Total Fertility and Interbirth Intervals Among Selected Swiss Amish Communities[1]

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Abstract: Recent demographic studies of the Amish consistently find that their families remain large, yet there is variation, especially when comparing fertility and other population characteristics across different affiliations. This article explores the Swiss Amish, a group for which demographic studies are practically non-existent. Based on data from the four largest Swiss Amish communities, both total fertility and birth intervals are examined. Recommendations for additional research of Swiss Amish population characteristics are discussed.

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"The Amish are well known for their high fertility and large families" (Troyer, 2022, p. 54). Despite this well-established generalization, Troyer's study of various Amish affiliations in the Holmes County settlement also found variation in fertility as well as in the length of a woman's reproductive period. Specifically, variation surfaced when comparing rates of total fertility of women over the age of 45 (i.e., completed fertility) from families belonging to five different affiliations or fellowships of Amish in the large Holmes County settlement.

Stoltzfus (2022), drawing on the earlier work of Scott (2009), describes the Swiss Amish as "generally more conservative in technology than the neighboring Amish" (p. 396). Furthermore, Stoltzfus mentions as a distinguishing fact that "the Swiss Amish from the two original Indiana settlements [in Adams and Allen Counties] have stayed quite separate" (p. 396) and not readily intermarried with other Amish groups. The Amish who would constitute the Swiss settlements immigrated to the United States in the mid-nineteenth century, as part of a larger wave of immigration of Amish and other Anabaptist groups (Nolt, 2015). Their origins are from Switzerland and lands bordering Switzerland to the west, including the Alsace region and the Montbéliard area in the present-day French province of Lorraine (Nolt & Meyers, 2007, pp. 26–

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27). They formed two principal settlements in Allen and Adams Counties, Indiana, in the years prior to the American Civil War.

This article examines the total fertility of Amish families from the four largest Swiss communities. They include the Greater Adams County group, the largest Swiss settlement, with 69 church districts in 2024 that spreads out into Jay and Wells Counties, Indiana, and includes over 100 households living to the east in Mercer County, Ohio (Young Center, 2024a). It was established in 1840 but received an early boost when a sizable group of Amish immigrants arrived in 1850. The other early Swiss settlement, begun in 1844 in Allen County, is centered northeast of the city of Fort Wayne (Nolt & Meyers, 2007, pp. 26–27). Seymour, located in southern Missouri, is the third largest Swiss settlement. It was established by families from Adams County, Indiana, in 1968, and today includes two groups due to a split in the mid-1970s (Stoltzfus, 2022, p. 135). California Corners was started in 1960, also by families from Adams County, and is located in south-central Michigan, spread across parts of Branch and Hillsdale Counties. Its location is not far from the large Elkhart-LaGrange County settlement in northern Indiana, which is Old Order Amish but not Swiss.

Literature Review

"There are usually several children—6 to 10 in a family are not uncommon," noted geographer Walter M. Kollmorgen (1942, p. 62) when writing about the Amish in the mid-twentieth century. Large families have remained a steady demographic characteristic of all Amish people. Kollmorgen's research, extending back over nine decades, confirms this fact. His examination of the Lancaster County Amish was one of the first empirical studies of their population characteristics and has been followed by many others.[2] Yutzy (1961), for example, looked at change among the Old Order Amish in the now extinct community of Plain City, Ohio, which is located about 35 miles to the north and west of downtown Columbus. His study examined various demographic and social traits over a 30-year period (1930–1960) and found that large family size persisted, even though there was a slight decline.

Elmer Lewis Smith (1960, p. 18) collected data on 696 Amish marriages in southeastern Pennsylvania between 1890 and 1940 and found no decline in the number of children. All but the women in the youngest cohort (those married during the decade of the 1930s) had completed their reproduction. For those married during the 1890s, the average number of offspring was 7.4, compared to 7.0 for the 1930s cohort.

Hostetler (1993), using information from population studies by Cross and McKusick (1970) and a report in *Population Bulletin* (Cook, 1968), compared live births across the three largest Amish communities, which are centered in Lancaster County, Pennsylvania; Holmes County, Ohio; and Elkhart-LaGrange Counties, Indiana. The numbers varied little, either across communities or

[2] Kollmorgen's study was funded by the Bureau of Agricultural Economics, U.S. Department of Agriculture, and was one of six studies in what was known as the Rural Life Studies. The other five included rural villages and towns in Iowa, Georgia, Kansas, New Hampshire, and New Mexico.

over time.[3] Almost always, the average number of live births was in the vicinity of 6.0 to 7.2. Cross and McKusick (1970) examined birth intervals based on data collected from nearly 1,900 households in the Holmes County settlement. This was part of a larger project to create a directory for a community that was not only quite large but also growing fast. They calculated a total fertility rate for "completed families" at 6.33. Among these families, the mean time between one birth and another was very consistent, generally between 24 and 30 months, regardless of birth order. Over 50 years later, research by Troyer (2022) found the same result, with interbirth periods after the first child still mostly between two and three years, except for Swartzentruber women. Swartzentruber Amish are among the most conservative of Amish affiliations, and the most conservative in the Holmes County community. In Troyer's analysis, Swartzentruber interbirth periods were consistently about 1.5 years through the first five births.

Donnermeyer's (2023a) demographic profile of Lancaster County combined data from the settlement's 2015 directory with the previously published information from Smith's (1960) research. This allowed for an examination of births for women 50 years of age and older extending from those who were married in the 1890s through those wedded in the 1980s. The result was that the average number of live births barely changed during the time period, declining from 7.4 to 7.2. As well, birth intervals varied little across date of marriage and followed an identifiable trend, with an average interval between marriage and first birth of about 1.6 years, and then increasing slightly with each interval thereafter (Donnermeyer, 2023a, p. 20).

Ericksen et al. (1979) used data from interviews of families residing in the four largest Amish settlements: Lancaster County, Holmes County, Elkhart-LaGrange Counties, and Geauga County.[4] Age at marriage of both the wife and the husband was the early twenties, with a slight decrease in marriage age from the oldest birth cohort (born before 1899) to the youngest cohort (born 1929 through 1938) of those interviewed. Likewise, the mean number of live births increased slightly, from 6.6 for the 1800s cohort to 7.0 for the 1929–1938 cohort (Ericksen et al., 1979, p. 258).

By the 1970s, the publication of directories listing information about Amish families was well-established for a large number of settlements, which contributed to the proliferation of demographic studies about the Amish. One of the earliest directory-based studies was by Markle and Pasco (1977), applying data from the Elkhart-LaGrange, Indiana, settlement. They found little change over time in fertility within various age cohorts of women, except for births by women who were between the ages of 20 and 24. Examining fertility over time, the authors debated whether there was any evidence that the Amish in that settlement had adopted any means of limiting family size. When they compared farm versus nonfarm employment of the husband, lower fertility among the latter group confirmed for them that some form of family limitation was likely practiced. They also speculated that, in the future, as the proportion of households in which the

[3] This same information also can be found in earlier editions of Hostetler's book *Amish Society*.

[4] These four settlements are much larger than the one or two counties in their name. Today, more accurate identifiers, given the geographic spread of families beyond the core county, use the word "greater," such as Greater Lancaster, Greater Holmes, Greater Elkhart-LaGrange, and Greater Geauga. See, for example, the article by Donnermeyer (2023a). Likewise, the Swiss community centered in Adams County includes families living in four counties, meriting the name Greater Adams County settlement.

husbands are employed in nonfarm occupations increases, the number of children born to Amish families will change.

Meyers (1991) also used Elkhart-LaGrange directory data (from directories published in 1970, 1980, and 1988), finding nearly constant family demographics for three characteristics among women born in 10-year cohorts from 1900–1909 through 1960–1969. His analysis was based on 586 cases. The three demographic traits he scrutinized were number of children, with a small range of 6.9 to 7.6 over time; median age at marriage of the husband, with a narrow range of 20.0 to 21.0 years; and median age of the wife at marriage, with a slightly larger range of 21.0 to 24.0 years. In a later study, Meyers (2022) worked from information in the 2007, 2012, and 2017 directories for this settlement, plus the three earlier ones. Noting that population growth nearly quadrupled from 1970 to 2017, he then estimated mean birth rates from the 2002, 2012, and 2017 directories. Birth rates did decline, from 7.18 in 2002 to 6.47 in 2017, which he associated with a decline in the proportion of men in this settlement who are farmers (Meyers, 2022, pp. 69–70). Average rates remained the same over time for households in which the husband's occupation was farming but declined for households in which the husband's occupation was in a different occupational group, such as carpentry, factory work, and shop work. Similar findings were discerned in studies of Lancaster County, Pennsylvania (Donnermeyer, 2023a).

Greksa (2002) examined fertility in the fourth largest settlement, centered in Geauga County, located in the northeast corner of Ohio, about 50 miles directly east of Cleveland. Using the settlement's 1993 directory, Greksa found a total fertility rate of 7.7, with a range, based on 10-year birth cohorts, of 7.65 to 8.14. The median length of time from the first to the second birth was about 1.5 years, and the interval increased to about two years for later births, although it decreased slightly between the 10th and 11th births. In a follow-up study of the Geauga County community, this time using data in the 2014 directory, Greksa (2021) found that completed fertility had declined from 7.7 to 6.9, and the average age for women from first birth to last child was lower by one year (from 38 to 37 years). There was only a minimal change in birth intervals, with most intervals after the first birth approximating two years.

Parity can be defined as the number of children already born to a woman and is often used to estimate the probability of when the next child will be born (Bogue, 1969; Lundquist et al., 2015). Wasao and Donnermeyer (1996) used data from one in every five families in the 1988 Holmes County directory to examine how parity varied based on the farm versus nonfarm employment status of the husband, the husband's ordination status (ordained or not), and if the family belonged to a more progressive or less progressive affiliation. With regard to the third factor, the authors presumed that affiliation membership was a group effect; that is, that there are group expectations about family size within similar Amish fellowships, which in turn influences procreative decision-making within individual households (Heaton, 1986). In fact, that is what they found: the less progressive Dan Amish averaged 6.3 children per family, followed by 5.2 children for Old Order families, and 4.8 children for families belonging to the more progressive New Order Amish.[5]

[5] Use of the word "progressive" with adjectives like "more" or "less" is not fully accurate, but better than other attempts at comparative labeling affiliations. In a now classic contribution to the Amish literature by

Using directory data for the Greater Holmes County settlement, the databases on the Swiss Anabaptist Genealogical Society website (https://www.saga-omii.org/), and books about the genealogical history of selected families, Troyer (2022) was able to compare the number of children and the interbirth intervals for five affiliations in the settlement: New Order, mainline Old Order, Dan, Hostetler, and Swartzentruber. The latter three are considered more conservative than the Old Order group. He found that the Swartzentruber group had an average completed fertility rate of 10.4 children, by far the highest of the five groups, with the fertility rate decreasing as the degree of conservatism decreased. That is, the more progressive the group, the lower its completed fertility rate.[6] As well, interbirth periods were much lower for the Swartzentruber group, except for the interval between marriage and first birth. To explain the differences in fertility among the affiliations in the Greater Holmes County settlement, and in line with the view of Heaton (1986) about the group effect of religion on fertility, Troyer (2022) concludes:

> The design of this study mitigates ethnicity, environment, and numerous other potential variables that could affect fertility. All of the groups share many aspects of the Christian faith, but there are subtle differences in how that faith is applied. For instance, the different affiliations of Amish vary widely in how broadly they apply the mandate "be in this world but not of it." (p. 61)

One of the few examinations of the population dynamics of the Swiss Amish comes from a study of the Amish population in Michigan. Using the 2019 directory of Amish settlements, Donnermeyer (2023b) compared the number of children born to Swiss Amish women by the completion of their fertility with the number of children born to women in Old Order groups and the number of children born to women in several other conservative non-Swiss Amish groups. The women from the Swiss settlements and the women from the other conservative communities had a higher number of live births than the women from the Old Order settlements. Donnermeyer did not report a total fertility rate but did note that the proportion of women with 13 or more children was highest among the Swiss Amish (22.5%) when compared with the women in the other conservative group (16.1%) and women in the Old Order group (7.9%).

Despite a number of demographic studies about the Amish dating back nearly 90 years, a specific examination of the population dynamics of Swiss Amish settlements is nearly non-existent. This is an omission that is important to correct because, as Troyer (2022) found from his study of the Amish in Holmes County, there are clear variations in fertility among different affiliations. As far back as 1968, commentary on changes in the demographic characteristics of Amish, Hutterites, and other high fertility groups can be interpreted as an indicator of change and

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Kraybill (1994), the words "more progressive" and "less progressive" were mostly employed to describe affiliation differences within the Holmes County settlement. He, too, noticed that the average number of children was larger for the Dan group (5.9) than for the Old Order (5.1) and the New Order (4.9) groups.

[6] Total fertility was 8.7 for the Hostetler group, 7.8 for the Dan group, 6.1 for the mainline Old Order, and 5.8 for the New Order.

acculturation within their subcultures. Cook (1968, p. 49) emphasized that "it is the Amish family…which must bear the economic burdens of high fertility," which implies that economic change should influence family size.

Cook's (1968) emphasis on the relationship between reproductive behavior and the family makes sense, but it leaves out the importance of the church, as expressed through the *Ordnung* or church discipline. There are now over 3,000 Amish church districts (Young Center, 2024a), each with several dozen families and, in most cases, a bishop, one or two ministers, and a deacon (Kraybill et al., 2013). A single church district will, with only a few exceptions, fellowship with other church districts that share an identical or similar Ordnung. These church districts could be located within the same settlement or they could be many hundreds of miles away, given that the number of settlements is now nearly 700 and most are relatively small (Young Center, 2024b). Stoltzfus (2022, pp. 391–397), based on the earlier work of Scott (2009), refers to these cross-district links as "clusters of Amish subgroups and networks." Kraybill (2001) and Hostetler (1993) call them "affiliations," which they describe as one of the three building blocks of Amish society, along with the family and the settlement.

Wasao and Donnermeyer (1996) cited affiliation as one factor creating variations in fertility in Greater Holmes County, which they based on the results of their logistic regression analysis, as did Troyer (2022) later in his comparative study of the same settlement. Affiliation can be seen as similar to a reference group with various normative expectations and cultural values to which members are motivated to conform. Hence, affiliation influences expected family size and, accordingly, actual reproductive behavior. This point is also made by McQuillan (2004, p. 50) when he states that "religious groups are more likely to influence the demographic choices of their followers when members feel a strong sense of attachment to the religious community," concluding that "religion is a defining trait in the lives of individuals." Heaton (1986, p. 249) makes essentially the same case when he describes higher than average fertility among members of the Mormon faith, which he characterized as possessing a "pronatalist theology." Considering the small size of Amish church districts, and their relative autonomy absent a vertically strong ecclesiastical hierarchy (Hostetler, 1993, p. 100; Troyer, 2022, p. 58), it should not be surprising that, even if the Amish as a group display higher levels of fertility than the general populations of both Canada and the United States, there is likely to be variation among Amish affiliations.

Methods

There are currently more than 210 Swiss Amish church districts and nearly 40 settlements (see Appendix).[7] Despite the many Amish demographic studies, there have been virtually none about fertility among the Swiss Amish. To fill this gap, this study examined completed fertility and birth intervals of women 50 years and older in the four largest Swiss communities: the settlements in

[7] Two settlements included in the appendix had been of Swiss Amish origin but are now a mix of Amish from Swiss and non-Swiss backgrounds. The two settlements are DeGraff in Logan County of western Ohio and Odon/Montgomery in Daviess and Martin Counties of southern Indiana.

Adams County, Indiana; Allen County, Indiana; Seymour, Missouri; and California Corners, Michigan.

Calculations of the average number of live births and of birth intervals were based on women age 50 and older. Included were 328 families in the Allen County settlement from in the 2020 directory of several communities in Indiana (Graber, 2020), 155 families (a 40% sample) from the 2018 directory for the Adams County settlement[8] (Hilty, 2018), 109 families in the Seymour settlement from the 2023 directory for the Amish in Missouri (Yoder, 2023), and 71 families in the California Corners settlement from the 2023 directory for the Amish in Michigan (*Michigan*, 2023). In total, the data is from about one-third of all Swiss Amish church districts.

Although the formatting of Amish directories varies, almost all list families alphabetically within each church district of a settlement. For each family is listed the birth date of the husband, the birth date of the wife, the date of their marriage, and the names and birth dates of each of their children. Death dates are also included, if applicable. Nearly all directories include information about ordained men, including their role (bishop, minister, or deacon) and the date of their ordination. Most directories also include the occupation of the husband and the baptism status of each child still living at home and the status as Amish or not Amish for each adult child. Many directories also provide information on the current location of adult children.

Total fertility (Bogue, 1969; Lundquist et al., 2015) is the number of live births for a woman who has completed her reproductive period, which is usually assumed to be 45 or 50 years of age, depending on the researcher's preference. For the purposes of this research, only women 50 years and older was entered into the database. Childless couples, of which there were not many (see Table 1), were included in the calculation of total fertility. Stillborn children, which were few, were not included; however, live births in which a newborn lived a short time were included. In instances of twins, the length of the birth interval was counted as zero days.

Results

The average age at marriage was about the same for men and women in all four settlements, as shown in Table 1. The early twenties is a typical age for marriage across all Amish affiliations, reflecting long-standing patterns. As Hostetler (1993, p. 99) found, "The median age at first marriage for women is just under twenty-two years. The median age for men at first marriage is slightly more than twenty-three years." Smith (1960) found about the same ages for both males and females in southeastern Pennsylvania in the period from 1890 through 1949, and Donnermeyer's (2023a) examination of marriages in the Lancaster County settlement found essentially the same thing. In other words, there is likely little variation in marriage age over the span of a century.

Total fertility is the number of live births for a population divided by the number of women (after setting the age of the women at 45 or 50 years). As shown in Table 1, total fertility for women ages 50 years and older ranged from 10.64 for Seymour to 7.48 for Allen County. The Allen

[8] Given the size of the Adams County settlement, two 1-in-5 systematic random samples were drawn.

County number is noticeably below the other three Swiss Amish settlements. This lower fertility likely reflects the general observation of a group effect because the Allen County Swiss Amish settlement is considered more progressive than the Adams County group (Stoltzfus, 2022, p. 397). However, a precise link is not known, so this conclusion is tentative.

Both the California Corners and the Seymour groups began with families from Adams County. However, more than half a century has passed since their establishment; hence, caution should be taken about concluding that differences are solely due to differences in the two original Swiss settlements. As well, both the Michigan and Missouri settlements display higher fertility than the Adams County rate by at least one live birth.

With the exception of the Allen County group, the Swiss settlements show total fertility equivalent to the fertility of the Swartzentruber affiliation in Troyer's (2022, p. 58) study of the Greater Holmes County settlement. There, the Swartzentruber group displayed a total fertility rate of 10.42, slightly above that of the California Corners settlement and slightly below that of the Seymour settlement.

The total fertility of the Allen County Swiss is quite similar to the Dan (sometimes called Andy Weaver) affiliation in Holmes County, and is higher than the mainline Old Order and the New Order affiliations. These comparisons indicate that reproductive behaviors also vary by affiliation and suggest that future research on family size should employ ethnographic research to determine what fertility control strategies, both natural and medical, might have been adopted.

Table 1

Summary Statistics

	Settlement			
Characteristic	Adams County, IN	Allen County, IN	California Corners, MI	Seymour, MO
Number of women 50 years and older	155	328	71	109
Average age of husband when married	22.18	21.57	21.07	22.74
Average age of wife when married	21.49	22.49	21.96	22.85
Number (percentage) of childless couples	3 (1.94)	11 (3.47)	5 (7.04)	5 (4.59)
Total fertility rate	9.30	7.48	10.31	10.64

Table 2 shows that there is also variation in the interval between marriage and the first birth, although the period is less than a year and a half for all four Swiss Amish settlements. Overall, the average number of months is 15.41, but for Seymour, Missouri, it is less than 14 months. Across the four settlements, the variation in age at marriage and in number of months from marriage to first birth are relatively small. Differences in total fertility are comparatively larger, though, indicating that some type of family limitation strategy likely is being employed, especially in the

Allen County settlement. Cumulatively, 63.38% (13.30% + 5.63% + 28.01% + 16.74%) of Swiss Amish women give birth to their first child within the first 12 months of their marriage.

Table 2

Interval between Marriage and First Birth

Number of months	Settlement				Percentage of births (*n* = 639)
	Adams County, IN (*n* = 152)	Allen County, IN (*n* = 317)	California Corners, MI (*n* = 66)	Seymour, MO (*n* = 104)	
≤ 6	17	61	4	3	13.30 (*n* = 85)
7–8	9	15	5	7	5.63 (*n* = 36)
9–10	45	69	25	40	28.01 (*n* = 179)
11–12	32	42	13	20	16.74 (*n* = 107)
13–14	12	31	11	13	10.49 (*n* = 67)
15–16	7	23	3	6	6.10 (*n* = 39)
17–18	7	11	0	3	3.29 (*n* = 21)
19–20	5	11	2	2	3.13 (*n* = 20)
21–22	3	8	1	1	2.03 (*n* = 13)
23–24	1	8	0	1	1.56 (*n* = 10)
≥ 25	14	38	2	8	9.70 (*n* = 62)
Average (in months) [a]	16.47	15.49	15.33	13.65	15.41

Note. All counts were based on month-by-month calculations, not the two-month intervals shown in the table.

[a] Calculation of average number of months from marriage to first birth excludes childless couples.

Table 3 and Figure 1 present information on the length of interbirth intervals. All four settlements share the same general pattern. Average intervals may fluctuate from one birth to the next but generally do not increase much until the number of births exceeds 10. Differences among the four Swiss Amish settlements are not very significant, even though the Allen County and the Greater Adams County settlements show larger intervals than either the California Corners or Seymour settlements. These differences are clearly seen in Figure 1.

Table 3

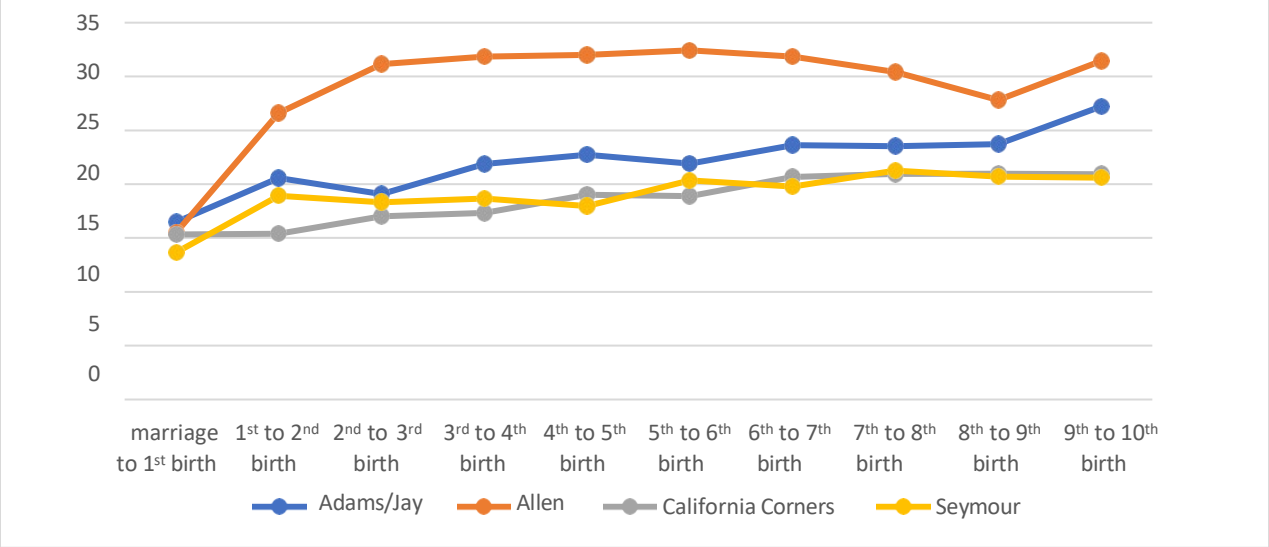
Length of Interbirth Periods in Months

	Settlement			
Interval	Adams County, IN	Allen County, IN	California Corners, MI	Seymour, MO
1st to 2nd birth	20.57 (*n* = 151)	26.60 (*n* = 312)	15.38 (*n* = 65)	18.93 (*n* = 102)
2nd to 3rd birth	19.09 (*n* = 146)	31.15 (*n* = 297)	17.01 (*n* = 64)	18.33 (*n* = 100)
3rd to 4th birth	21.89 (*n* = 146)	31.85 (*n* = 268)	17.34 (*n* = 64)	18.66 (*n* = 98)
4th to 5th birth	22.74 (*n* = 133)	32.00 (*n* = 232)	19.00 (*n* = 64)	17.98 (*n* = 98)
5th to 6th birth	21.91 (*n* = 128)	32.43 (*n* = 187)	18.88 (*n* = 63)	20.34 (*n* = 94)
6th to 7th birth	23.61 (*n* = 117)	31.85 (*n* = 147)	20.67 (*n* = 61)	19.79 (*n* = 89)
7th to 8th birth	23.53 (*n* = 110)	30.42 (*n* = 118)	20.94 (*n* = 58)	21.26 (*n* = 83)
8th to 9th birth	23.73 (*n* = 101)	27.81 (*n* = 86)	20.97 (*n* = 57)	20.71 (*n* = 79)
9th to 10th birth	27.21 (*n* = 85)	31.43 (*n* = 58)	20.93 (*n* = 56)	20.61 (*n* = 72)
10th to 11th birth	26.06 (*n* = 62)	24.05 (*n* = 39)	22.40 (*n* = 48)	20.95 (*n* = 65)
11th to 12th birth	22.71 (*n* = 47)	25.19 (*n* = 35)	24.86 (*n* = 39)	19.61 (*n* = 57)
12th to 13th birth	22.79 (*n* = 29)	27.55 (*n* = 21)	19.21 (*n* = 29)	20.45 (*n* = 44)
13th to 14th birth	23.93 (*n* = 20)	23.26 (*n* = 12)	24.50 (*n* = 26)	23.66 (*n* = 35)
14th to 15th birth	23.90 (*n* = 10)	32.70 (*n* = 9)	21.63 (*n* = 19)	25.66 (*n* = 23)
15th to 16th birth	30.48 (*n* = 7)	25.24 (*n* = 3)	20.59 (*n* = 10)	21.65 (*n* = 11)

Note. Because the number of families with more than 16 children was small in each settlement (3 in Adams County, 1 in Allen County, 9 in California Corners, and 6 in Seymour), they are not reported in this table.

Figure 1

Birth Intervals by Average Number of Months



Limitations

One of the limitations of this study is that the data is based only on information from published directories. Directories are important for quantitative research but have shortcomings. Perhaps the largest weakness is that interpretation of the statistical findings is limited unless supplemented by qualitative information, such as that which can be obtained from key informant interviews. Hence, it is impossible from directory information alone to determine if strategies to limit the size of families are prevalent in certain Amish communities and, if so, what those specific strategies are.[9] Required also is information derived from confidential and anonymous interviews with doulas, doctors, and other medical specialists who serve an Amish clientele. Discussions with wives and husbands, and with Amish religious leaders, would also add value to research on Amish fertility patterns. Future research should pursue a more qualitative approach to add depth to the data that can be found in directories.

Discussion, Conclusions, and Recommendations

There are indeed differences, however modest, in the Swiss Amish settlements, as previous research has demonstrated for non-Swiss Amish settlements (Troyer, 2022). Given that, in general, the Amish population and their settlements are predicted to double about every 20–22 years (Donnermeyer, 2021), the demographic dynamics of the Amish become an increasingly important topic for Anabaptist scholars to explore. The demographic composition of the Amish is like the foundation of a large structure, such as a pyramid, on which both the sustainability of Amish society and possible changes rest. Any future shift in the demographic foundations of the Amish could be a possible source of change. Hence, variations in demographic characteristics can bring insights into issues associated with maintaining religious and social practices.

Much more research can be conducted, especially with the information contained in directories that include Swiss settlements. Are there differences in total fertility and birth intervals among newer settlements founded by families from Adams County versus Allen County? Are there other factors that may cause differences among Swiss Amish settlements, such as husbands' occupation and fertility behavior within their families?[10] Might the changing ways Swiss Amish men make a living influence family size (Cook, 1968; Smith et al., 1997; Meyers, 2022)? Geographic factors may play a role, but more must be going on, prompting questions about the interplay of location and other sociological and cultural factors. These questions about the Swiss Amish point toward recommendations for researchers not only of this affiliation, but of the Amish in general. For example, has the regional spread of Amish settlements into the southern and western states of the United States caused any distinctive demographic trajectories for the Amish living there? There is much to be learned from a comparative analysis of the demographic characteristics of Amish settlements by their affiliation, their age, their location, and many other factors.

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[9] Jolly (2014) and Miller et al. (2007) provide rare insight into birth control strategies in certain Amish settlements.

[10] Some directories that include Swiss settlements provide no information about men's occupations, which limits statistical analysis of occupational status and fertility.

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Appendix

Swiss Amish Settlements

State/County	Name of Settlement	Variety/Origins	Founding Date	Est. number of church districts
Indiana				
Adams/Jay	Greater Adams County	Europe	1840	69
Allen	Allen County	Europe	1844	25
Daviess/Martin	Oden/Montgomery	Mixed: Swiss and other Old Order		35
Steuben (IN) & Williams (OH)	Hamilton	Swiss	1964	1
Whitley	South Whitley	Allen County	1971	2
Washington	East Washington/Salem	Swiss	1981	7
Switzerland	Vevay/Canaan	Swiss	1986	3
Clark	New Washington	Allen County	2006	1
Henry	Mooreland	Adams County	2008	1
Lawrence	Bedford	Swiss	2021	1
			Subtotal	145
Kansas				
Labette/Neosho	Galesburg	Swiss	2006	5
			Subtotal	5
Kentucky				
Breckinridge	Harned/Hudson	Swiss	1997	3
Henry	Turners Station	Swiss	2002	2
Fleming	Flemingsburg/Poplar Grove	Allen County	2004	4
Nicholas	Carlisle	Swiss	2006	4
Bath	Owingsville/Preston	Adams County	2009	4
Breckinridge	Stephensport	Adams County	2019	1
			Subtotal	18

State/County	Name of Settlement	Variety/Origins	Founding Date	Est. number of church districts
Michigan				
Hillsdale	Camden	Allen County	1956	5
Branch	California Corners	Swiss	1960	10
Branch	Quincy	Allen County	1977	4
Hillsdale	Reading	Allen County	1979	3
Branch	Kinderhook/Coldwater	Swiss	2004	2
Hillsdale	North Adams/Jerome	Allen County	2010	1
Calhoun	Athens	Allen County	2015	1
Lanawee	Morenci	Allen County	2015	1
			Subtotal	27
Missouri				
Webster	Seymour	Adams County	1968	21
Adair/Schuyler	Greentop	Allen County	2003	4
Cedar	El Dorado Springs	Adams County	2004	2
Hickory	Flemington	Swiss	2005	2
Texas	Licking #2	Swiss	2009	1
Dallas	Tunas	Adams County	2015	1
St Clair	Collins	Adams County	2019	2
Johnson	Holden/Centerview	Swiss	2020	1
			Subtotal	34
New York				
St. Lawrence	Norfolk	Swiss	1974	1
Wayne	Clyde	Swiss	1997	2
Livingston	Mt. Morris	Swiss	2010	1
			Subtotal	4
Ohio				
Logan	DeGraff	Mixed: Allen & Midwest Conservative	1994	4
			Subtotal	4
Pennsylvania				
Crawford	Linesville	Swiss	1985	4
Clarion	Emlenton/Sligo	Allen County	2000	4
Tioga/Bradford	Millerton	Swiss	2021	1
			Subtotal	9
Total				246

Note. Sources: Hilty (2018); *Michigan Amish Directory* (2023); Schwartz & Schwartz (2019); Yoder (2023); Schwartz (2020); Stoltzfus (2022); Young Center (2024b).