CHAPTER V

ATTITUDE ABOUT FACTORS AFFECTING FERTILITY

5.1 General Attitude about factors affecting fertility

Chapter Four discussed the way in which the three selected occupations and the three occupational levels affect the age at marriage. The present Chapter makes an effort to see the relationship between the occupations. The occupational levels and the attitude about various factors affecting fertility.

5.1.1 Summary of the questions on attitude

The first question in part B of the schedule deals with the attitude of the respondents regarding different factors affecting fertility. In the sub-question to the question the researcher has made an effort to include as many factors as possible (The schedule includes 19 sub-questions to the question). However, one sub-question related to the ideal frequency of coition was not received well by the respondents in the pilot testing. They felt embarrassed and hence the question was dropped after pilot testing (Even otherwise the researcher has a feeling that the question regarding the frequency of coition is not much useful unless it refers to specific time periods related to the age or the husband and the wife, the
duration of their married life as well as the number of their offsprings). The other question which are included are related to:

(1) Marriage, remarriage and sex - whether marriage is a must for a girl and if it should be continued at any cost. The ideal age of marriage for a girl, acceptibility of remarriages of widows and divorcees and attitudes about sex avoidance on religious days and after child birth.

(2) Abortion: Acceptability of induced abortion in general and after amnioncentesis to avoid the birth of a female child.

(3) The ideal number and timing of children and desired sex combination of children. Ideal gap between marriage and the first child and between children. Ideal age of mother at the birth of the first and last child.

In the pilot quesitonnaire an effort was made to collect the respondents' opinion on each of these aspects with reference to two time periods.

(1) Before marriage and

(2) At the time of interview.

It was found that the respondents were not able to recall their opinions before marriage and hence the question in the final interview schedule
refers only to the opinion at the time of interview. However, two sub-questions 'b' and 'c' were added to the table form detailed question number 1. Subquestion 'b' asked if the respondent earlier had different opinions on any of the factor affecting fertility included in the Table. If the respondent answered this question in the affirmative she was further asked in subquestion 'c' about the details of the earlier opinions, and of the changes.

5.1.2 Attitude on marriage and remarriage

Very few respondents have recorded any changes in their opinion on any factor affecting fertility. This can be either due to the fact of (a) recall gap or (b) real absence of changes in opinion. The researcher has a feeling that it was more due to the later as many respondents spontaneously maintained that there were no changes as their attitudes were more or less well formulated by the time they married. Hence the answer to the subquestion 'b' and 'c' to question number 1 are not coded. Nonetheless it should be mentioned that the main areas in which any changes in opinion were expressed were regarding (i) if every girl must marry (ii) whether a marriage should be continued at any cost. Some of the respondents responded that earlier they might have answered in the affirmative to
both the questions but now their opinion has changed
taking into consideration the experience of 'unmarried'
girls achieving occupational status and living
independently on their own and also by the perceived
need of resorting to divorce in certain cases.

However, it must be noted that
'156' (69.5%) of the total sample respondents said that
every girl must marry and '143' (63.6%) said that
marriage should be continued at any cost.

From the above discussion it can be
seen that a substantial majority of these educated
employed women living in a cosmopolitan city like
Bombay was much under the influence of the traditional
ideas regarding marriage and divorce. If the 8
respondents saying that every girl must marry 'as far
as possible' and the 54 respondents saying that
marriage should be continued 'as far as possible' are
added the percentage becomes all the more significant.

The other two questions delating
with remarriages of widows and divorcees are answered
in the affirmative by an overwhelming majority. 217
(96.4%) approved remarriages of widows and 192 (85.3%)
approved remarriages of divorcees. Some of the
respondents approving widow remarriages have however
imposed some conditions like absence of any issue from
earlier marriage. The difference between the attitude about remarriages of widows and divorcees is more than what is expressed in number and percentage approving it. Many respondents approved remarriages of divorcees only if the divorcees were themselves not responsible for the breakdown of the earlier marriage. Though these responses were not coded, the researcher as she herself carried out all the interviews noted the stigma attached to divorce in the mind of these respondents.

5.1.3 Indispensibility of children and of sons

One more question which had almost the same answer from all the respondents was regarding whether every couple must have a child. Two hundred and thirteen respondents (94.7% of the sample) answered in the affirmative. As there were only twelve respondents answering in the negative it was considered desirable to analyse their responses. The reasons given by all these twelve respondents mainly refer not to accepting the fate if you do not get a child but to the wider meaning of marriage in terms of companionship rather than the limited meaning in terms of sex and procreation. Thus this minority opinion indicates the direction of change.

A parallel question which had almost the same answer from all respondents was
regarding whether every couple must have a son except that the answer was in the negative. One hundred and ninety (84.44%) of the respondents answered in the negative. The answer to this question will be studied later in details in the section on son-preference.

5.1.4 Abstinence on religious days and after child birth

There was a sub-question on whether sex should be avoided on religious days. The researcher had an expectation that very few educated employed women would have this type of belief. Contrary to her expectation 88 (39.1%) respondents answered in the affirmative. The researcher however, feels that in opinion testing all statements indirectly indicate a direction thereby giving a lead and some of the affirmative answers may be the result of the lead. Yet even keeping this lead in mind it can be said that there were considerable number of educated employed women having this faith that sex should be avoided on religious days.

As regards the question on the abstinence after child birth 106 (47.11%) respondents have given 3 or less months as the ideal period of abstinence after child birth. Fifteen (6.67%) said that there is no specific limit and the remaining had given
6 or more months as the ideal period of abstinence after child birth.

5.1.5 Family planning, Induced abortion, amniocentesis

On the question as to whether family planning methods may be used immediately after marriage 166 answered in the affirmative and spontaneously stated that the couple should use family planning method immediately after marriage. Regarding the question that if induced abortion can be resorted to avoid unwanted children, 93 (41.33%) answered in the negative and of 32 (58.67%) who answered in the affirmative many categorically mentioned that in the first place, all efforts should be made to avoid undesirable conceptions. It is noteworthy that in spite of this attitude, 58 (25.7%) respondents had themselves undergone induced abortion and 10 of them had undergone it twice and one had it thrice. (it cannot be said that their own experience with induced abortion changed their opinion as not a single respondent expressed that her own experience changed her opinion. It thus shows either the weakness in turning the attitude into practice or giving a socially acceptable answer. If later, it seems that the answers are based on the lingering ethical considerations of the past even when practice has changed.
Similar is the case with reference to the answers to the question on the use of amniocentesis to abort a female embryo. Though 202 (89.78%) of the respondents said 'no' to the use of amniocentesis to get rid of a female embryo it cannot be said with certainty as to how many would have acted accordingly if they had faced the situation. Thus one is not sure whether the answers show the real attitude of the respondents or mere utterances of what the respondents thought as socially acceptable. The researcher thus feels that the questions on attitude have to be much more subtle and well thought of to get reliable answers. An open discussion where questions and counter questions can be spontaneously used to reveal the real attitude would be much more desirable than structured interviews. However, as the search on attitude was just a small part of the present research, the present researcher did not try it.

5.1.6 Age of marriage

The question on the ideal age of marriage for a girl and the ideal age of woman at the birth of her first and last child as well as the gap between marriage and the first child and between the successive children were answered with reference to what the respondents really felt to be the ideal and not on the basis of their own experiences as is found
in some earlier surveys. Surprisingly enough it cannot also be said that the answers tally with the social norm for a group of educated women. When the mean age at marriage for the sample women is 25 years, the modal age is 24 years, the mean ideal age for marriage is 21.95 years and the legal age of marriage for a girl is 18 years, there was one respondent who felt that '16' is the ideal age for a girl to marry and '18' is the ideal age for a girl to give birth to her first child. If this can be ignored as an isolated case there were 16 others (7.11%) of the sample respondents who feel that the ideal age for a girl to marry is 18. The researcher feels that the 'social norm' has more weightage when it comes to 'Yes' or 'no' type answers than when there is a wide range of answers as in the case of ideal age of marriage or at the birth of the first child.

It is noteworthy that the actual mean age of marriage for the total sample respondents is 25 but 204 (90.7%) respondents feel that the ideal age of marriage for a girl is below 25. Forty two (18.7%) feel it to be at or below 21 and 132 (59.6%) feel that it is at or below 22. One hundred and eighty four (82.2%) feel it to be at or below 23. Thus it can be seen that for the majority of them their marriage is a late marriage (A gap of 3 or more years as compared
to the ideal). It is also clear that their actual age of marriage has not affected their ideal.

5.1.7 **Ideal age of a woman at the birth of the first child**

With respect to the ideal age of a woman at the birth of the first child only 14 (6.2%) feel that it should be either 20 or below it, only 25 (11.1%) feel it to be 21 or below and only 51 (22.2%) give it as 22 or below. 102 respondents (45.3%) feel that the age of woman at the birth of her first child should be 23 or below. The mean ideal age of a woman at the birth of the first child is 23.8 years for the whole sample.

But even when a considerable majority (60.9%) feels that the ideal age of a woman at the birth of her first child should be 24 or below, in their own life only 43 (19%) of them had given birth to their first child at the age 24 or 25. On the other hand 60 (26.7%) had given birth to their first child at the age 26 or 27 and 57 (22.7%) had given birth to their first child at the age of 28 or 29. There were 48 (21.4%) respondents who had given birth to their first child at the age 30 and above.
The difference between ideal and the actual age of mother at the birth of the first child becomes all the more striking when it is taken into consideration that all but 3 respondents (98.7%) felt that the ideal age of mother at the birth of the first child should be 27 or below while in actual life 44% had given birth to their first child at an age 28 and above and the mean age of the sample women at the birth of first child was about 27.

It clearly shows that their attitude has neither affected their age at marriage nor their age at the birth at the first child. The first was not a thing of their choice in the present circumstances of settled marriages. When first was postponed they had no option but to accept a higher age at the birth of the first child. The only thing they could do was not to use any contraceptive method immediately after marriage to have the first issue as early as possible. This neglect of family planning in the beginning of their married life had important repercussions on the success of family planning as will be seen in the next chapter on the knowledge, attitude and practice of family planning.

The present researcher, therefore, strongly feels that there is a need to find out the optimum age of marriage for a girl which would be the
most desirable from the point of view of fertility control and family planning. A very high age at marriage made many of the respondents reluctant to use family planning immediately after marriage as they themselves have explained.

In response to the question regarding their desired timing of the birth of the first child at the time of marriage less than half, 99 (44%) said that they wanted it after some time while for 20 (8.89%) any time was all right indicating that they were not particularly interested in postponing the first birth and there were 5 (2.22%) who had not given thought to this question at the time of their marriage. The remaining 101 (44.8%) respondents wanted the first issue immediately after marriage. A majority of them (61 out of 101: 60.4%) wanted the first issue immediately as according to the reason given by them their marriage was a late marriage. Thus it is clear that for the majority of the respondents not wanting to use family planning immediately after marriage, their late marriage was the cause. It therefore becomes important to find out an ideal age of marriage which will not lead to the total neglect of any use of family planning methods before the birth of the first child.
5.1.8 Maximum age of the mother at the birth of the last child

Regarding the maximum age before which the mother should give birth to her last child, the respondents seem to answer from their actual experience as there is a strong co-relation between these two. Only 10 (4.4%) respondents suggested the age on or below 25 and only 54 (24%) as on or below 29. For the remaining 161 (71.6%) it was on or above 30. The median was 30 (122 respondents have given 30 as the age before which woman should give birth to her last child). However, there were 56 respondents giving the age as between 31 to 34. The age 35 seems to be the limit as only 8 gave the age as above 35 (6 of them giving it as 40). In their actual life 12 of them had given birth to their last child at an age between 36 and 40.

There was one question in the table (sub question 17 to question number one in part B of the schedule) regarding the minimum time gap for which women should not rejoin service after child birth. As the question is better fitting the 'cost of child' aspect it is analysed in the concerned chapter and is, therefore, omitted here from the analysis of attitude about factors affecting fertility.
5.1.9 Ideal family size

Regarding the next question on the ideal family size, the modal ideal no. of children is '2' for the sample respondents. 167 respondents had given their ideal family size as two. It is as expected on the basis of the government propaganda for 2 children until recently when it was turned to 1 or 2. In spite of this propaganda what is worth noting is the deviation from the norm. While 167 respondents had said that their ideal family size was '2' the majority of the remaining 58 respondents were inclining towards a larger and not a smaller family. Three major points may be noted down.

There were only 8 respondents who said that their ideal family size was 1 and another 8 respondents who said that it was one or two. There were 16 (7.1%) respondents having ideal family size as 3 and 11 (4.8%) having ideal family size as 4. As only two (less than 8%) of these respondents having ideal family size as 3 or 4 had actual family size equal to the desired family size, it cannot be said that they were idealising their actual experience. It, therefore, shows that the higher family size ideal still remains for some educated employed women in the reproductive age. Though it may not have affected their own fertility it must be affecting the ideas of others.
around them as these respondents are in an influential position to shape the opinion of other persons. Therefore, it is very much essential to identify these people and to change their opinions in the "small family norm" directions.

There are 20 respondents (8.8%) who were not sure about their ideal family size and gave it as 1 or 2 (8), 2 or 3 (10) and 3 or 4 (2). These 20 undecided persons are also in a danger of having larger family than their ideal family size, their own ideas being uncertain. Efforts are, therefore, needed to identify these persons and to encourage them to accept the lower margin as the ideal before they actually reach the higher one. Efforts are also needed to identify persons with low family size norm. These persons should be encouraged not to cross their ideal in practice.

From the present sample, of the 8 persons having one as the ideal family size, only 4 (50%) had maintained the desired size and 4 (50%) had already crossed it at the time of the interview.

5.2 Attitude on factors affecting fertility by occupation and by occupational level

Attitude about various factors affecting fertility are so far described regarding the
whole of the sample women. Now they will be discussed by the occupation and the occupational level of the respondents.

When the difference in the attitude on various factors affecting fertility was studied by occupation and by occupational level, it was found that there was no significant difference in the attitude on most of the factors.

5.2.1 Ideal age at marriage and at the birth of the last child

Beginning with the ideal age at marriage for a girl, it is seen that the mean ideal age at marriage for a girl is almost the same for the two occupations - teaching and office work (21.7 and 21.8 years respectively). The mean is slightly higher for the medical occupation. It is 22.4 years. The T value of the mean is not significant between any two occupations. Thus it is seen that the respondents from the three occupations under consideration do not differ significantly in their mean ideal age at marriage.

If the relation between the occupational levels and the mean ideal age at marriage is considered, the high and the middle level respondents give the same ideal age at marriage. (The
mean is 22 years in both the case). The mean for the low occupational level is slightly lower. It is 21.7 years. Again, the difference is statistically insignificant.

5.2.2 Ideal family building period

The mean ideal age of mother at the birth of the first child is 24.1, 23.6 and 23.5 years respectively for respondents from medical occupation, office work and teaching. It is 24, 23.9 and 23.5 years for the respondents from middle, high and low occupational level. In both the cases the differences are not statistically significant.

The mean ideal gap between children is the same for respondents from teaching and office work. It is 3.5 years. The respective mean is 3.2 years for respondents from medical occupation. It means that the respondents from the medical occupation favour a higher age at marriage as compared to the respondents from office work and teaching but they prefer a smaller gap between both marriage and the first child and between the successive children. As majority of the sample women (183 or 81.3%) have indicated their ideal family size as '2' or below '2' the above differences in the ideal gap between marriages and the first child and the first and the second child can be said to
indicate a smaller ideal duration of family building period for respondents in medical occupations as compared to respondents from the other two occupations. Two of them referred to 'career motive' in giving a smaller gap between children as ideal. Others referred to the ease of rearing two together and to the advantages that the children get in terms of each other's company.

In the next chapter on knowledge, attitude or practice of family planning it would be found that the respondents from the medical occupations led the other two group, on all the aspects of knowledge, attitude and practice of family planning. Whether a shorter ideal duration of family building had any part to play in the lead would be a point worth considering in detail in future studies. If a shorter ideal duration of family building can be proved to lead to more effective methods of family planning in the end then it may be perhaps a better policy to be advocated. Government can than concentrate on the women who say that their family size is completed (or who have two children, whichever is earlier) and give better emphasis on terminating or more effective methods and on more effective use of them for this special group. This may perhaps bring about better results with lower costs. This is just a direction of thinking suggested
by the present research. Though it nowhere comes near a research finding, it is an aspect certainly deserving the attention of future researchers as it can have serious policy implication.

5.2.3 Abstinence

With respect to the ideal number of months for which sex should be avoided after child birth the mean for the medical and the teaching occupation is almost the same (3.7 and 3.9 months for medical personnel and teachers respectively). The mean is much higher for the office workers (6.4 months).

If the attitude regarding sex avoidance on religious days is considered there are significant differences in the attitude of respondents both by occupation and by occupational levels. Table 5.1:A and Table 5.1:B indicate the situation.

Table 5.1:A on the next page shows that the teachers were the most orthodox group—while 28 (37.3%) of respondents from office workers and 22 (29.3%) of respondents from the medical profession had the attitude accepting abstinence on religious days, 37 (49.3%) of the respondents from teaching had this attitude. The differences on the attitude by occupation are thus found to be statistically significant (Chi-square 6.41, D.F. 2, Sig. <0.05)
TABLE 5.1:A

Favourable attitude towards abstinence on religious days by the occupation of the respondents

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Occupation</th>
<th>Acceptance of sex avoidance on religious day</th>
<th>Total</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Yes (I)</td>
<td>No (II)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Teaching</td>
<td>37 (49.3)</td>
<td>38 (50.7)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Medical</td>
<td>22 (29.3)</td>
<td>53 (70.7)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Teaching</td>
<td>28 (37.3)</td>
<td>47 (62.7)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Total</td>
<td>87 (38.7)</td>
<td>138 (61.3)</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Chi. Sq. 6.41, D.F. 2, Sig. < 0.05

Figures in the brackets indicate percentages

Table 5.1:B on the next page shows that the difference in this attitude by occupational level was also statistically significant. While only 18 (24.0%) respondents from the high occupational level accepted this attitude the respective percentage was (45.3%) and 46.6% for respondents from middle and low occupational level. The Chi. sq. was 10.24 at 2 D.F. and the level of significance was less than five percent. Thus the differences on the attitude by occupational level were statistically significant.
### TABLE 5.1:B

**Favourable attitude towards abstinence on religious days by the occupational level of the respondents**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Occupational level</th>
<th>Acceptance of sex avoidance on religious day</th>
<th>Total</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Yes (I)</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>High</td>
<td>18 (24.0)</td>
<td>75 (33.3)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Middle</td>
<td>34 (45.3)</td>
<td>75 (33.3)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Teaching</td>
<td>35 (46.6)</td>
<td>75 (33.3)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Total</td>
<td>87 (38.7)</td>
<td>225 (100.0)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>No (II)</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>High</td>
<td>57 (16.0)</td>
<td>75 (33.3)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Middle</td>
<td>41 (54.7)</td>
<td>75 (33.3)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Teaching</td>
<td>40 (53.3)</td>
<td>75 (33.3)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Total</td>
<td>138 (61.3)</td>
<td>225 (100.0)</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Chi. sq. 10.24, D.F. 2, Sig. < 0.05

Figures in the brackets indicate percentages.

Though the attitude regarding the two factors mentioned above may be called as traditional as against modern outlook, it is likely to help fertility control if it can lead to a reduction in the frequency of coition over a given time period as it is expected to do if the faith is adhered to in actual practice.
5.3 Son Preference

5.3.1 Open son-preference revealed from answers to direct questions

Question number one in the section 'B' of the interview schedule included a sub-question on whether the respondent felt that every couple must have a son (Sub-question 8). It is already mentioned that one hundred and ninety (84.44%) of the respondents answered in the negative. However, some of the respondents pointed out that there should also have been a question as to their feeling regarding whether every couple must have a daughter. As this was pointed out to the researcher, in the final and not in the trial interviews, it was not possible to change the schedule accordingly. The researcher feels that without this counter balancing question, the question on 'whether every couple must have a son' cannot be used for analysing son-preference'. The affirmative answer may not be indicating a son-preference and it is quite possible that the respondent equally feels that every couple must have a daughter too. As the one sided question only regarding son may conceal this fact the researcher does not feel justified in using this one sided question for analysing son-preference' and it is not used for that purpose. Future researchers can gain
by always using a pair of questions on son and daughter if the purpose is to judge son-preference.

Fortunately, in this very schedule there was another such question which covered this aspect (Sub question 18 to question No.1 in section B). There was also a pair of questions in the schedule at another place to judge 'son-preference' not with reference to the general desirability or otherwise of a son for any couple as such but with respect to the intensity of the desire for a male and female offspring in the mind of the respondent at the time of the respondent's marriage. (Sub-question 'c' and 'd' to question No.3 in section 'B' of the schedule). This pair will be analysed along with the sub-question 18 in question number 1 part B of the schedule which asks, 'In your opinion what is the ideal number of sons and daughters in a family?' The question was included before the question on ideal family size as is suggested by D.J. bogue in his book 'A Model interview for Fertility Research and Family Planning evaluation.' According to Bogue putting the question about the ideal number of sons and daughters before the ideal total family size leads to a more truthful answer. The researcher, however, feels now in retrospect that the first question suggested by Bougue is itself a 'leading' question making respondents feel that they should include children of both sex in their response.
However, in spite of the lead in the question there are 9 (4%) respondents whose answers reveal a son preference either in terms of an ideal family composition consisting only of sons or of more sons than daughters.

Sub-question 'C' to question No. 3 in section B of the schedule asked whether the respondent, at the beginning of her family building, intensely desired a 'son' and sub question 'd' to the same question collects similar information regarding daughter. Thus this pair can rightly indicate the son-preference in the mind of a respondent who intensely desired a son but not a daughter.

Judged from the answers of the respondents regarding the questions mentioned earlier a very negligible minority seems to have son preference. This is so whether the respondents are giving their ideal family composition in general or their own desired family composition at the time of marriage. The researcher was, however, doubtful about whether the answers indicated the respondent's real attitude or whether they were just reflecting the respondent's effort to look modern. She, therefore, decided to analyse the answers to some of the questions regarding the cost and benefit from children of the two sexes which she felt were also likely to reveal 'son-
preference'. The purpose of the analysis was that of counterchecking the information provided by the earlier questions discussed so far, on the composition of the ideal and desired family size.

5.3.2 **Disguised son preference revealed from the cost and benefit consideration of children of both sex**

A. **Cost Considerations:**

   (i) Saving for children: To consider the cost, the reason for saving for the child and the expected duration of the child's dependence on parents were considered. Table 5.2 gives the cross tabulation by the sex of a child and the purpose of the saving for the child.

   **TABLE 5.2**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Sex of the child</th>
<th>Main Reason of saving for the child</th>
<th>Total</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Education</td>
<td>Marriage</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Son</td>
<td>132 (99.2)</td>
<td>1 (0.8)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Daughter</td>
<td>61 (45.9)</td>
<td>72 (54.1)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Total</td>
<td>193 (72.6)</td>
<td>73 (29.4)</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Chi. Sq. 95.1, D.F. 1, Sig. < 0.05

Figures in the brackets indicate percentages.

Note: Total is more than 225 as a respondent saving both for his son and daughter is counted twice.
There were in all 145 respondents saving for their son and 144 respondents saving for their daughter. Of them 12 saving for their son and 11 saving for the daughter could not give any specific reason for the saving. The answers of the remaining 133 respondents saving for their sons and daughters respectively are classified according to the major reason of the saving, viz. marriage and education.

Table 5.2 (on the last page) cross tabulates their answer according to the sex of the child.

Table 5.2 shows that of the 133 respondents saving for son with some purpose all except one had saved for the education of the son. Even in the solitary case where the respondent was saving for son's marriage, it was not just for marriage but for marriage and education. On the other hand, of the 133 respondents saving for their daughter with same purpose, 61 (45.8%) were saving for the daughters' education and the majority 72 (54.13%) was saving for the daughters' marriage. Thus for these educated employed women the main reason of saving for their daughter is their marriage and not their education.

(ii) Duration of dependence of children on parents There were also significant sex wise differences in the duration of time for which
the respondents expected their children to depend on them. Table 5.3 reveals the situation.

**TABLE 5.3**

**Expected duration of dependence on parents by the sex of the child.**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Sex of the child</th>
<th>Expected duration of dependence</th>
<th>Total</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>20 or less no. of years (I)</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Daughters</td>
<td>60 (38.5)</td>
<td>156 (49.2)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Sons</td>
<td>23 (14.7)</td>
<td>161 (50.8)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Total</td>
<td>83 (26.2)</td>
<td>317 (100.0)</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

|                  | More than 20 years (II)         |       |
| Daughters        | 96 (61.5)                       |       |
| Sons             | 138 (86.3)                      |       |
| Total            | 234 (73.8)                      |       |

Chi. sq. 24, D.F. 1, Sig. < 0.05

Figures in the brackets indicate percentages.

Note: Total comes to 317 as 92 respondents having both sons and daughters are counted twice.

The above table reveals that while 60 out of 156 respondents (38.46%) having daughters felt that their daughters would depend on them for 20 or less number of years, only 23 (14.7%) respondents of the 161 respondents having sons felt that their sons would depend on them for the same period. On the other hand while 61.5% of respondents having daughters felt that their daughters would depend on them for a period
of more than 20 years, 86.3% of respondents having son felt that their son would depend on them for a period of more than 20 years. It shows that the difference by sex in the expectation of duration of dependence of children is statistically significant. (Chi.sq. 24, D.F. 1, Sig. <0.05).

Thus taking into consideration the sex-wise expectation of duration of dependence it was clearly less for daughters. The present researcher had not collected information regarding whether the amount saved for children of both sex was the same and if it differed for which sex it was larger. However, the cost consideration would not give a clear picture unless and until the returns expected from children of both sex are taken into consideration.

B. Returns expected from children

The returns from children are considered in terms of labour, income and pension motive. In the trial interviews, the labour motive was found to be totally absent and so the questions related to it were dropped from the final schedule. The analysis of income and pension motive clearly explained that the respondents expected more in both these form from their sons than from their daughters. This was especially true of the pension motive. The income motive
would be discussed in detail in the chapter on benefit and here the discussion would be limited only to 'pension' motive as the purpose is to find out the difference between the expected cost and benefit from a son and a daughter and thereby try to find out if there is a concealed son-preference.

The pension motive is generally discussed in the financial term. The present researcher, however, strongly feels that the physical and emotional support which a child can provide to its parents in the old age is a much more desired form of pension to the parents, a pension for which there is no substitute in the world outside. A secured pensionable job may diminish the need of financial support from children in the old-age as is indicated by many earlier surveys. But the physical and emotional support in old age is a need which pensions cannot fulfil.

Regarding the financial support in old age there were two questions in the present schedule. They form sub-question 'C' and 'D' to question number 14 in section 'C' of the questionnaire. Sub-question C to question number 14 asked if the respondent perceived any need of financial support in old age. Respondents said they did not perceive any need of financial support in old age. Sub-question 'd' to the same question '14' in section 'C' of the schedule asked
the respondents about on whom would they depend if at all there was the need of financial support in old age due to exceptional circumstances. In response to this sub-question 107 (47.6%) referred to children. In answer to the question on the possibility of physical support in old age 171 (76.0%) respondents referred to children as the source of physical support. These answers regarding the expected financial and physical support from children were analysed with respect to the sex of the child. Table 5.4 and table 5.5 show the results.

(i) Old age financial support from children

TABLE 5.4

Expectation of financial support from children by the sex of the child

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Sex of the child</th>
<th>Expectation of financial dependence</th>
<th>Total</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Yes (I)</td>
<td>No (II)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Son</td>
<td>91 (56.5)</td>
<td>70 (43.5)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Daughter</td>
<td>65 (41.7)</td>
<td>91 (58.3)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Total</td>
<td>156 (49.2)</td>
<td>161 (50.8)</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Chi.sq. 6.99, D.F. 1, Sig. < 0.05

Figures in the brackets indicate percentages.

Note: The total comes to 317 as 92 respondents having children of both sex are included twice.
(ii) Old age physical support from children

TABLE 5.5

Expectation of Physical support from children by the sex of the child

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Sex of the child</th>
<th>Expectation of financial dependence in old age</th>
<th>Total</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Yes (I)</td>
<td>No (II)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Son</td>
<td>122 (75.8)</td>
<td>39 (24.2)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Daughter</td>
<td>98 (62.8)</td>
<td>91 (37.2)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Total</td>
<td>220 (69.4)</td>
<td>97 (30.6)</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Chi sq. 5.32, D.F. 1, Sig. < 0.05

Figures in the brackets indicate percentages.

Note: The total comes to 317 as 92 respondents having children of both sex are included twice.

The tables (Table 5.5 and table 5.6) show that in case of both financial and physical support in old age a significantly larger percentage of respondents expected the support from sons as compared to daguthers. (The chi. sq. is significant at less than 5 percent level in both the cases).

(iii) The reasons for not depending financially on children

The situation becomes more clear when the reason for not depending on children for financial support is analysed by the sex of the child.
Seventy respondents not expecting to depend financially on their son and the 91 respondents not expecting to depend financially on their daughter were further asked about the reason behind the attitude. The answers clearly indicated that not only the difference between the persons expecting to depend on their sons and daughters were statistically significant but also were the differences in the reason for not financially depending on the children of the respective sex.

In the case of no male child the possibility of interference from his in-laws is said to be the cause of no financial expectation from him. Thus the parents were not worried that the sons would not help them because they get married. On the other hand, in case of daughters, 38 respondents (more that 2/5th of those respondents who were not expecting any financial support from daughters) had a clear understanding in their mind, which to express in their own words was, "daughters belong to other families". Thus the marital status of a daughter was seen as affecting her ability to help her parents financially even when the parents were in exceptional situations and badly needed the money. This was not the case with reference to the son in the mind of even a single respondent out of the 161 respondents having sons.
Thus whether the money saved for a son was smaller or larger than that saved for the daughter and even when the period of dependency was smaller for daughters the cost-benefit consideration would not favour daughters since the returns from them were not expected even in times of financial crisis, once they were married. If the cost-benefit considerations are any guide, they clearly indicate son preference at least in the mind of these 38 (24.35%) respondents (out of the 156 having a daughter) who did not expect to depend on their daughter even in emergency conditions of financial needs as the daughters belong to other families. This is all the more remarkable as it was the opinion of earning women who had been financially on their own throughout their married life.

(iv) The reasons for not depending physically on children

The difference becomes all the more impressive when it comes to the reasons for not depending on daughter for physical support in old age.

Even in case of need of physical support, the possibility of which was accepted by a larger percentage of respondents and where a larger percentage looked to children as the source of physical
support, 38 of the 58 respondents, (66.0% not expecting any physical support from daughters) gave the same reason that the daughters belong to other families.

Thus larger percentage (66.0%) was not expecting actual physical support from daughter in old age for the reason that after marriage the daughters are not able to support their parents physically as they belong to other families. Here again, even when the actual work of looking after the aged parents may not be done by the son but by his wife, there was only one solitary respondent who referred to the probability of the unwillingness of the daughter in law as a cause of not depending on son for old age physical support.

These differences regarding the future expectations from son and daughter were so vivid that they revealed a son-preference. The respondents answers regarding the benefit from children of both sex thus revealed what was concealed in the answers to the direct question regarding ideal and desired family size.

The important point to note about these expectations from son and daughter is that these differences in the expectations from children of the two sex remain the same irrespective of the occupation and the occupational level of the respondent. It is not
that there were no differences in the expectations from children by the occupation or the occupational level of the respondent but they were not statistically significant. It means that the same sort of 'son-preference' revealed by cost-benefit considerations remain in all the three occupations and the occupational levels under consideration.

This difference between the 'son-preference' revealed by direct questions and by the analysis of cost-benefit consideration clearly explains the desirability of counter-checking the reliability of answers given in response to direct questions on attitude by deeper analysis of the same attitude through some other mechanism. Moreover, this becomes essential in cases where the expressed opinion may be influenced by considerations of modernity and changes.

Earlier research has shown that the attitude about various factors affecting fertility affects fertility. The analysis in this chapter indicates that there were no significant differences either by occupation or by occupational levels in attitudes about various factors affecting fertility. It thus indicates that fertility difference either by occupation or by occupational level are not likely to result from the differences in attitude regarding various factors affecting fertility.
However, the analysis of the present research shows that most of the sample respondents held the traditional views that marriage is a must for a girl, and that it should be continued at any cost. Moreover, many of the respondents had a 'disguised' son-preference though they did not admit it openly. All these attitudes are favourable to high fertility. Thus employment of women has not been completely effective in removing the traditional views leading to higher fertility.