

II. POPULATION INCREASE ACCORDING TO FARM TENURE STATUS

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(Abstract)

This study is an attempt to test the validity of the common belief that it is from the lower grades of farm tenants that the greater proportions of the natural increase in the farm population is coming. As a general rule, the increase in population is in inverse proportion to social and economic status. That is, the rate of increase among the poorer classes is greater than that of the well-to-do classes, taking society as a whole. The data for this study are taken from a survey of 1,362 farm families in eleven counties of southwestern, southern, and southeastern Oklahoma, and were gathered in 1926. The results showed that not only is it true that tenants and croppers have fewer children born per one hundred families than do owner farmers, but also that they have fewer deaths, even when all families are standardized for age. However, considering their higher birth rates, owner farmers, in spite of higher death rates, are able to bring more children to maturity than the tenant and cropper families. This means that farm owners have a higher net fertility rate per one hundred families than the tenant and cropper families. These data furnish an example of how exceptions may take place in a given law. In other words, when a single socio-economic group is taken as a statistical universe the general

law of differential fertility of various classes of the human population does not necessarily hold true. The statistical data are presented in three tables showing (1) the average number of births and deaths that have occurred in families of at least twenty years duration by tenure classes; (2) the distribution of all families in the sample by tenure and duration of marriage and the average number of births per one hundred wives in each case; and (3) the crude fertility rates of farm families by tenure classes, not standardized for age and duration of married life of the operators.