

Topic – Family Planning Programme in India

Subject – Geography

Course – PG 402 – Advance Population Geography, Unit – II

Teacher Name – Priya Bhakat

India's population has already reached 1.26 billion in the current year and considering the present growth rate, by 2028, the country's population will be more than China, according to a recent report from the UN. Though, the report has clearly mentioned that the rate of population growth has slowed down in recent years, due to effective implementation of family planning and family welfare programmes, yet the rate is growing at a much faster rate compared to China. The national fertility rate is still high which is leading to long-term population growth in India. However, the family planning programme in India cannot be ignored.

History of Family Planning in India - Population growth has been a cause of worry for the Government of India since a very long time. Just after independence, the Family Planning Association of India was formed in 1949. The country launched a nationwide Family Planning Programme in 1952, a first of its kind in the developing countries. This covered initially birth control programmes and later included under its wing, mother and child health, nutrition and family welfare. In 1966, the ministry of health created a separate department of family planning. The then ruling Janata Government in 1977 developed a new population policy, which was to be accepted not by compulsion but voluntarily. It also changed the name of Family Planning Department to Family Welfare Programme.

Major focus and objectives - Family Planning program focuses on assuring complete knowledge and access to reproductive rights and services and enables women and men to make individual reproductive choice. The objectives, strategies and activities of the Family Planning programme have been meticulously designed in line with goals and objectives of various policies (National Population Policy 2000, National Health Policy 2002 and National Health Mission) and compliments India's commitment at International Forums (viz. International Conference on Population and Development-ICPD, Sustainable Development Goals-SDG, FP2020 and others). Family Planning has been a key priority area of the Government and it has been vigorously pursued through the National Rural Health Mission launched in the year 2005 in line with the policy framework for population stabilization as envisaged in the National Population Policy, 2000.

Family Planning / Family Welfare Programme (FWP) by the Government in India - This is a centrally sponsored programme, for which 100% help is provided by the Central to all the states of the country. The main strategies for the successful implementation of the FWP programme are:

- ❖ FWP is integrated with other health services.
- ❖ Emphasis is in the rural areas
- ❖ 2-child family norm to be practiced
- ❖ Adopting terminal methods to create a gap between the birth of 2 children
- ❖ Door-to-door campaigns to encourage families to accept the small family norm
- ❖ Encouraging education for both boys and girls

- ❖ Encouragement of breast feeding
- ❖ Proper marriageable age adopted (21 years for men and 18 years for women)
- ❖ Minimum Needs Programme launched to raise the standard of living of the people.
- ❖ Monetary incentives given to poor people to adopt family planning measures.
- ❖ Creating widespread awareness of family planning through television, radio, news papers, puppet shows etc.

Importance of Family Planning in India - Family planning is not confined to only birth control or contraception. It is important as whole for the improvement of the family's economic condition and for better health of the mother and her children. First of all, family planning highlights the importance of spacing births, at least 2 years apart from one another. According to medical science, giving birth within a gap of more than 5 years or less than 2 years has a seriously affect the health of both the mother and the child. Giving birth involves costs and with an increase in the number of children in a family, more medical costs of pregnancy and birth are involved, along with incurring high costs of bringing up and rearing the children. It's the duty of the parents to provide food, clothing, shelter, education to their children. Family planning, if adopted, has an effective impact on stabilising the financial condition of any family.

Initiatives under the Family Planning Programme of India –

- Mission Parivar Vikas: The Government has launched Mission Parivar Vikas for substantially increasing the access to contraceptives and family planning services in the high fertility districts of seven high focus states with TFR of 3 and above. These 146 districts are from the seven high focus, high TFR states (Uttar Pradesh, Bihar, Rajasthan, Madhya Pradesh, Chhattisgarh, Jharkhand and Assam) that itself constitutes 44% of the country's population.
- New Contraceptive Choices: The current basket of choice has been expanded to include the new contraceptives.
- Redesigned Contraceptive Packaging: The packaging for contraceptives has now been improved and redesigned so as to influence the demand for these commodities.
- New Family Planning Media Campaign: A 360 degree media campaign has been launched to generate contraceptive demand.
- Enhanced Compensation Scheme for Sterilization- The sterilization compensation scheme has been enhanced in 11 high focus states (8 EAG, Assam, Gujarat, Haryana).
- A new IUCD (Cu 375) with 5 years effectivity has been introduced in the programme as an alternative to the exiting IUCD (Cu 380A with effectivity of 10 years).
- A new method of IUCD insertion i.e. PPIUCD has been introduced.
- Emphasis on Postpartum Family Planning (PPFP) services with PPIUCD and promotion of minilap as the main mode of providing sterilization in the form of post-partum sterilization to capitalize on the huge cases coming in for institutional delivery under JSY.
- Scheme for ensuring drop back services to sterilization clients.
- Appointment of dedicated RMNCH+A counsellors at high case load facilities.
- Assured delivery of family planning services - In last four years states have shown their commitment to strengthen fixed day family planning services for both IUCD and sterilization.

- Scheme for Home delivery of contraceptives by ASHAs at doorstep of beneficiaries.
- Scheme for ASHAs to ensure spacing in births: Under the scheme, services of ASHAs are being utilized for counselling newly married couples to ensure delay of 2 years in birth after marriage and couples with 1 child to have spacing of 3 years after the birth of 1st child.
- The scheme is being implemented in 18 states of the country (8 EAG, 8 North East, Gujarat and Haryana). Additionally the spacing component has been approved in West Bengal, Karnataka, Andhra Pradesh, Telangana, Punjab, Maharashtra, Daman Diu and Dadra and Nagar Haveli
- Celebration of World Population Day & fortnight (July 11 – July 24): The World Population Day celebration is a step to boost Family Planning efforts all over the country.
- The event is observed over a month long period, split into an initial fortnight of mobilization/sensitization followed by a fortnight of assured family planning service delivery.
- June 27 to July 10: “Dampati Sampark Pakhwada” or “Mobilisation Fortnight”
- July 11 to July 24 “Jansankhya Sthirtha Pakhwada” or “Population Stabilisation Fortnight”

Impact of Family Planning Programme in India - The initiatives taken by the Government in implementing the Family Planning Programme have significant impact on the country as a whole. Some major achievements are as follows:

1. Awareness of one or more methods of contraception.
2. Increase in contraceptives use over the years.
3. Knowledge of female sterilization, which is considered to be the most safest and popular method of modern family planning.
4. Increase in the use of condoms.
5. Increased knowledge about contraceptive pills.
6. Fertility rate low among educated women.
7. Fertility rate low among higher income groups.
8. The decadal growth rate has declined from 21.54 % in 1990-2000 to 17.64 % during 2001-11.
9. The Crude Birth Rate has declined from 23.8 in 2005 to 20.8 (SRS 2015) and 24 states/UTs have already achieved the replacement level TFR of 2.1 or less out of 36 states/UTs.
10. As a result of the initiatives of the Government, the country's Total Fertility Rate (TFR) has declined from 2.7 in 2006 to 2.2 in 2016 (NFHS- IV).
11. The implementation of National Family Welfare Programme has been satisfactory with the performance in IUCD insertions increasing from 52,75,440 to 55,40,743 and sterilisations increasing from 40,30,409 to 40,70,597 from 2014-15 to 2015-16 as per HMIS reports available with the Ministry of the Health and Family Welfare.