

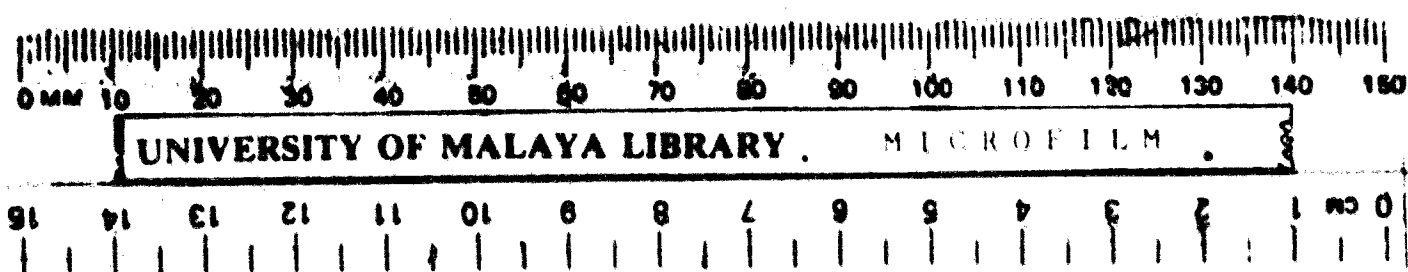


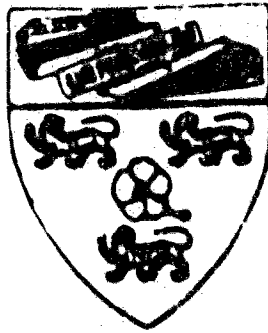
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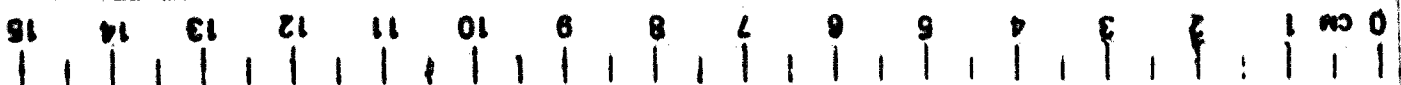


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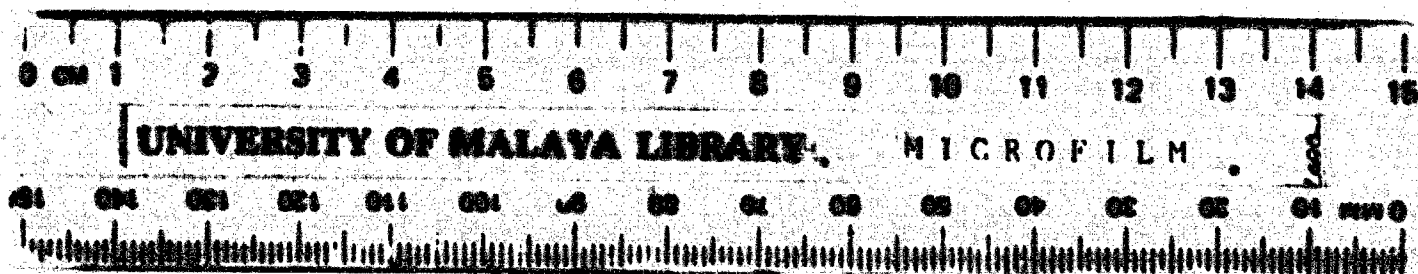




# THE POPULATION OF SARAWAK

By  
Wan Yusoff bin Wan Ismail

A Graduation Exercise submitted as  
part fulfilment towards the Degree  
of Bachelor of Arts in Economics,  
University of Malaya.



KUALA LUMPUR

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## INTRODUCTION

The population of Sarawak has never received much attention from anybody. Until the publication of the two censuses, 1947 and 1960, knowledge of the Sarawak population was fragmentary. However, recent events have suddenly pushed the country into the limelight of international politics particularly with the formation of Malaysia and with Indonesian confrontation.

This article is not an analysis of the political and economic position of the diverse population of Sarawak but rather is an attempt to outline, in simple and straightforward manner, some features of the Sarawak population.

Any attempt to study the demographic history of Sarawak is made difficult by two factors, viz.. the lack of population data on the one hand, and the changing size of the country from time to time in its growth as an integral state on the other. Until 1939 there was no attempt to make a complete head-count of the population. However, various estimates of the population have been made from time to time but these are very unreliable. What is more unfortunate is that figures of any kind are woefully few, for during the Japanese occupation there was much destruction of records and archives so that little now remains. Although figures are also found in works of history of the country these are of uneven value.

When James Brooke assumed power in Sarawak in 1841, the area under his administration extended from Tanjong Datu to the Samarahan river and the population was computed to have been 10,500. Since then the territory of Sarawak has expanded over twenty times its original size. Because of this a study of population change is not possible. Nevertheless, the 1947 Census is a good basis for any future study of the demographic features of the country.

THE GROWTH OF THE POPULATION

1. GROWTH BY RACE AND SEX

The first noticeable feature in the growth of the population of Sarawak in the postwar years is the rapid rate at which the population is increasing. Secondly, the importance of natural increase, and the corresponding decline of immigration, as a factor of population growth is rising. The decline in importance of immigration as a factor of population growth in the postwar years is due to the political changes that have taken place since the War. During the War, when family lives were uprooted, there was neither incentive nor means for immigrants to enter the country and after the war, official restrictions against the entry of aliens were imposed strictly.

According to the first complete enumeration of the population taken in 1939 the total population was 490,585; in 1947 it was 546,385; and in 1960, when the second census was taken, the population was 744,529. Thus in the period from 1939 to 1947 the increase in population was 55,800 or an annual rate of increase of 1.4 per cent, which is a comparatively low rate of increase. Nevertheless, it must be remembered that the period from 1939 to 1947 was an unsettled period because of the Japanese occupation. Consequently the low rate of increase is to be expected. The war resulted not only in food shortage but also in the complete neglect of social services. In addition to food shortages and the neglect of social services there was also an outbreak of epidemics in the lower Rejang district. Also, as mentioned earlier, there was a halt in immigration as a result of the war.

During the intercensal period, 1947-1960, there was an increase of 198,144 persons or 36.3 per cent as compared to the 11.4 per cent for the earlier period. This increase represents an average annual increase of 2.5 per cent. This rate of 2.5 per cent per annum is a very high rate of growth as compared to the period preceding it. Indeed, this rate of growth is unprecedented in recorded Sarawak history and almost certainly in all time. It marks a change in population trends of vital importance, for it signifies a change in the demographic pattern of the country.<sup>1</sup> This rate is shared also by several other countries in the region, such as Sabah (2.9 per cent), Singapore (3.9 per cent), Malaya (3.1 per cent), Ceylon (2.5 per cent),

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<sup>1</sup> Population Census Report, Sarawak, 1960, p. 27.



Taiwan (3.5 per cent), Indonesia (1.8 per cent) and Philippines (1.9 per cent).<sup>2</sup> Thus the average annual rate of increase is probably the best indication of population growth in the intercensal years, since the rate involves a comparison of population resulting from natural increase more than from migrational factor.

Table 1.1

Population Growth by Race, 1939-1960

Race	Year			Annual Rate of Increase	
	1939	1947	1960	1939-47	1947-60
All Races	490,585	546,385	744,529	0.9	2.5
Malay	92,709	97,469	129,300	0.5	2.3
Melanan	36,772	36,560	44,661	-0.2	1.8
Sea Dayak	167,700	190,326	237,741	1.0	1.8
Land Dayak	36,963	42,195	57,619	1.0	2.5
Other Indigenous	27,532	29,867	37,921	0.7	2.0
Chinese	123,626	145,158	229,164	1.3	3.7
Others *	5,283	5,810	8,123	0.8	2.7

Table 1.1 shows the distribution of population by race for the years, 1939 to 1960. These figures show that the change in population for the two intercensal years has been remarkable. The national average for the period 1939 to 1947 was less than one per cent per annum; but the national average for the period 1947 to 1960 was 2.5 per

\* The term includes Europeans and Eurasians, Indians, Ceylonese, Pakistanis, Indonesians and others.

<sup>2</sup> Ibid, p. 35.

cent per annum. The rates of growth for the various races differ a great deal, ranging from nearly four per cent for the Chinese to about two per cent for the Melanans and Sea Dayaks. These differential rates of growth are significant for they determine the future trends of the population structure, particularly with regards to its composition and distribution. These differences in the rates of growth are due to cultural, social, economic and geographical factors. The majority of the indigenous races are undeveloped in various aspects and geographically they live in the hinter-land areas where social amenities are not available. These factors determine both the fertility and the mortality levels.

The largest and most important of the indigenous people is the Sea Dayak, a largely tribal, agricultural people centered in the Second and Third Divisions. They are a comparatively homogenous race and a definite distinguishable culture is evident. They are also known as Ibans. In 1939 they numbered 167,700; in 1947 there were 190,326 of them; and in 1960 they were enumerated at 237,741. Thus from 1939 to 1947 their increase was 22,626 persons or 13.5 per cent. This represents a rate of one per cent per annum. Between 1947 and 1960 their increase was 47,415 or 24.9 per cent. This represents an increase of 1.8 per cent per annum. These increases are fairly steady signifying perhaps that the Sea Dayak way of life has been little changed by the influences working in the country in general, including the Japanese occupation. The increase could be regarded as natural since no large numbers had moved into or away from the country since 1939. Prior to 1939 the Sea Dayaks appeared to increase by some 50 per cent in one hundred years. <sup>3</sup>

The Malays live in towns and along the coast where they have been a powerful influence for centuries. In 1939 they numbered 92,709 while in 1947 they were enumerated at 97,469, an increase of only 4,760 or 5.1 per cent. This represents an average annual rate of growth of only half per cent. Between the last intercensal years the increase in the Malay population was 31,831 or 32.7 per cent. This difference in the percentage change is remarkable. The increase on the average is 2.3 per cent per year. This increase is high but it accords with the increases in the other indigenous races. The reason for the sudden change in the increase may perhaps be in the war, for the Malays live mainly in areas which felt the weight of the occupation and the

accompanying lack of food supplies from outside; being town and coastal dwellers they would probably have suffered more than the interior peoples. Their numbers might also have been lost due to the outbreak of epidemics in the lower Rejang district. Migration has not been an important factor in the growth of the Malay population since 1947. The records show that net immigration amounts to just over 1,000 persons. <sup>4</sup>

The increase in the Land Dayaks has been the greatest recorded for any indigenous race since 1947. It was also the greatest between 1939 and 1947, so that over the 21 year period, from 1939 to 1960, the Land Dayaks have grown by 55 per cent. Yet the 1876 count put them at 18,376, which means that it took them over 60 years to double in numbers. There might have been some immigration from Kalimantan but it is doubtful if the number had been sizable. A few of them would have been lost through intermarriage with Chinese and subsequently turned themselves as Chinese. Yet their rate of increase has been the greatest among the indigenous races. No one can explain this phenomenon, for by general observations they live under unhygienic conditions and as a group they appear to be of a physically low standard. <sup>5</sup> It cannot be explained away by an undercount in 1939 and in 1947 or by immigration, though some immigration might be possible. But in a community of less than 60,000 any appreciable amount would be noticed immediately. Moreover, the sex ratio betrays no preponderance of males which usually accompanies recent immigration.

An examination of table 1.1 shows plainly that there has been some confusion in the enumeration of the Melanaus. The confusion arises from the fact that upon embracing Islam Melanaus tend to call themselves Malays. <sup>6</sup> Indeed, this is also the case with other converts. To-day about 70 per cent of the Melanaus are Muslims. <sup>7</sup> The number involved may be small in such confusion but it is important to the small Melanau group.

The other indigenous races are thus classified only for census purposes. They are composed by Bisayahs, Kendayans, Kayans, Kenyahs, Kelabits, Muruts, Punans and

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<sup>4</sup> Ibid, p. 52

<sup>5</sup> Ibid, p. 54

<sup>6</sup> Census Report, Sarawak 1960

<sup>7</sup> Commission of Enquiry, North Borneo and Sarawak, p. 20.

other indigenous races. Between 1939 and 1947 their increase was 4,335 or about 8 percent, while between 1947 and 1960 this was 8,064 or 27 per cent. These two increases represent an average annual growth of 0.7 per cent and 2 per cent respectively.

The Chinese, the largest immigrant race in the country, increased by 17 percent or 21,532 persons from 1939 to 1947 and 58 percent or 83,996 from 1947 to 1960. These increases represent an average increase of 1.3 per cent per annum and 3.7 per cent per annum respectively. Thus for both the intercensal periods the Chinese showed the highest average annual rate of growth.

The balance of immigration over emigration between 1935 and 1939 was 19,000 persons. The net balance between 1939 and 1947 was not more than one per cent of the 1939 population, that is to say, not more than 5,000 persons, most of whom were born in China. 8 Between 1948 and mid 1960, net immigration was 7,779 persons. Thus after allowance is made for both these figures the natural increase from 1939 to 1947 was 13 per cent and from 1947 to 1960 was 52 per cent or an annual increase of 3.6 per cent, which is comparable with the rate of some neighbouring countries. Thus the Chinese in Malaya in 1947 were increasing at an annual rate of 3.4 per cent; the population of Taiwan was increasing at 3.5 per cent in 1954. 9

Perhaps a brief summary of Chinese migrations into Sarawak would be of value at this stage. Chinese contract with Borneo is of many centuries' standing. This was only a trade contract, since it is not certain whether there was early settlement. However, the first firm influence of the Chinese in Sarawak was gained by their goldmining at Bau, where they were already well established when James Brooke first arrived in Sarawak in 1839.<sup>10</sup> Stable government and law and order provided by the Brooke administration encouraged more immigrants from China, especially when there was a definite demand for Chinese Settlers. Their influence grew by their capacity for hard work and their business acumen. They become shopkeepers, artisans, traders and farmers. <sup>11</sup>

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8 Census Report Sarawak, 1960. p. 57

9 Ibid, p. 57

10 Ibid, p. 56

11 Ibid, p. 56

In the 1920's and 1930's large groups of Chinese from Singapore and China migrated into Sarawak in order to augment the numbers of the early settlers. Immigration restriction had to be imposed during the slump periods when many Chinese were repatriated. In fact during the slump years the number of emigrants exceeded that of immigrants.<sup>12</sup> This system of immigration control went on for some time until 1935 when conditions began to improve. Thus between 1935 and 1939 the number of immigrants again exceeded the number of emigrants. The Second World War brought immigration to a halt and after the War immigration restrictions were considerably tightened when the political situation demanded a different policy towards the entry of Chinese.

Two factors have therefore influenced the rapid growth of the Chinese community in Sarawak, viz. immigration in the earlier years and now high rate of natural increase.

By contrast with the indigenous population, the Chinese population has increased with startling rapidity as table 1.1 shows. If the rate of increase of the Chinese and indigenous peoples is any criterion, it seems inevitable that the Chinese proportion will become even larger at the next census count. <sup>13</sup>

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<sup>12</sup> Y.L. Lee. "Journal of Social Science Society, 1963-64". University of Singapore. p.7

<sup>13</sup> It has been estimated that in 1962 the Chinese were the largest racial group in Sarawak.

**TABLE 1.2****POPULATION GROWTH BY RACE AND SEX, 1947-1960**

Race	Total Population				Annual Rate of Increase	
	1947		1960		Male	Female
	Male	Female	Male	Female		
ALL RACES	281,170	265,215	375,846	368,683	2.3	2.7
Malay	48,459	49,010	63,430	65,870	2.2	2.4
Melanaus	17,440	18,120	21,837	22,824	1.8	1.9
Sea Dayak	94,232	96,094	117,478	120,263	1.8	1.8
Land Dayak	21,032	21,163	28,451	29,168	2.4	2.6
Other Indigenous	15,096	14,771	19,737	18,196	2.2	1.7
Chinese	81,392	63,766	120,369	108,785	3.1	4.3
Others	3,519	2,291	4,546	3,577	2.1	3.6

Table 1.2 shows the rates of growth of the population of Sarawak by race and sex for the period between 1947 and 1960. An examination of the table shows that the overall rates of growth for the sexes are different. The rate of growth for the females is much faster than the rate of growth for the males. This is true for all the racial groups except the Sea Dayaks which have equal growth rate and the other Indigenous groups, which have a lower growth rate for the females.

Among the male population the Chinese has by far the highest rate of growth per annum, which is more than 3 per cent. All other races have growth rates exceeding 2 per cent except the Melanaus and the Sea Dayaks whose rates of growth are equal and below 2 per cent. The average rate of growth for the male population of Sarawak is 2.3 per cent.

Among the female population of Sarawak the rates of growth again vary from one race to another. Here the highest rate is that for the Chinese females the rate being 4.3 per cent, an extremely high rate of growth. This shows

that more and more female births have taken place during the intercensal period from 1947 to 1960. The lowest rate among the female population is 1.7 per cent which is disclosed by the group 'Other Indigenous'. This is significant for it either means that the population within this group is declining or that more women gave births to male children during the intercensal period. It is unlikely that some of the female population in the 'Other Indigenous' groups have emigrated. At first sight it may be thought that the males have immigrated from Kalimantan because an examination of the sex ratio reveals that there is a preponderance of males over females; whereas in 1947 their sex ratio was 1,022 males to 1,000 females, in 1960 this has increased to 1,035. To some extent it may be due to immigration but the census report does not show this possibility.

Further, the table shows that the rate of growth for the female population of the group 'Others' is also very high, much higher than the rate of growth for the female population among the indigenous peoples. But this is not likely to continue now since this group includes Europeans who are more transient than the Indonesians, Indians and others included in this group. In any way, this group is not likely to have much influence upon the future structure of the population since they are numerically small.

What is more significant about these rates of growth is that the rates for the indigenous population, particularly for the females, are lower than those of non indigenous peoples. The probable effect of this is to change the population composition of the country in the future.

## II GROWTH BY ADMINISTRATIVE DIVISION

TABLE 1.3

### POPULATION GROWTH BY ADMINISTRATIVE DIVISION, 1947 - 1960

Administrative Division	1947 Population	1960 Population	Annual Rate of Increase (%)
SARAWAK	546,385	744,529	2.5
First Division	172,247	247,954	3.0
Second Division	92,670	109,422	1.4
Third Division	195,984	261,487	2.3
Fourth Division	63,606	96,666	3.6
Fifth Division	21,879	39,000	2.3



Table 1.3 shows the rate of population growth by division for the intercensal period, from 1947 to 1960. The highest rate of growth occurs in the Fourth Division while the lowest in the Second Division. It is significant to note that while the Third Division, due of course to its large size, has the largest population, its growth rate is only equivalent to that of the Fifth Division which has the smallest population, again due to its size. These differential rates of growth may be due to either of two factors, to natural increase or to internal migration. Both may be true but the degree to which they influence the growth of the population in each division varies. The most important factor which influences internal migration at least those in the working ages, is the employment opportunities that may be available in one division or other. Thus in the intercensal period 10,000 indigenous peoples of whom 8,000 were Sea Dayaks, migrated into the Fourth Division especially to work in the oil field at Miri. 14 The low rate of growth in the Second Division is due to the loss of population through migration of the people in this division to other divisions especially to the Fourth Division. The same reason is applied to the low rate of growth in the Third Division.

The table also reveals that only two divisions, the First and Fourth Divisions have annual rates of growth exceeding the overall rate of growth. Proportionally, 31.5 per cent of the total population lived in the First Division in 1947 and this percentage has increased to 33.3 per cent in 1960. The Fourth Division also experienced a proportional increase in its population during the intercensal years; in 1947 the proportion of the population found in the Fourth Division was only 11.6 per cent but in 1960 this proportion had increased to 13.0 per cent. The other three divisions had suffered a proportional decrease. Thus the proportion of the population in the Second Division decreased from 17 per cent to 14.7 per cent in 1960.

### III. MIGRATION

#### INTERNAL MIGRATION

Information on internal migration can be obtained from the census data tabulated according to place of birth and place of enumeration. The principle is that if 100,000 persons are stated to have been born in a particular district but only 90,000 are enumerated there, then there has been



an out-migration of 10,000 persons, or ten percent of those born there and who are still alive.

The figures given in table 1.4 show that a large majority of the people of Sarawak live in their place of birth. This is to be expected in a country such as Sarawak where the population is still in the subsistence economy, where family ties or tribal relationships are still strong, and where opportunities for employment are still very limited. The figures do not show whether the migration is temporary or permanent because the census is a photograph of the population on a particular day. Further, there is no record at all of people who have migrated and have since died. Nevertheless, the information tabulated gives some indication of the movements of the population within the country.

Several points can be noted from the table. Firstly, there is a trend of movement among the indigenous people away from the Second Division and the Third Division towards the Fourth Division and the Fifth Division. There is also another stream of smaller magnitude going to the First Division. The census report shows that in-migrants to the First Division come from the Second Division, while the Fourth and the Fifth Divisions also draw on the Second and on the Third Divisions. Thus from Simanggang in the Second Division the largest number of out-migrants have gone to Miri in the Fourth Division and the next largest to Baram, also in the Fourth Division. Out-migrants from the same district have also gone to Limbang in the Fifth Division. From Sibu in the Third Division, the largest number of out-migrants has gone to Bintulu and Baram, both are districts in the Fourth Division.

The main factor that influences the movement of people from one district to another is economic. Some have moved in order to take up jobs in the oilfield, some to open up new land; others have moved in order to work in the bauxite mine at Lundu in the First Division, while others still have moved in order to work in saw-mills, in estate or to develop the timber industry. Another factor which has made people move from one district to another is the war. This factor has much effect upon the internal movement of the Malays, Chinese and Melanau because they are coastal and town dwellers. They were the people who felt the weight of the upheaval of the Second World War.

The large number of in-migrants among the indigenous people who moved into the Fourth Division is largely due to the movement of Sea Dayaks into Miri in search of employment at the Miri Oil-field. This large movement of

Sea Dayaks is to be expected as they are a people who are accustomed to wandering and migrating.

Secondly, the movement of Chinese is slightly different from that of the indigenous people. The Chinese tend to move out of the First Division and the Third Division into the remaining divisions. Whereas there is a net loss of migrants in the Second Division among the indigenous people there is a net gain among the Chinese. The movement out of the First Division is partly because of the War. The areas which were badly affected by the occupation and the re-occupation were Bau and Kuching.

In summary there has been some internal migration at divisional level. The clearest general movement among the indigenous people is one of leaving the Second and the Third Divisions and going to the Fourth and the Fifth Divisions. Among the Chinese the general movement is one of leaving the Third and the Second Divisions and going to the Fourth and Fifth Divisions.

# INTERNAL MIGRATION, 1960

	Born in Division		Out-migration		In-migration		Number Gain or Loss	
	Indige- nous	Chinese	Indige- nous	Chinese	Indige- nous	Chinese	Indige- nous	Chinese
First Division	143,810	79,122	8,735	8,729	9,249	7,983	+ 514	- 746
Second Division	106,567	8,032	13,175	1,682	4,582	2,403	- 8,593	+ 821
Third Division	169,422	75,369	19,470	10,744	16,223	8,752	- 3,247	- 2,022
Fourth Division	59,489	15,979	4,159	1,416	14,179	3,139	+10,020	+ 1,723
Fifth Division	22,326	1,864	718	209	2,024	433	+ 1,306	+ 224
Total	500,614	182,366	46,257	22,710	46,257	22,710	-	-

## EXTERNAL MIGRATION

The reader is aware that Sarawak is the home of many races. Of the immigrants who have experimented with living in Sarawak in the last century some have stayed and some have left again. Immigration at the ports of Sarawak is, and has been, controlled in accordance with the policy in force from time to time, although unauthorized immigration over the long land border with Indonesia is possible.

It has been estimated that from 1939 to 1947 immigration accounted for about 5,000 persons. From 1948 to mid-1960 the reported excess of immigration over emigration, shown in table 1.5 was 10,088 persons. This represents about 1.8 percent of the 1947 census population. A large number of illegal immigrants would not be possible since in a thinly populated country like Sarawak they could be easily spotted. However a good opportunity for a few determined persons to get across the border existed, especially when the economic conditions were favourable.

## CHINESE MIGRATION

Contact between Borneo and China is of many centuries' standing, since there has been early trade between the two countries. Whether there has been early settlement or not is not very certain. No indication of it exists on the present landscape. However, the first Chinese settlement within recorded Sarawak history was at Bau where they were already well established when James Brooke arrived in 1839.

As law and order was restored in the country by the Brooke administration, the number of Chinese immigrants began to increase, especially when there was a definite demand for Chinese settlers. Their influence grew very quickly as they had the capacity for hard work and also as they were well endowed with business acumen.

In 1877 it was thought that the Chinese numbered 7,000 in the state, which was not as large as at present. In 1909 an estimate gave a figure of 45,000. After this date immigration was great at times particularly before the depression of the 1930's. Large groups of Chinese from Singapore and China migrated to the country in order to augment the numbers of the early settlers.

During the slump periods immigration restriction had to be imposed. Many Chinese were repatriated and indeed during the slump periods the number of emigrants

exceeded that of immigrants. This system of immigration went on for some time until 1935 when conditions began to improve. Thus between 1935 and 1939 the number of immigrants again exceeded the number of emigrants by 19,000 persons. The war brought immigration to a halt. There was neither incentive nor means for fresh immigrants to gain entry into Sarawak. After the war, immigration restrictions were considerably lightened because the political situation demanded a new policy towards immigration.

#### OTHER MIGRATION

The population of immigrant stocks, other than the Chinese, is very small in number. They came from as far as India, Ceylon, Pakistan and the various parts of Indonesia. Although Sarawak has a long land boundary with Indonesia, very few Indonesians are found in Sarawak. Table 1.5 shows the excess of immigrants over emigrants between 1948 and 1960 was only 300 persons among others and 1,300 among Europeans.

TABLE 1.5

#### SUMMARY OF IMMIGRATION - EMIGRATION 1948 - Mid. 1960

	Entered	Left	Balance	Percentage
SARAWAK	122,633	112,545	10,088	100.0
Indigenous	16,256	15,627	728	7.2
Chinese	74,806	67,027	7,779	77.1
European	23,517	22,241	1,276	12.6
Others	8,055	7,750	305	3.0

Table 1.5 shows a summary of immigration and emigration for the period from 1948 to June 1960. It is clear from this that immigration is unimportant in the intercensal growth of the population of Sarawak. Indeed the postwar growth in the population is little influenced by this factor. The table shows a net balance of 10,000 immigrants during the intercensal period which is about 2 per cent of the population counted in 1947. Of these 77 per cent were Chinese, 13 per cent Europeans and only

7 percent indigenous or less than 1,000 persons. The reason for this of course lies in the strict control over immigration exercised by the Government since the end of the war.

#### IV. FERTILITY

TABLE 1.6

##### CHILD-WOMAN RATIO BY RACE, 1960

Race	Female Population Aged 15-49	Number of Children Aged 0 - 4	Child-woman Ratio
Malay	30,948	23,014	743.6
Melanau	11,081	7,066	637.7
Sea Dayak	59,296	39,220	661.4
Land Dayak	13,506	11,061	819.0
Other Indi- genous	8,912	6,580	738.3
Chinese	43,956	39,589	900.7
Others	1,605	1,373	855.5
Total	169,304	127,903	755.4

The above table shows the distribution of child-woman ratio by race. It is a ratio of children aged 0 to 4 years to 1,000 women of child-bearing age, 15 to 49 years. To some extent this measures the level of fertility of women in a country. For a country-like Sarawak, where population statistics are far from adequate the child-woman ratio is one of the best, if not the best, measure of fertility, for it can be easily calculated from the census data.

The overall ratio for Sarawak in 1960 was 755 children aged 0 to 4 years to 1,000 women of child-bearing age. A comparison of the ratio among all races in Sarawak shows that the indigenous peoples have the

lowest child-woman ratios, particularly among Melanau and Sea Dayaks. Of the indigenous peoples the Land Dayaks have the highest ratio, followed by the Malays. In fact the child-woman ratios of the indigenous peoples are all below the average. This is significant for it determines the future trend of the racial composition of the country. The Chinese have the highest ratio of children aged 0 to 4 to 1,000 mothers, indicating that the fertility of the Chinese is highest. This means that the Chinese population will increase at a much faster rate than the other racial groups. These differences in the fertility level of the various races can only be explained in cultural terms. The indigenous peoples, with the exception of the Malays, are culturally backward. Most of them would probably be illiterate and their living conditions would also be poor. Consequently the general health conditions would also be poor. Unlike the indigenous peoples, the Chinese are culturally more advanced and their living conditions would in general be far better than those experienced by the indigenous. Consequently their chances of preventing infantile deaths would be greater than the indigenous peoples. Living mainly in the town as shopkeepers, artisans and government clerks they are presumably more healthy. They would be able to make use of government hospitals more frequently than the rural indigenous. However, it might be expected that the fertility of the indigenous people would increase with increasing social services and better education which is today universal for the young population.

TABLE 1.7

THE GENERAL FERTILITY RATIOS, BY RACE, 1960

Race	Female Population aged 15-49	Births	G.F.R.
Malay	30,948	4,312	139.3
Melanau	11,081	765	69.0
Sea Dayak	59,296	2,268	38.2
Land Dayak	13,506	2,065	152.9
Other Indigenous	-	-	-
Chinese	43,956	8,415	191.4
Others	1,605	1,026	639.3
Total	160,392	18,851	117.5



Table 1.7 shows the general fertility ratios for the various races in Sarawak. There is some doubt concerning these ratios for the registration system in Sarawak is far from complete. The Registrar General reports in 1961 that many births and deaths were still unreported. This seems to be particularly so among the Melanau and Sea Dayaks.

These differences in general may be said to represent certain extremes of living conditions, social environment and economic activity of the various racial components. There are many cultural differences among the heterogeneous population of Sarawak and these differences probably influence the patterns of fertility among them.

The general fertility rate for the Chinese is 191 births to 1,000 mothers which is 'high' by world standard.

#### V. FOREIGN BORN POPULATION

TABLE 1.8

#### THE DISTRIBUTION OF THE POPULATION BY PLACE OF BIRTH, 1960

Race	Sarawak Born	Foreign Born
Malay	92.4	1.6
Melanau	99.8	0.2
Sea Dayak	99.6	0.4
Land Dayak	99.9	0.1
Other Indigenous	91.1	8.9
Chinese	79.6	20.4
Others	65.3	34.7
ALL RACES	<u>92.4</u>	<u>7.6</u>



The total number of persons who stated that they were born in Sarawak was 688,288 or 92.4 per cent of the total population. Since about 32 per cent of the population is non-indigenous but only 7.5 per cent were born outside Sarawak it follows that some three-quarters of the immigrant communities were born within the country. For a thinly populated and still developing country this indicates a satisfactory state of affairs in that a large proportion of the immigrant peoples are settling down in the country permanently. Although large scale immigration came to a halt almost 25 years ago, during that period there has been no hindrance on the part of Sarawak to the return of immigrants to their motherlands.

The table shows that very small numbers indeed of the native peoples were born outside Sarawak. Of the most important immigrant group, the Chinese, 79 per cent declared themselves as locally born, of whom 78 per cent were males and 81 per cent were females. Of the small group of others 65 per cent claimed Sarawak birth. For the indigenous races the figures leave little room for error but for the immigrant groups there is. It is possible to imagine that the immigrants might well think that their position in the country would be stronger by establishing Sarawak birth. Nevertheless, the extent of inaccuracy in these figures is likely to be small.

Of the 507,252 indigenous persons in Sarawak 6,638 were foreign born, of whom rather more than half were born in Indonesia; they are mostly other Indigenes, followed by the Sea Dayaks and then by some Malays. One thousand eight hundred persons were born in Brunei, about two-thirds of whom being Malays. 604 persons claimed Sabah birth. Whatever movement is recorded between Sarawak and its neighbours is probably due in part to an influx of labour since the war to work at the oilfield in Miri.

## CHAPTER TWO

### POPULATION COMPOSITION AND DISTRIBUTION

#### 1. RACE-COMPOSITION

One of the results of migration is the heterogeneity of race composition. In examining the race composition it is convenient to group the races into seven major components, viz. Malays, Melanau, Sea Dayaks, Land Dayaks, Other Indigenous, Chinese and Others. Admittedly this seven-fold division is not absolutely perfect but it is fairly satisfactory for purposes of studying the demographic characteristics of the major races in Sarawak.

The diversity of races tends to produce problems of far-reaching effects in the political, economic and social framework of the country. To the demographer this racial diversity offers interesting contrasts and vast scope for research. The races are known to differ in their sex-age structure, educational composition, levels of fertility and mortality and economic characteristics.

The term Other Indigenous is used for census purposes to include a number of smaller tribes comprising the Bisayahs, Kayans, Kedayans, Kelabits, Kenyahs, Muruts, Punans \* and Others. Those classified under 'Others' include Indians, Pakistanis, Ceylonese, Indonesians and Europeans which again include Eurasians.

Although the relative position of each race to the total population has not changed until 1960, this is not likely to remain so for long since the levels of fertility and mortality and the sex-age structure are different for all the races.

TABLE 2.1  
PERCENTAGE DISTRIBUTION OF POPULATION BY RACE  
1939 - 1960

<u>Race</u>	<u>1939</u>	<u>1947</u>	<u>1960</u>
Malay	18.9	17.9	17.4
Melanau	7.5	6.5	6.0
Sea Dayak	34.2	34.8	31.9
Land Dayak	7.5	7.7	7.7
Other Indigenous	5.6	5.5	5.1
Chinese	25.2	26.6	30.8
Others	<u>1.1</u>	<u>1.0</u>	<u>1.1</u>
All Races	<u>100.0</u>	<u>100.0</u>	<u>100.0</u>

\*The only nomadic tribe in Sarawak. Because of this they create quite a problem in census-enumerations.

Table 2.1 shows the percentage distribution of the population of Sarawak by race for the years 1939, 1947 and 1960. Some changes have occurred in the racial composition of the population as can be seen in the above table. The overall percentage of the indigenous population has been continuously reduced due to the increase in the percentage of the Chinese population. The high percentage of the Chinese population in 1939 was mainly due to net immigration \* but the increase in the percentage in 1947 and 1960 was by far due to natural increase.

In 1939, the indigenous races together formed about 74 per cent of the total population; but by 1960 the relative proportion has been reduced to 68 percent. In contrast to this decreasing trend of the indigenous races, the proportion of the Chinese has increased from 25 percent in 1939 to 31 per cent in 1960, thus forming about one-third of the total population. The relative position of the largest racial group, the Sea Dayaks, has been reduced quite substantially from its position in 1939, but not as considerable for the other indigenous races. It can be seen that the position of the Land Dayaks has increased slightly from that in 1939. This is because the rate of increase for the Land Dayaks is relatively higher than those of the Other indigenous races.

Of the seven component races which make up the population of Sarawak the two most important races numerically are then the Sea Dayaks and the Chinese, and to a lesser degree the Malays. With regard to social and economic characteristics, however, the Chinese and the Malays are the most important and to a lesser extent the Melanans. The 'Others' are also very important with respect to social and economic characteristics although they are numerically unimportant.

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\* Net immigration between 1935 - 1939 was 19,000 persons.

**TABLE 2.2****DISTRIBUTION OF POPULATION BY RACE AND SEX,**  
**1947-1960**

Race	1947		1960	
	Male	Female	Male	Female
	Number			
Malay	48,459	49,010	63,430	65,870
Melanau	17,440	18,120	21,837	22,824
Sea Dayak	94,232	96,094	117,478	120,263
Land Dayak	21,032	21,163	28,451	29,168
Other Indige- nous	15,096	14,771	19,735	18,196
Chinese	81,392	63,766	120,369	108,785
Others	3,519	2,291	4,546	3,577
All races	281,170	265,215	375,846	368,683
	Percentage			
Malay	17.2	18.5	16.9	17.9
Melanau	6.2	6.8	5.8	6.2
Sea Dayak	33.5	36.2	31.2	32.6
Land Dayak	7.5	8.0	7.6	7.9
Other Indige- nous	5.4	5.6	5.3	4.9
Chinese	28.9	24.0	32.0	29.5
Others	1.2	0.9	1.2	1.0
All Races	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0

Racial distribution by sex is shown in table 2.2. The most striking feature is the increase in

proportion of the Chinese of both sexes, and the corresponding decrease in proportion of the indigenous races, except in the male population among Land Dayaks. Of the male population in 1947 the indigenous races together formed 69.8 per cent and in 1960 this percentage has dropped to 66.8. Similarly, in the female population the indigenous races together formed about 75 per cent in 1947 and 69.5 per cent in 1960. In contrast, the proportion of the Chinese males has increased from 28.9 per cent in 1947 to 32 per cent in 1960, and the proportion of the Chinese females has increased from 24 per cent in 1947 to 29.5 per cent in 1960. This striking proportional changes between the Chinese on the one hand and the indigenous races on the other is due to differences in the levels of fertility and mortality. Judging from these figures the population composition will change in favour of the immigrant races.

Further examination of the table shows that the number of Chinese males has surpassed that of the Sea Dayak males. Thus numerically the Chinese males were 81,400 in 1947 or 29 per cent and 120,400 in 1960 or 32 per cent. In contrast the Sea Dayak males numbered 84,200 in 1947 or 33.5 per cent and 117,500 in 1960 or 31 per cent. Again the growth in the female population between the Chinese and the Sea Dayak is of great contrast. Between 1947 and 1960, the Sea Dayak females increased by only 24,200 persons but in the Chinese females the increase has been 45,000. The important point to remember in this case is the difference in the rate of natural increase of both these races.

## II. GEOGRAPHICAL DISTRIBUTION

TABLE 2.3

PERCENTAGE DISTRIBUTION OF POPULATION BY DIVISION  
1947 - 1960

Administrative Division	1947	1960
First Division	31.5	33.3
Second Division	17.0	14.7
Third Division	35.9	35.1
Fourth Division	11.6	13.0
Fifth Division	4.0	3.9
<b>SARAWAK</b>	<b>100.0</b>	<b>100.0</b>
=====		

The distribution of the population in administrative divisions has also changed between 1947 and 1960. This is more particularly so in the First, Second and Fourth Divisions. While some divisions have experienced an increase in population relative to the total population, others have suffered a decrease. Thus two divisions have their population increased in population: The First Division has increased from 31.5 per cent to 33.3 per cent; and the Fourth Division has increased from 11.6 per cent to 13 per cent. The other three Divisions have, in proportion, suffered a decrease: thus the proportion in the Second Division has decreased from 17 per cent to 14.7 per cent, that in the Third Division from 36 per cent to 35 per cent; and that in the Fifth Division from 4 per cent to 3.9 per cent. The reason behind these proportional changes in the population lies in the extent to which internal migration has taken place during the intercensal period. The main reason which makes people move from one district to another is economic and educational. Because of this, the section of population involved is usually among those in the schooling-ages and those in the working-ages, who are usually males. Those in the schooling-ages usually move from the rural areas to the towns where better educational facilities are available.

TABLE 2.4

PERCENTAGE DISTRIBUTION OF THE POPULATION BY  
ADMINISTRATIVE DIVISION AND RACE - 1960

	<u>Malay</u>	<u>Melanan</u>	<u>Sea Dayak</u>	<u>Land Dayak</u>	<u>Other Indigenous</u>	<u>Chinese</u>	<u>Others</u>	<u>Total</u>
First Division	27.3	0.1	8.0	23.0	0	39.2	2.3	100.0
Second Division	24.0	0.1	64.6	0.1	0	11.0	0.2	100.0
Third Division	4.8	14.5	42.7	0.1	2.1	35.5	0.3	100.0
Fourth Division	12.1	6.5	33.1	0.2	21.9	24.9	1.3	100.0
Fifth Division	<u>38.4</u>	<u>0.1</u>	<u>12.0</u>	<u>0.1</u>	<u>37.7</u>	<u>10.3</u>	<u>1.4</u>	<u>100.0</u>
	17.4	6.0	31.9	7.7	5.1	30.8	1.1	100.0

The distribution of the various races of Sarawak in each division varies a great deal. Table 2.4 shows the percentage distribution of the population by administrative division in 1960.

In the First Division the population is largely of Chinese, Malays and Land Dayaks. There is almost a complete absence of Other Indigenous peoples. The total percentage of the population in this division who are of immigrant stock, is more than 40 per cent, mainly Chinese.

Racial distribution in the Second Division is again unequal. About two-thirds of total population in the Second Division are Sea Dayaks and almost one-quarter are Malays. More than 11 per cent are of immigrant stock mainly Chinese. The Third Division is the first stronghold of the Melanau although proportionally they form only 14 per cent of the total population. The only racial groups which are in the majority in the Third Division are the Sea Dayaks and Chinese.

The first point to be noted in the Fourth Division is the relative increase in the percentage of the Other Indigenous people. More than one-fifth of the total population in the Fourth Division is made up of the Other Indigenous group, one-third of them are Sea Dayaks and one-quarter Chinese. Malays and Other Indigenous people are in the clear majority in the Fifth Division, the two together form 76 per cent of the total population.

**TABLE 2.5**

**PERCENTAGE DISTRIBUTION OF POPULATION BY  
ADMINISTRATIVE DIVISION AND RACE, 1960**

	1st Di- vision	2nd Di- vision	3rd Di- vision	4th Di- vision	5th Di- vision	Total
Malay	52.3	20.4	9.7	9.0	8.6	100.0
Melanau	0.7	0.2	84.9	14.1	6.1	100.0
Sea Dayak	8.4	29.7	47.0	13.4	1.5	100.0
Land Dayak	98.0	0.2	0.4	0.4	0	100.0
Other Indi- genous	0.4	0	14.8	55.9	28.9	100.0
Chinese	42.5	5.3	40.4	10.5	1.3	100.0
Others	68.9	2.2	8.7	15.1	5.1	100.0



Table 2.5 shows the distribution of each community by administrative division. More than half of the Malay population in Sarawak are found in the First Division and another one-fifth in the Second Division. The other three divisions contain about 9 per cent each. The Melanau are heavily concentrated in the Third Division, where 85 per cent of them live. The rest of them are mainly found in the Fourth Division. The distribution of the Sea Dayaks is more widespread than the Melanau. They are to be found mainly in the Third, Second and Fourth Division, in that order. Land Dayaks are the most ill-distributed people among all the races of Sarawak; for 98 per cent of them are in the First Division and almost none of them are to be found in the Fifth Division. The 1960 census records only 15 persons who are Land Dayaks in the Fifth Division.

Other Indigenous people, comprising Kenyahs, Kayans, Bisayahs, Kedayans, Muruts, Renam and others, are not as ill-distributed as the Land Dayaks. The table shows that about 56 per cent of them live in the Fourth Division, about 29 per cent in the Fifth Division and 15 per cent in the Third Division. Only 16 persons were enumerated in the Second Division in 1960.

The Chinese are mainly found in the First and the Third Divisions, the areas with the two largest towns of Sarawak, Kuching and Sibul. More than 82 per cent of them live in the two divisions.

Of the group called 'Others' in the table, comprising Europeans, Eurasians, Indians, Pakistanis, Ceylonese and Indonesians, nearly 70 per cent live in the First Division. About 15 per cent of them are to be found in the Fourth Division.

THE AGE STRUCTURE AND SEX COMPOSITION

1. AGE STRUCTURE

A study of the age structure of the population of Sarawak can best be made in terms of five broad age groups. Unlike many other countries, Sarawak lacks population statistics, and for this reason it is not possible to make a study of the trend in age structure of the population. Here it is only possible to make a comparison between the 1947 age structure and the 1960 age structure as given in the 1960 Census Report.

In table 3.1, which shows the distribution of the population by broad age groups, it is to be noted that there has been a considerable change in the age structure of the population since 1947. The table shows plainly that the

TABLE 3.1  
PERCENTAGE DISTRIBUTION OF POPULATION  
BY AGE, 1947-1960

<u>Age</u>	<u>1947</u>	<u>1960</u>
0-4	13.9	17.2
5-14	25.6	27.3
15-44	45.0	40.5
45-59	10.4	9.8
60 and Over	<u>5.1</u>	<u>5.2</u>
ALL AGES	<u>100.0</u>	<u>100.0</u>

population is on the young side. The number of children five years is well over half the number aged 5 to 14 in 1960. A very high proportion of the population is under 15 years of age. Thus in 1960 the proportion of children aged 0 to 14 was 44.5 per cent as against 39.5 per cent in 1947. This high proportion of children to the total population is attributable to the high rate of natural increase which has been the trend since the end of the

war. Because the number of children is so great Sarawak has a heavy school burden to carry and must look forward to comparatively large numbers of people seeking jobs in the future.

Over the age of 45 the numbers decrease rapidly. Thus in 1960 only 15 per cent were aged 45 and over and only 5.2 per cent were aged 60 and over, whereas in 1947 15.5 per cent were aged 45 and over and only 5.1 per cent aged 60 and over. Sarawak has then a large number of children but not many old people, which means that the problem of old age is not very important as compared to most advanced countries.

A comparison of the age structure of the population of Sarawak with those of other countries will be of great interest. The age structure of Sarawak is very similar to that of its neighbours. The proportion of children to the total population in Japan was 33 per cent in 1956 and 59 per cent were in the working age group, 15 to 59. Australia has even fewer children than Sarawak and 58 per cent were in the working age group but there is marked increase in the proportion of old people as compared to Sarawak. The United Kingdom has about half the proportion of children of Sarawak, but it has three times as many old people and quite a lot more in the working

TABLE 3.2

PERCENTAGE DISTRIBUTION OF POPULATION OF  
SELECTED COUNTRIES BY THREE BROAD AGE GROUPS

	<u>0 - 14</u>	<u>15 - 59</u>	<u>60 and Over</u>	<u>All Age</u>
Sarawak (1960)	44.5	50.3	5.2	100.0
Singapore (1957)	42.8	53.4	3.8	100.0
Philippines (1956)	44.1	51.3	4.6	100.0
Taiwan (1956)	43.9	52.1	4.0	100.0
Japan (1956)	32.8	59.0	8.2	100.0
Australia (1956)	29.3	58.3	12.4	100.0
United Kingdom (1956)	23.1	60.5	16.4	100.0

age group. So compared with other countries Sarawak has a very high proportion of children and very low proportion of old people. Thus it can be generalized that the population of Sarawak will increase rapidly in the future.

The proportion of old people has remained the same for 1947 and 1960; but in 1947 the number of children was considerably fewer and the number in the working ages considerably more than those of 1960. This is evidence to show that the population of Sarawak will increase more rapidly than in the past because the country now has a greater proportion of children who will, in time, marry and have children of their own.

The substantial increase in the proportion of population in the youngest age group 0 to 4 is no doubt the result of rising crude birth rates and to a limited degree of the decline in mortality; but no vital statistics will confirm this since vital statistics registration is still far from complete.

The increase in the second age group 5 to 14 was not so pronounced. This age group consist of children of school-going age. In terms of fertility, employment and migration, the third age group, 15 to 44 constitutes the important and active section of the population, while the next group 45-59 refers more or less to mature persons of working age and those past the prime of their reproduction life. The falls in these two groups in terms of proportion are the result of two factors. On the one hand, there is the growing proportionate importance at the young age groups and on the other, there is a continuous diminution of immigration to a negligible level since the War.

The implication underlying all these changes in the population structure is that a smaller proportion of working-age persons would be bearing the burden of supporting an increasing proportion of young dependents.

TABLE 3.3

**PERCENTAGE DISTRIBUTION OF THE POPULATION BY  
RACE AND AGE, 1960**

	Malay	Melanan	Sea Dayak	Land Dayak	Other Indigenous	Chinese	Others
0-4	17.8	15.8	16.6	19.2	17.3	17.3	16.8
5-14	26.6	24.9	23.2	27.6	23.8	33.0	25.1
15-44	42.0	42.9	43.6	41.9	44.4	36.1	42.0
45-59	8.9	10.4	10.3	7.9	9.8	10.1	11.3
60 and Over	4.7	6.0	6.6	3.6	4.7	4.6	4.8
All Ages	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0

The age structure of the different races which make up the population of Sarawak is shown in table 3.3. The most outstanding feature is the remarkable shape of the Chinese age structure. In the youngest age group 0 to 4, the proportion of the Chinese is about the same as the others but in the next age group 5 to 14 a very much larger proportion is being recorded for the Chinese as compared to other races, the lowest being among the Sea Dayaks. This unusual figure suggests a high current rate of increase for the Chinese. However, this high proportion in the age group 5 to 14 is compensated by a lower proportion of people aged 15 to 44 and also by a proportion of old people which is rather lower than the average for the country. The large bulge in the 5 to 14 age group together with the average proportion in the youngest age group seems to suggest that the recent growth of the whole population took effect rather earlier in the Chinese population than in the others. The Land Dayaks show a rather high proportion of persons under 15 years of age and a very small proportion in the old age group 60 and over.

The 1960 Census Report gives a comparison of the age distribution of the three major races, the Malay, the Sea Dayak and the Chinese, for the years 1947 and 1960. The table is reproduced in the following table 3.4 for the purpose of studying the changes in age structures of these races.

**TABLE 3.4**

**THE AGE DISTRIBUTION OF THE POPULATION**  
**BY THREE MAJOR RACES, 1947 - 1960**

Age	Malay		Sea Dayak		Chinese	
	1947	1960	1947	1960	1947	1960
0 - 4	14.7	17.8	13.2	16.5	15.0	17.3
5 - 14	26.1	26.6	22.7	23.2	29.4	33.0
15 - 44	45.1	42.0	46.2	43.5	42.1	35.1
45 - 59	8.9	8.9	11.8	10.3	9.8	10.1
60 and over	5.2	4.7	6.1	6.5	3.7	4.6
Total	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0

The first point to be noticed in the table is that all the three races show an increase in the proportion of children during the intercensal period. The second feature revealed by the table is that all the three major races show considerable proportional changes in all the five age groups. This is explained by the increase in the number of children as pointed out above. The three races were selected because the change in the age structure of these races approximate to the change for the whole population - more children, a smaller proportion aged 15 to 44 years, and except for the Chinese, fewer people over 45 years of age. The increase in the number of Chinese aged 45 and over is likely to be due to a number of immigrants in the community; when immigrants come they are usually in the working ages so that any considerable numbers of them will distort the population distribution until they have been in the country long enough for the population to be balanced again by the usual number of old people and children, a process which takes place a long time. The recent increase in the proportion of old Chinese people indicates that this process is taking place.

The increased proportion of children under 15 years of age is very marked in all the three races - from 40.8 to 44.4 per cent for Malays, from 35.9 to 39.7 per cent for Sea Dayaks and from 44.4 per cent to 50.3 per cent for Chinese. Throughout the country the proportion of old people has risen very slightly but among Malays this proportion appears to have fallen - a point which may be misleading and may perhaps be explained by more accurate age reporting in 1960. This is a tendency which will become less as education improves and the concept of age becomes more widely known.

**TABLE 3.5****DISTRIBUTION OF POPULATION IN URBAN AND RURAL AREAS BY AGE AND RACE, 1960**

Age Group	Malays		Chinese		Others	
	Urban	Rural	Urban	Rural	Urban	Rural
0 - 4	18.7	17.6	15.6	12.1	15.4	17.0
5 - 14	26.2	26.7	31.3	33.8	23.1	24.2
15 - 44	41.8	42.1	39.0	33.4	48.4	43.1
45 - 59	8.8	8.8	9.9	10.1	9.4	9.9
60 and over	4.5	4.8	4.3	4.6	3.7	5.8
All Ages	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0

Being an under developed country, Sarawak has a small urban population. Most of the population are rural. Of the total population of 744,529 persons only 111,757 persons or 15 per cent are urban. The process of urbanization is closely related to the process of industrialization of which Sarawak is still backward. This process will have to take some time for there is vast room for the development of natural resources in the primary sector. Also this process is likely to be slow because of the smallness of the population numbers in relation to the size of the country as well as in relation to the available resources. However, because large proportions of the population are in the young age groups, the question of providing future employment will be quite a burden to the government and it might well be that the government will pursue a policy of industrialization, which will therefore hasten the process of urbanization.

The table shown above gives the age distribution of the population in urban as well as in rural areas. The population are grouped under three headings, Malays, Chinese, and Others. This is because Chinese and Malays are the two most urbanized population of Sarawak, with the exception of other immigrants like Europeans, Indians and Ceylonese. It is to be observed that among all races in Sarawak, the proportion of people in age group 60 and over in the urban areas is smaller than that in the rural areas. This reflects that the process of urbanization is a new one. In the age group 0 - 4 the proportion of the urban population among Malays is greater than that of the rural population, but



this is not so among Chinese and others. This might be due to the fact that in recent years Malays have taken to urban life at much greater pace than the other races. It would be very interesting to compare this with future census statistics.

In the age group 5 - 14 the proportion of Chinese in both urban and rural areas is much greater than the proportion of either Malays or others. Probably this is due to the fact that the period after the war saw an increase in the fertility of Chinese women.

However, in the age group 15 - 44, the proportion of Chinese is much lower than the proportion of either the Malays or others. The explanation may be found in the process of migration from the rural to the urban areas among Malays and others in search of employment. The proportion of children under 15 years of age in urban areas is highest among Chinese followed by Malays and others. However, in the working age groups, 15 - 59 the proportion of Chinese in the urban areas is lowest, to be followed by Malays and others.

In the Malay community the age structure in urban and rural areas are very similar although in the towns there are apparently slightly more people under the age of 44 and slightly fewer over that age. But in the Chinese community there is a marked difference between the figures for urban and rural areas, urban areas having a considerably smaller proportion of children, considerably large proportion in the age group 15 to 59 and slightly fewer in the old age group 60 and over. In the whole country 50.3 per cent of the Chinese are aged under 15; in the urban areas the proportion is 46.8 per cent and in the rural areas 52.0 per cent. At the same time the sex ratio in the rural areas is worse than that in the urban areas.

**TABLE 3.6****DISTRIBUTION OF POPULATION IN URBAN AND  
RURAL AREAS BY AGE AND SEX, 1960**

	U R B A N				R U R A L			
	T	M	F	Sex Ratio	T	M	F	Sex Ratio
0 - 4	16.8	15.8	16.5	999	17.4	17.3	17.4	1,011
5 - 14	29.2	29.2	29.2	1,038	26.9	27.8	26.1	2,083
15 - 44	40.7	40.2	41.3	1,010	40.5	38.6	42.5	923
45 - 59	9.6	10.4	8.7	1,239	9.8	10.7	8.8	1,232
60 and over	4.3	4.3	4.3	1,035	5.4	5.6	5.2	1,088
All Ages	100.0	100.0	100.0	1,038	100.0	100.0	100.0	1,014

Table 3.6 shows the distribution of the population in urban and rural areas by age and sex, 1960. The proportion of the total population in the age group 0 to 4 is 16 per cent in the urban areas as compared to 17 per cent in the rural areas. However, the sex ratios show that in the urban areas there is a normal sex ratio between male and female but in the rural areas there is an excess of men over women.

In the age group 5 - 14 the proportion of the total population in urban areas is greater than that in rural areas and the sex ratios are 1038 males per 1000 females in urban areas and 1083 males and 1,000 females in the rural areas.

In the age group 15 - 44 the proportion of the total population in urban areas is slightly greater than that in rural areas. This might well be the outcome of migration from the rural to the urban areas, not only in search of employment but also due to persons attending school as shown also by the sex ratio. Although this might be the case the proportion of the population involved is very small.

The age structure is illustrated graphically as a population pyramid. Age groups are arranged in strata, youth at the bottom, old age at the top. A pyramid con-

veys at a glance the entire shape of the age structure. It also shows any gross irregularities due to special past events (such as a war, epidemic or age-selective migration), fluctuations of fertility, inaccurate age reporting, or to widespread omission of people of some age group by the census enumeration. It is the most widely used of all graphic devices in population studies.

The shape of the pyramid of the population of Sarawak is typical of all underdeveloped countries. It is broad at the base, tapering upward according to the past numbers of births and deaths that have formed it. This is because a large supply of children has been added to the population each year. This is particularly true since the 1950's as shown by the age pyramid. The affect of the Japanese occupation can only be seen slightly. It is not so prominent as in some countries of Europe, which means that the local population did not lose as much of its numbers during the war as in some other countries. Nevertheless the war did bring about unstable family lives as shown in the age structure from the age group 15 - 19 to 30 - 34, and even after the war, as shown by the age structure in the age group 10 - 14. The future trend of the age structure of the population of Sarawak is likely to be more "youthful". Even today the population is a 'young' population as a greater proportion of it is concentrated in the young age-groups.

Age statistics offer material that is valuable for many purposes, not just for analysing growth and reproduction. Aspects of age structure have some significance for nearly every type of population study, from the general state of health and mortality, to marriage patterns and questions of manpower and dependency.

# CHART 3.1. AGE PYRAMIDS

San Bayans

Chinese

Male

Female

Male

Female

Total  
Population

Total Males  
117,478

Total Females  
120,263

Total Males  
120,369

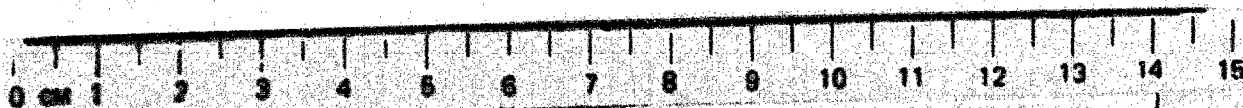
Total Females  
108,785

MALE

FEMALE

Total Males 575,846

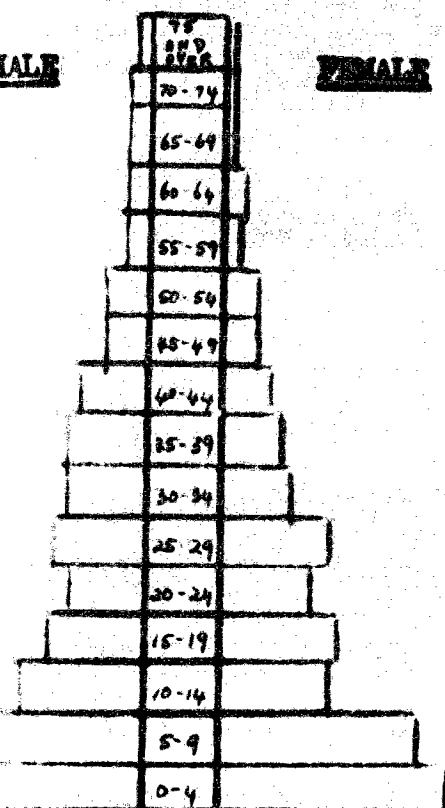
Total Females 568,683



# **Iand Dayaks**

**MALE**

**FEMALE**



1,000

1,000

6,000

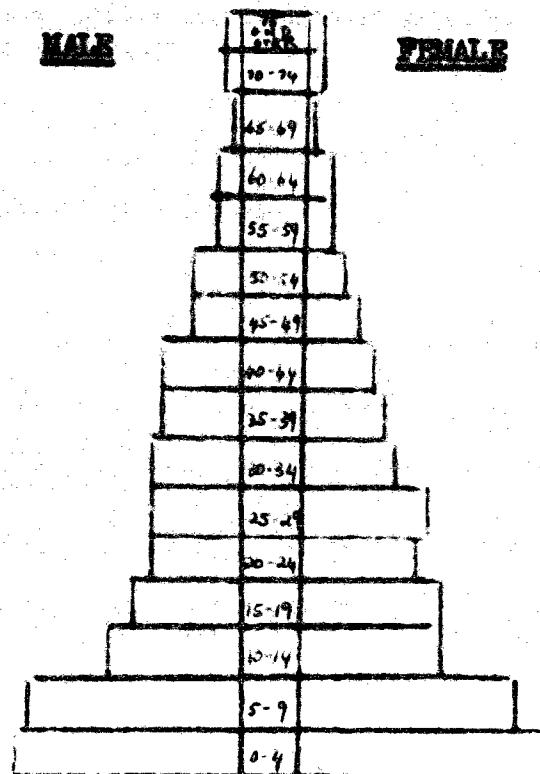
**Total Males**  
**28,451**

**Total Females**  
**29,168**

# **Malays**

**MALE**

**FEMALE**



12,000

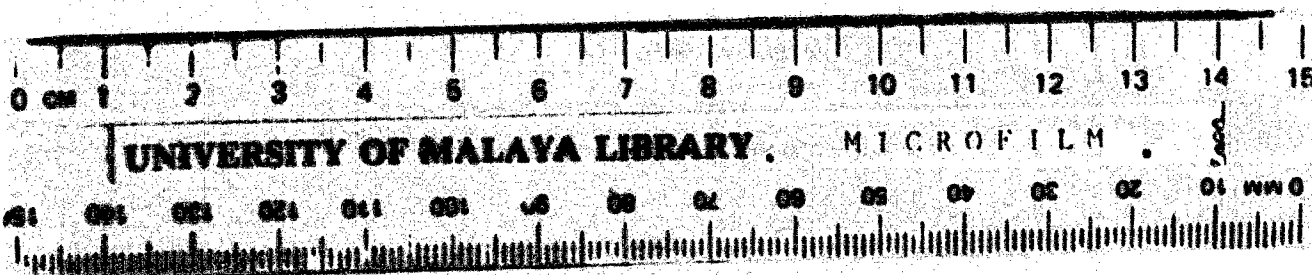
6,000

6,000

14,000

**Total Males**  
**63,430**

**Total Females**  
**65,870**



## II. SEX COMPOSITION

A population has nearly equal numbers of men and women, and this should be reflected in census data, unless the balance is disturbed by migration. Without migration the sex ratio of a country's total population should be close to 1,000. Thus in Sarawak this is true for the indigenous races, since migration is of little importance among them. But for the Chinese and Others, who constitute the population of immigrant stocks the sex

TABLE 3.7

### SEX DISTRIBUTION OF POPULATION BY RACE, 1947 - 1960

Race	1947			1960		
	Male	Female	Sex Ratio	Male	Female	Sex Ratio
Malay	48,459	49,010	989	63,430	65,870	963
Melanau	17,440	18,120	962	21,837	22,824	957
Sea Dayak	94,232	96,094	981	117,478	120,263	977
Land Dayak	21,032	21,163	994	28,452	29,168	975
Other Indigenous	15,096	14,771	1,022	19,735	18,196	1,085
Chinese	81,392	63,766	1,276	120,369	108,785	1,106
Others	3,519	2,291	1,536	4,546	3,577	1,271
All Races	281,170	265,215	1,060	375,846	368,683	1,019

ratio is rather abnormal. The term sex ratio is used here to denote the number of males per 1,000 females. Through time a slow movement towards a more balanced sex ratio normally occurred. This process has taken place among the two immigrant groups, Chinese and Others but this movement towards a normal sex ratio is rather fast. This is because immigration has ceased to be of any importance in the growth of the population since 1942, so that the increase is largely due to natural increase. At the time of the census, 1960 the immigrants had 18 years in which to stabilize themselves.

Table 3.7 shows that there has been an improvement in the overall sex ratio since 1947. The primary cause of this improvement is the influence of the Chinese community as the table indicates. In the indigenous population there has been a slight majority of females as there was in 1947 and it is unlikely that the small decrease in the sex ratio is of any significance - it could be due to 2,000 more males being abroad working or there might have been slight under-enumeration of girls in 1947. This small preponderance of women is found also in the indigenous peoples of Sabah and Malaya. The number of 'Others' is too small to be of great importance but here again the notable improvement in the sex ratio indicates that a section of the population is settling down; among this group, mostly Indonesians and Indians, there are now 13 men to every 10 women, as against 15 men to every 10 women in 1947.

## CHAPTER FOUR

### MARITAL STATUS AND LITERACY RATES

#### I. MARITAL STATUS

TABLE 4.1

THE PERCENTAGE DISTRIBUTION OF THE POPULATION  
AGED 10 YEARS AND OVER BY MARITAL STATUS AND SEX,  
1947 AND 1960

Marital Status	<u>Male</u>		<u>Female</u>		<u>Total</u>	
	<u>1947</u>	<u>1960</u>	<u>1947</u>	<u>1960</u>	<u>1947</u>	<u>1960</u>
Single	40.4	39.6	29.5	30.1	35.0	34.8
Married	52.7	55.4	54.6	57.2	53.6	56.3
Widowed	4.7	3.4	12.3	9.8	8.5	6.6
Divorced	<u>2.2</u>	<u>1.6</u>	<u>3.6</u>	<u>2.9</u>	<u>2.9</u>	<u>2.3</u>
Total	<u>100.0</u>	<u>100.0</u>	<u>100.0</u>	<u>100.0</u>	<u>100.0</u>	<u>100.0</u>

Table 4.1 shows the distribution of the population aged 10 and over by sex and marital status for 1947 and 1960. It is found that proportion of married persons risen since 1947 while those of singles, widowed and divorced persons have decreased. There is a marked difference between the proportions of single males and single females, about 40 per cent of males being single and 30 per cent of females. The actual numbers as shown in the census report of married females and married males correspond closely and what difference exists can be easily explained by plural marriages and by husbands being away from Sarawak for work, but in the other categories there is a great divergence between males and females. The discrepancy makes a suspicion of bias inevitable. Elderly unmarried women for instance would prefer to consider themselves as widowed. In the single category it is to be expected that more males should remain single than females as the age of marriage for females is much earlier than that for males.



TABLE 4.2

**PERCENTAGE DISTRIBUTION OF POPULATION AGED 10 YEARS  
AND OVER BY RACE, MARITAL STATUS AND SEX, 1960**

Race	Male				Female			
	Single	Married	Widowed	Divorced	Single	Married	Widowed	Divorced
Malay	40.3	54.5	3.9	1.3	34.4	54.1	9.3	2.2
Melanau	37.7	55.6	4.7	2.0	29.4	56.0	11.8	2.8
Sea Dayak	31.2	62.7	3.3	2.8	19.9	62.8	11.7	5.6
Land Dayak	39.9	55.1	4.2	0.8	29.6	57.9	10.2	2.3
Other Indi- genous	35.9	57.2	4.4	1.9	25.8	60.2	11.3	2.7
Chinese	49.2	47.3	2.9	0.6	41.5	50.8	7.3	0.4
Others	36.6	58.5	3.0	1.9	34.0	58.9	5.6	1.5
ALL RACES	39.6	55.4	3.4	1.6	30.1	57.2	9.8	2.9

Table 4.2 shows the distribution of the population aged 10 and over by sex and marital status in the main racial group of Sarawak, 1960. By far the largest proportion of single persons is among the Chinese; next in order came the Malays and Land Dayaks while the smallest proportion of single persons is among the Sea Dayaks. The factor of the number of children involved is still present as these percentages apply to the population aged 10 and over, but it seems likely nevertheless that the Chinese marry rather later than the Malays and considerably later than the Sea Dayaks. Among Sea Dayak females aged 10 and over only 20 per cent are single. The marriage rates are nearly the same for both males and females; it is the rates for widowed persons which differ greatly. Nearly 12 per cent of Sea Dayak women over 10 years of age are reported to be widowed and over 10 per cent of Land Dayaks, but only 7 per cent of Chinese. The proportion of Chinese women reported as divorced is only 0.4 per cent. Among Dayaks and Chinese 8 to 10 per cent more of the males are single than females. In the case of the Chinese the reason is that there are more males than females in total, while in the case of Dayaks the difference lies in the much larger proportion of women claiming to be widowed.

**TABLE 4.3**

**PERCENTAGE DISTRIBUTION OF POPULATION**  
**AGED 10 YEARS AND OVER BY MARITAL STA-**  
**TUS AND AGE GROUP, 1960**

	Single	Married	Widowed	Divorced
10 - 19	76.5	4.6	0.4	11.5
20 - 29	17.6	26.4	2.9	29.3
30 - 39	3.0	28.8	7.9	19.8
40 - 49	1.3	20.8	16.8	15.3
50 - 59	0.8	11.9	24.6	11.2
60 - 69	0.5	5.2	24.8	7.2
70 and Over	0.3	2.2	22.5	5.6
Total	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0

The above table shows the percentage distribution of all persons aged 10 and over by marital status in 10 year age groups. In the single category more than three-quarters of them are in the age group 10 to 19 years, reflecting the large number of children included in the age 10 to 14. In the age group 20 to 29, the proportion of single persons has decreased suddenly to 18 per cent as compared to the earlier 10 year age group. This indicates that the rate of marriage has increased in the age group 20-29. Indeed the modal age group in which the marriage rate has increased is the age group 30 to 39. The figures show that 76 per cent of the population who are married are in the age group 20 to 49, the most reproductive period in the life of men and women, but it is to be noted the proportion of divorced persons in the same age group is also large, about 64 per cent of all persons reported as divorced. The modal age group in which divorced persons are highest is 20 to 29.

TABLE 1.4.

PERCENTAGE DISTRIBUTION OF POPULATION AGED 10 YEARS AND OVER BY RACE AND MARITAL STATUS, 1960

Marital Status	Malay	Melanan	Sea Dayak	Land Dayak	Other Indl- genous	Chinese	Others
Single	37.3	33.4	25.4	34.7	27.9	45.6	35.6
Married	54.3	55.8	62.7	56.5	62.7	49.0	58.7
Widowed	6.6	8.4	7.6	7.2	7.2	4.9	4.1
Divorced	1.8	2.4	4.3	1.6	2.2	0.5	1.6
Total	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0

The largest proportion of married persons is among the Sea Dayaks and Other Indigenous, while the smallest is among the Chinese. Correspondingly the smallest proportion of single persons occur among the Sea Dayaks and Other Indigenous while the largest is among the Chinese, which is 46 per cent. This may be due to the fact that many Chinese are at schools and therefore they tend to marry at much later age but it also reflects the future reproductive behaviour of the Chinese community.

The proportion of married persons is highest among the Sea Dayaks and Other Indigenous races and lowest among the Chinese. But it has been shown that the fertility of the Chinese is far higher than that of the indigenous races. Again this goes to support the view that the Chinese will outnumber the Sea Dayaks in a few years time from the 1960 Census.

About 5 per cent of the Chinese aged 10 years and over were widowed, the lowest among all the races in Sarawak except the group of 'Others' the highest being among the Melanans. Perhaps this reflects the living conditions experienced by the various races; thus the Chinese and Others have better living conditions than the indigenous races.

The rate of divorce is highest among the Sea Dayaks and lowest among the Chinese. This might be an indication that Chinese marriages are more stable than marriages among other races.

## II LITERACY RATES

TABLE 4.5

PERCENTAGE DISTRIBUTION OF LITERATE POPULATION  
BY SEX, 1947 AND 1960

	1947	1960
Male	26.1	31.5
Female	6.4	15.9
Total	16.6	25.3

Table 4.5 shows the distribution of the population who were literate, both male and female, 1947 and 1960. The table indicates that there has been an increase in the number of literate people. This is to be expected since more and more young children would be attending schools. Whereas in 1947 only 17 per cent of the population aged 10 and over were literate, in 1960 this has increased to 25 per cent.

Further examination of the table shows that there is a difference between the literacy rates for male and female. Thus in 1947 26 per cent of the males aged 10 and over were literate and only 6 per cent of the females aged 10 and over were literate. In 1960 this has changed. The rate for males was 35 per cent and that for females was 16 per cent. This indicates also that the rate for females has been increasing much faster than the rate for males. Thus a much greater proportion of the population is literate now than 1947, and the improved literacy rate for women is a noticeable feature in the above table. This goes to prove that the school system has managed to do considerably more than merely keep pace with the growing population.

In a developing country like Sarawak in which both population and literacy are increasing rapidly it is natural that literacy is much more widespread in the younger years. The following figures conform this statement.

TABLE 4.6

LITERACY RATES BY AGE GROUP, 1947 AND 1960

Age Group	1947	1960
10 - 14	10.7	45.1
15 - 19	18.8	38.5
20 - 24	21.5	31.7
25 - 29	17.5	21.2
30 - 34	18.0	19.0
35 - 39	18.5	16.0
40 - 44	18.0	14.6
45 - 49	17.2	15.3
50 - 54	14.7	12.8
55 and over	12.4	9.9
ALL AGES	16.6	25.3

Nearly half of all children aged 10 to 14 are literate; in the next five year age group the proportion drops to 38.5 per cent; after 24 years of age there is a

very sharp decline in the proportion literate to 21.2 per cent. After 49 years of age the figure is small. In these figures therefore the main feature is the impact of the expanded school system on the age group still at school or just out of school. More than twice as many persons are literate in the 10 to 14 group as in the 25 to 29 group.

The pattern which appeared in 1947 is different from that of 1960, reflecting firstly the Japanese occupation, when schooling virtually stopped and secondly the much slower increase of both population and literacy before the Second World War. Indeed literacy in the 35 to 39 age group was reported to be greater in 1947 than in the 25 to 29 group. Probably this is due in part to the immigrant Chinese, since more than half of the literate people in the 35 to 39 age group were Chinese.

TABLE 4.7

LITERACY RATES BY SEX AND AGE GROUP, 1960

Age	Male	Female
10 - 14	52.3	37.1
15 - 19	50.9	27.1
20 - 24	44.1	20.9
25 - 29	33.1	11.4
30 - 34	28.8	9.1
35 - 39	24.9	6.9
40 - 44	23.3	5.4
45 - 49	24.2	4.8
50 - 54	20.6	3.3
55 and over	16.4	2.3
ALL AGES	34.5	15.9

Table 4.7 shows the rates of literacy by sex and age group, 1960. The rates decrease with old age, indicating that among the old people, illiteracy is still widespread.

This is more so among females than among males, most probably due to social attitudes towards female education. This can be seen clearly by examining the rates of literacy against the age given above. Between the ages 10 to 24 the rates for the females are generally much greater than the rates in the ages 25 and over. This reflects the changing attitudes towards female education. Since the war more and more females are attending schools than their mothers had ever had when they were of the same age. The single important factor was the increasing expenditure on education provided by the government since the end of the Second World War.

In the age group 10 - 14 more than 50 per cent of the males aged 10 and over are literate but of the females only 37 per cent are literate. The difference between the rates for males and females become wider with increasing ages. Thus in the 20 - 24 age group, the difference is more than two-fold. In the next age group, the difference is threefold. In the age group 50 - 54 the difference is about 6 times.

LITERACY RATES BY RACE AND AGE, 1960

Age	Malay	Melanau	Sea Dayak	Land Dayak	Other Indigenous	Chinese	Others *
10 - 14	43.3	35.9	23.9	26.8	27.0	65.5	41.3
15 - 19	33.5	28.2	13.8	19.1	23.2	76.1	35.8
20 - 24	27.3	21.9	8.6	12.5	16.9	66.3	31.8
25 - 29	20.4	14.8	4.9	6.5	10.7	54.8	30.0
30 - 34	21.0	15.4	3.3	4.2	7.2	47.6	33.1
35 - 39	17.8	12.3	2.6	2.8	4.9	43.7	29.3
40 - 44	16.2	11.6	1.9	2.4	2.2	37.3	30.5
45 - 49	15.8	10.0	1.7	1.8	1.5	35.4	28.5
50 - 54	12.5	6.4	0.8	2.0	1.4	31.1	30.0
55 and Over	10.1	5.0	0.8	1.0	0.9	24.4	18.5
Total							
aged 10 & Over	24.5	17.8	7.1	10.6	11.1	53.0	31.5

\* Excludes Europeans.



Among the races the indigenous are less literate than the Chinese and Others (which exclude Europeans and Eurasians), but among the Indigenous people the Malays are the most literate. The least literate are the Sea Dayaks and this is true even for the age group 10-14. This means that many children of the Sea Dayak community are still not attending schools. In fact more than three quarters of the Sea Dayak children aged 10-14 did not attend school in 1960, whereas among Chinese who were on the same age group only 35 per cent did not attend school in 1960. This figures to some extent measure the degree of social advancement among the various races, for it is true to say that the more advanced the society socially the less will be the number of illiterate people in that society.

All the communities in Sarawak show a decreasing trend of population being literate with increasing ages. This downward trend is greater for the Sea Dayak and least for the Chinese.

It is important to note that among the Sea Dayaks less than one per cent of the population aged 50 and over are literate and that among the Other Indigenous group less than one per cent of the population aged 55 and over are literate.

It is to be noted also that the degree of illiteracy varies widely between the communities, ranging from 47 per cent in the Chinese community to 93 per cent in the Sea Dayaks.

## CHAPTER FIVE

### THE ECONOMIC CHARACTERISTICS OF THE POPULATION

#### I. CONCEPTS AND DEFINITIONS

In the 1960 census, the total population 15 years of age and over is divided into two broad categories of economic activity status - those who were economically active and those who were economically inactive. No attempt was made to assess unemployment, partly because unemployment, regarded as a problem of more developed countries, hardly exists, and partly because it would have been particularly difficult to investigate.

The method adopted for classifying the population 15 years of age and over into economically active and economically inactive persons is based upon the "gainful worker approach", which has two advantages, namely, it requires less complex census questions and instructions, and the data collected are less affected by temporary conditions at the time of enumeration.

Three questions were asked, namely, on the individual's occupation, on industry and on occupational status. The answers were then sorted during processing into economically active and economically inactive. The lists of occupations and industries used were based on the standard international codes, being adapted rather closely from the Malayan occupation and industrial classifications devised for the census of Malaya of 1957. Although questions were asked only of persons 15 years and over, it must be stated that there must be in the country large numbers of children under 15 years, at least between 10 and 14 years, who help in the work of their families. The information was not collected partly because the dividing line of 15 years is generally accepted practice and partly because an enquiry into the part-time work of children would probably have been of little use.

In the Census, occupation refers to the kind of work done by a person, such as builder or farmer. Concerning the time period the report says, "If in the last 12 months the person had two or more jobs at different times (for examples, rice farming and collecting jungle produce) or if he does two or more jobs at the same time (for instance, one in the morning and one in the afternoon) enter the job which has produced most income, whether in cash or goods, during those 12 months." With regard to part-time work the report gives the following instruction to enumerators: "If in the last 12 months the person has worked one-third or more of the normal time, whether every day, or at different periods in

the year) enter the person as doing that job. If he/she worked less than one-third, enter as Student or Home Housework. A retired person may work two hours a day in an office; as this is about one-third of the usual hours enter his job and not "Retired". These two points no doubt presented many enumerators with difficulties. However, failure to understand this particular point may have been relatively unimportant, since comparatively few people change their jobs during the year, Sarawak being a predominantly agricultural country. Further, in areas where people are more likely to change their jobs, that is to say in the towns, a better standard of enumerator was possibly able to grasp the 12-month principle. Many people, however, have two occupations, possibly more in the rural areas than in the urban areas and here it is inevitable that some error was made.

Industry was described as the trade or business in which a person is working and carries on the occupation. Industry is quite a different concept from occupation. The same occupation may be found in several industries. For example, a driver may work in the rubber industry, or for a building contractor, or in the oil industry, or for the government, or in a number of other industries. Similarly, in the same industry there may be several occupations, for instance, in the rubber industry, there are tappers, clerks, drivers, managers and so on.

Four answers to the question on occupational status were specified, namely, employer, employee, own account worker and family worker. An employer is defined as a person engaged in his own business with one or more paid employees. An employee is a person who works for an employer other than a member of his own household and receives wages whether in cash or kind. An own account worker refers to a person who does not engage an employee in his own enterprise. A family worker is defined as a person who works with or without pay in an enterprise operated by another member of his/her own household.

## II. ECONOMIC ACTIVITY RATES

Of the total of 744,529 enumerated in the 1960 census, about 56 per cent or 413,433 persons are 15 years of age and over. Of this 71 per cent are economically active. The remaining 29 per cent being economically inactive. Of the total number of males aged 15 and over 89 per cent are economically, whilst of the total of females aged 15 and over 53 per cent are economically active. Thus the proportion of the economically active population is comparatively high, the number being influenced by the large

number of women who work.

About 70 per cent of the economically inactive persons are home houseworkers and the remainder are divided almost equally among school children, retired people and others. About 98 per cent of the home houseworkers are women.

**TABLE 5.1**

**PER CENT OF ECONOMICALLY ACTIVE POPULATION TO WORKING AGE POPULATION (15 YEARS AND OVER) FOR MAJOR RACIAL GROUPS AND SEX, 1960**

Race	Total	Male	Female
Malay	59.8	89.2	31.7
Melaneu	66.9	91.2	44.6
Sea Dayak	85.6	93.3	78.5
Land Dayak	76.5	93.1	60.7
Other Indigenous	76.3	90.7	60.4
Chinese	68.9	83.1	31.7
Others	68.7	90.4	33.7
<b>Total</b>	<b>71.2</b>	<b>89.3</b>	<b>53.1</b>

Table 5.1 shows for each racial group and sex the proportion of economically active population to working age population, that is, persons 15 years of age and over. To some extent these ratios reflect the nature of the dependency problem; generally the lower the proportion of the economically active population, the greater is the dependency burden.

The Sea Dayaks by comparison have an exceptionally high proportion of economically active population, resulting from the fact that a very high proportion of their women are economically active. To a lesser degree this is also true among the land Dayaks, and Other Indigenous group.

The Malays have the lowest rates of economically active persons among the indigenous communities, a low rate of females because Muslim women tend to stay at home to look after their children. The proportion of economically active males among Chinese is markedly lower and this is because the number of Chinese over 15 attending school is considerable. Only 32 per cent of Chinese women work, the same proportion as in the Malay community. This is because Chinese have an abnormal sex ratio particularly towards older ages, for instance, from 50 years onwards. Further, the ratio of the economically active females to the total females aged 50 and over for Chinese is less than 20 per cent.

The analysis of the working population involves no complicated statistical concepts, but it is mainly descriptive. The simplest index is measured by the crude economic activity rate, which gives an idea of the proportion of population who provides the labour upon which the economic life of the country depends. It also indicates the magnitude of dependency burden which is borne by the working population. This rate is defined as the percentage of the working population to the total population of all ages.

Table 5.2 gives the crude economic activity rates for the various racial groups distributed by sex. The crude economic activity rate for the whole population of Sarawak is about 40 per cent. When this percentage is compared with corresponding figures for various other countries, it appears that the labour force of Sarawak is proportionately rather small. For instance, India, Japan, Thailand, and the United States all have a larger proportion of their population in the labour force than Sarawak. Nevertheless, Sarawak is slightly better off in terms of dependency problem than Malaya, which has a rate of about 35 per cent in 1957. A rate of 40 per cent means that in every one hundred persons sixty persons depend on the labour of forty persons for their maintenance. It measures the extent of economic participation by the population.

Among the indigenous people of Sarawak the Malays have the lowest crude economic activity rate (33 per cent), the highest being 52 per cent which is the rate for the Sea Dayaks. This low rate among Malays has already been accounted for. The high rate among Sea Dayaks reflects the important part played in the economic life of the community by women.

The lowest rate among the racial groups occurs among Chinese (29 per cent). This is because the proportion of Chinese aged 0-14 is more than 50 per cent of the total Chinese population. Apart from this, it has been mentioned earlier that the number of Chinese over 15 years of age attending school is also significant.

Further examination of table 5.2 shows that there is a marked difference in the crude economic activity rates between the males and the females. Several factors can be accounted for. First, the extent of the economic participation by women depends to a large degree upon social attitudes towards female labour. It is conventional that women are supposed to look after the home and the family while men go out to work. Usually this attitude changes with education and other social developments. Second, women tend to marry at a much earlier age than men and upon marriage they usually withdraw themselves from the labour force. Third, the variety of jobs available to women is less than that available to men due perhaps to their physical limitation. It can also be suggested that the extent to which women participate in economic activity tends to fall off during periods of child-bearing. The difference between the sexes in the degree of economic participation is most clearly marked among Malays, Chinese, Melanans and Others.

**TABLE 5.2**  
**CRUDE ECONOMIC ACTIVITY RATES BY RACE AND**  
**SEX, 1960**

<b>Race</b>	<b>Male</b>	<b>Female</b>	<b>Total</b>
Malay	49.4	17.7	33.2
Melanau	53.0	26.9	39.7
Sea Dayak	54.5	48.7	51.6
Land Dayak	49.0	32.8	40.8
Other Indigenous	53.7	35.4	44.9
Chinese	41.7	15.7	29.3
Others	56.2	17.6	39.2
<b>Total</b>	<b>49.0</b>	<b>29.9</b>	<b>39.5</b>

The crude economic activity rate is, however, not the best measure of the extent of economic participation, since it is very much affected by the age structure as well as the sex structure of the working population. A population with a high proportion of persons in working ages will therefore show a high crude economic activity rate. A better method, which overcomes the effect of age structure is the age-specific economic activity rate. It is defined as the percentage of working population to the total population of a given age group, usually a five-year age group.

The schedule of the age-specific economic activity rates has a definite shape and pattern which is determined by cultural and economic factors. There are some differences between the rates for the males and for the females, which have been brought out clearly by the chart. The pattern of economic participation by women depends on the general attitudes of the people, whether women should contribute to the economy or should look after children. The schedule for females drops from age 20 to 29 due to the fact that more women are married during this period, a period of increasing reproductivity. After the age of 30 the rate increases again until about 40 years of age at which the rates begin to drop again. To what extent the curve drops depends on cultural and economic conditions. The drop is less prominent in this case because most of the women, particularly from the indigenous communities, are engaged in agricultural occupations.

The figures for males show that men are particularly active between the ages of 20 and 59, the rates being more than 90 per cent, reaching as high as 98.4 per cent in the age group 30-34 years.

**TABLE 5.3****AGE-SPECIFIC ECONOMIC ACTIVITY RATES BY  
AGE AND SEX, 1960**

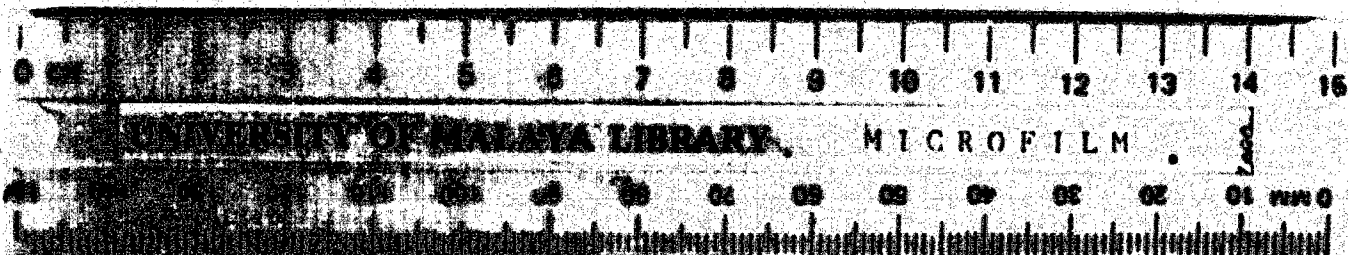
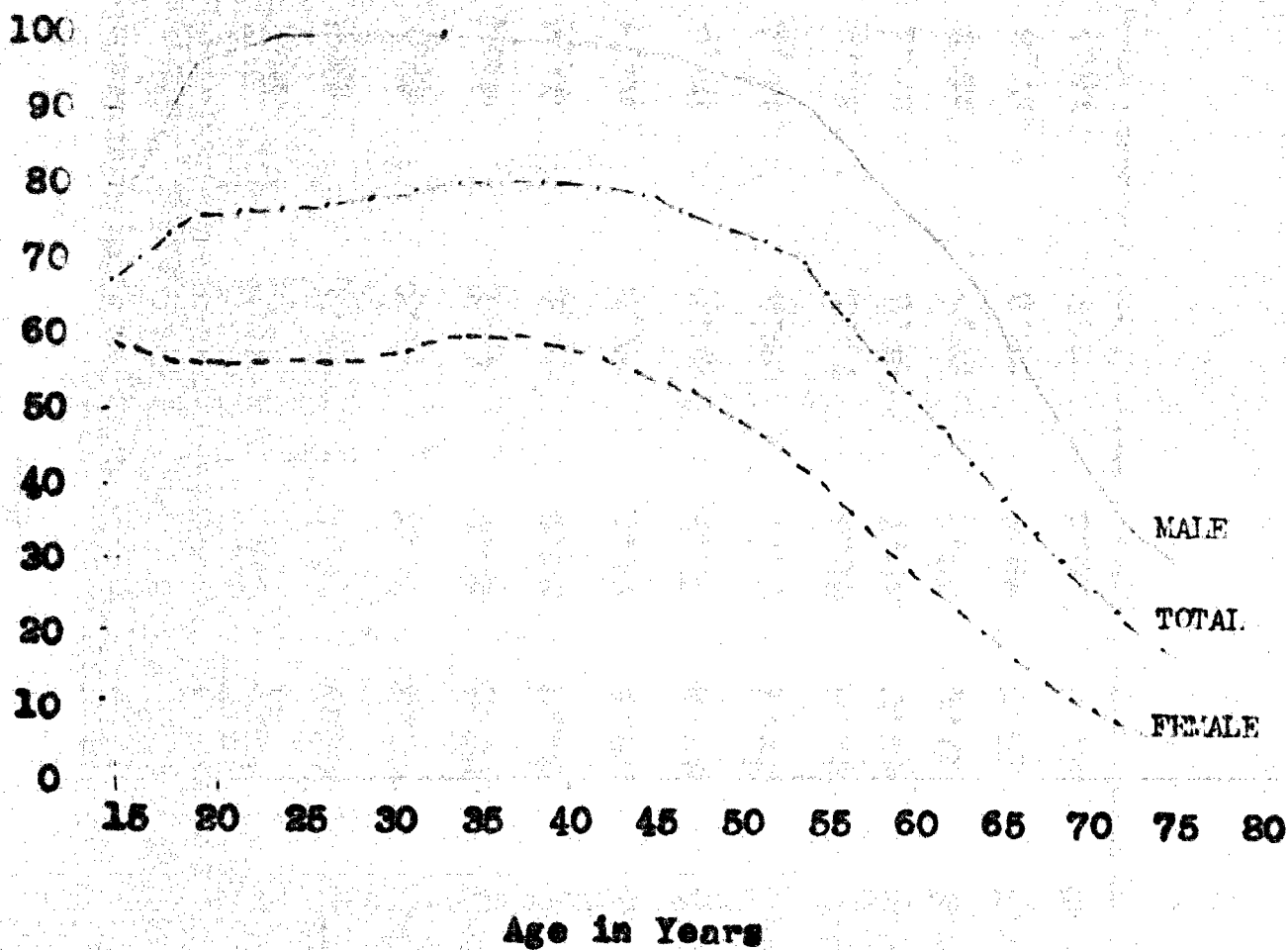
<b>Age</b>	<b>Male</b>	<b>Female</b>	<b>Total</b>
15 - 19	70.9	58.4	64.4
20 - 24	93.6	55.7	73.3
25 - 29	97.2	56.2	75.1
30 - 34	98.4	56.6	77.6
35 - 39	98.3	59.1	78.9
40 - 44	97.8	58.3	78.7
45 - 49	97.1	56.0	78.4
50 - 54	95.0	50.3	74.7
55 - 59	90.1	43.4	70.4
60 - 64	72.9	31.6	56.8
65 - 69	67.9	22.5	46.5
70 - 74	49.5	14.2	32.3
75 and over	34.1	7.8	20.6



**CHART 5.1**

**AGE-SPECIFIC ECONOMIC ACTIVITY RATES BY AGE SEX,**  
**1960.**

Rate  
(%)



AGE-SPECIFIC ECONOMIC ACTIVITY RATES BY AGE AND RACE,  
1960

Age	Malay	Melanesian	Sea Dayak	Land Dayak	Other Indigenous	Chinese	Others
15 - 19	82.6	66.3	36.2	72.9	72.5	44.6	50.4
20 - 24	80.2	70.9	30.9	76.8	79.1	62.7	63.7
25 - 29	82.6	69.6	91.3	75.3	79.6	64.4	66.8
30 - 34	65.6	72.4	92.4	81.7	81.2	63.4	72.8
35 - 39	65.9	72.1	94.0	82.6	79.9	64.0	71.4
40 - 44	67.8	73.3	92.5	84.7	81.4	65.7	75.7
45 - 49	68.1	73.1	92.4	83.2	80.3	67.9	77.8
50 - 54	66.5	65.6	86.4	74.2	76.9	67.3	74.2
55 - 59	61.3	64.7	81.8	68.3	74.4	64.5	76.3
60 - 64	53.9	52.6	63.2	48.6	58.2	51.4	71.6
65 - 69	40.3	42.2	51.5	43.5	52.9	40.2	57.3
70 - 74	31.7	27.7	36.5	28.8	38.5	27.5	52.3
75 and over	20.1	17.9	21.7	15.2	37.7	15.3	37.5

Table 5.4 shows the economic activity rate by age and race, 1960. The population of Sarawak may be divided into three groups according to the modal age in which the rate of economic participation is highest. The first group includes the Malays, Chinese and Others, each of whom has the highest age specific economic activity rate in the age group 45 to 49 years. The second group includes the Melanans, the Land Dayaks and the Other Indigenous races, each of whom has the highest rate in the age group 40 to 44 years. The third group which has the highest rate in the age group 35 to 39 is the Sea Dayak. These differences in the modal age are determined partly by cultural and partly by economic factors. The age of marriage differs from one race to another, the tendency being much earlier in illiterate, farming societies. In other words, the age of marriage tends to vary inversely with educational level and industrialization. This is true among the racially and culturally different peoples of Sarawak.

Another feature revealed by the table is that some races issue a drop in age specific economic activity rate after a certain age while others do not. Thus the Sea Dayaks and Others show no drop until after the age of 49 years. The Malays, for instance show a slight drop after the age of 34 years; the Melanans show a drop after the age of 34 years; the Land Dayaks too show a drop after the age of 34 years; the Other Indigenous show a drop, after the age of 34; and the Chinese after the age of 29. Perhaps the main reason lies in the reproductive behaviour of the races. In general, the intensity of reproduction tends to increase between the ages 25 to 34 years, and this is in keeping with the behaviour of the population of Sarawak.

### III. ANALYSIS BY INDUSTRY

The economically active population can be classified under three broad industrial groups, namely, primary, secondary and tertiary. Primary industries are defined to include agriculture, forestry, hunting and fishing, and mining and quarrying, secondary industries include manufacturing, and building and construction; and tertiary industries include electricity, water supply and sanitary services, commerce, transport and communication and services such as business, personal, recreational, defence and governmental not classified elsewhere.

The industrial distribution of the economically active population is given in table 5.5 below.

**TABLE 5.5****DISTRIBUTION OF ECONOMICALLY ACTIVE POPULATION  
BY THREE BROAD INDUSTRIAL GROUPS, 1960**

Industrial Group	Number			Percentage		
	M	P	T	M	P	T
Primary	138,650	103,355	242,005	75.3	93.9	82.2
Secondary	14,697	1,416	16,113	7.9	1.3	5.5
Tertiary	30,867	5,300	36,167	16.8	4.8	12.3
Total	184,214	110,071	294,285	100.0	100.0	100.0

The table shows the pattern in which manpower resources have been utilized in Sarawak. Since the economy of Sarawak is predominantly agricultural, it is not surprising that most of the economically active persons earn their living in agriculture; Over 80 per cent are engaged in primary industries in 1960. No comparison with later years is possible for lack of statistical data. Whether this percentage will decrease or remain stable in the near future depends very much upon the rate of industrialization and the rate of population growth. From the point of view of economic development Sarawak is undoubtedly underdeveloped, as revealed not only by the characteristically high proportion of people engaged in agriculture but also by the large percentage of children under 15 years of age. Under these conditions the Government will be faced not only with the heavy burden of providing schools and teachers but also with creating employment opportunities.

The table shows also that only about 6 per cent of the economically active population are engaged in secondary industries, mainly manufacturing. This percentage is indeed very low compared with the more developed countries, like the United States, Canada and the countries of Northwest Europe. The proportion of the economically active population engaged in tertiary industries is more than doubled those engaged in secondary industries.

It is to be noted that among the females 94 per cent are engaged in primary industries, the remainder are engaged mainly in tertiary industries. This preponderance of females in primary industries, particularly in agriculture, shows the lack of varieties of jobs for the women.

### Primary Industries

This is by far the largest sector in the industrial economy. Of the 842,000 persons more than 80 per cent are engaged in agriculture, fishing, forestry and hunting. The remaining 20 per cent are taken up by mining and quarrying.

PERCENTAGE DISTRIBUTION OF THE ECONOMICALLY ACTIVE POPULATION  
BY THREE INDUSTRIAL GROUPS AND RACE, 1960.

[illegible]

Table 5.6 shows the distribution of the economically active population among the various races in Sarawak by three broad industrial groups. It can be seen that more than 70 per cent of all the indigenous races, who are economically active, are engaged in primary production, mainly in agriculture. The Chinese and Others have just about half of their economically active population in primary production. This is because the proportions of the economically active population engaged in tertiary industries are quite considerable for both the Chinese and Others, namely Europeans, Indians and Pakistanis.

### Secondary Industries

Sarawak is far behind as compared to Malaya in the process of industrialization, for at the time of the last census only five per cent of the economically active population were engaged in secondary industries, of whom 3.9 per cent were engaged in manufacturing and 1.6 per cent in building and construction. In total, this is less than 17,000 persons. Of those engaged in manufacturing, about half are involved with the manufacture of wood and cork products, less than a sixth are in the food manufacturing industries and general engineering including manufacture of machinery and transport equipment. Racial distribution varies tremendously. For instance, of the total economically active persons among the Sea Dayaks, only 0.4 per cent are engaged in secondary industries, while among the Chinese 11 per cent are so engaged. Thus, the natives of Sarawak are far behind in economic development of the country. They have not been particularly interested in adapting themselves with the general changes that have taken place in the country, except perhaps in the political sphere since the establishment of Malaysia.

### Tertiary Industries

Only twelve per cent of the economically active persons are engaged in tertiary industries, namely, in commerce, services of all kind, transport and communications. Nearly two-thirds of the people engaged in tertiary industries are Chinese, of whom about 14,000 work in commerce. Almost all of those engaged in commercial activities work in wholesale and retail trade. Of these 11,500 odd are Chinese and 1,100 odd are Malays.

#### IV. ANALYSIS BY OCCUPATION

TABLE 5.7

#### ECONOMICALLY ACTIVE POPULATION BY SEX AND OCCUPATION, 1960

<u>Occupation</u>	<u>T</u>	<u>M</u>	<u>F</u>
Professional, technical and related workers.	2.1	2.5	1.5
Administrative, Executive and managerial workers.	0.3	0.5	0
Clerical workers	1.5	2.1	0.4
Sales workers	4.0	5.8	1.0
Agricultural workers, forestry workers, fishermen, hunters and trappers.	81.5	74.0	94.1
Miners, quarrymen, and related workers.	0.1	0.1	0
Workers in transport and communication	1.4	2.3	0.1
Craftsmen, production process workers and labourers not classified elsewhere	6.8	10.1	1.2
Service, sports, entertainment and recreation workers	2.3	2.6	1.7
<b>Total</b>	<b>100.0</b>	<b>100.0</b>	<b>100.0</b>
<b>Persons ('000)</b>	<b>294.3</b>	<b>184.2</b>	<b>110.1</b>

The classification by occupation is an alternative method of presenting the economic characteristics of the population in contrast with the classification by industry in which the occupation is pursued. To some extent the two classifications overlap, for example, the number of agricultural workers and fishermen more or less correspond to the number engaged in the agricultural and fishing industries respectively.



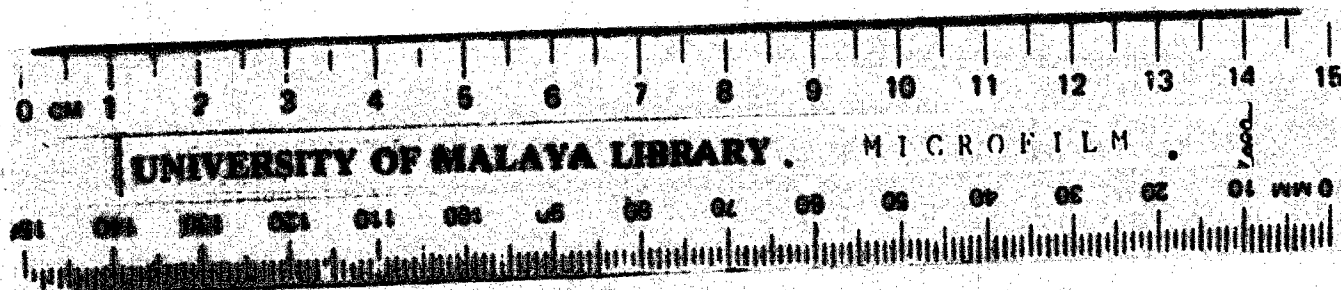
Table 5.7 shows that the pattern of occupation is largely determined by agriculture, forestry and fishing. More than 80 per cent of the economically active population of Sarawak are engaged as agricultural and forestry workers, fishermen, hunters and trappers. The remaining one-fifth of the economically active population are engaged in varying proportions in other occupations, ranging from 7 per cent as craftsmen and production process workers to 0.1 per cent as miners, quarrymen and related workers.

Except for agricultural workers, forestry workers and so forth, in which 94 per cent of the economically active women are engaged, the occupational pattern is largely determined by males. There are two groups of occupations in which men are exclusively engaged, the administrative, executive and managerial occupations and the mining and quarrying occupations. In these two groups of occupations only 21 persons were females as compared to 989 males in 1960 in the first group of occupations, and only 1 female as compared to 178 males in the latter group.

**TABLE 5.8****PERCENTAGE DISTRIBUTION OF ECONOMICALLY  
ACTIVE POPULATION BY RACE AND OCCUPATION, 1960**

<b>Occupation</b>	<b>N</b>	<b>M</b>	<b>S.D</b>	<b>L.D</b>	<b>O.I</b>	<b>C</b>	<b>O</b>
Professional, technical and related workers	2.4	1.2	0.6	1.3	0.9	4.8	32.4
Administrative, exe- cutive and managerial workers	0.3	0.3	0.1	0.1	0.2	0.8	7.7
Clerical workers	2.5	0.7	0.1	0.2	0.1	4.2	6.8
Sales workers	1.7	1.1	0.3	0.5	0.3	15.2	6.2
Agricultural and forestry workers, fishermen, hunters and trappers.	72.9	84.7	97.6	95.1	93.9	50.5	28.3
Miners, quarrymen and related workers	0.2	0	0	0.1	-	0.1	0.1
Workers in transport and communication occupations	3.9	1.8	0.1	0.1	0.2	3.9	3.7
Craftsmen, produc- tion process workers	12.7	9.5	0.7	1.1	3.9	19.4	9.8
Service, sport, entertainment and recreation workers.	3.4	0.7	0.5	1.5	0.5	5.1	5.3
<b>Total</b>	<b>100.0</b>	<b>100.0</b>	<b>100.0</b>	<b>100.0</b>	<b>100.0</b>	<b>100.0</b>	<b>100.0</b>
<b>Person ('00)</b>	<b>429.8</b>	<b>177.1</b>	<b>1,227</b>	<b>235.0</b>	<b>170.4</b>	<b>671.1</b>	<b>31.9</b>

The distribution of occupation by race shows that an overwhelmingly large proportion of the indigenous races are engaged as agricultural worker, forestry workers, fishermen, hunters and trappers, particularly among the Sea Dayaks, Land Dayaks and Other Indigenous. Only half of the economically active Chinese population are engaged in these occupations.



DISTRIBUTION OF ECONOMICALLY ACTIVE POPULATION IN  
AGRICULTURAL OCCUPATIONS BY RACE, 1960

Occupation	Malay	Melanau	Sea Dayak	Land Dayak	Other In- digenous Chinese	Others	All Races
Workers on small- holding.							
Market gardens	21,581	8,462	109,994	20,365	14,089	618	190,165
Rubber Tappers	4,301	4,050	9,437	1,896	660	641	37,990
Loggers, forestry workers.	2,505	1,160	278	4	919	7	5,118
Fishermen	2,408	1,276	15	3	16	18	4,357
Other Occupations.	548	56	100	71	388	68	2,168
All agricultural occupations	31,343	15,004	119,824	22,339	16,006	1,358	239,828

The above table shows the type of work done by persons having agricultural occupations. About 80 per cent of agricultural workers work on smallholdings which most of the remainder tap rubber. Some 5,000 persons work as loggers and in other types of forestry work. Just over 4,000 persons stated that they were fishermen, that is to say it was fishing which gave them most income in the year, but because many people do fishing as a secondary occupation, dependent to some extent on the seasons and the weather, this figure may give little indication of the total amount of labour put into fishing. The number of Chinese engaged in smallholding gardening is comparatively small - there are more Chinese mother tappers than smallholding gardeners - but in the indigenous races it is smallholders who are in the majority. Half of the rubber tappers in the country are Chinese and another quarter are Sea Dayaks. About half the loggers are Malays and rather more than half of the fishermen.

Seventy-one per cent of the workers in agriculture or about 170,000 are engaged in growing rice or mainly rice.

#### V. ANALYSIS BY STATUS

TABLE 5.10

#### DISTRIBUTION OF ECONOMICALLY ACTIVE POPULATION BY OCCUPATIONAL STATUS, 1960

Status	Female		Male		Female	
	Number	Per cent-age	Number	Per cent-age	Number	Per cent-age
Employer	3,159	1.1	3,022	1.6	137	0.1
Employee	56,789	19.3	48,053	26.1	8,736	7.9
Own Account worker	102,292	34.7	92,189	50.1	10,103	9.2
Family worker	132,045	44.9	40,950	22.2	91,095	82.8
Total	294,285	100.0	184,214	100.0	110,071	100.0

The importance of the family concern - the farm, the shop - is obvious. Only one-fifth of the working population are employees. Except for a handful of employers the remaining four-fifths of the working population are own account workers and family workers. Among women more than four-fifths are family workers but among men the proportions are quite different, a situation which is natural in an agricultural society where large numbers of women work. One quarter of

men are employees and it is only 28 per cent who are engaged in small family concerns. A large majority of the own account workers are men and a large majority of the family workers are women.

TABLE 5.11

PERCENTAGE DISTRIBUTION OF ECONOMICALLY ACTIVE  
POPULATION BY RACE AND STATUS, 1960

	Employer	Employee	Own Account Worker	Family Worker	Total
Malay	0.3	33.9	36.7	30.1	100
Melanan	0.2	28.1	35.7	35.0	100
Sea Dayak	0.1	3.3	36.2	60.4	100
Land Dayak	0.1	7.3	37.4	55.2	100
Other Indi- genous	0	9.3	35.0	55.5	100
Chinese	4.1	41.1	31.2	23.6	100
Others	2.1	71.8	17.5	7.1	100
All Races	1.1	19.3	34.7	44.9	100

Table 5.11 shows the percentage distribution of the working population by occupational status within each race. Leaving the group 'Others' out of consideration, about the same proportion within each race are own account workers, that is to say 30 to 36 per cent. But other than own account workers there is a clear difference in the patterns of Malays, Melanans and Chinese on the one hand and Dayaks and Other Indigenous on the other; among the former, those who are not own account workers are divided not very far from equally between employees and family workers; while among the latter, employees are very few, those who are not own account workers being mostly family workers. In the following races the proportions of all working people engaged in family concerns, employing no-one from outside the family are as follows: Malay 65.8 per cent, Melanan 71.7 per cent, Chinese 54.8 per cent, Sea Dayak 96.6 per cent, Land Dayak 92.6 per cent, and Other Indigenous 90.5 per cent. These figures may be taken as a rough guide to the importance of subsistence economy to each race.

**TABLE 5.12****DISTRIBUTION OF ECONOMICALLY ACTIVE POPULATION BY OCCUPATION AND STATUS, 1960**

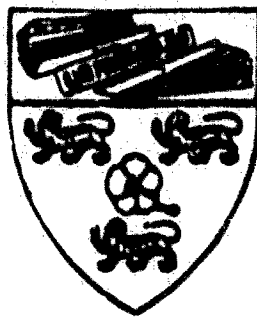
	<b>Em- ployer</b>	<b>Em- ployee</b>	<b>Own Account worker</b>	<b>Family worker</b>
Professional, technical and related workers	45	5,930	219	26
Administrative, Executive and Managerial Workers	223	665	104	18
Clerical Workers	34	4,295	38	19
Sales workers	1,475	3,575	4,899	1,899
Agricultural workers, forestry workers, fisher- men, hunters and trappers	527	16,712	93,470	129,119
Miners, quarrymen and related workers	3	104	51	21
Workers in transport and communication occupa- tions	59	3,589	575	32
Craftsmen, production process workers and labourers not classi- fied elsewhere.	466	16,824	2,037	601
Service, sport, entertain- ment and recreation workers	327	5,095	899	310
	3,159	56,789	102,292	132,045

Table 5.12 shows that 3,000 persons or slightly more than 1 per cent of the economically active are employers; the majority are engaged as sales workers. In the professional, technical and related occupations, an overwhelming majority are engaged as employees, mostly employees of the government. Again in the second group of workers the majority are employees. In the employee category, however, most of the economically active persons are engaged in agriculture, forestry, fishing, hunting and trapping, and as craftsmen, production process workers and labourers. The large number of persons engaged as own account workers and family workers are due to the agricultural nature of the economy.



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# TAMAT

