane* for years 1950-1958, and a *New Lekam* in the 1930s. In different capacities he has been a village level government official since mid-1920s.

He is primarily a farmer. He owns about 5 acres of paddy (mostly in the *akkaravel* sector of the *yaya*) and about an acre of highland.

He is a member of the Conciliation Board for the area, a member of the Co-operative Society, Death Donation Society and a Committee Member of the Cultivation Committee. He is the brother of S.B. Basnayake (R.16). Though politically neutral he holds a position of respect in the village that is almost at par with his brother. Unlike his brother, Tikiribanda was quite popular with the younger set.

He believes that population education need to be given to all those above 18 years of age, since such a group was adult enough to understand the benefits of such an education. He is aware that population of the village had increased very much in the last three decades which in turn generated problems like paddy land fragmentation and unemployment.

CONCLUSION

In terms of mobilisation of Kahapathwilagama for a population education programme, both Basnayake and Tikiribanda have to be actively drawn in. Tikiribanda at the time of the survey occupied a politically neutral role in the Kahapathwilagama society. He is treated with respect by villagers because of his official status, his age, and the peace-maker role he fulfils in the village society. He is also popular with the younger groups. His brother, Basnayake though more politically committed and less popular with the village youth, however, also commands the support of a large mass of the adult population of the village.

The organisations which existed in the village at the time of the survey may not be useful for mobilising public support towards such a programme. They are unstable, sporadic or too specialised to be of much use in a population education programme. The Rural Development Society which, at the time of the survey, had not met for about an year, would if resuscitated, be a better medium to popularise such a programme. It is run mostly by youth for whom it acts as a forum. The records of the society shows that at different times in the past (i.e. between 1970-1974) the Rural Development Society had in fact sent petitions to public officials requesting funds for their activities. However, due to its unregistered status the Society, has not been able to obtain public funds.

3. NADU ODAI : ORGANISATIONS AND INFLUENTIALS

Nadu Odai was served by eight organisations of which four were associated with the principal and secondary sources of employment - textile weaving and fishing; two organisations were linked to the dominant faith of the village (Islam), one was a service establishment (Co-operative) and the other a Sports Society. The names of organisations, membership, participation, and positions held by village influentials in the organisations are indicated below :

Table 32 : Village Organisations

*Organisations	No. of members	No. who regularly participate	Positions held by village influentials	
			R.67	R.9
Jailania Weaving Society	22	15	Sec	-
Al-Hithaya Weaving Society	7	4	Sec	-
Keerithona Weaving Society	4	3	-	-
Co-operative Society	13	2	-	-
Meera Mosque Society	6	3	-	-
Mohideen Mosque Society	9	2	-	-
Fishermen's Society	3	2	-	-
Gold Star Sports Society	7	4	-	-

* All of the organisations serve both Nadu Odai and the adjacent village, Keerithona.

Abbreviations : Sec = Secretary

The *weaving societies* are organisations which command the foremost attention of the villagers as they are linked to the traditional cloth weaving industry of the village. All three weaving societies have histories dating back to the early '30s when they were first formed.

These societies charged levies ranging from 1/10th to 1/17th of the sales of finished products of individual members. The societies supplied members (having home-based cloth weaving machines) with yarn and dyes and undertook the marketing of finished products. All three societies also gave loans of different amounts (with interest rates ranging from 5 -7% per year) to their members. All three societies also ran weaving centres. Members, and children of many members, work at least part-time in these centres.

The *Mosque Committees* like the Parish Committee of Duwa were in charge of the maintenance of mosque buildings and the organisation of prayer sessions and festivities. Usually the patriarchal figures of the village held positions of responsibility (as Lebbes) in these organisations. They were essentially male oriented organisations.

The *Keerithona Fishermen's Society* served both villages. It was run more or less in the lines of the Kattudel Society of Duwa. Crab and Prawn fishing were more popular, with the result that the supply of trap nets to members formed a vital function of the society.

It gave loans to its members for buying nets and tackle. A levy equivalent to 1/15th of the catch is charged per week from member fishermen for services rendered. It also gave loans to individual members to tide over difficult periods.

The *Gold Star Sports Society* (though it has a number of members from Keerithona village) is essentially an organisation created by the youth of the Nadu Odai village. A levy of 50 cts a month and an entry fee of Rs.5 is charged from members. The funds are utilised to buy volley balls, nets, tennis balls, etc.

The organisation which served this village are too specialised to be of use in launching population programmes. The religious fervour and traditionality which pervade the mosque organisations make them more unfavourable for initiating population programmes than the Parish Committee of Duwa (eventhough the Catholic Church was opposed to the practice of contraception).

Two influentials were identified during the survey : M. Iqbal (R.67) and A. Mustapha (R.9). Mustapha emerged with 53% of the total number of respondents in the village quoting him as an important invitee for household functions, an opinion leader, and an organiser of village socio-cultural activities. Details concerning them are given below :

M. Iqbal (R.67)

He is 32 years of age, married, and has five children. He has had eleven years of formal education at a government school. He is conversant in Tamil and English languages.

By profession he is a teacher in a government school in Batticaloa, and is also a cloth weaving instructor (in the Jailania, Al-Hithaya and Keerithona Weaving Societies). He is the Secretary of both Jailania and Al-Hithaya Weaving Societies. He did not own the land he lived in. It is owned by his father.

He is aware that the village population has increased since 1950, but does not regard it as a problem. He believes that the cloth weaving industry of the village could absorb more labour. He however states that population growth has constricted the village land available for housing. He is against modern methods of contraception as he believed that they would generate social evils (illicit pre-marital and extra-marital relationships).

A. Mustapha (R.9)

He is 61 years of age and has no children. He has received six years of education at a government school and is conversant in tamil. He has about 5 acres of highland on which he has his homestead. He is employed in the weaving industry and is a member of the Jailania Weaving Society, though he rarely attends its meetings.

He considers R.67, who is a cousin of his, as a very active and a popular personage in the village. Mustapha though he holds no formal posts in the village-level organisations is a prominent personality in the social activities of the village. Thirty-five respondents (48%) cited him as the usual guest-of-honour for weddings held in their households; 56% quoted him to be a personage who is personally requested to officiate at funeral ceremonies. He officiated at such functions in the capacity of a *Lebbe*. Similarly, 64% of the respondents cited him as a person who is invited to households for matters connected with faith healing.

He is quite aware of the pressing need for land caused by population growth, but he is vehemently opposed to any form of population education which would encourage the use of contraceptives. His opposition is based on his strong religious convictions and a fear that a moral degeneracy would set in among the younger villagers.

CONCLUSION

A population education campaign aiming at changing village attitudes towards conception and contraception would require a prior attitudinal change among the patriarchal figures of the village (such as R.9). They command high respect in the village and their influence pervades all organised activity. They are usually patrons of all these organisations and officiate at village socio-cultural functions.

The house-to-house family planning campaigns initiated by the Health Ministry and volunteer Family Planning Associations since early 1970s in the Palamunai-Kattankudy area where the Nadu Odai village is located, has resulted in creating a general level of awareness of population problems and contraception. Public Health Nurses and volunteer workers were found to regularly visit the village. Through their visits, and through information which trickles in through interpersonal sources about stronger campaigns which are being conducted in the Kattankudy area, people in Nadu Odai are now aware of the population phenomenon than ever before.

However, the eventual acceptance and practice of contraception depends on the influence of religious and social prominents of the village, the religio-cultural beliefs connected with the Islamic faith, and the traditional nature of the society.

4. USSAN : ORGANISATIONS AND INFLUENTIALS

The Ussan village at the time of the survey had nine active organisations. Four of the organisations, a Rural Development Society, a Church Society (Catholic church), a Community Centre, and a Mutual Aid Society were confined to the village itself, while the remaining ones were organisations catering to the entire Mirusuvil area in which Ussan village was located. The names of the organisations serving the village, their membership, participation, and the position of responsibility occupied by Ussan influentials are given below :

Table 33 : Village Organisations

Organisation	No. of members	No. who regularly participate	Positions held by village influentials	
			R.61	R.83
Rural Development Society	74	41	-	-
Mutual-Aid Society	80	53	-	-
Co-operative Society	42	2	-	-
Community Centre	65	34	Ch	Cm
Conciliation Board	4	4	-	-
St. Nicholas Society	14	9	-	-
Parent Teacher Association	12	5	-	-
Village Council	2	2	-	Cm
Kantha-Sami Kovil Trustees	4	4	Ch	Cm

Abbreviations : Ch = Chairman Cm = Committee Member

The Rural Development Society, the Community Centre and the Mutual-Aid Society, are the most popular organisations in the village.

The Rural Development Society of Ussan was started in the early 1950s. Its present Committee consists of 14 members. Of the 5 office bearers of the Committee only one (Treasurer) is a farmer. The rest are in non-traditional employment. The President and Vice President are teachers. The Secretary is a bus-driver and the Assistant Secretary a clerk. Of the 9 Committee Members one is a teacher, one a clerk in the Village Council office, one a businessman, and the rest farmers. Average age of the Committee Members is 45 years while that of the general membership is 37 years. Fifty-seven per cent of the Committee and 57% of the general membership are in non-traditional occupations.

A sum of Rs.1 was charged as an entry fee from the members. The activities like building roads, participating in weeding campaigns, helping villagers during funerals, and so on, are done on a *shramadana* basis. However, when funds are needed a list is sent around the village for voluntary donations.

The Community Centre originated in the early 1960s. It caters to a number of welfare activities in the village. A reading room run by this organisation exists in the village. It also mobilises village youth to organise festivities associated with the village *kovil*. The *Community Centre* consists of a 14 member Committee, of whom 4 are in non-agricultural occupations and 9 in agriculture. One member is a student. The average age of members of the Committee is 38 years and of the general membership 27 years. While 29% of the Committee members are in non-traditional occupations, 34% of the general membership are in non-traditional occupations. Among the general membership 21% are students.

It is significant to note that the *Rural Development Society Committee* consists of a strong (43%) white collar group (teachers and clerks), while the *Community Centre* does not have a single teacher or a clerk in the Committee. In fact 64% of the Committee consist of cultivators.

The Rural Development Society occupied a prestigious position as a social service organisation in the Ussan village, second only to the *Kovil Board of Trustees*. The older age groups occupy prominent positions in its Committee and it is able to draw in the educated elite of the village. *The Community Centre* officiated by K.V. Nadarajah, Justice-of-Peace, a prominent personality in the village, catered more to the youth and to a lesser extent to the older age group (many of whom are retired government servants).

The Mutual-Aid Society which was very popular among the cultivators of the village had a membership of about 30 and a Committee of twelve. All of the Committee Members and 96% of the general membership were cultivators. The average age of the members of the Committee was 57 years and of the general membership 44 years, showing a concentration of senior members of this village in this organisation.

Of the nine village organisations the *Mutual-Aid Society* had a higher proportion of senior villagers as members.

Educational attainments, age, and experience were found important criteria in the selection of office bearers to organisations in Ussan, when compared to other villages.

Among those who were active in village organisations two of the more prominent persons were C.T. Thangarajah (R.61) and M. Thambimuttu (R.38). Brief descriptions of these two personalities are given below.

C.T. Thangarajah (R.61)

Ninety-three respondents (65% of the total interviewed) quoted him as one to whom they most often go for advice and opinion ranging from family problems, and employment to contacts with the regional bureaucracy.

He is 46 years of age married and has four children. He has received eight years of formal education in a government school. He is only conversant in Tamil.

He owns the house he lives in, and has leased-in 10 acres of paddy land, which he cultivates.

He is a Justice-of-Peace, the President of the Ussan Community Centre, and the Chairman of the *Kovil* Board of Trustees. He is a noted social worker in the village and is frequently called upon to officiate at village functions.

He obtains extra-village information mainly from newspapers, radio and from contacts with visitors to the village. He considers the newspaper to be the most important carrier of information.

He considers family planning to be an important factor in reducing the population pressure on land. He in fact is very much aware of modern methods of contraception. He uses the Condom - popularly known as Preethi. He wishes to learn more about the population problem. He is willing to assist in launching a population education programme in Ussan.

M. Thambimuttu (R.38)

He is 48 years of age, married and has seven children ranging in ages from 6-23 years. He has received eight years of formal education at a government school. He is a farmer by profession and owns 1.38 of highland (under chillies and onions) and nearly 2 acres of lowland (under paddy).

He is a member of the Mirusuvil Village Council and of the Ussan Village Community Centre. The former position is considered to be a highly prestigious in the Ussan society. He is a highly respected personality in the village, who also is called upon to officiate at both family level and village level social functions.

He is cited by seventy-five respondents (52% of the total interviewed) as a major opinion leader in the village, whose advice is frequently sought on many matters (e.g. on cultivation problems, on political and village factional problems).

He is well aware of problems arising through rapid population growth in the village. He has a positive attitude towards contraception and firmly believes that knowledge about family planning/contraception should be made available to all villagers above 20 years of age. He regrets that he did not have the benefit of such information early in his married life.

CONCLUSION

Both individuals could be usefully drawn into a programme of population education in the village. Ussan with its highly literate population, and greater proportion quoting both nominal awareness of (84% of the respondents know of the existence of contraceptives, and 74% their names) and practical awareness (40%) of contraceptives (Table 19) among the study villages, would not pose very many problems for a programme of population education. Among village organisations both the Rural Development Society and the Community Centre could be drawn into the programme with the aid of the two influentials described above and a host of lesser influentials almost all of whom favour a such programme.

GENERAL OBSERVATIONS

Except for Nadu Odai village where the village influentials were vehemently opposed to population education programmes because of strong religious and cultural beliefs the influentials in other villages generally harboured a favourable attitude towards contraception. The village influentials were found to be active in very many different types of organisations affecting the life of the villagers.

For example, the essentially catholic nature of Duwa was borne out in the Parish Committee and the Hindu nature of Ussan borne out in the Kovil Committee, the Buddhist nature of Kahapathwilagama in the Temple Committee and Islamic nature of Nadu Odai in the Mosque Committee. Four of the principle influentials in the villages were prominent figures in these religious organisations.

Similarly, village influentials also drew much authority through their affiliations with political organisations. For example, the principal influential of the Duwa village was the chief organiser of the Sri Lanka Freedom Party, the same as Basnayake of the Kaha-pathwilagama village. Likewise Thambimuttu of Ussan village drew on Tamil United Front political support through his membership in the Village Council in order to maintain his position of authority in the village.

Generally the village influentials were also directly associated with the major economic activity of the village.

The task of harnessing such influentials towards a programme of population education would thus necessarily entail the more problematic task of altering attitudes of political, religious and economic interests in the villages represented by the influentials.

A complex strategy need to be adopted so that the drawing in of the village influentials for active participation in the programme would not in turn involve them in a situation where their very social position may be threatened. Negative results of the lack of consideration for this factor in promoting different village development programmes, was observed in certain villages encountered in village surveys done by the Agrarian Research and Training Institute in recent years.¹

¹ A common causal factor for this situation is the inevitable boost given to the aspirations of the village influentials by prominently enlisting them for such programmes. These influentials tend to tie themselves to the change agents and begin to divest themselves from the society. This eventually leads to the creation of a stressful situation between them and the rest of the village, weakening their authority positions and social acceptance in the villages. A classic situation was observed at Medagama in the Hiniduma area of Sri Lanka, discussed in some detail in the Case Study I, of this Village Communication Study Series. Similar situations were observed in the villages of the Beminiwatte area (Mawanella electorate) which form the field laboratory of the ARTI, and in the Ambana village, Mirigama electorate where an embryonic situation on similar lines was forming around a dynamic youthful influential (some details are given about this village in the Case Study III, of the Village Level Communication Series). The Weliya village in the Minuwangoda electorate, which is a model village of the Department of Rural Development shows a situation where a youthful individual exhibiting leadership qualities is gradually losing his authority. The contacts he had formed in his capacity as the President of the Rural Development Society is drawing him away from the people. A similar situation was also observed in the Minipe Colonisation Scheme, Minipe electorate in the course of an ARTI study on rural organisations. A son of a colonist was seen to have emerged prominently in the colony through political and personal affiliations he had formed with the area political authority. This colonist held the positions of responsibility in the Committees of all of the major colony organisations and was being drawn away from the society from which he emerged.

CHAPTER V

SUMMARY AND CONCLUSIONS

The four study villages showed varying household population densities ranging from 4.8 persons per family in Ussan, 5.2 persons per family in Duwa and Nadu Odai, to 6.8 persons per family in Kahapathwilagama. Density of population on land ranged from a high of 8.0 persons per acre in Duwa to 8.4 persons per acre in Nadu Odai, 7.7 persons per acre in Kahapathwilagama to 1.9 persons per acre in Ussan.

In the villages of Duwa and Ussan 60% to 65% of the population was below 30 years of age, while in Kahapathwilagama and Nadu Odai this age group accounted for 70% to 75% of the population. In the Duwa, Nadu Odai, and Ussan villages roughly 60% to 70% of the families had three children or more.

In Kahapathwilagama and Nadu Odai the average age of marriage of males was 23 years while in Duwa and Ussan it was above 25 years. Age of marriage among females in the villages ranged from a low of 18 years in Nadu Odai, 21 years in Kahapathwilagama, 22 years in Duwa, to 23 years in Ussan. In Nadu Odai no unmarried persons of both sexes were found in ages above 25 years, while at Kahapathwilagama the upper limit was 35 years. In the remaining villages about 85% of the unmarried persons were above 35 years.

Landlessness was acute in the villages of Duwa, Nadu Odai and Ussan. In the Duwa village 30% of the families were landless. In Nadu Odai it was 21% and in Ussan 19%. In Duwa it was more the physical size of the village (13 acres) in relation to its population rather than mal-distribution which had resulted in landlessness. People of Duwa were less landbound than those of the remaining three villages, because of the nature of their primary occupation, fishing. A majority of them seasonally migrated to other coastal areas of the island in pursuit of their trade.

From an outsider's point of view, population pressures and landlessness were high in Duwa. However most of the Duwa folk did not view population growth in quite the same terms, as they did not place much value on land ownership. Many, quoted housing shortages especially during months when the entire population stay at home (in January-April), and an associative problem of water shortage to be the more critical problems resulting from population growth than actual ownership of land. In case of Nadu Odai landlessness was a result of a combination of two factors, high population densities and mal-distribution of available land. For example, 58% of the land was owned by only 8% of the families. In Ussan landlessness was essentially a result of mal-distribution than high population densities. For example, nearly 50% of the land area of Ussan was owned by 15% of the families.

Except in case of Ussan where only about 65% of the total number of respondents were employed in the major traditional occupation of the village, in each of the three remaining villages more than 85% of the respondents were involved in traditional occupations. Ussan also showed the highest proportion of literate (95%) persons. In Duwa and Kahapathwilagama between 85% to 90% of the respondents were literate. The lowest proportion (58%) was found to be in the Nadu Odai village. The same village also showed the highest proportion of respondents (93%) involved in the traditional village occupation - cloth weaving. The obvious relationship between literacy levels and the type of occupation generally pursued by people, realised in other surveys done in the island¹ was again seen in the study villages. Though higher literacy levels have not necessarily bred a higher proportion of respondents in non-traditional occupations (except in case of Ussan),² sufficiently low literacy levels were definitely seen to have encouraged more people to be tied to traditional occupations, as was seen in Nadu Odai.

A majority of the respondents of the study villages (77%) were aware of the phenomenon of population growth through day to day problems they face in their village environments. These problems are : lack of space for housing (and water shortages), lack of space for cultivation, cost of bringing up children, unemployment and so on. Of them, lack of space for housing and cost of bringing up children occupied foremost positions. All of the problems cited signified the prevalent village psychology of personalising phenomena which occur in their environment. None of the respondents associated village population growth with - for example national problems like the mounting financial difficulties faced by the government in maintaining social services at the village level.

In terms of awareness of contraception, 80% of the respondents in the four study villages were aware that modern methods of contraception were available in the country, 68% quoted names of one or more of the contraceptive methods, and 35% had a knowledge of how they were used and for what purpose. Though reliable field evidence was lacking, the proportions of adopters of contraceptive methods in the study villages may be assumed to be very much smaller. Though factors like low education levels, pre-occupation with problems of day to day living and unfavourable cultural norms may be brought forward as important reasons for the broad gap between awareness and final adoption, by far the most important reason for this awareness - adoption gap in the study villages is a critical shortage of services - in making available contraceptives, in facilitating clinical examinations and operations, and in providing a sound population education background to the potential adopters.

¹ Statement of Census and Statistics, the Population of Sri Lanka (Colombo 1974) pp. 82-85.

² The ready availability of sufficient non-traditional employment in the village environment, rising education costs, and relative advantages in cost-benefit terms of the traditional modes of employment may be reasons why higher educational and literacy levels have not encouraged higher proportions to be employed in non-traditional occupations in villages like Duwa and Kahapathwilagama.

Formal interpersonal paths especially through medical and para-medical personnel were preferred by respondents in extension work associated with family planning. Among mass media paths the Radio was considered to be more important than other paths in conveying family planning messages. Though a noticeable preference for Western medical practitioners and Western medical treatment was identified in the villages, it may not deter an ayurvedic physician, from acting as an educator in spreading information about modern views on conception and contraception. The ayurvedic physician holds a position of respect in the study villages. An example lies in Kahapathwilagama village where the foremost influential was also an ayurvedic physician.

A number of influentials who were most prominent in terms of choices of respondents were identified in each of the study villages. Frequently they held positions of importance in village organisations. As frequently many of them derived their stature in the villages through their commitment to a particular political cause. Economic activities and the major faiths in the village society also had a profound influence on these influentials.

In organising population education programmes in the study villages, it would be opportune to enlist the assistance of these influentials to counter any moral issues and problems that may arise in the villages, to harness diverse village groups towards the programme, and to be responsible for the continuance of the village programme after the "out-of-village" element ceases to be associated with the education programme.

In this task the influentials need to be given a deep understanding not only of the technicalities of conception and population control, but also the philosophy behind the drive for family limitation. This need to be done by experienced and mature educators whose very age and experience may be used to advantage in motivating the influentials.

This is especially important in the four study villages, where certain of the village influentials have shown various levels of traditionalism in their beliefs about the population phenomenon. All of them are frequently invited to household and village functions not merely because of their political affiliations or the positions they hold in organisations, but for what they represent - a reference group (based on incomes, occupations, organisational position, and educational status). Such influentials would perhaps lend an ear to an out-of-village educator of their age group than to a youthful person, however educated he may be.

As mentioned in the concluding paragraphs of Chapter III, care must be taken that in enlisting these influentials their very social positions in the village are not endangered through their association with the programme. If such a danger is perceived at any stage in a programme, it is far better to either temporarily close up the programme in the particular village, or to transfer the entire task of education to "out-of-village" trainers so that the influentials would act merely as patrons or persons who could unobtrusively help to reduce possible adverse rumours about the programme.

The small family concept has little or no meaning in Kahapathwilagama where environmental possibilities exist for the enlistment of more labour to supplement the family income. But they may be amenable to a concept of like birth-spacing which may not be perceived by the respondents to cause a reduction in family size.

Respondents in Nadu Odai declare that its weaving industry could absorb more labour and add to family incomes. But they are aware that the shortage of housing and the cost of bringing up children are problems resulting from population growth. Respondents of Kahapathwilagama are aware also of the costs of bringing up children and food shortages. In addition both Duwa and Ussan respondents cite the lack of space for housing as strongly felt village problems.

Concepts which are easily understood and accepted by people and concepts which could be linked to the immediate problems of the village may be utilised to good effect in a population education programme. Likewise, such a programme need to be linked up with other programmes aimed at solving more urgently felt needs of the villagers for it to be more acceptable to the target population.

A population education programme originating from a single source thus needs to have a high degree of flexibility and should be capable of generating complex strategies to effectively communicate with the people of the four study villages whose felt needs undergo dynamic changes. For instance, since the field survey was done a political change has occurred and a certain proportion of the village influentials who drew upon the dominant political climate of the yester year may have witnessed changes in the level of their influence over the village. The cited influentials, however, cover range of sources through which they derive their authority in the villages. Nevertheless, if such a change has indeed happened, then the population education programme should evolve a different approach to cater to the particular change which has occurred at the village level.

The residents in the four study villages have their own lives to lead, A programme of this nature is necessarily an intrusion into their routinised life. Furthermore, the sponsors are outsiders to the village society and thus have a tremendous task of winning over to some extent an appreciable part of the villagers to support the programme. An in-depth village study done by the Rural Sociology Unit of the Agrarian Research and Training Institute (ARTI) on the role of local groups in rural development shows that a total acceptance of new immigrants by older residents of the village is a popular myth, and does not reflect the reality.¹

Statements which were made by informants in the four study villages (especially in Kahapathwilagama and Ussan) about other persons and groups who have moved into their villages, as far back as 2-3 decades ago, are interspersed with terms which often have slight derogatory connotations. These statements reflect strong views based on regionality, caste and faith considerations held by original villagers. These realities need to be carefully examined in launching a programme.

Such a programme also need to be sufficiently long phased as it involves the creation of an attitudinal change among a majority of villagers towards an eventual adoption of family planning concepts and techniques. To achieve this state the programme must become a part of village life and the village routine. For example, the educational component of the programme if launched in Kahapathwilagama has not only to cater to the seasonal agricultural rhythm of the village society but also to the daily or weekly rhythm involving times of peak activity and leisure hours. It has to approach the population through mature farmers and influential who to a great extent determine the general attitudes of the village towards extraneously introduced concepts. It has also to rope in the youth through their own age-level opinion leaders.

To many respondents in the study villages a large population holds distinct advantages. Even to the minds of Duwa folk much labour is needed to handle the multifarious tasks attached to the fishing industry. Kahapathwilagama residents see in a larger population a distinct advantage to a family in that it could cultivate more chena, bring in more rationed goods from the cooperative, and be eligible for more flour and other food items distributed through drought/flood relief campaigns. To the Nadu Odai villagers the traditional weaving industry of the village could absorb more labour. Besides these advantages are others based on traditional socio-cultural norms associated with marriage inheritance, and the continuity of the family as an institution. Ussan folk however feel the pressure of an expanding population quite distinctly due to its ever expanding educated-unemployed younger generations.

¹ Perera, J., Krause, G., The Role of Local Groups in Rural Development (Colombo, ARTI : October, 1977) p.18.

On the other hand shortages in housing, increasing cost of bringing up children (cost of schooling, food and clothing) and general maintenance costs of the entire family, are felt in all the villages in various degrees.

A motivational campaign would necessarily have to tip the scale in favour of the disadvantages as perceived by the village people while at the same time showing a fresh series of advantages that would accrue to them by adopting family planning.

In the final analysis a motivational campaign aimed at directing respondents of the study villages towards an ultimate goal of adoption of family planning techniques would achieve fruition only if respondents consider the relative advantages of adoption to be far greater than non-adoption, and only if contraceptives and clinical help are easily made available to those who require them.

At present facilities (in trained persons, equipment, and space for offices and operating theatres) in the hospitals which could cater to an increasing demand from the study villages, are insufficient. The marketing network for distribution of contraceptives like condoms and pills is not very extensive. Sales points for these items are generally located in urban areas and in major junction settlements. Except for Duwa which was adjacent to an urban centre, and which had easy access to both hospitals and sales points for pills and condoms, the remaining villages were less favourably situated. Distribution of pills and condoms in these villages were done by public health nurses (and in case of Nadu Odai, also by volunteer workers). Much organisational activity involving the setting up of sales points at the village level and expanding family planning facilities and services need to be planned alongside population educational programmes in order to create better awareness and adoption patterns in the study villages.

G L O S S A R Y

AKKARAVELA - A reclaimed area from the marginal lands bordering the traditionally owned paddy field under the village tank. The reclaimed area (under paddy) is usually linked to the irrigation network originating from the village tank. Individual holdings of villagers in the *akkaravela* are very much larger than those of the traditional paddy fields, and less fragmented. *Akkaravela* symbolises a form of adaptation of the village economy to an expanding population.

ARACHCHI - A village headman. This designation is used more as an *honorific* in the villages which come within the Kandyan cultural region (*Nawarakalaviya*).

AYURVEDA - An age-old system of indigenous medicine covering both curative and preventive aspects.

BEDDA - A belt of wood which surrounds the village and which traditionally was exploited by the entire village. In the dry zone regions between the village and the *bedda* lies a strip of brush designated *Tisbambe* (1 bambaya = 6 feet - *Tisbambe* is equivalent to 30 x 6 = 180 feet).

CHENA (*hena*)- A highland plot, reclaimed through a slash-and-burn process from the forest. A newly created *chena* is continuously exploited for a period of 2-4 years. After the fertility depletes the *chena* is vacated.

EK-GE-KEMA - A special form of polyandry, which is on the decline, found to be associated with the villages which belong to the Kandyan cultural region. In an *ek-ge-kema* situation usually two brothers are found to share one wife. One of the brothers (generally the elder) is the common-law marriage partner of the woman, while the other is a marriage partner according to the marriage customs of the region. This form of polyandry is practiced with a view to prevent fragmentation of family lands as a result of marriages.

GAMMEDDA - Core area of a village. This is especially distinct in the villages of the North Central regions of the island, where a cluster of houses surround a compound, which is bereft of trees or structures.

GANGODA - Cluster of homesteads which form the village, which is located in a highland area above the village tank. A *gammeda* is located in the heart of the *gangoda*.

GRAMA SEVAKA - A village headman. This in fact is the official designation for a village headman. In the Kandyan culture region he is recognised through the honorific *Arachchi*, and in some parts of the low country region through the honorific *Ralahami*.

KANNA - A cultivation season.

KOVIL - A place of worship of Hindu pantheon of gods. Kovils are also found in the premises of Buddhist temples showing the ancient linkages between these two religions.

LEBBE - A Moslem religious dignitary. Besides officiating at Mosque ceremonies, he is also called upon to officiate at ceremonies associated with both weddings and funerals.

MAHA - A cultivation season which extends from September/October to February/March and which coincides with the incidence of North-East monsoonal rains.

MURUNGA (Cassia Fistula) - The edible pod of a drumstick tree.

OLAGAMA - An abandoned or unoccupied village.

PINKAMA - A religious function associated with a Buddhist temple. It also may contain an element of festivity. It is an occasion for much social intercourse among both sexes and among residents of different villages.

PURANAGAMA - This term is generally used to identify villages which have existed for centuries in the dry zone regions although the same term is occasionally used also to identify similar villages in the wet zone regions of the island.

PURANAVELA - The older paddy field below the village tank which was traditionally owned by all the households on a *pangu* (share) ownership basis. The present day *puranavela* depicts an intricate tenurial pattern associated with multiple owners to individual plots of land.

SHRAMADHANA - Voluntary provision of free labour by people for specific developmental tasks.

VARIGE - "An affinal endogamous kin-group" (Courtesy : Pieris, R., *Sinhalese Social Organisation* : Colombo, Ceylon University Press: July 1956, p.310).

VEL VIDANE - An irrigation headman who was responsible for administration/co-ordination of the activities of individual farmers related to paddy cultivation. He was a field-level government official who imposed a land tax and who could sue or be sued.

WEWA - A village reservoir which fed the *purana vela* and *akkara vela*, and satisfied the water requirements of individual households of the *gangoda*.

WEWLEKAM - Supervisor of a village reservoir. He is directly responsible for water allocation to individual plots. He was a field level government official.

YALA - A cultivation season which extends from April to August, which coincides with the incidence of the South-West monsoon.

YAYA - A paddy tract worked by a single village or a number of villages.

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