# Status Inequalities within Families in Relation to their Structural Differences

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THE nuclear family, not the individual, is regarded as the basic unit of social stratification systems: a nuclear family being usually defined as a man and wife, with their dependent children, sharing a common domicile. All members of this household share the same status in the eyes of the community, dependent children being accorded the status of their parents. When the children assume an independent occupational or familial role, and especially when they take up a separate residence of their own, their status comes to depend primarily on their own characteristics and their own achievements.[1] Relative to his father's position the individual can move to a higher status, hold the same position, or move to a lower one. To measure this relative mobility the occupation of the father and of his son (once he has established an independent occupational role) is used as the basic indicator of status or prestige position.[2]

Most studies of social mobility have been based on cross-sectional samples, using the individual as the unit of analysis.[3] They have compared similar types of individuals from different families, not different types of individuals within the same family. The present study follows the latter course. Taking the family as the unit of analysis, it is concerned with the extent to which different members of a family take up occupations of equivalent status. Some families are characterized by a very narrow range of occupational status groups entered by the children, others by an almost equally notable diversity. The children of certain families, for instance, may be concentrated within a very narrow range of professional or of manual occupations. On the other hand, the children of other families may

1. B. Barber, *Social Stratification*, Harcourt, Brace and World, New York, 1957, pp. 73–76, and pp. 171–176.

2. See S. M. Miller, Comparative Social Mobility, *Current Sociology*, 9, 1, 1960, for a discussion of different kinds of social mobility and of the indicators used.

3. S. M. Lipset and R. Bendix, *Social Mobility in Industrial Society*, University of California Press, 1963; Miller, *op. cit.*; and D. Glass, (ed.), *Social Mobility in Britain*, Routledge and Kegan Paul, London, 1954.

be scattered throughout the status range of occupations, from professional to unskilled manual. The purpose of this paper is to analyse such family differences in a sample of 269 families from one rural community in Ireland.[4] We shall seek to account for these differences, and to indicate some of their likely consequences for the family and community.

The presence of status differences amongst siblings, or between parents and adult children, has been found to have a major impact on family interaction and solidarity. The greater the status differences present, the less frequent and the less intense the interaction, both with one's family of orientation, and with one's extended family.[5] Besides this likely effect on interaction and solidarity within the family, it has been suggested that, in small tightly integrated rural communities in Ireland, the achievements or failures of sons and daughters can influence the status of the parental family, especially where the children are working and living within the confines of the local community.[6] Given these likely consequences on the family, we would expect to see pressure on the parents to ensure approximate equality amongst sons and daughters in the occupational status they achieved. Besides these pressures flowing from the likely consequences of inequalities within the family, the demands of social justice alone might tend to ensure relative equality of opportunity. Previous anthropological studies in rural Ireland had emphasized this ideal pattern of equal provision for all the children who have to move off the land.[7] Both the ideal norm of equal provision, and the foreseeable consequence of unequal status, suggest the exertion of strong pressure on the family towards minimising differences within the family. Even if these equalizing pressures exist, however, children within families are likely to differ considerably in intellectual ability and in skills, and consequently in educational and occupational achievement. This would be especially true, no doubt, of large families. The larger the family, therefore, the greater should be the range in abilities or skills important for achievement, since even by chance alone more extreme cases might be expected within larger groups.[8]

We might foresee that such variations within the sibling group would be related also to the occupational, or social class, characteristics of the family head,

4. The data are from a study of migration behaviour amongst a group of adolescents growing up in a rural trade centre community in Co. Cavan. It is hoped that this study will be published in Spring 1970.

5. Robert P. Stuckert, Occupational Mobility and family relationships, *Social Forces*, 41, (1963), pp. 301–307. But see E. Litwak, Occupational Mobility and extended family cohesion. *American Sociol. Rev.* vol. xxv, pp. 9–21, 1960.

6. Patrick McNabb, Social Structure, in J. Newman, (Ed.), *The Limerick Rural Survey*, Muintir na Tire Publications, Tipperary, 1964, pp. 214–215.

7. See Arensberg and Kimball, *Family and Community in Ireland*, Peter Smith, reissued 1961, Ch. 8; C. Arensberg, *The Irish Countryman*, Peter Smith, 1961, Ch, 3; NcNabb, *op. cit.* pp. 214–215; Vercruijsse, *The Shannon Hinterland Survey*, Leyden University, unpublished mimeograph, 1961.

8. P. Guilford, *Fundamental Statistics for Psychology and Education*, McGraw Hill, International Student Edition, New York, 1956, p. 79.

although we cannot make such definite predictions here as in the preceding case. Most social mobility studies have shown that children of manual workers find it difficult to enter nonmanual occupations. Miller's comparisons of social mobility studies from 15 countries show that only one-fifth to one-quarter of the sons of manual workers were able to achieve this.[9] Hutchinson's data for Dublin show even smaller rates of mobility across the manual-nonmanual barrier, especially for persons from semi-skilled and unskilled manual backgrounds. Less than 10 per cent of the sons of unskilled manual, and only 12 per cent of the sons of semi-skilled manual workers, entered nonmanual occupations.[10] Variation within the families of manual workers, therefore, may well be largely restricted to the range of manual occupations. On the other hand, sons of professional, managerial and executive workers were almost equally unlikely to be found in the ranks of manual workers.[11] Here also intra-familial variations in the status of siblings' occupations should be correspondingly restricted, in this case to nonmanual occupations. How do these two groups compare with farm families? The evidence is rather conflicting. International social mobility studies show that the sons of farmers are almost as unlikely to achieve nonmanual occupations as the sons of manual workers.[12] Within Ireland, however, Arensberg and Kimball, together with later anthropological and sociological studies, have emphasized the status consciousness of the farmer, his tendency to choose secondary rather than vocational education for his children, and his objection to their taking up lower status manual occupations locally, and so on.[13] Yet a number of studies have shown that, despite this, there is considerable downward mobility among farmers' sons.[14] Census returns support this, in showing a considerable movement into farming by farmers' sons when they complete their primary education, followed by a flow out of farming (most probably into manual occupations) a few years later by almost half of these new recruits.[15] Both these characteristics of farm families—their emphasis on secondary education, especially for girls, and the movement by

9. S. M. Miller, *op. cit.*

10. B. Hutchinson, *Social Status and Inter-Generational Social Mobility in Dublin*, Economic and Social Research Institute, Dublin, October, 1969, p. 16.

11. *Ibid.*

12. Miller, *op. cit.*, p. 52.

13. Arensberg and Kimball, *op. cit.*; McNabb, *op. cit.*; Vercruisse, *op. cit.*

14. McNabb, *op. cit.*, pp. 214–215; See Lipset and Bendix, *op. cit.*, pp. 15–23 and 203–227 for extensive data from the United States and other Western countries. It is shown that the sons of farmers from the rural middle class who go to the city are more likely to become manual workers than young men from the urban middle class. They are even less likely to enter nonmanual occupations than the sons of urban manual workers.

15. Between 1961 and 1966, for instance, there was a decline of 37 per cent in the number of farmers' relatives assisting on farms aged 14–19 in 1961. These figures excluded an increase of 1,394 in the number of males who became farmers or farm owners from that age group in the interim, i.e., it assumes that these "new" farmers were previously "farmers' relatives assisting" *Census of Population of Ireland, 1966, Vol. V.*, p. xiii. The older five-year cohort who were aged 20–24 in 1961 showed a similar decline of 17 per cent in the same period. The great majority of these poorly-educated migrants probably moved into lower manual occupations.

some of their sons from primary schools, first into farming and later into manual occupations—suggest that farm families may exhibit a wider range in the status of occupations taken up by these children than would be the case with non-farm children.

We propose only two hypotheses, therefore: (1) the larger the family, the greater the status variation within it, and (2) farm families exhibit much wider variations than non-farm families. Although it is not possible to make further clear predictions, we shall also examine the effects of the remoteness of the household, and certain mediating processes within the family (such as educational and occupational selection) on status variation within the family. Unfortunately, the data we use to test these hypotheses were not specifically gathered or coded for this purpose. The tests, therefore, are only approximate and the conclusions preliminary. Nevertheless, this family variable is so important from a theoretical and practical point of view that even a secondary analysis of this nature appears worthwhile—especially when no other study has attempted it, to our knowledge.

*Method*

The basic data for this study come from a much larger study of migration behaviour amongst a sample of adolescents in Co. Cavan. Data were available on the occupational, residence and educational histories of all the brothers and sisters of 269 respondents in the study. There were three pairs of siblings included in the study. Although data on each of these three families are repeated twice, the error introduced is negligible. Almost all families were completed families, the average number of children per family being 5·6.

We employed nine status categories of occupations in coding the occupations of siblings: (1) Professional, (2) Semi-Professional, (3) Employers-Proprietors, (4) Farmers, (5) Intermediate Nonmanual Workers, (6) Skilled Manual Workers, (7) Service Workers, (8) Semi-skilled Manual Workers, (9) Unskilled Manual Workers. The occupation of each sibling was allocated a status accordingly. The status variation within each family was measured by the range—the difference between the sibling with the highest status and the one with the lowest. The maximum variation, therefore, was 8—where one or more of the siblings had taken up a professional occupation and another one had taken up an unskilled manual occupation. The minimum variation was zero where all siblings occupied the same status group.

The number of working sibs within the family was found to be highly correlated with the range ($r$=·616). Since size of family is also correlated with other independent variables, it is necessary to control for it in the analysis. However, since the independent variables are either only of a categorical or ordinal level of measurement, the partial correlation technique could not be employed. And, since the numbers involved were small, the sub-group classification method of control was unlikely to give clearcut results. The method employed, therefore, was through standardizing each independent variable on the control variable—

number of working siblings.[16] Since size of family varies somewhat according to the father's occupation, for instance, the method allows us to examine the relationship between occupational background and occupational variability, controlling for size of sibling group.

Another variable initially considered necessary to control was that of the stage of the family cycle. Following Glick, all our families were in the third stage of the family cycle—the period at which the children were taking up employment and leaving home.[17] We can divide this stage into three sub-stages:

(1) The stage at which less than half the children had completed their education and taken up permanent employment.

(2) The stage at which more than half had entered permanent employment.

(3) The stage at which all the children were working.

The sub-stage of the family cycle varied slightly with the size of the family, as the following table shows.

TABLE 1: *The percentage of families of different sizes with half or more of their members working, i.e. in the second sub-stage of the family cycle*

| *Proportion of Siblings Working:* | *Size of Family* | | | | |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| | 1—2 | 3—4 | 5—6 | 7—8 | 9 and over |
| Half or more: | 100% | 91% | 77% | 70% | 76% |
| *N*= | 33 | 65 | 57 | 59 | 55 |

In total, just over 30 per cent of the families had all members working, i.e. in the third sub-stage. Almost half (48 per cent) were in the second sub-stage and 22 per cent were in the first sub-stage. The larger families had proportionately fewer workers as the results above show, but the differences are not very pronounced. By failing to control for this variable we would tend to underestimate the range for large families—since proportionately more of the younger children from these families were yet to enter the labour force. However, since we are already controlling for the number of working sibs in the analysis, a variable highly related to family cycle position, the omission of this additional control should not introduce any serious errors.

16. Morris Rosenberg, Test factor standardization as a method of interpretation, *Social Forces*, 4, 1, 1962, pp. 53–60.

17. Paul C. Glick, The life cycle of the family, *Marriage and Family Living*, 17, 1, 1955, pp. 3–9; reprinted in Lipset and Smelser (eds.), *Sociology*, Prentice Hall, 1961, pp. 255–262.

*Results*

In their order of presentation the main independent variables examined are (1) Size of family; (2) father's occupation; (3) remoteness of parents home from the community's centre. Educational variability and selection within the family will be used as an additional explanatory variable.

1. *Number of Working Sibs.* The relationship between the number of siblings working and status variation amongst them is very pronounced as the results in Table 2 clearly show.

TABLE 2: *The relationship between the number of working sibs and the range of occupational statuses within the family*

| *Range of occupational statuses amongst siblings* | *Number of Working Siblings* | | | *Total N* |
|---|---|---|---|---|
| | *1–3* | *4–6* | *7 and over* | |
| | % | % | % | |
| 0 | 45 | 8 | 5 | 60 |
| 1–2 | 29 | 32 | 26 | 75 |
| 3–4 | 24 | 45 | 36 | 87 |
| 5–8 | 3 | 15 | 33 | 31 |
| *N*= | 112 | 102 | 39 | 253 |

Pearsonian $r$=·616 (7 values of sibling numbers, and 8 values of the range).

Almost three quarters (69 per cent) of the largest families exhibit ranges of three or over while this is true of only one quarter of the smallest ones. Overall, variation in the number of siblings working explains a considerable proportion of the variance in the range of occupational statuses of siblings; nearly 40 per cent if we assume (unjustifiably) a variance interpretation of the correlation coefficient.

Besides the purely statistical factor of more extreme cases turning up in a larger sample, a tendency which is exaggerated by the use of the range as a measure of variation, what other factors are responsible for the greater variation found within the larger family? There appear to be essentially three ways in which this could occur. It could firstly be due to exactly corresponding variation in the structural and psychological factors likely to be the major influences upon occupational achievement: i.e. educational achievement, intelligence, achievement motivation, etc. Secondly it could be due to the fact that in larger families such variations in intellectual abilities or skills, etc., are paid more attention by parents and teachers in selecting and encouraging children to go on for further

education. Size of family was found to be highly related to educational mobility in the original study, especially in working class families.[18] One might expect, therefore, that in selecting children to go on for further education in larger families, parents would discriminate more in favour of the more clever children. In small families they could afford to send almost all children for further education while in the larger families they would have to discriminate to a greater extent. A partial test of this hypothesis was possible by relating the assessed mental abilities of students to postprimary educational mobility, controlling for size of family.[19] If the hypothesis is valid, the correlation between variation in mental ability and variation in educational mobility should be much greater in the larger than the smaller family. The following table summarises these relationships between the assessed mental ability of school leavers (five values) to mobility into postprimary schools (three values, (3) to secondary, (2) to vocational, and (1) primary only), controlling for the size of family and the occupational background of students. These data, however, refer only to the selection of people from different families and not to selection within families. Nevertheless, if such real selection differences exist within families, these should also show up in such cross sectional samples.

TABLE 3: *Zero order correlation coefficients between the assessed mental abilities of students and their educational mobility controlling for size of family and occupational background.*

| *Size of Family* | *Occupation of Father* | | |
|---|---|---|---|
| | *All Nonmanual* | *Farmers* | *All Manual* |
| Large (>5) | ·369 ($N$=94) | ·393 ($N$=278) | ·314 ($N$=293) |
| Small (<6) | ·286 ($N$=121) | ·307 ($N$=300) | ·427 ($N$=200) |

None of the differences between any pair of correlation coefficients are, in fact, statistically significant. The stringency of selection for postprimary education on the basis of assessed mental abilities is approximately equal in both small and large families. The greater achievement differences found within larger families is not apparently influenced by any exaggeration or any greater emphasis on ability differences in choosing to send children on to postprimary schools. The

18. See D. F. Hannan, *Factors Involved in the Migration Decisions of Irish Rural Youth*, unpublished Ph.D. dissertation, Michigan State University, 1967, p. 100.

19. Primary school teachers were asked to evaluate the "mental ability" of students using a five point scale: "Excellent", "Very Good", "Average", "Below Average", "Poor". These data are available for almost 1,300 students who had left primary schools in the community studied in the period 1960–1964.

variation of mental abilities within larger families is somewhat larger of course. By progressively assigning scores of 1 to 5 to each of the ability assessments from "Poor" to "Excellent", we calculated the standard deviations of these scores within small and large families. The standard deviations for nonmanual families were 1·00 for large, and ·78 for small families. The equivalent standard deviations for farm families were ·92 and ·91 respectively, and 1.17 and ·90 for manual families. Although the influences of ability differences are no more important in large than small families, the fact that there is a greater variation in larger families should nevertheless lead to greater achievement differences.

Are these ability differences expressed in corresponding educational differences, however? Is there a greater educational variation within larger than smaller families? And do these differences result in wider occupational ranges in the larger families? The following table has been set up to try to answer this question. It relates size of family to variation in the kind of education received within it and to the range of occupations taken up by siblings. Although the measure of educational variation within the families is very crude, the trends indicate that families where education is restricted only to primary, or to primary and vocational levels, are far more homogeneous occupationally than others where some members receive a secondary and some a primary education or even, in a lesser number of cases, where all three educational levels are represented within the same family.

TABLE 4: *The proportion of families with occupational ranges of less than three as related to size of sibling group and variation in education present within it*

| *Variation in Education Received by Siblings within the Family* | *Number of Working Siblings within the family.* | | |
|---|---|---|---|
| | *2 or less* | *3–4* | *5 and over* |
| | *% of Families with occupational status ranges of 2 or less* | | |
| All Primary only, or some Primary and some Vocational | 73<br>*N*=41 | 56<br>*N*=36 | 29<br>*N*=41 |
| Some Primary and some Secondary, and some Primary-Vocational-Secondary | 67<br>*N*=55 | 30<br>*N*=37 | 38<br>*N*=26 |

In small families there is a very narrow range in educational or occupational achievement. In fact, in the lower row of the table above almost all members of the small family received a secondary education. As a result, two thirds of these

families had occupational ranges of less than 3 units. This is somewhat less homogeneous than in small families, where all members received a primary education, or where some received a primary and some a vocational. This tendency for the more educationally differentiated families to have wider occupational ranges is very marked in medium sized families, but is reversed again in the largest families. Although the sampling errors are so large here that we cannot be sure of the statistical significance of these trends, they are highly suggestive of a moderate correlation between educational and occupational variability. It is evident as well that, even within family groups that are equally homogeneous or heterogeneous educationally, the larger the family the greater the occupational variation.

Although not indicated by the crude measures used above, larger families experience longer time lapses between the primary school graduation of their oldest and youngest members and should consequently exhibit wider educational ranges. The larger the family, the greater the chance of educational differentials occurring within it, due to educational patterns changing during the interval. The oldest of a family of 10 or 12, for instance, whose youngest sibling completed his primary education in 1963 or 1964, would have himself left primary school in the middle or late 1940's—an interval of around twenty years. The equivalent interval for small families of two or three would only be around 4 to 6 years. Since the proportion of primary school leavers going on to postprimary levels has progressively increased since the end of the war, the longer this interval the greater the chance of educational differentials between the oldest and youngest member of the family. Between the school years 1950–51 and 1963–64, for instance, the number of entrants into secondary schools increased by over 50 per cent for the whole country.[20] And, even in the period 1960–1964 in the community studied the proportion of primary school leavers going on for postprimary education increased from 66 to 78 per cent. The larger the family, the greater the educational differences introduced into it because of these progressively increasing participation rates over time.

Another complication arises from the greater period intervening between the time the oldest and youngest members of large families completed their education and entered the labour force—the difference between the two extreme positions in the amount of time spent working. The smaller the family, the more alike the youngest and oldest siblings become in the amount of time spent working. Since social mobility is usually in an upward direction as the number of years spent working increases, the larger the family, the greater the opportunity of the oldest member to increase his status vis-a-vis the youngest due to such mobility alone. [21]This may be one of the reasons why families that are relatively homo-

20. Dept. of Education, *Investment in Education*, Annexes and Appendices, Stationery Office, Dublin, 1961, p. 153.

21. See B. Hutchinson, *op. cit.* Of 2,497 respondents in this study that could be classified on their first and their current occupation, only 6 per cent were downward mobile from their first job, 37 per cent were still occupying the same status, and the remaining 57 per cent had achieved some upward mobility in the course of their working life.

geneous educationally still exhibit a relatively high correlation between size of family and occupational variability. However, these two factors should tend to balance each other out. If the oldest of a large family has had a better chance to increase his occupational status because of the longer period of time he has spent working, the youngest of such a family has also had a better chance than the older of receiving a better education. Unfortunately, the data from the Cavan study are not comprehensive enough to confirm these likely effects. Any further research, however, should try to do so.

2. *Father's Occupation.* The relationship between father's occupation and occupational variability amongst the siblings is examined below in Table 4. All nonmanual occupations are aggregated, as are all manual occupations. Farmers and shopkeepers are treated separately.

TABLE 4: *The relationship between father's occupation and occupational variability amongst the siblings standardising on the number of working sibs in the family*

| *Range of occupations amongst Siblings* | *Father's Occupation* | | | |
|---|---|---|---|---|
| | *All Nonmanual Occupations* | *Farmers* | *Shopkeepers* | *All Manual Occupations* |
| | % | % | % | % |
| 0 | 59 | 18 | 25 | 31 |
| 1–2 | 21 | 22 | 18 | 42 |
| 3–4 | 20 | 45 | 38 | 18 |
| 5–8 | | 15 | 20 | 9 |
| *N*= | 22 | 125 | 25 | 87 |

$\chi^2=36{\cdot}74$; $P<{\cdot}001$; C=·353

There is, in fact, a pronounced relationship between occupational background and variability within the sibling group. Nonmanual families exhibit by far the least variation amongst the sibling group, whereas the families of farmers and shopkeepers exhibit the greatest. Working class families are intermediate. Roughly 60 per cent of the families of farmers and shopkeepers, for instance, exhibit a range of three or more occupational categories, while this is true of only 20 to 30 per cent of nonmanual and manual families. Most of the families with ranges of over three include some members with manual and others with nonmanual occupations. It appears from this table, therefore, that roughly half the families of farmers and shopkeepers cross the manual-nonmanual "barrier". This is true of only about a quarter of the families of manual or nonmanual workers.

It is an interesting finding that the status differences within these particular families parallel almost exactly the finding from other studies that status differ-

ences amongst farmers and shopkeepers themselves were greater than any other occupational groups.[22] The position of farmers especially can range all over the status hierarchy. If, therefore, all farmers are given a status position of 3, the range of occupations held within the family will be exaggerated where a lower status farm family has all or some of its members in lower manual occupations, while one of the family stays at home on the farm. The range here would be from 3 to 8 or 9, when it should, in fact, be 6 to 7 or 8 to 9. This error in estimating the individual range was estimated as arising in 29 per cent of the farmers' cases. Because of this error, farmers were roughly re-allocated to other nonfarm status groups on the basis of the similarlity of their estimated income. This resulted in a slight reduction of their status ranges. Only 45 per cent of farmers families now exhibited a range of 3 or more instead of 60 per cent as previously. Although the range is reduced, it is still considerably larger than that for manual or nonmanual families (see Table 1). These differences appear to be real, therefore, and not due to some statistical anomaly. Very few of the children of shopkeepers, etc., stayed working at home once their education was completed, so similar errors of measurement did not occur in their case. Consequently, they appear to exhibit the widest within-family ranges of all groups.

There are, therefore, major differences within "parental" occupational groups in the status range of occupations taken up by their children. It appears that such intra-familial variation in siblings 'occupations is concentrated within nonmanual occupations for those families from nonmanual backgrounds, while the position of manual families exhibits a similar concentration within manual occupations. The families of farmers and shopkeepers, however, are not so restricted by the manual-nonmanual barriers. The following table shows the relationship between father's occupation and the modal occupation of his children.[23] The results clearly demonstrate the extent to which a manual or nonmanual origin tends to restrict movement across the border separating the two.

TABLE 5: *The percentage of families (siblings) with nonmanual modal occupations, as related to occupation of father*

| *Father's Occupation* | | | |
|---|---|---|---|
| *Nonmanual* | *Farmers* | *Shopkeepers* | *Manual* |
| 71 | 53 | 48 | 26 |
| *N*=24 | 129 | 25 | 88 |

22. O. D. Duncan, and J. W. Artis, *Social Stratification in a Pennsylvania Rural Community*, Pennsylvania Agric. Expt. Stat. Bulletin 543, Oct. 1951; B. Barber, *op. cit.*, p. 109.

23. The modal occupation, the one most frequently occurring in the sibling group, was not determinable in 20 per cent of the cases. In these cases the median occupation was used.

Roughly three-quarters of the nonmanual and manual families have modal occupations within their own occupational groups. On the other hand, both shopkeepers' and farmers' families are roughly evenly divided between manual and nonmanual modes. Mobility within both extremes therefore appears to be restricted to a limited range of contiguous occupations rather similar in status to those of the parents, while both upward and downward mobility within farmers' and shopkeepers' families is not so restricted by the manual-nonmanual barrier. The reasons why this might occur will be explored in the concluding section. It may be remarked here, however, that most social mobility studies have shown that upward mobility from manual backgrounds, and downward mobility from nonmanual backgrounds, is generally restricted to contiguous steps on the ladder, and is greatly limited by the manual-nonmanual barrier.[24]

When father's occupation was classified against the modal occupation of his family, it emerged also that there were no differences (in the width of the intra-familial range) between the families of farmers, or of shopkeepers, whose modal occupation was manual or nonmanual. Similarly, when additional controls were introduced for income of farm families, it emerged that there were no significant differences between the richer and the poorer farmers in the size of the range. There were, however, significant differences between these two types of manual families. The families of manual workers who were generally upwardly mobile—whose modal occupation was nonmanual—exhibited a far wider intra-familial range than did those families who generally held their position.

It appears, therefore, that there is something in the intrinsic nature of the farm occupation itself that accounts for the wider status range of occupations taken up by the children of farm origin. It does not appear to be related to extrinsic features of the occupation, since it holds equally for the richer and poorer farms, and for those whose families were generally upward, or generally downwardly, mobile. The same situation seems to hold for the families of shopkeepers and proprietors, although the sample size is so small here that significance levels are inconclusive. Before proposing any reasons for these anomalies, however, it will be instructive to examine the influence of geographical or ecological factors on intra-familial variation.

3. *Remoteness.* A factor found to be highly related to educational and occupational mobility in Cavan was the distance of the household from the trade centre of the community. Families living more than four miles from the centre, in open country areas, were much less likely to secure a postprimary education for their children than those living in or near the centre.[25] The sons and daughters of these families were also more likely to be downward mobile.[26] Given these findings,

24. See B. Hutchinson, *op. cit.*

25. D. F. Hannan, *op. cit.*, p. 109.

26. D. F. Hannan, Follow-up study to the original migration study (D. F. Hannan, 1967, *op. cit.*) to be published in early 1970.

does the relationship between occupational background and the intra-familial occupational range hold for each level of remoteness? The following table was devised to test this relationship.

TABLE 6: *The relationship between father's occupation and occupational range among children controlling for remoteness, and standardizing on size of sibling group*

| *Range of Occupations amongst Siblings* | *Remoteness of Family Household* | | | |
|---|---|---|---|---|
| | *Centre and region within 4 miles of the centre* | | *Areas more than 4 miles from the centre* | |
| | *Father's Occupation* | | *Father's Occupation* | |
| | *Farmer, Shopkeeper* | *Nonmanual and Manaul* | *Farmer, Shopkeeper* | *Nonmanual and Manual* |
| | % | % | % | % |
| 0 | 19 | 35 | 18 | 33 |
| 1–2 | 37 | 43 | 15 | 29 |
| 3–4 | 34 | 15 | 49 | 25 |
| 5 and over | 10 | 7 | 17 | 13 |
| *N*= | 46 | 71 | 104 | 38 |
| | $\chi^2$=7·8; *P*=·95; *C*=·25 | | $\chi^2$=15·49; *P*<·005; *C*=·31 | |
| | | | Overall $\chi^2$=27·72; *P*<·005 | |

The differences between farmers and shopkeepers, and manual-nonmanual workers, persists at both remoteness levels. The size of this difference is also approximately the same at both levels, as a comparison of the percentage differences, or contingency coefficients, clearly shows. This happens despite the fact that the range of occupations taken up by both groups of families increases greatly with remoteness. The proportion of farm and shopkeeper families with ranges of 3 or more classes increases with increasing remoteness from 44 to 66 per cent, while the proportion of manual and nonmanual families with the same range of occupations increases from 22 to 38 per cent. The relative increase in the range is approximately the same in each case, however, so that the difference between the two groups of families remains approximately the same. The influence of remoteness is approximately equal for all occupational groups.

*Conclusions*

We have isolated three factors as important influences on the range of occupations taken up by siblings: size of family, father's occupation, and distance of parental home from the centre of the community. A discussion of the major

influences on intra-familial differences will be clearer if we take occupation of father as the major dependent variable. Within each occupational group, the larger the family and the more remote the place of residence, the greater the sibling variation. In fact, family size, like remoteness, has an approximately equal effect on farm and nonfarm families. Although the correlation between family size and sibling variation was slightly higher for farm and shopkeeper families ($r=\cdot 63$) than for manual and nonmanual families ($r=\cdot 54$), these differences are not statistically significant. We have already seen why increases in family size should lead to a widening of the intra-familial range. We now attempt a similar explanation for occupational background and remoteness.

The reasons why a much wider status range should occur amongst the sons and daughters of farmers and shopkeepers, as also amongst the more remote families, seem to be related, first, to the process of selection of siblings for educational advancement within the different types of families; secondly, to the greater impermeability of the manual-nonmanual barrier to families from manual or nonmanual backgrounds as compared to farmers or shopkeepers; and thirdly, to the lesser importance to farmers of occupational status criteria in the determination of general prestige as compared with nonfarmers.

First, educational selection within the family seems important. In the total population from which this sample of families was selected, the sons and daughters of farmers received a far more varied education than any other occupational group. Roughly one-third of farmers' children went to secondary schools, one-third to vocational schools and one-third received only a primary education. At the other extreme, almost all the children of nonmanual workers received a secondary education. The children of unskilled manual workers were almost equally homogeneous educationally, since less than 10 per cent received any secondary education, and half of them received only a primary education.[27] As a consequence of educational selection processes such as these, the majority of the children of nonmanual families stayed at that level, while the majority of children of manual workers were similarly concentrated in manual jobs. The children of farmers, on the other hand, were not equally restricted by the manual-nonmanual boundary, and entered all kinds of occupations, from the highest to the lowest. The above figures, refer only to differences between families, but apparently the same principles hold within families. As the data presented in Table 7 clearly show, there is far greater educational variability within farm and shopkeeper families than within manual or nonmanual families.

Both nonmanual and manual parents appear to give their children a relatively homogeneous education, although this homogeneity is most pronounced in the former case. In fact, of the 81 per cent of nonmanual families receiving "some primary and some secondary" education, almost all families gave all their children a secondary education. On the other hand, all the children within 20 per cent of the manual families received only a primary education, and a further 43 per cent

27. D. F. Hannan, 1967, *op. cit.*, p. 114.

TABLE 7: *The relationship between occupational background and the type of education received by children within the family*

| *Education received by children within the family* | *Father's Occupation* | | |
|---|---|---|---|
| | *Nonmanual* | *Farmers and Shopkeepers* | *Manual* |
| | % | % | % |
| All received only a primary | 5 | 13 | 20 |
| Some received a primary and some vocational | 5 | 35 | 43 |
| Some primary and some secondary | 81 | 26 | 15 |
| Some primary, some vocational, and some secondary | 9 | 26 | 22 |
| *N*= | 22 | 149 | 88 |

of manual families exhibited minimal educational differences, where some members received a primary and some a vocational education. Hence, where educational differences occurred within either manual or nonmanual families, in over two-thirds of the cases the differences are not very great. Such differences, however, are maximised for farm families. In almost all farm families some members terminated school at primary level, and in over half the families some of the other members had received a secondary education. These greater educational differences within farm families explain some of the consequent occupational differences.

The causes of these greater educational differentials within farm families seem to be closely related to the process of occupational recruitment amongst farm boys. Over thirty per cent of all farm boys in the original enquiry started off their occupational life on the home farm. On most farms, two or more sons had initially done this. Although a considerable proportion of these are obliged to stay at home on the farm to help the family, very many are not. Yet, owing to their very strong identification with the farming way of life, or to feelings of disillusionment with the educational process, they insist on staying at home on the farm, even, in many cases, against their parent's wishes. Besides their strong farming identification, their previous family obligations (which frequently forced them to stay at home from school to help on the farm at spring and harvest time etc.) would have obvious effects on school performance and on their own educational self images. The majority of farm males, in fact, who had not gone on to further education, dropped out of primary school before completing the sixth standard, while their attendance levels and general achievements in primary

school were amongst the lowest of all groups.[28] Whether their poor performance in primary school, and their consequent disillusion with the educational process, lead to this strong farming preference, or whether their poor academic performance results from their previous work experience on the farm, or from their very strong identification with it (which they perceive as requiring only a low educational standard), cannot be gauged from this study. Most researchers who have found the same pattern of over-recruitment to farming in other countries emphasize the latter explanation.[29] But whatever the causal linkages, the end result of this high association between poor educational level and initial farm entry is that, after a few years of farm work, about half the initial entrants leave farming, to find employment only as unskilled or semi-skilled labourers off the farm. In the sample studied, although more than 30 per cent of farm males had initially taken up employment on the home farm, less than 20 per cent were still so employed after five years. Most of the remainder had taken up manual employment.[30] While this pattern of downward mobility was characteristic of many farm boys, some of their brothers and most of their sisters had gone on for further education and subsequently into nonmanual occupations.[31] This pattern of educational and occupational divergence is not characteristic of manual or nonmanual families. It is characteristic, however, of shopkeepers' and other proprietors' families. What seems to be a common factor here is that both anomalous groups are self employed property owners, while the others are wage or fee and salary earners. The fact that divergent families own property from whose exploitation they earn their living, seems to provide a set of circumstances which partly constrains them to emphasize the family occupational role and de-emphasize the educational role for some of their children while they are in primary school, while it also allows them to be more lenient or more indulgent with their children at the point when they are leaving primary school. Their children can stay and work at home while the children of wage or salary earners have to work outside the family. The break from the dependent familial and educational role is far more dramatic for non-property holding families. They have to go out and find a job if they are leaving school, while property owners can sustain them within the family for some time.

28. The following are the percentages of boys and girls from different occupational classes who missed less than 38 school days in primary school in their second last year of attendance at primary school. Fifty-three per cent of farm boys, and 71 per cent of farm girls; 93–94 per cent of boys and girls, respectively from professional and semiprofessional backgrounds; 62 per cent and 64 per cent of boys and girls respectively from semiskilled and unskilled manual backgrounds.

29. A. O. Haller, The Occupational achievement process of farm reared youth in urban industrial society, *Rural Sociology*, 25, 3, Sept. 1960, pp. 321–333; R. Gasson, Occupations chosen by the sons of farmers, *J. Agric. Economics*, 19, 3, Sept. 1968, pp. 317–326.

30. These occupational movements were not limited to Co. Cavan. In the period 1961–66, there was a decline of 37 per cent. in the numbers of farm males employed on the home farm who were aged from 14 to 19 in 1961. *Census of Population of Ireland*, Vol. V, 1966, p. xiii.

31. See D. F. Hannan, Follow-up Study, *op. cit.*

Besides these occupationally based family differences in patterns of educational and occupational decision making there may also be major cultural differences. A factor that may be related to the greater range of occupations found within farm families, for instance, may be the lesser importance attached to occupational status criteria by farm as compared to nonfarm families. This might hold especially for the more remote farm families. A number of studies have found that farmers place much less importance on differences in occupational prestige in choosing an occupation than do all other occupational groups;[32] while other studies have shown that occupational status distinctions are much less important as criteria of community prestige in more traditional farm or peasant communities than in more urbanised ones.[33] If the same situation holds in this case, farm families would place much less importance on occupational prestige criteria than would other families, particularly those who are more urbanized in their values. If this were so, farm families, and particularly the more remote farm families, would not be constrained to maintain minimum status distinctions amongst siblings to the same extent as other more urbanized families. Such status distinctions, in fact, would have much less influence on feelings of relative deprivation and family interaction in general.

There was clearcut evidence in the original study that cultural orientations became more traditional with increasing distance from the centre. This was particularly obvious amongst farm boys. The more remote the household the more satisfied they became with their family and community roles and with social provisions in the community. This occurred despite the fact that, in terms of an urbanite's perspective, the actual situation was quite the reverse. It was also apparent in the follow-up study that some such divergent factors were influencing status or prestige judgements in the more remote areas of the community. The downwardly mobile farm respondents were even less likely to have migrated or to plan to migrate than the less remote manual respondents who maintained their status position. In fact, they seemed even more willing to stay at home than the manual respondents who were upwardly mobile.[34] Such prestige considerations didn't seem as important to them.

In the "portioning off" of the farm family, therefore, all of the members do not receive equal shares or equal chances. In fact of all families, with the exception of those of shopkeepers etc., farm families are likely to exhibit the greatest inequalities. The situation in Cavan at the present time is very different from that described by Arensberg as the case in Clare in the 1930's. There he found it to be "a matter of pride and duty with the farm father to provide well for his children".[35] Here we find that he provides very well for some and very poorly for

32. J. N. Morgan, The achievement motive and economic behaviour, *Economic Development and Culture Change*, 12, 3, 1964, pp. 243–267.

33. W. A. Faunce and J. M. Smucker, Industrialization and community status structure, *American Sociological Review*, 31, 3, 1966, pp. 390–399.

34. D. F. Hannan, 1970, *op. cit.*,

35. C. A. Arensberg, *op. cit.*, p. 80.

others. It may well be that economic forces have put such great strains on the farm family that it is currently leading to its malfunctioning. However, it is far more likely that these inequalities have always existed within farm families and that Arensberg's functionalist orientation led him to overemphasize the more ideal, harmonious aspects of family life. It seems unlikely, however, that at the present time these inequalities within the larger family or the farm family have led to any weakening of family bonds. It may well be, however, that as the traditional culture of the more remote areas of the country changes that these family inequalities will lead to conflict and weakening of family bonds. Certainly as prestige values approach more urbanized models these differences within the family will become points of contention. And, if the argument put forward to explain the greater inequalities within the farm family is valid, the current "free education" scheme will not help resolve these contentions.