

### CHAPTER III

#### PATTERN OF OCCUPATION

Before going further into this topic, the term "in employment" must needs be exactly defined. A person is "in employment" when he "gainfully employed for at least four months out of the preceding twelve months and part time workers who do an average of at least three hours a day". "

A housewife or houseworker is a person who normally engages in household duties excluding all domestic servants while students are considered not in employment and attend schools or those who study privately.

A reminder should be made here because it may surprise many that the unemployment figure is too high for a rural society. This is because all who are not employed are included as unemployed and these includes the children who are below the age of 0-4 and those who are too young to attend school. Although this is not in keeping with the accepted practice, this system is adopted in order to facilitate checking of the number of persons in the blocks. In other words it is an attempt to make the figures for occupation pattern to equal to the total population.

TABLE 13      OCCUPATION IN BLOCKS

Occupation	Block D		Block E		Block F		Total	
	No.	%	No.	%	No.	%	No.	%
Farmer	229	53.6	130	47.3	72	49.6	431	50.9
Student	52	12.2	38	13.8	26	17.9	116	13.7
Unemployed	132	30.9	93	33.9	37	25.5	262	30.9
Housewife	10	2.3	8	2.9	7	4.8	25	3.0
Others	3	0.7	5	1.8	3	2.1	11	1.3
Total	426	100	274	100	145	100	845	100

\* See 1957 Population Census of the Federation of Malaya Report No. 14 (K. Lumpur Dept. of Statistics 1960) P.24.

## AGRICULTURE IN THE VILLAGE

In Block D 53.6% of the population are farmers, accounting for 229 persons out of the total population of 426. In Block E 47.3% belong to this occupation while in Block F it is 49.6%.

In the case of students Block D and E have nearly the same percentage while Block F has a higher percentage with 17.9%. Again, in the figures for the employed Block D and E with 30.9 and 33.9% respectively are close to each other as compared to 23.9% in Block F.

The figures for the housewives and the others are too small to be of any importance. For example, there are only 25 reported households from a population of 843 and 11 persons who are in the others group. The main reason for the small number of housewives is because only small master are exclusively agriculturists. Most of them are housewives and farmer. With most of farming jobs, labour is intensive and the housewife cannot afford to leave all the farming work to her husband while she does the household chores only.

Although the community is dependent upon farming, not every man is a farmer. But this contention may not apparently be true if we take a look at the figures, which show that, except for the "Others" all the gainfully employed are farmers. It must be realised that the survey was done in the middle of the harvesting season in the first year and just after harvesting in the second year. Thus it is most probable that the economically active will

**TABLE 14** POPULATIONS BY ACTIVITIES GROUPS

Occupations	Male		Female		Total	
	No.	%	No.	%	No.	%
Farmers	174	49.1	257	52.1	431	50.9
Students	48	13.9	68	13.9	116	13.7
Unemployed	112	33.3	144	29.5	252	30.9
Housewives	6	1.7	19	3.7	25	3.0
Others	7	2.0	4	0.8	11	1.3
Total	353	100	492	100	845	100

## POPULATION STATUS BY AGE AND SEX

Age Group	Occupation Groups												Total	
	Employed		Unemployed		Housewives and Homemakers		Others		Employed		Unemployed			
	M	F	M	F	M	F	M	F	M	F	M	F		
- 4	-	-	-	-	67	63	-	-	-	-	67	65		
- 9	-	-	27	22	53	59	-	-	-	-	90	81		
- 14	23	25	25	16	7	9	3	4	-	-	65	66		
- 19	39	39	4	1	-	-	5	2	-	-	47	39		
- 24	31	29	1	-	-	-	3	-	-	-	34	26		
- 29	17	25	-	-	-	-	3	-	-	-	17	28		
- 34	29	25	-	-	-	-	2	-	-	-	19	27		
- 39	28	20	-	-	-	-	3	-	-	-	18	23		
- 44	21	14	-	-	-	-	2	1	-	-	22	16		
- 49	20	4	-	-	-	-	1	-	-	-	19	5		
- 54	12	8	-	-	-	-	3	3	-	-	15	11		
- 59	8	5	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	8	5		
- 64	15	4	-	-	1	-	-	1	-	-	17	4		
Total	722	73	-	-	-	1	-	-	-	-	7	4		
	229	222	77	39	128	134	25	11	-	-	445	400		

state their occupation as farming. Therefore if a survey on employment is to be done in the off season it is most probable that the proportion of farmers will be comparatively smaller.

### OCCUPATION BY ETHNIC GROUPS

In the case of the Malays 49.1 percent are farmers while the Javanese have 52.1%. The percentage of students are the same in the case of the Javanese and the Malays with 13.9%. When it comes to the unemployed the Malays have 33.3% while the Javanese have the lower figure of 29.5%. This fact should be taken into consideration because of the fact that the percentage of Malays gainfully employed as farmers is lower than that of the Javanese. But this does not tell the whole story because 2.0% of the Malays are employed in the "Others" while we only have 0.6% of the Javanese in this category. With regard to the housewife the Javanese have a higher percentage 3.7, than the Malays whose figure is 1.7.

It is interesting to speculate on why a higher percentage of the Javanese females are reported as housewives and not farmers. Does this mean that they do not go to the farm to help their husband because of the fact that they are well off and so need not help the husband or is it because of the fact that they have more children to look after and so have no time to go to the fields. But with the existing data no conclusions can be drawn.

### OCCUPATIONAL GROUPS BY AGE AND SEX

The number of people who are farmers when comparing the males and the females have a close correlation to the number of males or females within that age group. In the 10-14 age group the female population exceeds the number of male population and this trend is carried on to farming where the females exceed the number of the males.

From the ages of 15-24 the number of males exceeds the number of females with regard to farming as well as the population figures. On the other hand when the total number of females exceeds the number of males within the ages of 25-39, the same case applies to the number of farmers. From the ages of 40 upwards the number of male farmers exceeds the number of female farmers which again is closely related to the population figures where the males exceed the number of females.

In all cases there are more male students than female ones. This is to be expected because females are not usually

encouraged to continue their education as they grew older.

The "unemployed" figures are mainly concentrated in the younger ages because at this stage the young are still not expected to search for jobs. This is especially true in the case of the 0-9 age groups. Those between these ages are either in school or too young to go to school. In the ages of 10-14 the "unemployed" are usually those who are too young to work but have left school for one reason or another. There is one case of "unemployed" in the 60-64 age group and another in the 65 and over age group. Obviously these people are too old to work and are living on the earnings of their children.

The figures for housewives and housekeepers do not vary much within the age groups. The highest figure is in the 15-19 age group. It is high, possibly because during these years they are unmarried and in the rural areas, unmarried daughters are usually confined to the house as far as possible.

There are no females in the "Others" occupational group but the highest figure is in the 10-14 age group. These are young people who in most cases are just out of school and do not find farming attractive enough.

Out of a total population of 245, 432 are farmers out of which 229 are males and 202 are females. This high figure for this occupation is not surprising because farming is essentially a labor intensive occupation. But the question is, is this number too much for that amount of land area. If the number of labourers is to be reduced, will the output remain the same? If the output remains the same then a certain amount of disguised unemployment exists in this community.

With regards to students 77 are males while 39 are females. What is important here is that 61 of these are between the ages of 10-14 are farmers, while ideally speaking, they should be in school. It is doubtful, whether their work as farmers is very effective or whether they become "farmers" because they have nothing else to do. It may be possible that they have been forced into farming because of the lack of secondary educational facilities, or because they are too poor, as it may be possible that they are not qualified enough.

The number of those unemployed in this case is high but if we take out those who are too young to go to school, that is those within the ages of 5-9 and the two who are too old then we

find only 16 are unemployed. This may surprise many because with the lack of employment facilities in the rural area the number of unemployed should be higher. But in actual fact very few people are totally unemployed in the rural area. There are many ways in which a person can keep himself occupied although he may be able to do better things. In other words he is underemployed.

## CONCLUSION

In all the Blocks, both among the Malays and the Javanese, farming occupies about 70% of the total population. Another general feature is that the number of males or females in this occupation reflects the number of males or females within that age group.

It is most probable that the commodity does not depend on the soil alone but maintains a mixed economy for parti farming or rubber tapping or temporary employment as a casual labourer. It can also happen that the same man may be an agriculturalist at one season and a fisherman at another. The reported occupation depends on when the survey is carried out. If the survey is carried out during the parti season that is from March to September, the man will most probably be a farmer. If it is carried out during the off-season then occupation may be more diversified.

Although the main crop is usually his staple food it is possible that the farmer sells some after the harvesting so that he can have some cash. This suspicion is further confirmed by the fact that capitalists out to exploit the farmer usually hold fun fairs just after the harvesting season. The farmers in order to relieve the monotony of his life or obtain some fun are usually relieved off their hard earned income by the likes of cheap and gaudy prizes at the fun fairs. During the off season the farmer usually drifts to the surrounding area in order to find odd jobs which are necessary to provide him with the other necessities for the rest of the year.

As many farmers farming is seasonal and subsidiary. The money they earn by farming alone is inadequate so they will go somewhere else to search for a more permanent job and rent the land to another person.

The strenuous nature of the farming operation done by the male member makes it impossible to complete the task without the assistance of the rest of the family especially the womenfolk. Originating from sheer necessity it has become an important economic factor which exploits a good source of labour. Although it has been recognised that the quality of the task performed by either sexes do not usually vary, from observations it is found that the females are given the more labour intensive jobs requiring little physical exertion for example, harvesting with the taoi or weeding in addition to her household duties.

**TABLE 16** LAND OPERATION BY FARM GROUPS AND BY SIZE OF PIECES

Size of Pieces In Acres	Non-Paid		Paid		Owned but not Operated TOTAL
	Operated and Owned	Operated but not Owned	Operated and Owned	Operated but not Owned	
Under 1	-	-	-	-	
1 & under	10	27	4	4	
2 & under	2	-	3	9	
3 & under	3	-	1	6	
3 & under	4	2	1	2	
4 & under	5	-	49	69	
5 & over	-	-	2	1	
Total	21	29	5	102	302