

# SOCIAL AND PSYCHOLOGICAL FACTORS AFFECTING FERTILITY

## XXIX. INTEREST IN AND LIKING FOR CHILDREN IN RELATION TO FERTILITY PLANNING AND SIZE OF PLANNED FAMILY<sup>1</sup>

LOIS PRATT AND P. K. WHELPTON

ONE of the original hypotheses of the Indianapolis Study is: The stronger the interest in and liking for children the lower the proportion of couples practicing contraception effectively and the larger the planned family. This formulation was a natural outgrowth of the social situation during the depression of the 1930's. The obvious signs of economic hardship—which were accentuated among large families—together with the declining birth rate, led to the conclusion that fertility planning probably occurs primarily as a means to avoid becoming overburdened by children, and that those with the least interest in children are the most susceptible to pressures to restrict family size. Since the 1930's, however, the apparent increase in the size of planned families under much better economic conditions, and the findings of the Indianapolis Study itself (to be reviewed here briefly), have provided evidence suggestive of a positive aspect to the motivation for planning—planning for the best interest of children and family—rather than an exclusively negative type of motivation. In the light of this evidence the following formulation of the first part of the hypothesis now appears more justifiable: The stronger the interest in and liking for children the *higher* the proportion of couples practicing contraception effectively. Interest in children might be expected to have a positive influence on size of planned family, as originally hypothesized, at least among families with good resources. This partial reformulation suggests,

<sup>1</sup> This is the twenty-ninth of a series of reports on a study conducted by the Committee on Social and Psychological Factors Affecting Fertility, sponsored by the Milbank Memorial Fund with grants from the Carnegie Corporation of New York. The Committee consists of Lowell J. Reed, Chairman; Daniel Katz; E. Lowell Kelly; Clyde V. Kiser; Frank Lorimer; Frank W. Notestein; Frederick Osborn; S. A. Switzer; Warren S. Thompson; and P. K. Whelpton.

in turn, the advisability of viewing *both* attitudes toward children and fertility behavior within the family organization context. The influence of one element of family organization—the participation of the wife in extra-familial social activities—on her attitudes toward children and fertility behavior is examined in a paper to follow.

Other Indianapolis Study analyses suggest that a family-centered interest may serve as motivation for family planning. First, there is the finding that the maritally adjusted are more apt to plan fertility than are the maladjusted.<sup>2</sup> It seems reasonable to characterize the maritally adjusted as persons who give more care to the maintenance of healthy family relations than do the maladjusted. While fertility planning may contribute to family adjustment as well as grow out of it, the evidence suggests that planning usually is at least part of a tendency to attend to the effective operation of one's family. However, it does not provide conclusive proof that marital adjustment means greater interest in the family or that planning is motivated by such concern for the family.

A similar suggestion arises from the finding that those who feel personally adequate, and specifically those who are confident they can do a good job of raising children, are more apt to have large planned families than those with feelings of personal inadequacy.<sup>3</sup> The implication here is that women who attend closely to interpersonal relations, as measured by their evaluation of the success of their performance, will plan fertility because they believe it helps to insure good family relations.

Indianapolis data also indicate that people who think of children as a means of enhancing their own egos—for example, who feel that children owe parents appreciation for their sacrifices—are no more likely to plan small families than those

<sup>2</sup> Reed, Robert B.: *Social and Psychological Factors Affecting Fertility*. vii. The Interrelationship of Marital Adjustment, Fertility Control, and Size of Family. The Milbank Memorial Fund *Quarterly*, October, 1947, xxv, No. 4, pp. 383-425 (Reprint pp. 259-301).

<sup>3</sup> Westoff, Charles F. and Kiser, Clyde V.: *Social and Psychological Factors Affecting Fertility*. xvii. The Interrelation of Fertility, Fertility Planning, and Feeling of Personal Inadequacy. The Milbank Memorial Fund *Quarterly*, July, 1952, xxx, No. 3, pp. 239-297 (Reprint pp. 741-799).

whose reaction to children is less selfish.<sup>4</sup> If it were assumed that only the negative motivations for fertility control were operative, it would be expected that those who were the most self-centered and least concerned about children for their own sake, would be the ones most apt to limit fertility. Since a self-centered attitude toward children is not characteristically accompanied by planning, it suggests that negative motivations are not a complete explanation for fertility planning action.

In addition, it has been found that the feeling that children interfere with personal freedom is not accompanied by fertility planning. In fact, the lack of this feeling of restraint by children tends to be directly associated with planning, suggesting the existence of a "positive" motivation behind planning.<sup>5</sup>

### 1. THE DATA

The data pertain to the inflated sample of 1,444 "relatively fecund" couples of the Indianapolis Study.<sup>6</sup> These couples

<sup>4</sup> Swain, Marianne and Kiser, Clyde V.: *Social and Psychological Factors Affecting Fertility*. xviii. The Interrelation of Fertility, Fertility Planning and Ego-Centered Interest in Children. *The Milbank Memorial Fund Quarterly*, January, 1953, xxxi, No. 1, pp. 51-84 (Reprint pp. 801-834).

<sup>5</sup> Reimer, Ruth and Whelpton, P. K.: *Social and Psychological Factors Affecting Fertility*. xxvii. Attitudes toward Restriction of Personal Freedom in Relation to Fertility Planning and Fertility. *The Milbank Memorial Fund Quarterly*, January, 1955, xxxiii, No. 1, pp. 63-111 (Reprint pp. 1140-1187).

In contrast, little evidence of "positive" motivations for planning is revealed in a British Royal Commission study. The reasons that were given by women for using birth control are:

	<i>Per Cent</i>
Could not afford (more) children	38
To space pregnancies at appropriate intervals	25
Health reasons; medical advice (husband or wife)	24
Housing difficulties	16
Uncertainty due to the war	11
Parental instincts satisfied with children already born	9
Dislike of pregnancy or childbirth	5
Ties and loss of freedom	4
Difficulties of obtaining domestic assistance	1

Royal Commission on Population: *FAMILY LIMITATION AND ITS INFLUENCE ON HUMAN FERTILITY DURING THE PAST FIFTY YEARS*. London, His Majesty's Stationery Office, 1949, I, p. 177.

<sup>6</sup> All couples reporting four or more live births were classified as "relatively fecund," regardless of other circumstances. Couples with three or fewer live births were also classified as "relatively fecund" unless they knew or had good reason to believe that having a live born child was physiologically impossible during a period of at least 24 or 36 consecutive months since marriage (24 if never pregnant, 36 if

(Continued on page 433)

were native white, Protestant, at least eighth grade graduates, married during 1927-1929, neither previously married, husband under 40 and wife under 30 at marriage, and residents of a large city most of the time since marriage.<sup>7</sup> They were interviewed between April 1, 1941 and January 31, 1942.

As in other articles in this series, four fertility planning categories are used, namely, Number and Spacing Planned, Number Planned, Quasi-Planned, and Excess Fertility.<sup>8</sup> They indicate the extent to which all *pregnancies* were planned, and for the large majority of couples the extent to which *live births* and *living children* were planned. A very few couples had more living children (but not pregnancies) than planned, because of twins; a somewhat larger proportion had more pregnancies (but not living children) than planned, mainly because of pregnancy wastage, but partly because of child mortality. Fertility is represented by number of live births to the couple; the fertility rate used is the number of live births per 100 couples.

Ten attitude questions for both husbands and wives are used as measures of interest in and liking for children, together with a summary index. The questions are:

1. Do you like to play with, read or talk to children?
2. Do you get tired of hearing the constant questions children ask?
3. Do you get as much "kick" from the things children say as from those grownups say?
4. How much do you enjoy taking children on outings?
5. How do you feel about seeing children's pictures in ads, store windows, etc.?
6. How does the fun you get compare with the trouble when

ever pregnant). Failure to conceive in the absence of contraception practiced "always" or "usually" during periods of the above durations was considered "good reason" for such belief.

<sup>7</sup> A detailed account of the sampling procedure may be found in Whelpton and Kiser: *Social and Psychological Factors Affecting Fertility*. v. The Sampling Plan, Selection, and Representativeness of Couples in the Inflated Sample. The Milbank Memorial Fund *Quarterly*, January, 1946, xxiv, No. 1, pp. 49-93 (Reprint pp. 163-207).

<sup>8</sup> Whelpton and Kiser: *Social and Psychological Factors Affecting Fertility*. vi. The Planning of Fertility. The Milbank Memorial Fund *Quarterly*, January, 1947, xxv, No. 1, pp. 63-111 (Reprint pp. 209-257).

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children of your neighbors or friends come in and make themselves at home? .

7. Frequently children get so wrapped up in their play that they forget there is anyone around. Do you find it fun just to watch them then and see what they do and say?

8. How much are you interested in hearing other people talk about their children?

9. How much did a strong liking for children encourage you to have your last child?

10. How much have you been discouraged from having more children by not being more interested in children?

The respondent answered each of these questions by checking one of five categories which ranged from "very much" to "very little" (or their equivalent). The summary index was computed for each individual by averaging the respondent's answers to eight of the ten items.<sup>9</sup> "Interest scores" for individuals on this index range from 3 to 9 for wives and 1 to 9 for husbands out of the possible range of 1 to 9.<sup>10</sup> They have been grouped in four categories, namely,

Scores:

1-5: "Little interest"

6: "Some interest"

7: "Much interest"

8-9: "Very much interest"

Two questions about attitudes concerning family size were

<sup>9</sup> Item 5 was excluded because it was thought to represent a rather inconsequential type of interest and to reflect the individual's reaction to advertisements. Item 10 was excluded because similar information is contained in item 9.

<sup>10</sup> Correlations of individual items against the summary index are as follows:

<i>Item</i>	<i>Item-to-scale r</i>
1	+ .628
2	+ .597
3	+ .400
4	+ .518
6	+ .438
7	+ .427
8	+ .544
9	+ .497

A Guttman scale was formed with these items with reproducibility of .76. Various other combinations of several items fail to reach higher levels of reproducibility.

(Continued on page 435)

used. They are: (a) When you were married, how many children did you want? (b) if you could begin your married life over again, and the size of your family could be determined only by your liking for children, how many would you have?

When the schedules used in the Indianapolis Study were prepared in 1940 it was realized that the foregoing questions probably did not provide an adequate means of measuring interest in and liking for children. Since the Committee was not aware of a better set, the choice was between using them or omitting the hypothesis. Methodological advances made since 1940 indicate several deficiencies. A basic shortcoming is that the items do not represent one or two precise attitude dimensions. For example, the child referent varies, and is sometimes not clearly specified as being either one's own children or those of others. It would be especially useful to distinguish between attitudes toward own and other children when studying motivations for actually bearing children. Distinctions could also be made profitably between a passive liking for children and an interest in active participation with children; between liking to play with children, to "take care of" children, and to train children; between liking for children *as* children and interest in children as future adults; and between other dimensions of what has been considered in the present study a general attitude of "interest in and liking for children." In future work it would be desirable to develop scalable items for one or more such dimensions.

Another type of shortcoming is that of depending on answers

However, Borgatta and Westoff have derived a cumulative scale (H) with the items used in the summary index, excluding item 4 and adding other items. Reproducibility for that is .9624. Even using the same items, this higher rate might presumably be expected because of the greater tolerance of response error in the H technique.

Westoff and Borgatta studied the relationship between their scale of liking for children and total fertility and planned fertility. Hence the present study can be considered, in part, a test of the same hypothesis with an alternative index of the attitude variable. As will be indicated, findings based on the two techniques are similar. Borgatta, Edgar F. and Westoff, Charles F.: *Social and Psychological Factors affecting Fertility*. xxv. *The Prediction of Total Fertility*. The Milbank Memorial Fund *Quarterly*, October, 1954, xxxii, No. 4, pp. 383-419 (Reprint pp. 1087-1123); *Ibid.*; xxvi. *The Prediction of Planned Fertility*. The Milbank Memorial Fund *Quarterly*, January, 1955, xxxiii, No. 1, pp. 50-62 (Reprint pp. 1125-1137).



to questions asked at a given time when measuring the intensity of a feeling which may have changed substantially over the twelve to fifteen years of married life being studied, in many cases without the respondent being aware that changes have occurred. This is one of the unavoidable handicaps of a one-time study as compared to a longitudinal study.

## 2. FINDINGS

### A. FERTILITY PLANNING

For the sample as a whole—including childless couples as well as couples with children—there is no clear pattern of relationship between the summary index of interest in and liking for children and fertility planning, although there is a slight tendency among both wives and husbands for a low index of liking to be accompanied by excess fertility (Table 1, deck A). However, when attention is limited to couples with children, a significant positive relationship is found between the index and the effectiveness of fertility planning. The relationship is masked when the childless couples are included, because 94 per cent of all childless wives and husbands have the combined characteristic of (a) a low index of interest in children and (b) complete success in planning the number and spacing of their pregnancies.<sup>11</sup> This may mean that the negative type of motivation for planning is heavily concentrated among couples who, on the basis of relatively little liking for children, decide to have *no* children. On the other hand, it may indicate only that couples who remain childless intentionally (for a variety of reasons) fail to *develop* strong interest in children.

The relationships between each of the ten individual measures of interest in children and effectiveness of fertility planning are shown in Table 2 for couples with children. Three of the interest items have a significant positive relationship to fertility planning for both wives and husbands, namely,

<sup>11</sup> If there was evidence that childlessness was due to other causes than the effective practice of some type of contraception, the couple was classified as "relatively sterile." As mentioned above, this analysis is restricted to "relatively fecund" couples.

2. Do you get tired of hearing the constant questions children ask?
9. How much did a strong liking for children encourage you to have your last child?
10. How much have you been discouraged from having more children by not being more interested in children?

Table 1. Effectiveness of fertility planning by summary index of interest in and liking for children, for wives and husbands.

SUMMARY INDEX OF INTEREST	NUMBER OF COUPLES	PER CENT DISTRIBUTION BY FERTILITY PLANNING STATUS				
		Total	Number and Spacing Planned	Number Planned	Quasi-Planned	Excess Fertility
<i>A. All Couples</i>						
<i>Wives</i>						
Very Much	406	100	27	20	33	20
Much	498	100	23	17	33	27
Some	350	100	26	9	31	34
Little	190	100	47	5	23	25
<i>Husbands</i>						
Very Much	254	100	32	13	34	21
Much	418	100	22	18	34	26
Some	449	100	22	17	34	28
Little	323	100	40	6	24	30
<i>B. Couples With Children<sup>1</sup></i>						
<i>Wives</i>						
Very Much	406	100	27	20	33	20
Much	484	100	21	17	34	28
Some	302	100	14	11	36	39
Little	117	100	21	4	35	40
<i>Husbands</i>						
Very Much	254	100	32	13	34	21
Much	408	100	21	19	34	26
Some	424	100	17	18	36	29
Little	223	100	16	7	34	43
<i>C. Childless Couples<sup>2</sup></i>						
<i>Wives</i>						
Some	48	100	98	2	-	-
Little	73	100	90	5	4	-
<i>Husbands</i>						
Some	25	100	100	-	-	-
Little	100	100	93	4	2	1

<sup>1</sup> The differences between the proportions of those with "very much" interest and of those with "some" or "little" interest who have excess fertility are significant at .01 level, for both wives and husbands with children. None of the tests of significance given in this report takes into account the possible effect of sample inflation.

<sup>2</sup> Only 14 wives and 10 husbands are rated as having "much" interest, and none as having "very much" interest. A few childless couples appear in the number planned, quasi-planned, and excess fertility groups because fertility planning status was determined on the basis of pregnancies, not live children. For example, a couple with only one pregnancy would be classed as having "excess fertility" if the pregnancy was not wanted and was ended by a miscarriage.

A positive tendency is suggested for wives and husbands in two others:

6. How does the fun you get compare with the trouble when children of your neighbors or friends come in and make themselves at home?
8. How much are you interested in hearing other people talk about their children?

No relationship—positive or negative—is indicated between

Table 2. Effectiveness of fertility planning by replies to ten questions regarding interest in and liking for children, for wives and husbands with children.

DEGREE OF INTEREST IN CHILDREN	NUMBER OF COUPLES	PER CENT DISTRIBUTION BY FERTILITY PLANNING STATUS				
		Total	Number and Spacing Planned	Number Planned	Quasi- Planned	Excess Fer- tility
<i>A. Wives</i>						
<i>1. Do you like to play with, read or talk to children?</i>						
Very Much	556	100	21	17	33	29
Much	297	100	17	13	39	31
Some	388	100	24	15	31	30
Little	68	100	22	9	43	26
<i>2. Do you get tired of hearing the constant questions children ask?</i>						
Very Interested	413	100	28	18	32	22
Rather Interested	628	100	18	15	35	32
Indifferent	78	100	24	8	27	41
Tired	188	100	17	14	39	30
<i>3. Do you get as much "kick" from the things children say as from those grownups say?</i>						
Much More from Children	551	100	19	17	34	30
More from Children	625	100	22	15	35	28
Neither More or Less	117	100	19	10	38	33
Less from Children	16	*	*	*	*	*
<i>4. How much do you enjoy saking children on outings?</i>						
Very Much	794	100	23	16	33	28
Much	295	100	19	14	35	32
Some	186	100	18	13	39	30
Little	34	100	17	21	41	21

Table 2. (Continued)

DEGREE OF INTEREST IN CHILDREN	NUMBER OF COUPLES	PER CENT DISTRIBUTION BY FERTILITY PLANNING STATUS				
		Total	Number and Spacing Planned	Number Planned	Quasi- Planned	Excess Fer- tility
<i>5. How do you feel about seeing children's pictures in ads, store windows, etc.?</i>						
Like Very Much	732	100	22	17	33	28
Rather Like	392	100	18	14	33	35
Slightly Interested	138	100	22	9	38	31
Not Interested or Bored	47	100	23	23	28	26
<i>6. How does the fun you get compare with the trouble when children of your neighbors or friends come in and make themselves at home?</i>						
Much More Fun than Trouble	264	100	25	15	40	20
Some More Fun	479	100	18	16	40	26
As Much Trouble as Fun	419	100	22	16	26	36
More Trouble than Fun	146	100	22	12	23	43
<i>7. Frequently children get so wrapped up in their play that they forget there is anyone around. Do you find it fun just to watch them then and see what they do and say?</i>						
Very Much	1,063	100	21	17	34	28
Much	150	100	17	11	35	37
Some	79	100	23	6	38	33
Little	17	*	*	*	*	*
<i>8. How much are you interested in hearing other people talk about their children?</i>						
Very Much	429	100	23	18	33	26
Much	354	100	23	15	29	33
Some	406	100	17	15	40	28
Little	120	100	20	9	37	34
<i>9. How much did a strong liking for children encourage you to have your last child?</i>						
Very Much	553	100	27	22	31	20
Much	286	100	25	12	35	28
Some	272	100	16	12	41	31
Little	198	100	8	7	33	52
<i>10. How much have you been discouraged from having more children by not being more interested in children?</i>						
Very Little	893	100	22	19	35	24
Little	273	100	20	11	34	35
Some	102	100	20	6	31	43
Much or Very Much	37	100	13	5	22	60

Table 2 (Continued).

DEGREE OF INTEREST IN CHILDREN	NUMBER OF COUPLES	PER CENT DISTRIBUTION BY FERTILITY PLANNING STATUS				
		Total	Number and Spacing Planned	Number Planned	Quasi- Planned	Excess Fer- tility
<i>B. Husbands</i>						
<i>1. Do you like to play with, read or talk to children?</i>						
Very Much	467	100	25	17	32	26
Much	334	100	22	13	34	31
Some	441	100	15	16	39	30
Little	67	100	28	10	27	35
<i>2. Do you get tired of hearing the constant questions children ask?</i>						
Very Interested	356	100	29	14	30	27
Rather Interested	673	100	17	18	37	28
Indifferent	156	100	22	11	37	30
Tired	124	100	18	10	32	40
<i>3. Do you get as much "kick" from the things children say as from those grownups say?</i>						
Much More from Children	421	100	22	15	36	27
More from Children	676	100	21	14	33	32
Neither More or Less	169	100	16	23	37	24
Less from Children	43	100	35	5	30	30
<i>4. How much do you enjoy taking children on outings?</i>						
Very Much	651	100	21	16	35	28
Much	362	100	22	18	35	25
Some	228	100	17	13	34	36
Little	68	100	25	6	29	40
<i>5. How do you feel about seeing children's pictures in ads, store windows, etc.?</i>						
Like Very Much	371	100	22	13	35	30
Rather Like	540	100	25	15	35	25
Slightly Interested	209	100	17	24	29	30
Not Interested or Bored	189	100	15	9	38	38
<i>6. How does the fun you get compare with the trouble when children of your neighbors or friends come in and make themselves at home?</i>						
Much More Fun than Trouble	239	100	24	11	43	22
Some More Fun	452	100	23	19	36	22
As Much Trouble as Fun	474	100	18	15	33	34
More Trouble than Fun	143	100	23	13	19	45

Table 2 (Continued)

DEGREE OF INTEREST IN CHILDREN	NUMBER OF COUPLES	PER CENT DISTRIBUTION BY FERTILITY PLANNING STATUS				
		Total	Number and Spacing Planned	Number Planned	Quasi- Planned	Excess Fer- tility
<i>7. Frequently children get so wrapped up in their play that they forget there is anyone around. Do you find it fun just to watch them then and see what they do and say?</i>						
Very Much	890	100	25	14	33	28
Much	260	100	12	20	36	32
Some	128	100	16	16	39	29
Little	31	100	26	6	42	26
<i>8. How much are you interested in hearing other people talk about their children?</i>						
Very Much	259	100	27	11	34	28
Much	247	100	24	18	34	24
Some	554	100	17	17	35	31
Little	249	100	22	13	34	31
<i>9. How much did a strong liking for children encourage you to have your last child?</i>						
Very Much	453	100	30	21	29	20
Much	312	100	25	13	36	26
Some	316	100	15	14	39	32
Little	228	100	7	11	36	46
<i>10. How much have you been discouraged from having more children by not being more interested in children?</i>						
Very Little	863	100	23	17	35	25
Little	236	100	22	14	29	35
Some	164	100	17	10	35	38
Much or Very Much	44	100	11	—	50	39

\* Distributions are not shown for fewer than 20 persons.

the effectiveness of fertility planning and the replies to the other questions.

Since the relationship between interest in children and effectiveness of fertility planning is positive for both wives and husbands with children, it might be thought that when wives and husbands are matched as to interest an even closer relationship would be observed with planning. This does tend to be the case, as is shown in Table 3. Among couples in which

Table 3. Effectiveness of fertility planning by summary index of interest in and liking for children of wives by that of husbands, for couples with children.

SUMMARY INDEX OF INTEREST		NUMBER OF COUPLES	PER CENT DISTRIBUTION BY FERTILITY PLANNING STATUS <sup>1</sup>				
Wives	Husbands		Total	Number and Spacing Planned	Number Planned	Quasi-Planned	Excess Fertility
Very Much	Very Much	120	100	40	17	26	17
Very Much	Much	133	100	25	22	37	16
Very Much	Some or Little	155	100	19	21	34	26
Much	Very Much	75	100	23	9	45	23
Much	Much	173	100	24	21	27	28
Much	Some or Little	235	100	17	16	37	30
Some or Little	Very Much	59	100	29	10	34	27
Some or Little	Much	102	100	12	10	42	36
Some or Little	Some or Little	251	100	15	8	34	43

<sup>1</sup> The difference between the couples in which both wife and husband have "very much" interest and those in which the wife has "very much" but the husband "some or little" interest with respect to the proportion classified as number and spacing planned is significant at the .01 level. The difference between the couples in which both wife and husband have "very much" interest and those in which the wife has "some or little" and the husband "very much" interest with respect to the proportion who planned the number and spacing of their pregnancies does not reach the .10 level of significance. However, the difference is significant at the .10 level between the couples in which both wife and husband have "some or little" interest and those in which the wife has "some or little" but the husband "very much" interest.

both wife and husband have a high index of interest in children, 40 per cent planned the number and spacing of their pregnancies, compared to 27 per cent of all couples in which the wife has a high index (regardless of the husband), and 32 per cent of all couples in which the husband has a high index. Similarly, when both wife and husband have a low index of liking, 43 per cent are excess fertility, which is somewhat above the corresponding figure of 39 per cent for couples in which the wife has a low index and 34 per cent for those in which the husband has a low index regardless of the spouse's rating. If the reasoning implicit in the hypothesis is correct, this finding suggests that planning behavior is more likely to be consistent with level of liking for children when both husband and wife are similar in their degree of interest in children (and presumably also in the strength of their motivation to plan their family) than when they are different. If both members of the couple strongly like children they are highly motivated to plan effectively; if both are not interested in children they are unlikely to plan effectively because they lack this positive motivation.

In addition to indicating that similarity of wives' and husbands' attitudes toward children reinforces the tendency to plan, Table 3 also shows that the wife's and husband's summary indexes of liking for children are somewhat independent of one another. Furthermore, the table shows that when the wife's index of interest is high but the husband's low, the proportion of couples that plan effectively (19 per cent) is smaller than when the husband's index is high and the wife's low (29 per cent). Again, following through the reasoning underlying the hypothesis, this suggests that husbands with strong liking for children more often exert an independent influence in the direction of effective fertility planning than wives with such a liking. No such difference is found in the proportion of couples having excess fertility.

In addition to the difference mentioned above between the childless couples and those with children, it appears that the



relationship between interest in children and fertility planning is not the same for couples that differ in family size. (See

Table 4. Effectiveness of fertility planning by summary index of interest in and liking for children, for wives and husbands with different numbers of children.

SUMMARY INDEX OF INTEREST, AND NUMBER OF CHILDREN	NUMBER OF COUPLES	PER CENT DISTRIBUTION BY FERTILITY PLANNING STATUS <sup>1</sup>				
		Total	Number and Spacing Planned	Number Planned	Quasi-Planned	Excess Fertility
<i>A. Wives</i>						
<i>One Child</i>						
Very Much	135	100	48	4	39	9
Much	120	100	38	5	43	14
Some or Little	110	100	35	4	38	23
<i>Two Children</i>						
Very Much	153	100	26	33	27	14
Much	213	100	22	26	36	16
Some or Little	174	100	14	12	48	26
<i>Three Children</i>						
Very Much	63	100	5	24	35	36
Much	97	100	7	16	24	53
Some or Little	74	100	3	14	24	59
<i>Four or More</i>						
Very Much	55	100	4	18	31	47
Much	54	100	2	9	30	59
Some or Little	61	100	3	5	10	82
<i>B. Husbands</i>						
<i>One Child</i>						
Very Much	70	100	47	—	50	3
Much	115	100	45	6	37	12
Some or Little	180	100	36	5	38	21
<i>Two Children</i>						
Very Much	145	100	29	38	21	12
Much	176	100	17	30	37	16
Some or Little	219	100	19	7	48	26
<i>Three Children</i>						
Very Much	46	100	4	30	26	40
Much	70	100	8	13	28	51
Some or Little	118	100	3	15	27	55
<i>Four or More</i>						
Very Much	28	100	4	7	29	60
Much	47	100	2	15	21	62
Some or Little	95	100	3	9	23	65

<sup>1</sup> For wives with one, two, or three children, the difference between those with "very much" interest and those with "some or little" interest with respect to the proportion classified as excess fertility is significant at the .10 level. For women with four or more children this difference is significant at the .01 level.

The difference between the one-child husbands with "very much" interest and the one-child husbands with "some or little" interest with respect to the proportion classified as excess fertility is significant at the .05 level; the difference for husbands with two or three children is significant at the .10 level; for husbands with four or more children the difference does not reach the .10 level of significance.

Table 4.) For both wives and husbands *with one or two children* there is a clear positive relationship between the index of interest and the effectiveness of fertility planning. For those with three children, the positive pattern is less evident, in part, no doubt, because so few are number and spacing planned. Among wives with four or more children there is a sharp rise in the proportion with excess fertility as the index of interest declines. Among husbands with four or more children, how-

Table 5. Effectiveness of fertility planning by summary index of interest in and liking for children, by socio-economic status, for wives and husbands with children.

SUMMARY INDEX OF INTEREST, AND SOCIO-ECONOMIC STATUS	NUMBER OF COUPLES	PER CENT DISTRIBUTION BY FERTILITY PLANNING STATUS <sup>1</sup>				
		Total	Number and Spacing Planned	Number Planned	Quasi-Planned	Excess Fertility
<i>A. Wives</i>						
<i>Upper Status</i>						
Very Much	155	100	50	19	23	8
Much	126	100	29	22	28	21
Some or Little	121	100	28	16	44	12
<i>Middle Status</i>						
Very Much	85	100	14	20	46	20
Much	119	100	24	12	40	24
Some or Little	88	100	13	10	43	34
<i>Lower Status</i>						
Very Much	166	100	13	20	35	32
Much	239	100	15	17	35	33
Some or Little	210	100	10	5	28	57
<i>B. Husbands</i>						
<i>Upper Status</i>						
Very Much	68	100	55	15	24	6
Much	120	100	38	18	30	14
Some or Little	214	100	30	21	34	15
<i>Middle Status</i>						
Very Much	63	100	30	10	48	12
Much	98	100	16	16	41	27
Some or Little	131	100	13	14	42	31
<i>Lower Status</i>						
Very Much	123	100	20	14	32	34
Much	190	100	14	20	32	34
Some or Little	302	100	9	10	33	48

<sup>1</sup> For upper status wives and husbands the difference between those with "very much" interest and those with "some or little" interest with respect to the proportion classified as number and spacing planned is significant at the .01 level. For middle status husbands and lower status wives and husbands the difference between those with "very much" interest and those with "some or little" interest with respect to the proportion classified as excess fertility is significant at the .01 level; for middle status wives the difference is significant at the .05 level.

ever, there is no consistent relationship between the index of interest and the proportion in any fertility planning group.

The positive relationship between interest in children and effectiveness of fertility planning among couples with children persists in all socio-economic status groups. This holds true for both wives and husbands, as is shown by the summary index of interest in Table 5. The relationship appears somewhat closer on the whole among wives and husbands of high socio-economic status than those of medium or low status.<sup>12</sup>

#### B. FERTILITY, AND SIZE OF PLANNED FAMILY

Considering all couples, regardless of fertility planning status, those with a high index of interest in children are more likely

<sup>12</sup> There is only a slight association between socio-economic status and the index of interest in children. The distribution of wives by socio-economic status is the same for those with "very much" and "little" interest. For husbands, the proportion having high socio-economic status tends to vary inversely with degree of interest in children.

Socio-economic status by summary index of interest in and liking for children, for all couples.

Summary Index of Interest	Number of Couples	Per Cent Distribution by Socio-Economic Status					
		Total	1 (High)	2	3	4	5 (Low)
<i>Wives</i>							
Very Much	405	100	21	17	21	25	16
Much	500	100	12	14	25	31	18
Some	350	100	10	19	22	29	20
Little	189	100	20	18	21	25	16
<i>Husbands</i>							
Very Much	260	100	10	17	25	29	19
Much	413	100	16	14	24	28	18
Some	450	100	13	21	21	27	18
Little	321	100	23	14	20	28	15

For the analysis of fertility and fertility planning by socio-economic status see Kiser and Whelpton: *Social and Psychological Factors Affecting Fertility*. ix. Fertility Planning and Fertility Rates by Socio-Economic Status. *The Milbank Memorial Fund Quarterly*, April, 1949, xxvii, No. 2, pp. 188-244 (Reprint pp. 359-415).

Appendix II in Part ix shows the basis for classifying couples according to socio-economic status. Nine groups were formed. In the above table five groups are used, which correspond to the following original groups: 0-1, 2, 3, 4, and 5-9. In other tables where it is necessary to combine still further, three groups are used, which correspond to the original status groups 0-2, 3, and 4-9.

SUMMARY INDEX OF INTEREST	BIRTHS PER 100 COUPLES <sup>1</sup>				NUMBER OF COUPLES			
	All Couples		Couples with Children		All Couples		Couples with Children	
	Wives	Husbands	Wives	Husbands	Wives	Husbands	Wives	Husbands
Very Much	218	222	218	222	406	254	406	254
Much	219	212	225	218	498	418	484	408
Some	201	215	233	228	350	449	302	424
Little	134	158	218	229	190	323	117	223

<sup>1</sup> The difference between the fertility rates for wives and husbands classified as having "very much" interest and those having "little interest" is significant at the .01 level for all couples.

Table 6. Fertility rates by summary index of interest in and liking for children, for all wives and husbands and those with children.

to have *some* rather than *no* children than those with a low index, but among couples with children there is no tendency for persons who like them very much to have *larger* families than those who like them moderately or less. As shown in Table 6, fertility rates tend to vary directly with the index of interest

Table 7. Number of live births by summary index of interest in and liking for children, for all wives and husbands.

SUMMARY INDEX OF INTEREST	NUMBER OF COUPLES	PER CENT DISTRIBUTION BY NUMBER OF LIVE BIRTHS <sup>1</sup>					
		Total	None	1	2	3	4 or More
<i>A. Wives</i>							
Very Much	406	100	—	33	38	15	14
Much	498	100	3	24	43	19	11
Some	350	100	14	22	35	16	13
Little	190	100	38	17	27	10	8
<i>B. Husbands</i>							
Very Much	254	100	—	28	41	19	12
Much	418	100	2	28	42	17	11
Some	449	100	6	24	41	16	13
Little	323	100	31	22	23	14	10

<sup>1</sup> The difference in per cent childless is significant (at the .01 level) between the couples with "very much" interest and those with "little" interest. The difference in the proportion having one child is also significant (at the .01 level) between wives with "very much" interest and those with "little" interest; this is not true for husbands.

in children when all couples are included, but not to vary significantly when the couples with children are considered separately. It is notable in Table 7 that not one wife or husband who is rated as very much interested in children is childless. Similarly, Table 8 indicates that over half of the childless wives and nearly three-fourths of the childless husbands are classified as having "little" interest, but that among the groups with children the maximum for "little" interest is 9 per cent for women and 28 per cent for men. Unfortunately, the data do not show whether couples that are not interested in children decide to avoid having any, or whether those that are intentionally childless<sup>13</sup> fail to develop much interest in them. It seems probable, however, that the cause-effect sequence is in one direction for some couples and in the opposite direction for others.

Table 8. Summary index of interest in and liking for children by number of live births, for all wives and husbands.

NUMBER OF LIVE BIRTHS	NUMBER OF COUPLES	PER CENT DISTRIBUTION BY INTEREST IN CHILDREN <sup>1</sup>				
		Total	Very Much	Much	Some	Little
<i>Wives</i>						
None	135	100	—	10	36	54
One	365	100	37	32	22	9
Two	540	100	28	40	23	9
Three	234	100	27	41	24	8
Four or More	170	100	32	32	27	9
<i>Husbands</i>						
None	135	100	—	7	19	74
One	365	100	19	32	30	19
Two	540	100	20	33	34	13
Three	234	100	21	30	30	19
Four or More	170	100	17	28	35	20

<sup>1</sup> The difference between the childless couples and those with any other family size with respect to the proportion with a rating of "very much" interest is significant at the .01 level. The difference between the childless couples and those with any other family size with respect to the proportion rated "little" interest is also significant at the .01 level.

<sup>13</sup> As mentioned earlier, couples who were unable to have at least one child were classified as "relatively sterile" and are not included in this analysis.

Table 9. Fertility rate by degree of interest in and liking for children (summary index and ten items), for all couples who planned the number and spacing of their pregnancies and those with children.

SUMMARY INDEX AND SPECIFIC ITEMS	ALL COUPLES				COUPLES WITH CHILDREN			
	Births per 100 Couples		Number of Couples		Births per 100 Couples		Number of Couples	
	Wives	Husbands	Wives	Husbands	Wives	Husbands	Wives	Husbands
<i>Summary Index</i>								
Very Much	147	172	110	82	147	172	110	82
Much	146	139	113	95	165	152	100	87
Some	71	103	90	97	149	139	43	72
Little	41	43	90	129	154	156	24	36
1. Do you like to play with, read or talk to children?								
Very Much					150	165	116	115
Much					163	155	51	75
Some or Little					152	142	108	85
2. Do you get tired of hearing the constant questions children ask?								
Very Interested					153	173	114	100
Rather Interested					154	146	110	118
Indifferent or Tired					163	144	51	57
3. Do you get as much "kick" from the things children say as from those grownups say?								
Much More from Children					156	160	106	89
More from Children					158	154	140	144
The Same or Less					141	152	29	42
4. How much do you enjoy taking children on outings?								
Very Much					150	163	179	138
Much					173	145	56	80
Some or Little					153	151	40	57
5. How do you feel about seeing children's pictures in ads, store windows, etc.?								
Like Very Much					159	175	164	80
Rather Like					145	145	69	132
Not Interested					157	151	42	63
6. How does the fun you get compare with the trouble when children of your neighbors or friends come in and make themselves at home?								
Much More Fun than Trouble					138	141	66	58
Some More Fun					163	175	84	100
As Much or More Trouble than Fun					159	145	125	117
7. Frequently children get so wrapped up in their play that they forget there is anyone around. Do you find it fun just to watch them then and see what they do and say?								
Very Much					159	158	227	216
Much					138	152	26	31
Some or Little					132	136	22	28
8. How much are you interested in hearing other people talk about their children?								
Very Much					151	171	100	68
Much					161	148	80	60
Some or Little					155	151	95	147
9. How much did a strong liking for children encourage you to have your last child?								
Very Much					159	159	146	133
Much					148	160	71	79
Some or Little					155	141	58	63
10. How much have you been discouraged from having more children by not being more interested in children?								
Very Little					156	158	193	190
Little					150	149	54	51
Some or Much					162	144	26	32

Next, considering only couples who planned the number and spacing of their pregnancies, but combining the childless couples and those with children, the same positive relationship is found between interest in children and fertility. (See Table 9.). Again, *among wives* this is due mainly to the tendency for those with a high summary index to have some children rather than none; there is little, if any, tendency for the more interested women to have larger families than the less interested. The summary index and the ten "interest" items give no evidence of being significantly related to fertility among women with children that were planned as to number and spacing.

On the other hand, among *husbands* with children planned as to number and spacing, a positive relationship between fertility and interest in children is shown by the summary index and at least three of the index items. This is reflected in the fertility rates given in Table 9. In addition, Table 10 indicates that, among couples classified as number and spacing planned, the proportion of husbands with two, three, or four or more children is greater among the much interested than the little interested. It is important to note, however, that the positive relationship for husbands with children in Table 9 is accounted for in large part by the greater tendency for those with consid-

Table 10. Number of live births for wives and husbands by summary index of interest in and liking for children, for couples with children who planned the number and spacing of their pregnancies.

SUMMARY INDEX OF INTEREST	NUMBER OF COUPLES	PER CENT DISTRIBUTION BY NUMBER OF LIVE BIRTHS <sup>1</sup>				
		Total	1	2	3	4 or More
<i>Wives</i>						
Very Much	110	100	59	36	3	2
Much	100	100	45	47	7	1
Some or Little	67	100	57	37	3	3
<i>Husbands</i>						
Very Much	82	100	40	51	5	4
Much	87	100	59	33	7	1
Some or Little	108	100	59	38	2	1

<sup>1</sup> The difference between the proportion of husbands with one child who have "very much" interest and "some or little" interest is significant at the .01 level.

erable interest in children to have two children rather than one, and in very minor degree by a tendency to have three or more.

In this connection attention should be called to the report by Westoff and Borgatta, based on factor analysis of Indianapolis data, that "liking for children" is the main factor relevant to planned fertility among the twenty social and psychological factors tested. Their inclusion of childless couples probably accounts in large measure for their finding higher fertility rates among those with strong liking for children than among those with little interest.<sup>14</sup>

It is possible that interest in children has little influence on the decision to have the first child, and that the low level of interest in children on the part of childless couples is due to their lack of opportunity to develop an interest in children. After the first child, a re-evaluation may take place—with those couples who find they are not very interested in children taking measures to avoid having a second child, and those who find themselves strongly interested going on to have a second child.

There is interesting variation in the pattern of relationship by socio-economic status. Among all the effective planners (with and without children) there is a strong positive relationship in the upper and lower status groups between wives' and husbands' index of interest in children and the fertility rate. (See Table 11.) Among those with children, however, there is a weaker positive relationship for husbands and little evidence of one for wives. In fact among the lower status wives the relationship appears to be negative. These findings should be considered with caution, however, because of the small number of cases involved.

Table 12 indicates the relationship between fertility and the wife's interest in children classified by the husband's interest, for number and spacing planned couples with children. The

<sup>14</sup> Westoff and Borgatta: *Social and Psychological Factors Affecting Fertility*. xxvi. The Prediction of Planned Fertility. *Op. cit.*



Table 11. Fertility rate by summary index of interest in and liking for children, by socio-economic status, for all couples who planned the number and spacing of their pregnancies and those with children.

SUMMARY INDEX OF INTEREST, AND SOCIO-ECONOMIC STATUS	BIRTHS PER 100 COUPLES						NUMBER OF COUPLES					
	All Couples			Couples with Children			All Couples			Couples with Children		
	Wives		Husbands	Wives		Husbands	Wives		Husbands	Wives		Husbands
<i>Upper Status</i>	149	182	149	182	77	38	77	38	77	38	77	38
Very Much	154	149	189	162	44	49	36	45	44	49	36	45
Much	65	81	159	148	83	117	34	64	83	117	34	64
<i>Middle Status</i>	*	*	*	*	12	19	12	19	12	19	12	19
Very Much	144	*	159	*	32	19	29	16	32	19	29	16
Much	29	52	*	*	38	44	11	17	38	44	11	17
Some or Little												
<i>Lower Status</i>	138	164	138	164	21	25	21	25	21	25	21	25
Very Much	138	130	146	135	37	27	35	26	37	27	35	26
Much	58	57	154	141	59	65	22	27	59	65	22	27
Some or Little												

\* Fewer than 20 persons.

SUMMARY INDEX OF INTEREST		NUMBER OF COUPLES	FERTILITY RATE
Wives	Husbands		
Very Much	Very Much	48	158
Very Much	Much, Some or Little	62	139
Much, Some or Little	Very Much	34	191
Much, Some or Little	Much, Some or Little	133	152

Table 12. Fertility rate by summary index of interest in and liking for children of wives by that of husbands, for number and spacing planned couples with children.

positive relationship for husbands persists regardless of the wife's classification. For wives, on the other hand, there appears to be a negative relationship between degree of interest and fertility regardless of whether the husband has a high or low rating for interest. The highest fertility is not found in those couples where the husband and wife are both strongly interested in children, but among those where the husband's index is "very much" "much," and the wife's index is "some" or "little." This suggests that when the husband has a strong liking for children, a similar feeling by the wife tends to *hold down* family size. It may be, then, that the wife's interest in children tends to be satisfied about as well by one planned child as by a larger number. While a husband's strong liking for children is expressed in fertility planning, as is his wife's, the husband's inclination seems to be to press for a larger family as well. It must be remembered, however, that most of the "larger families" among these number and spacing planned couples include only two children.

The *ex post facto* nature of this study does not permit conclusions about whether strong interest is a cause of higher fertility (as stated in the hypothesis), or whether persons who have larger families develop a stronger interest as a result of the experience of having larger families. Two other questions asked of the respondents have a bearing on this point, one relating to the number of children wanted at marriage and the other to the number the person would have on the basis of liking

if married life could be begun again. There is a positive relationship between the index of interest and the number of children wanted at marriage and also the number wanted if married life could be relived. (See Tables 13 and 14.) This is true for all wives and husbands and also for those with children. The number of children wanted at marriage is substantially

Table 13. Number of children wanted when married, and actual fertility rate, by summary index of interest in and liking for children, for all couples and couples with children.

SUMMARY INDEX OF INTEREST	NUMBER OF COUPLES <sup>1</sup>	PER CENT DISTRIBUTION BY NUMBER WANTED <sup>2</sup>						FERTILITY RATE	
		Total	None	1	2	3	4 or More	Wanted at Marriage	Actual
ALL COUPLES									
<i>Wives</i>									
Very Much	404	100	3	5	48	19	25	264	218
Much	492	100	4	8	55	15	18	237	219
Some	333	100	8	7	61	9	15	221	201
Little	190	100	17	4	55	14	10	200	134
<i>Husbands</i>									
Very Much	243	100	6	5	52	19	18	242	222
Much	406	100	5	8	55	16	16	235	212
Some	437	100	5	8	59	18	10	225	215
Little	312	100	21	12	50	13	4	167	158
COUPLES WITH CHILDREN									
<i>Wives</i>									
Very Much	404	100	3	5	48	19	25	264	218
Much	478	100	3	8	55	15	19	240	225
Some	289	100	6	7	61	9	17	229	233
Little	117	100	13	6	51	17	13	217	218
<i>Husbands</i>									
Very Much	243	100	6	5	53	19	17	242	222
Much	396	100	5	8	54	16	17	235	218
Some	412	100	4	8	59	18	11	227	228
Little	216	100	16	12	54	14	4	177	229

<sup>1</sup> The totals shown differ from those of earlier tables because several respondents failed to answer one or both of the questions about desired family size.

<sup>2</sup> The difference between the husbands and wives classified as having "very much" interest and those classified as having "little" interest with respect to the proportion wanting four or more children at marriage is significant at the .01 level. The difference with respect to the proportion wanting no children at marriage is also significant at .01 for all couples and at .05 for couples with children.

smaller than the number wanted if married life could be relived for wives and husbands at all levels of interest. Among all couples the number wanted at either period is consistently larger than the number actually born, regardless of level of interest. Among couples with children this is true except with respect to the number wanted at marriage by wives and hus-

Table 14. Number of children would like if could relive married life, and actual fertility rate, by summary index of interest in and liking for children, for all couples and couples with children.

SUMMARY INDEX OF INTEREST	NUMBER OF COUPLES	PER CENT DISTRIBUTION BY NUMBER WOULD LIKE <sup>1</sup>						FERTILITY RATE	
		Total	None	1	2	3	4 or More	Would Like	Actual
ALL COUPLES									
<i>Wives</i>									
Very Much	406	100	—	1	23	25	51	367	218
Much	497	100	—	1	39	23	37	311	219
Some	350	100	—	2	51	23	24	285	201
Little	190	100	4	5	56	18	17	241	134
<i>Husbands</i>									
Very Much	252	100	—	2	36	23	39	343	222
Much	418	100	—	1	36	27	36	337	212
Some	449	100	—	4	45	19	32	303	215
Little	321	100	5	7	54	22	12	234	158
COUPLES WITH CHILDREN									
<i>Wives</i>									
Very Much	406	100	—	1	23	25	51	367	218
Much	483	100	—	1	39	23	37	310	225
Some	302	100	—	3	52	20	25	282	233
Little	117	100	—	3	59	18	20	257	218
<i>Husbands</i>									
Very Much	252	100	—	2	36	23	39	343	222
Much	408	100	—	1	35	27	37	339	218
Some	424	100	—	3	45	20	32	306	228
Little	223	100	2	9	47	27	15	247	229

<sup>1</sup> The difference between the husbands and wives classified as having "very much" interest and those classified as having "little" interest with respect to the proportion wanting four or more children if married life could be relived is significant at the .01 level. The difference with respect to the proportion wanting two children if married life could be relived is also significant at the .01 level for all wives and husbands and for wives with children, and at the .05 level for husbands with children.

bands with "some" or "little" interest. The tendency to want four or more children if married life could be repeated is strikingly greater for couples with "very much" interest than for those with "little" interest. While this difference is also found for the number wanted at marriage, it is not as sharp as for the number wanted if married life could be started again.

Table 15. Opinions about desired family size by summary index of interest in and liking for children, for all number and spacing planned couples.

SUMMARY INDEX OF INTEREST	NUMBER OF COUPLES	PER CENT DISTRIBUTION BY NUMBER OF CHILDREN						FERTILITY RATE	
		Total	None	1	2	3	4 or More	Wanted	Actual
<b>WANTED AT MARRIAGE<sup>1</sup></b>									
<i>Wives</i>									
Very Much	110	100	5	11	43	19	22	244	147
Much	113	100	8	15	54	17	6	198	146
Some	82	100	16	4	62	9	9	197	71
Little	90	100	26	1	58	9	6	176	42
<i>Husbands</i>									
Very Much	74	100	8	8	45	25	15	235	172
Much	93	100	2	4	65	18	11	232	139
Some	95	100	4	13	57	23	3	209	103
Little	122	100	27	12	43	15	3	155	43
<b>WOULD LIKE IF MARRIED LIFE COULD BE RELIVED<sup>2</sup></b>									
<i>Wives</i>									
Very Much	110	100	-	2	25	30	43	336	147
Much	113	100	-	2	50	27	21	276	146
Some	89	100	-	-	48	37	15	289	71
Little	90	100	9	8	59	15	9	209	42
<i>Husbands</i>									
Very Much	82	100	-	5	36	21	38	343	172
Much	95	100	-	-	35	39	26	315	139
Some	97	100	-	10	47	21	22	260	103
Little	126	100	8	5	63	15	9	217	43

<sup>1</sup> The difference between the husbands and wives classified as having "very much" interest and those classified as having "little" interest with respect to the proportion wanting no children at marriage is significant at the .01 level. The difference with respect to the proportion wanting four or more children at marriage is significant at the .05 level.

<sup>2</sup> The difference between the very interested and the little interested with respect to the proportion wanting two children if married life could be relived is significant at the .01 level. The same statement can be made with respect to the proportion wanting four or more children.

A significant positive relationship between the summary index of interest in children and both the number wanted at marriage and if married life could be relived is found also among the couples who planned the number and spacing of their pregnancies. (See Table 15.) The larger number of children wanted at marriage by wives with a high index than by those with a low index is due almost entirely to the greater tendency of the former to have wanted some children rather than none. When wives who wanted no children at marriage are excluded the difference in rates between those with a high index and those with a low index disappears.<sup>15</sup> Among husbands with children, on the other hand, those having a strong liking wanted a larger number when married than those with a weak liking. An important part of this difference, however, reflects a desire for two children rather than one. While it is possible that answers to this question may have been rationalized to agree with actual family experience, these findings are consistent with the hypothesis that strong interest in children, at least among husbands, may serve as motivation for having larger than average families. Particularly suggestive is the fact that husbands who are rated as "very much" interested in children said they wanted larger families when they were first married, and came nearer to achieving their goal, than is the case for husbands with "little" interest. Wives with a strong interest said they wanted more children when married than husbands with this rating, but actual size of family was considerably smaller.

<sup>15</sup> Fertility rates based on the number of children wanted by wives and husbands, excluding those wanting no children, for all number and spacing planned couples.

Summary Index of Interest	Number of		Number of Children Wanted at Marriage		Number of		Number of Children Would Like if Married Life Could Be Relived	
	Wives	Husbands	Wives	Husbands	Wives	Husbands	Wives	Husbands
Very Much	105	68	244	256	110	82	336	343
Much	104	91	216	237	113	95	276	315
Some	69	91	235	218	89	97	289	260
Little	66	89	239	212	82	116	228	235

For both wives and husbands the summary index of interest in children is closely related to the size of family she or he would have on the basis of liking if married life could be lived again. (See lower deck of Table 15.) There is a strikingly greater tendency for couples with a strong liking for children than for those with a weak liking to want four or more children if they could make a fresh start. This finding fits in with the previous suggestions concerning the relationship of husbands' attitudes to children and family size. And it suggests that for wives also there is some connection between degree of interest in children and family size desires. It may be that other forces overshadow women's attitudes about children in determining family size. Or it may be that women with strong interest in children *develop* a desire to have a large family only after they have had children. The plausibility of this latter notion is suggested by the finding that among women who wanted some children at marriage, those with a high index wanted no more than those with a low index.

In seeking to understand the relationship between fertility and attitudes toward children, it is helpful to compare actual fertility and attitudes about family size at the time of marriage and after childbearing. Table 16 shows that, for wives and husbands who successfully planned their families, the fertility rate based on live births rises markedly with the number of children reported as wanted when married and also with the number desired if married life could be lived again. There is a strong tendency for those saying they wanted no children or one child when married to actually have this same number. Among the wives who said they wanted no children, 61 per cent succeeded in remaining childless; those who wanted one child actually performed according to their desire in 70 per cent of the cases. Those wanting two children at marriage produced larger families, on the average, than all those wanting fewer children, but the likelihood that they would have exactly two children was not high (28 per cent), and the average number born was less than two. Similarly, the wives wanting three or four or more

children did not follow the tendency of those wanting no child or one to produce the number wanted; instead, they bore fewer, on the average, than they had wanted. Nevertheless, for both wives and husbands there is a consistent relationship between

Table 16. Actual fertility by desired family size, for all number and spacing planned couples.

NUMBER OF CHILDREN	NUMBER OF COUPLES	PER CENT DISTRIBUTION BY ACTUAL NUMBER OF LIVE BIRTHS <sup>1</sup>						ACTUAL FERTILITY RATE
		Total	None	1	2	3	4 or More	
<i>Wanted at Marriage</i>								
<i>Wives</i>								
0	51	100	61	31	8	-	-	47
1	33	100	15	70	15	-	-	100
2	213	100	34	36	28	2	-	98
3	55	100	15	36	36	8	5	154
4 or More	43	100	14	19	53	9	5	184
<i>Husbands</i>								
0	45	100	67	20	11	2	-	49
1	36	100	39	47	14	-	-	75
2	199	100	29	44	25	1	1	100
3	76	100	18	32	41	8	1	143
4 or More	28	100	18	7	53	11	11	199
<i>Would Like if Could Relive Married Life<sup>2</sup></i>								
<i>Wives</i>								
0	8	100	*	*	*	*	*	*
1	11	100	*	*	*	*	*	*
2	181	100	33	45	22	-	-	90
3	110	100	28	33	36	3	-	116
4 or More	92	100	22	29	38	7	4	216
<i>Husbands</i>								
0	10	100	*	*	*	*	*	*
1	20	100	30	70	-	-	-	70
2	189	100	41	36	22	1	-	83
3	93	100	14	47	30	9	-	133
4 or More	88	100	19	24	48	3	6	153

\* Fewer than 20 wives.

<sup>1</sup> The proportion actually childless is significantly larger (at the .01 level) for wives and husbands who wanted no children at marriage than for those who wanted one or more children.

The proportion that actually has two children is significantly smaller (at the .01 level) for wives who would like two children if married life could be relived than for those who would like four or more children; the difference for husbands is significant at the .01 level.

<sup>2</sup> The eight wives and ten husbands with no children said they would like to be childless.



the number of children wanted at marriage and the number of children actually produced.

Arranging the percentages and rates in the opposite direction shows clearly that the smaller the actual family the smaller

Table 17. Desired family size by actual fertility, for all number and spacing planned couples.

ACTUAL NUMBER OF LIVE BIRTHS	NUMBER OF COUPLES	PER CENT DISTRIBUTION BY NUMBER OF CHILDREN						"WANTED" FERTILITY RATE
		Total	None	1	2	3	4 or More	
NUMBER WANTED AT MARRIAGE <sup>1</sup>								
<i>Wives</i>								
0	123	100	25	4	59	6	6	165
1	143	100	11	16	53	14	6	188
2	112	100	4	4	53	18	21	251
3	12	*	*	*	*	*	*	347*
4 or More	5	*	*	*	*	*	*	
<i>Husbands</i>								
0	121	100	24	12	48	12	4	159
1	140	100	7	12	63	17	1	195
2	106	100	5	5	47	29	14	244
3	12	*	*	*	*	*	*	318*
4 or More	5	*	*	*	*	*	*	
NUMBER WOULD LIKE IF MARRIED LIFE COULD BE RELIEVED <sup>2</sup>								
<i>Wives</i>								
0	125	100	6	4	49	25	16	254
1	148	100	—	3	55	24	18	259
2	112	100	—	2	32	35	31	318
3	12	*	*	*	*	*	*	400*
4 or More	5	*	*	*	*	*	*	
<i>Husbands</i>								
0	123	100	8	5	63	10	14	219
1	148	100	—	9	47	30	14	271
2	112	100	—	—	38	25	37	334
3	12	*	*	*	*	*	*	353*
4 or More	5	*	*	*	*	*	*	

\* Fewer than 20 couples.

<sup>1</sup> The proportion of childless wives who wanted no children at marriage is significantly different (at the .05 level) from the proportion of one-child wives who wanted no children, and it is significantly different at the .01 level from the proportion of two-child wives who wanted no children. The comparable differences for husbands are both significant at the .01 level.

<sup>2</sup> The difference between the childless wives and husbands and those with two children with respect to the proportion that would like four or more children if they could relive married life is significant at the .01 level.

the number of children reported as wanted at marriage. (See Table 17.) It shows also that there is a strong tendency for all couples, regardless of the number of live births they had, to say that they wanted two children. Among those who had fewer than two children the average number wanted is a little less than two, while among those who had two or more children it is a little over two. Among childless women, only one-fourth stated that they wanted no children at the time of marriage and only 4 per cent that they wanted a single child; 59 per cent said they wanted two children. This suggests that there may be a generally preferred family size—two children in the case of this sample—and that this value may exert pressure on couples to have two children regardless of their inclination to have another number on the basis of their interest in children. The norm may encourage couples to have a second child who, on the basis of their low level of liking for children, would be inclined to have only one child. Similarly, the norm may operate to restrict the family size of couples who, on the basis of strong liking for children, would be inclined to have three or four children.

There is also a positive relationship between the actual fertility of a couple and the number of children they say they would have on the basis of liking if they could live their married life again. Each of the eight wives and ten husbands who would like to be childless if they could start anew was childless. In contrast, only 6 per cent of the wives and 8 per cent of the husbands who actually were childless would like to be childless if they could relive their lives. This reflects the general tendency for couples to want a larger family than they actually had if they could have another opportunity. The concentration of reports on two children, regardless of the actual size of family, is not as great as is the case for size of family wanted at time of marriage. This suggests that other forces come into play during marriage to mold values about the desirable family size. One of the important ones may be the present level of interest in children, which has already been shown to be related

to the family size that would be chosen on the basis of liking if married life could be repeated.

### C. SUMMARY

One of the original Indianapolis Study hypotheses is: The stronger the interest in and liking for children the lower the proportion of couples practicing contraception effectively and the larger the planned family. In the light of present knowledge about social and psychological factors related to fertility it appears more plausible to reverse the first part of the hypothesis. The Indianapolis Study findings on the relationship between fertility control and marital adjustment, feelings of personal adequacy, ego-centered interest in children, and attitudes toward the restriction of personal freedom point to the importance of positive rather than negative motives for family planning. Unfortunately, the available data do not permit an adequate test of this part of the hypothesis in reversed form. The measures used to represent interest in and liking for children were not designed to represent one or two precise attitude dimensions. Furthermore, it is hazardous to impute a causal connection between attitudes toward children as reported 12 to 15 years after marriage and fertility decisions made throughout that period.

The first part of this hypothesis is sustained in the analysis in so far as a comparison between childless couples and couples with children is concerned. Among the couples that were childless from choice (practicing contraception always or usually) 9 out of 10 had little interest in children. Among couples with children there is a positive relationship between indices of degree of interest in children and effectiveness of fertility planning. The relationship characterizes all socio-economic groups. It is in accord with the idea that a large element in the motivation for fertility planning by couples having children may be a desire to seek the best interests of children and family.

The second part of the hypothesis is sustained among husbands, at least. Family size is positively related to indices of degree of interest in children among all couples and effective

planners; but the principal source of the variation is the greater tendency to have *some* rather than *no* children among couples with strong liking for children than among those with little liking for them. Among husbands in all socio-economic status groups there is a tendency for more interest in children to be accompanied by *larger* families. This tendency is not found among wives.

The highest fertility among the number and spacing planned couples is found when the husband is strongly interested in children and the wife only moderately or little interested, suggesting that, if the husband has a strong liking for children, a strong liking by the wife tends to hold down family size. The wife's liking for children does not appear to be expressed in terms of large family size.

Among couples classified as number and spacing planned, the direct relationship between degree of interest in children and number of children wanted at marriage is closer for husbands than for wives. But there is a direct relationship for both wives and husbands between liking for children and the number of children they would have on the basis of liking if they could live married life over again. This holds true for all couples, couples with children, and couples classified as number and spacing planned. It suggests that there is a tendency for strong interest in children to produce a desire for a large family among women as well as men, but that this does not occur in women until after they have had their families. Other pressures apparently have more effect with women.

One influence which may be competing with interest in children is the general inclination for couples to think that a two-child family is the best size regardless of their level of liking for children. However, in addition to the tendency for all groups to want two children at marriage, there is clear indication that the size of family wanted at marriage, and the size that would be chosen on the basis of liking if married life could be relived, are both related to the number of children the couple actually has.