

Volume 22, Number 4

October 1990

Journal of
**Biosocial
Science**

Published by the Parkes Foundation

Cambridge, England.

Editor: D. F. Roberts

Editor for the Biosocial Society: C. G. N. Mascie-Taylor

Editorial Advisory Panel

J. A. Beardmore
W. Brass
Robert Chester

Peter Diggory
A. J. Fox
E. Grebenik

G. A. Harrison
M. Kirk
John Peel

D. M. Potts
J. S. Price
M. P. M. Richards

Review Editors

E. J. Clegg

P. F. Selman

Associate Editor

M. A. Herbertson

Notice to Contributors

The *Journal of Biosocial Science* publishes original papers, reviews, lectures, proceedings and major book reviews dealing with social aspects of human biology, including reproduction and its control, gerontology, ecology, genetics and applied psychology; with biological aspects of the social sciences, including sociology, social anthropology, education and criminology; and with biosocial aspects of demography. Preference will be given to material which is clearly interdisciplinary.

Papers are considered for publication on the understanding that they have not been, and will not be, published elsewhere in whole or in part, and that, where customary, they have been approved for publication by the relevant Head of Department. The Editor is not responsible for any loss of or damage to manuscripts or illustrations and his decision on all editorial matters is the final. This Journal is covered by *Current Contents*, *Biological Abstracts*, *Psychological Abstracts* and *Population Index*.

Manuscripts should be sent in duplicate to the Editor, *Journal of Biosocial Science*, 22 Newmarket Road, Cambridge CB5 8DT. They should be clearly typewritten, on one side of the paper only, with a 1¼ inch margin, and be double-spaced and in the English language. Spelling should follow that of the *Concise Oxford Dictionary*. The Editor reserves the right to make minor literary emendations in the final editing, but manuscripts will not be altered substantially without consultation with the author or marked unless the paper is thought provisionally to be acceptable. The author is responsible for the accuracy of quotations, tabular matter and references. Manuscripts or tables prepared on dot-matrix printers are not acceptable.

Manuscripts should bear the title of the paper, name of the Institution where the work was done, the present postal address of the author if different from that of the Institution, and a short running head of not more than 50 letters. Titles should be brief. A short summary should precede the text. Acknowledgments should be made in a separate section.

Diagrams must be numbered and should bear the author's name, short title of the paper and figure number on the back. Captions should be typed on a separate sheet.

Tables should be typed on separate sheets, be given Arabic numbers and be headed by adequate captions. Their approximate position in the text should be indicated by a note in the margin. They should not exceed in size the equivalent of one page of print. Weights and measurements should be given in metric units. Standard abbreviations should be used (μg , mg, g, kg; ml, l; mm, cm, m, km, °C, %, <, >, hr, min). Abbreviations should not be followed by, and initials need not be separated by, full points (e.g. FPA). Mean values should, where possible, be accompanied by standard errors or similar statistical indications of variance.

References in the text should be given in the manner that is standard in the Journal. Titles of journals should be abbreviated according to the *World List of Scientific Periodicals*, 4th edn (1964) and its supplements, and as also given in *World Medical Periodicals*. An unpublished paper should not be cited unless it is already in press.

Debate. A section headed *Debate* is reserved for comments on papers appearing in previous issues. Authors whose papers are involved will be given an opportunity to reply at similar length for simultaneous publication. Discussion of any particular paper will not normally be continued beyond the first comment or comments and the author's reply. The Editor's decision as to publication of comments is final. Comments, not exceeding 500 words (one printed page), should be sent to the Editor.

Proofs will be sent to contributors for minor corrections, and should be returned to the Editor within one week. Special attention should be given to the checking of tables, mathematical formulae and figures. Major alterations to the text will be accepted only at the author's expense. Overseas contributors are advised to arrange for a proof-reader in Great Britain. The date of receipt given at the end of the paper is that on which the script as published was received or agreed.

Offprints. A copy of the issue of the Journal in which the paper appears will be supplied free to the author, or, where there are two or more, to the author responsible for ordering offprints. Offprints may be purchased by ordering on the form sent out with the proofs.

© Parkes Foundation. With the exception of abstracts of no more than 300 words, no part of this publication may be reproduced or stored in a retrieval system in any form or by any means without the permission of both the Parkes Foundation and the Author.

JOURNAL OF BIOSOCIAL SCIENCE

Vol. 22, No. 4

Contributors

October 1990

- | | | |
|--------------------------|---|--------|
| Astier M. Almedom | DPhil Student, Department of Biological Anthropology, University of Oxford | p. 489 |
| J. Alston | Professor, Department of Sociology, Texas A & M University, USA | p. 453 |
| Hassan Y. Aly | Assistant Professor of Economics, Ohio State University, Marion Campus, USA | p. 447 |
| Ellen Annandale | Lecturer in Sociology, University of Warwick | p. 405 |
| Muriel Berkeley | Senior Lecturer, Department of Community Medicine, University of Aberdeen | p. 522 |
| W. I. De Silva | Postdoctoral Fellow, Department of Demography, Australian National University, Canberra | p. 395 |
| Alexander de Waal | Research Officer, Department of Biological Anthropology, University of Oxford | p. 489 |
| Nicholas Ford | Research Fellow, Institute of Population Studies, University of Exeter | p. 519 |
| H. Fukurai | Assistant Professor, Department of Sociology, University of California, Santa Cruz, USA | p. 453 |
| V. Fuster | Associate Professor in Physical Anthropology, Department of Animal Biology I, Complutense University, Madrid | p. 501 |
| Kate Hunt | Research Fellow, MRC Medical Sociology Unit, Glasgow | p. 405 |
| W. H. James | Visiting Worker, MRC Mammalian Development Unit, University College London | p. 517 |
| Peter Kaim-Caudle | Emeritus Professor of Social Policy, University of Durham | p. 520 |
| Geok Lin Khor | Associate Professor, Department of Human Development Studies, University Pertanian Malaysia, Selangor | p. 465 |
| F. Luna | Associate Professor in Physical Anthropology, Department of Animal Biology I, Complutense University, Madrid | p. 501 |
| J. P. M. Ntozi | Director and Associate Professor, Institute of Statistics and Applied Economics, Makerere University, Kampala, Uganda | p. 433 |
| A. Oakley | Deputy Director, Thomas Coram Research Unit, Institute of Education, University of London | p. 477 |
| D. L. Poston | Professor and Chairman, Department of Rural Sociology, Cornell University, Ithaca, NY, USA | p. 507 |
| L. Rajan | Research Co-ordinator, Thomas Coram Research Unit, Institute of Education, University of London | p. 477 |
| P. Robertson | Computer Programmer, Thomas Coram Research Unit, Institute of Education, University of London | p. 477 |
| Eric A. Salzen | Anderson Professor of Psychology, University of Aberdeen | p. 521 |
| S. Thapa | Senior Research Associate, Family Health International, North Carolina, USA | p. 423 |
| T. M. Vaidya | Executive Director, Nepal Fertility Care Center, Kathmandu | p. 423 |
| Jia Zhongke | Research Associate, Department of Rural Sociology, Cornell University, Ithaca, NY, USA | p. 507 |

AGE AT MARRIAGE IN SRI LANKA: STABILIZING OR DECLINING?

W. I. DE SILVA

*Department of Demography, Australian National University,
Canberra, Australia*

Summary. Over the last four decades in Sri Lanka, age at first marriage for males increased marginally, and for females it rose considerably, but there has been no recent increase in female age at marriage. Among the younger cohorts, estimated ages at which some married indeed show a declining mean age at marriage. Coale–McNeil estimates indicate that there is no real decline in female age at marriage in Sri Lanka. Marriages were delayed as a result of economic hardship or increased mortality to the mid-1970s, but once the overall economy improved after 1977, more marriages took place. Female age at marriage in Sri Lanka remained slightly below 24 years, the age which is anticipated by younger cohorts, and this level is likely to persist for some time.

Introduction

Kirk (1969) described Sri Lanka as a sort of Ireland in Asia, where late marriage reduced fertility. Caldwell *et al.* (1989) identified Sri Lanka as the leader in Third World Asia's change in marriage patterns; by the mid-1970s Sri Lankan females were marrying not at puberty but a decade later. There have been several studies of age at marriage, or its relative contribution to lower fertility in Sri Lanka (Fernando, 1976; Wright, 1968, 1970; Smith, 1980; Trussell, 1980; Immerwahr, 1981; Langford, 1981; McCarthy, 1982; Smith, Shahidullah & Alcantara, 1983). Alam & Cleland (1981), indicated that up to 1970 about 60% of the decline in fertility in Sri Lanka was attributable to marriage postponement, but in 1971–75 the contribution of changes in nuptiality to the decline in the total fertility rate fell to 46%. As procreation is almost entirely within marriage, any upward or downward trend in nuptiality would influence the fertility of Sri Lankan women. It is therefore important to enquire whether age at marriage of Sri Lankan women continues upward or has stabilized at the pre-existing high level.

Data

There are two sources of data on marriage provided by the nationally representative Sri Lanka Contraceptive Prevalence Survey (SLCPS) of 1982. The household survey of 14,637 women contains information on all female members of each household

- ERIC A. ROTH AND K. BALAN KURUP *Child mortality levels and survival patterns from Southern Sudan* page 365
- W. G. F. GROENEWOLD AND M. TILAHUN *Anthropometric indicators of nutritional status, socioeconomic factors and mortality in hospitalized children in Addis Ababa* page 373
- BIRGITTE BÖNNELYKKE *Social class and human twinning* page 381

Book reviews

- MALCOLM SMITH reviews *Human Mating Patterns* (edited by C. G. N. Mascie-Taylor & A. J. Boyce) page 387
- ALLAN G. HILL reviews *The Causes of Demographic Change. Experimental Research in South India* (by J. C. Caldwell, P. H. Reddy & P. Caldwell) page 388
- JACK PARSONS reviews *Biology and Freedom* (by S. A. Barnett) page 390
- ALISON FRATER reviews *Having a First Baby: Experiences in 1951 and 1985 Compared* (by B. Thompson, C. Fraser, A. Hewitt & D. Skipper) page 392

Vol. 22

October 1990

No. 4

- W. I. DE SILVA *Age at marriage in Sri Lanka: stabilizing or declining?* page 395
- KATE HUNT AND ELLEN ANNANDALE *Predicting contraceptive method usage among women in West Scotland* page 405
- S. THAPA AND T. M. VAIDYA *Vasectomy reversal in Nepal* page 423
- JAMES P. M. NTOZI *The desire for children in tropical Africa: the influence of relatives on fertility decisions in Ankole, Uganda* page 433
- HASSAN Y. ALY *Demographic and socioeconomic factors affecting infant mortality in Egypt* page 447
- HIROSHI FUKURAI AND JON ALSTON *Divorce in contemporary Japan* page 453
- GEOK LIN KHOR *Fertility preferences among Malaysian women: an analysis of responses to the new population policy* page 465
- ANN OAKLEY, LYNDA RAJAN AND PENROSE ROBERTSON *A comparison of different sources of information about pregnancy and childbirth* page 477
- ASTIER M. ALMEDOM AND ALEXANDER DE WAAL *Constraints on weaning: evidence from Ethiopia and Sudan* page 489
- F. LUNA AND V. FUSTER *Reproductive pattern in a rural Mediterranean population: La Alpujarra, Spain* page 501
- DUDLEY L. POSTON AND JIA ZHONGKE *Socioeconomic structure and fertility in China: a county level investigation* page 507

Debate

- W. H. JAMES *The sex ratios of offspring of sexually promiscuous people: with reference to hepatitis B and prostatic cancer* page 517

Contents

- W. I. DE SILVA *Age at marriage in Sri Lanka: stabilizing or declining?* page 395
- KATE HUNT AND ELLEN ANNANDALE *Predicting contraceptive method usage among women in West Scotland* page 405
- S. THAPA AND T. M. VAIDYA *Vasectomy reversal in Nepal* page 423
- JAMES P. M. NTOZI *The desire for children in tropical Africa: the influence of relatives on fertility decisions in Ankole, Uganda* page 433
- HASSAN Y. ALY *Demographic and socioeconomic factors affecting infant mortality in Egypt* page 447
- HIROSHI FUKURAI AND JON ALSTON *Divorce in contemporary Japan* page 453
- GEOK LIN KHOR *Fertility preferences among Malaysian women: an analysis of responses to the new population policy* page 465
- ANN OAKLEY, LYNDIA RAJAN AND PENROSE ROBERTSON *A comparison of different sources of information about pregnancy and childbirth* page 477
- ASTIER M. ALMEDOM AND ALEXANDER DE WAAL *Constraints on weaning: evidence from Ethiopia and Sudan* page 489
- F. LUNA AND V. FUSTER *Reproductive pattern in a rural Mediterranean population: La Alpujarra, Spain* page 501
- DUDLEY L. POSTON AND JIA ZHONGKE *Socioeconomic structure and fertility in China: a county level investigation* page 507
- Debate*
- W. H. JAMES *The sex ratios of offspring of sexually promiscuous people: with reference to hepatitis B and prostatic cancer* page 517
- Book reviews*
- NICHOLAS FORD reviews *The Changing Population of Britain* (edited by H. Joshi) page 519
- PETER KAIM-CAUDLE reviews *Differential Mortality—Methodological Issues and Biosocial Factors* (edited by L. Ruzicka, G. Wunsch & P. Kane) page 520
- E. A. SALZEN reviews *Neural Darwinism. The Theory of Neuronal Group Selection* (by G. M. Edelman) page 521
- MURIEL BERKELEY reviews *Selected Readings in the Cultural, Social and Behavioural Determinants of Health* (edited by J. C. Caldwell & G. Santow) page 522
- Author and Subject Indexes to Volume 22 page 525