

CHAPTER VI

CONCLUSION

From the study of these four blocks, several important facts concerning certain demographic and economic characteristics of the population are brought to light. One important characteristic of the population is its youthful nature, with large proportion of children. Many of the economic characteristics of the population could be explained in terms of this youthful structure. We see that in order to overcome the disadvantage of this youthful age-structure, there developed a pattern of early employment. It is seen that large percentage of the economically active persons are virtually children. Due to the fact that large proportion of people are in the younger age-groups, a fairly small increase in the percentage of employed between, say, ages 10 - 14 years, will produce a large increase in the actual number of employed.

Women also form a substantial proportion of the gainfully employed population. Most of them are farm workers. Padi farming here is conducted on small scale, and also depends largely on traditional techniques which do not require any formal education. Therefore, it offers easy venue of employment for women and children. Furthermore, farming activities and most of the rural occupations are not incompatible to motherhood and household duties. Farming activities also offers a way of caring for the aged and the infirm, giving them opportunity to contribute slightly towards their own support. Hence it has been known as a field where a large population can be maintained even though many of them are only partially employed - a field of "hidden employment".

The dependency problem also merits our attention. Although the ratio of dependents is not particularly high (47.7% depending on 52.3% of population), the peculiar feature is that these people are dependents largely on the livelihood of women and children workers. Although the percentage of gainfully employed is appreciably large in actual fact the productivity will be relatively low, because large percentage of gainfully employed are women and children. The dependency problem is, therefore, aggravated by this fact.

An important problem which arises from the youthful nature of the population is the question of employment. It is noted that the potential forthcoming labour force is 49.5% of the population. Assuming that only $\frac{2}{3}$ of these people are going to be farmers, we can foresee that under present state of technology, eventually there will be serious overcrowding on land. This will lead to fragmentation of padi holdings, under-employment and diminishing returns. One way of relieving this problem is to increase productivity by improving techniques of production and to diversify the padi lands with off-season padi or other non-padi crops.