The last few years have witnessed a rapid advance of research in family planning in India. A number of detailed studies have been published on the success/failure of family planning programmes in several parts of the country ranging from states, regions and villages. Quite a good number of studies described and analysed the anatomical and physiological aspects of family planning with reference to particular religious groups like the Hindus, Muslims and Christians, occupational groups like agriculturists, agricultural labourers, industrial workers and employees of public and private enterprises and socio-cultural groups like castes, and tribes. However, only a few studies focused their attention on the options and opportunities provided by the social, economic and demographic environments of specific communities for the introduction and implementation of family planning policies and programmes.

In a State where regional imbalances in the natural, economic and socio-cultural setting are strikingly visible, there is a possibility of the advantaged and the disadvantaged groups evincing differential interests in the family planning activities. Andhra Pradesh is no exception to this. It has three regions, the Coastal, the Rayalaseema and the Telangana,
of which kayalasoma is extremely backward. So far, no caste group in the kayalasoma has been studied at full length to know its response to the acceptance of the various methods of family planning. The present research work is devoted to a study of the influence of demographic, socio-economic and programme input variables on the adoption of sterilisation by the Kamasas and Harijans, which are socially as well as economically diametrically opposite caste groups. The area selected for the study is Chandragiri panchayat samithi of kayalasoma. The respondents chosen for this study are all Hindus. Muslims and Christians are not included since they are negligible in number in the area chosen for this study.

This study is intended to highlight the prospects and problems of family planning, specifically, sterilisation at micro-level. The aim is to provide material that will not only inform and evoke interest among the students of economics and population studies but also illustrate the range and diversity of economic problems enveloped in the social and cultural fabric. Depth of coverage in a relatively small area seems to be more suitable to the needs of family planning workers, the family planning adopters and the family planning scientists.

The organization of the material is based on a framework that gives an account of the problem under study, review of research studies in economics, sociology, anthropology, demography, communication and other fields related to family
planning and the results and discussion, touching briefly in
the end, the problems of family planning and the suggestions
that may be followed in a rural set up. The concepts in this
research work are defined in the introductory as well as in
other chapters. Technical terms that are not defined in the
introductory part are explained in footnotes in the text.
The term Harijan consists of two castes, the Bala and the
Nindiga. In terms of social and economic backwardness, each of
the two castes is almost on par with the other. Hence, for the
sake of brevity, both the groups are referred to as a single
group, viz., Harijan. The term family planning is used
throughout this study as a synonym to family welfare.

The most important finding of the study may be said to
be that the rich, educated, and knowledgeable Harijans are not
favourable to plan their families probably because they
believe in the proliferation of their numbers for extracting
as many benefits as possible from the existing political
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