

CHAPTER III

HOUSEHOLD

The term 'household' as used here is taken to be analogous to 'family'. Thus, following this analogy, there can be more than one household in one house.¹ The 'members' of a household include the head, the wife and their children. They include also those relatives and persons who regard that house as their normal place of residence, and exclude those other than these. In some instances there would be single person living in the house and in other instances there are persons who have been divorced (in the case where the heads are females), living with their children or their parents or both. Apart from these there are still other instances where widows stay with the mothers and their children or with the children only, and a variety of other cases. But, whatever the case may be each household must have a head. There is no instance in the blocks concerned C, J, O, where the head does not reside in the house in one of the three blocks.

For purposes of comparability the various types of household are classified into nine types. These are:

- a) Man-wife and children.
- b) Man-wife.
- c) Couple with parents with/without children.
- d) Couple with miscellaneous relatives.
- e) Divorcee with/without parents, with/without children.

¹In many instances in the course of the survey the interviewer was required to know by way of interrogation as to whether the persons staying in the same house share the same cooking utensils. If so, they belong to the same household. If otherwise, then it means that there is more than one household in that house. This approach has not strictly been adhered to here.

- f) Widow/widower with children.
- g) Single person household.
- h) Household with non-resident head.
- i) Others.

The eight type of household 'household with non-resident head', does not prevail in any of the three blocks but it has not been overlooked because it seems to have prevailed in blocks other than C, J, O. The classification 'ot 'others' includes among other things, the household with a head, unmarried and living with his mother and brothers and in another instance living with the mother and the sisters.¹

A total of 185 households are found in the three blocks C, J, O. This can further be divided into their respective blocks: 71 in block C, 98 in block J, and 46 in block O. In terms of ethnic group, there are altogether 37 Malay households and 98 Javanese households. The Javanese households outnumber the Malay households in all the three blocks. However while the number of Malay households correspond with the number of Malay houses, that of the Javanese households exceeds the number of Javanese houses by one. In other words, in all the three blocks combined, there is only one instance where one house contains two households. The information is given in Table 7.

TABLE 7

DISTRIBUTION OF HOUSES AND HOUSEHOLDS
BY BLOCK AND ETHNIC GROUP (C, J, O).

Block	C		J		O		Total		%	
	No. of h'se	No. of h'ld	No. of h'se	No. of h'ld	No. of h'se	No. of h'ld	No. of h'se	No. of h'ld	No. of h'se	No. of h'ld
(1)	(2)	(3)	(4)	(5)	(6)	(7)	(8)	(9)	(10)	(11)
Malay	35	35	31	31	21	21	37	37	47.3	47.0
Jav.	35	35	37	37	25	25	97	98	52.7	53.0

Of the 135 households in total in all the three blocks 130 or about 3/4 pertain to the first type..... 'man-wife and children'. The total number of persons that come under this type of household is 330. This constitutes about 84% of the total population of 1017 persons. Out of the 139 cases of the first type of household, 72 are Javanese households and 67 Malay households. In terms of total number of households these represent about 39% and 36% respectively.

The classification..... 'couple with miscellaneous relatives', comes next in importance. Twelve households with a total of 37 persons fall into this group, corresponding to about 6% and 7% respectively.

In all three blocks C, J, O, 9 cases of the 'man-wife' type of household are known. Five of these are Javanese couples. There is no instance where a man has more than one wife.

The other types of household are less common in the three blocks C, J, O. For example, in the fifth type of household..... 'divorcee with/without parents, with/without children', there is only one case known and that pertaining to the Malay household, where a divorcee lives with her mother and her child. This means that the average size of household under this type is 3. Logically the 'single person household' type has an average of 1 person to a household. Five cases of this type of household are known in the three blocks.

Three types of household namely,.... 'divorcee with/without parents, with/without children',... 'widow/widower with children',... and 'single person household', together make up only 3% of the total number of households and 4% of the total number of persons.

Apart from the type of household classified as 'others', the Javanese group has a larger number of households corresponding to each type of household than the Malay group. The figures quoted above have been obtained from Table 8 and Table 9.

The number of people corresponding to a household or what is normally referred to as the family size has always been the item of major interest in any population study. It is important because it could give a useful guide in determining the degree of dependency among the population and the level of living of an average household, given the factors income and prices of foodstuffs.

TABLE 3

HOUSEHOLDS BY TYPES OF HOUSEHOLD

Types of household (1)	Household		Person	
	No.	%	No.	%
	(2)	(3)	(4)	(5)
1) Man-wife & children	189	75.0	350	83.6
2) Man-wife	9	4.9	18	1.8
3) Couple with parents with/without children	4	2.2	20	2.0
4) Couple with miscellaneous relatives	12	6.5	67	6.6
5) Divorcee with/without parents, with/without children	1	0.5	5	0.3
6) Widow/widower with children	9	4.9	25	3.4
7) Single person household	5	2.7	5	0.5
8) Household with non- resident head	-	-	-	-
9) Others	6	3.2	19	1.9

TABLE 9

DISTRIBUTION OF HOUSEHOLD TYPES BY
ETHNIC GROUP, (ALL BLOCKS COMBINED)

Household types (1)	Ethnic Group					
	Number			%		
	Malay (2)	Malay (3)	Jav. (4)	Tot. (5)	Mal. (6)	Jav (7)
1) Man-wife & children	189	67	72	75.1	36.2	33.9
2) Man-wife	9	4	5	4.9	2.2	2.7
3) Couple with parents, with/without children	4	1	3	2.2	0.5	1.6
4) Couple with miscellaneous relatives	12	3	9	6.5	1.6	4.9
5) Divorcee with/without parents with/without children	1	1	-	0.5	0.5	-
6) Widow/widower with children	9	4	5	4.9	2.2	2.7
7) Single person household	5	2	3	2.7	1.1	1.6
8) Household with non- resident head	-	-	-	-	-	-
9) Others	6	5	1	3.2	2.7	0.5

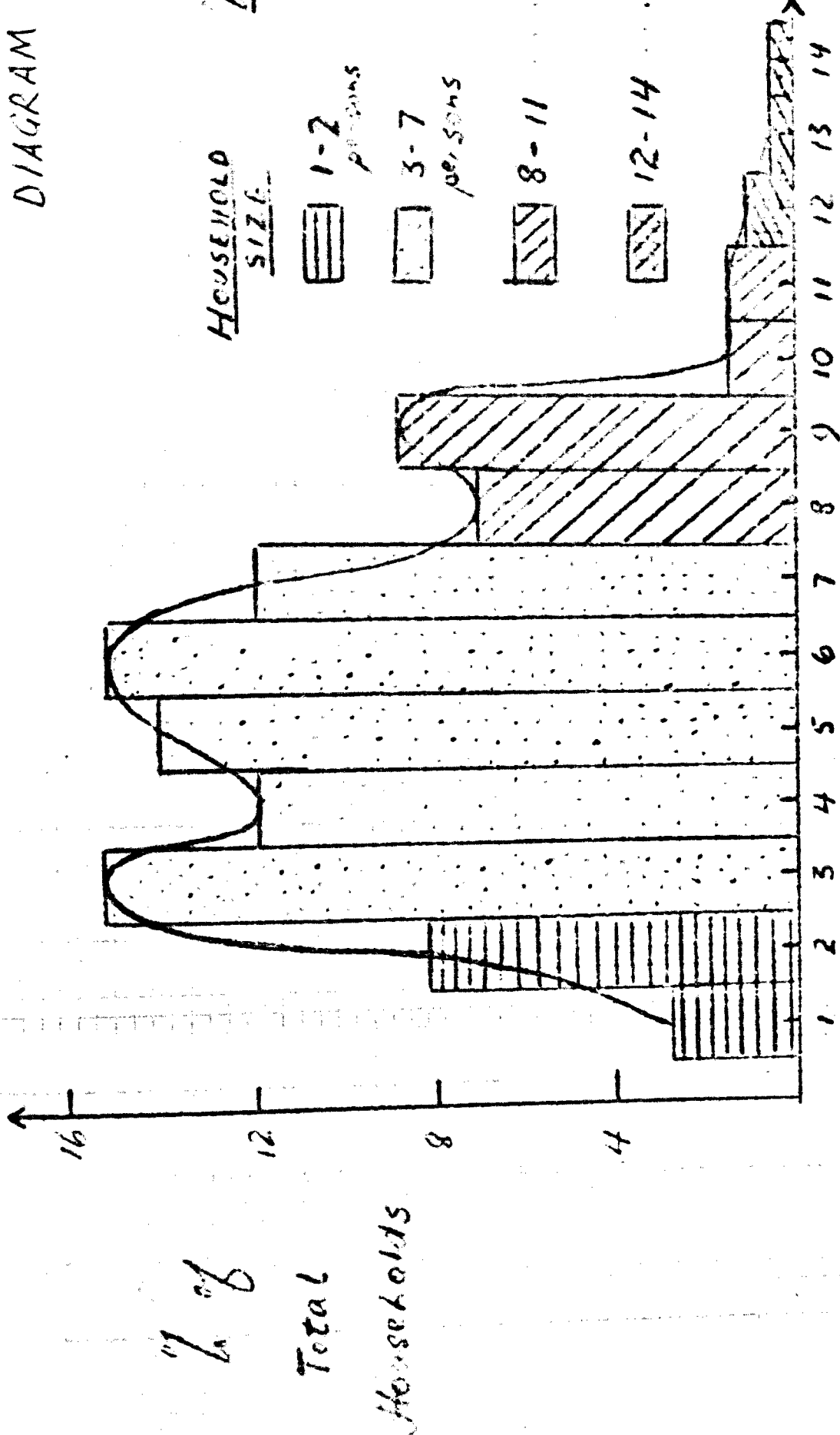
TABLE 10

HOUSEHOLDS BY NUMBER OF PERSONS

Number of persons (1)	Number of households (2)	(3)
1	5	3.7
2	15	3.1
3	28	15.1
4	22	11.9
5	20	14.1
6	28	15.1
7	22	11.9
8	13	7.0
9	16	3.7
10	3	1.6
11	3	1.6
12	2	1.1
13	1	0.5
14	1	0.5

BY SIZE OF HOUSEHOLDS

DIAGRAM 2



Size of household



Table 9 gives us a picture of family sizes prevailing in blocks C, J, O. It tells the number of households with particular reference to the number of people in them.1, 2, 3, 4, etc. In all three blocks C, J, O, the largest household size known has 14 persons contained in it and the lowest with only one person.

Most of the households however, fall within the range of family sizes 3 and 7. About 12% households corresponding to about 13% of the total number of households in the three blocks come under this group. Table 9 could in fact be represented diagrammatically.¹

The average size of a household in blocks C, J, O, is 6. The Javanese households have an average of 6 persons in blocks C and J, and an average of 5 in block O, bringing a total average in all three blocks to 6. The Malay households in contrast have an average of 5 persons to a household in all three blocks. But a closer examination of the family composition in the questionnaires would reveal that this average has been pulled up by a few extreme cases. This fact is also indicated in Table 12, where 21 Malay households have an average of 3 persons to a household. This number recorded is the highest for any of the household size ranging from 1 to 14, that prevail in blocks C, J, O, in the Sawah Sempadan area.²

TABLE 11

AVERAGE SIZE OF HOUSEHOLD BY ETHNIC GROUP

Ethnic group (1)	Block C (2)	Block J (3)	Block O (4)	C, J, O, combined (5)
Malay	5	5	5	5
Javanese	6	6	5	6

¹ Refer to Diagram 2, p. 19a.

² These averages have been worked out on the basis of the total number of households.

TABLE 12
HOUSEHOLDS BY SIZE AND ETHNIC GROUP

Household size	Ethnic Group				Mixed	
	Number		%		No.	%
	Malay	Javan.	Malay	Javan.		
(1)	(2)	(3)	(4)	(5)	(6)	(7)
1	2	3	1.1	1.6	5	2.7
2	9	6	4.9	3.2	15	3.1
3	21	7	11.3	3.9	28	15.1
4	11	11	6.0	6.0	22	11.9
5	14	12	7.6	6.5	26	14.1
6	11	17	6.0	9.2	28	15.1
7	9	13	4.9	7.0	22	11.9
8	6	7	3.2	3.2	13	7.0
9	6	10	3.2	5.4	16	2.7
10	2	1	1.1	0.5	3	1.6
11	-	3	-	1.6	3	1.6
12	-	2	-	1.1	2	1.1
13	1	-	0.5	-	1	0.5
14	-	1	-	0.5	1	0.5

Total < 100%

The average size of a household also varies with the types of household. Table 13 tells us that the largest family or household size corresponds with the first type of household.....'man-wife and children'. This is an important finding since the size of a family classified under this type of household gives a reflection as to the frequency of childbirth among the mothers. It is generally agreed that a high frequency of childbirth among mothers does exercise influence on their health conditions and therefore their life expectancy. Combined with this is the fact that their intake of food is insufficient in terms of their nutritional value. It is most logical to expect that the children born of mothers who are subject to all these circumstances are likely to be less healthy, less energetic and become prone to all kinds of diseases. Hence the importance attached to the family or household size.

In this first type of household the combined average size for both the Malay and the Javanese groups is 7. This means that the wife has at least had five child-births, neglecting adoptions and infants who died during the period of infancy. Following this analogy it would interest us to know that 16 mothers (wives) have had at least 7 child-births, 13 with 6 child-births, 22 with 5 child-births and 28 with at least 4 child-births. This is an alarming situation from the health point of view, because in this instance it is also discovered that almost all of the housewives are full time workers in the farm beside performing their duties as housewives.

The fourth type of household... 'couple with miscellaneous relatives' has an average of 6 persons to a household. But this need not necessarily reflect a high frequency of child-births among mothers belonging to this type of household because there may be many relatives that make up the household and these relatives have no direct relationship with the frequency of child-birth attributed to the wife of the head in that household.

1Datin Lady Thomson, Senior Nutrition Officer, Institute for Medical Research, Kuala Lumpur, in the article entitled 'The problem picture that Malaya faces' which appeared in Straits Times, Tuesday, November 20th, 1962.

TABLE 13

AVERAGE HOUSEHOLD SIZE BY ETHNIC GROUP AND
TYPES OF HOUSEHOLD

Ethnic Group	Average Size of Household									
	Types of Household									
	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	All h'ld
(1)	(2)	(3)	(4)	(5)	(6)	(7)	(8)	(9)	(10)	(11)
Mal.	6	2	4	6	3	4	1	-	3	4
Jav.	7	2	6	6	-	4	1	-	5	4
Both groups	7	2	5	6	3	4	1	-	4	4

To sum up this part of the study it is to be noted that there are altogether 3 types of household in blocks C, J, O. The remaining one type does not prevail in this area but has been included in order to facilitate comparison with the other blocks if need should arise. The average size of a household in the three blocks combined for both the ethnic groups has been calculated to be 5, a size too big relative to the means. The average Javanese household is larger in size than the Malay household. There are extreme cases of 13 persons and 14 persons to a household. On the other extreme there are 15 cases of households having an average of 2 persons each.

How is this household size going to affect the level of living of the farmers? According to Professor Ungku Aziz the Malay farmers in general earn between \$50 and \$100.1 In the context often associated with economic development they would be classified as low income earners. In terms of health, a sufficiently high

1See U. Aziz, Rencana 2 Ekonomi dan Kemiskinan (Singapore: Pustaka Melayu, 1959).

standard could be attained with an income of between \$50 and \$100 but for the fact that our farmers are ignorant as to the nutritional content of their food intake. Thus in many cases the standard of health is poor by international standard. Poor health would lead to a reduced effort in the farming activities. Reduced effort means reduced input of human resources. By the theory of production a smaller dose from a particular resource would not only upset the combination of resources but also reduced the total output from the farm. Reduced output leads to reduced income, leading to poor health standard caused by limited income. This then is the other approach which explains the 'vicious circle' of poverty.

Economists who specialize in the field of economic development often associate large family size with an agricultural community. This feature is also true of this area.

The facts relating to the structure of the population and the size of the households indicate to us that the dependency problem is something which should greatly concern the students of Rural Economics. This problem could lead to a chain of events and problems which would involve the whole network of the nation's economy. Indications are that household type related to the household size can probably help to cast some light as to the conditions of living or the level of living whichever is felt the better criterion in Economics, that prevail among the 1017 persons in the three blocks C, J, O, in Sawah Sempadan, Tanjong Karang, where there appears to be only a single common and vital means of livelihood... and the source of their survival, and that occupation is padi farming. This will be the next field of our study.