

Quadrant II - Notes

Programme: Bachelor of Arts (First/Second Year)

Subject: Economics

Paper Code: ECG 104

Paper Title: Demography and Population Studies-II

Unit: 6

Module Name: India's Population Policy 2000

Module No: 29

Name of the Presenter: Ms. Sanskruti Mahale

India's Population Policy 2000

(Objectives, features and criticisms)

Population Policy

A population policy is a set of measures taken by a State to modify the way its population is changing. A population policy may also aim to modify the distribution of the population over the country by encouraging migration or by displacing populations. All of the measures explicitly or implicitly taken by the authorities aimed at influencing population size, growth, distribution, or composition.

Background

India's population reached 100 crore on May 11, 2000 and it was estimated that if current trends of population increase continue India will become the most populous country in the world by 2045 and it would overtake China.

During the 20th century, India's population increased nearly five times from 23 crore to 100 crore, while during the same period world's population increased nearly three times from 200 crore to 600 crore. With this increase in population, it was difficult to maintain a balance to conserve the resources and environment in the country.

This frightening growth rate of population has aggravated the problems of poverty, unemployment and inequalities. There was also a neglect of social sectors like primary education, basic health and social security. India's resources were fast depleting due to rising demand.

For promoting sustainable development with more equitable distribution, there was an urgent need to stabilize population.

It was in the Ninth Plan that the Government announced the National Population Policy on 15 February, 2000.

The basic aim of this policy was to cover various issues of maternal health, child survival and contraception and to make reproductive health care accessible and affordable for all.

There are three types of objectives of National Population Policy (NPP) 2000:

1. The Immediate Objective
2. The Medium Term Objective
3. The Long Term Objective

1. The Immediate Objective

- The immediate objective was to address the unmet needs for contraception, health care infrastructure and health personnel and to provide integrated service delivery for basic reproductive and child health care.

2. The Medium Term Objective

- The medium term objective is to bring the Total Fertility Rate (TFR) to replacement level by 2010 through vigorous implementation in inter-sectorial operational strategies.

3. The Long Term Objective

- The long term objective was to achieve a stable population by 2045 at a level consistent with the requirements of sustainable economic growth, social development, and environment protection.

Targets

1. Achieve zero growth rate of population by 2045.
2. Reduce infant mortality rate of below 30 per thousand live births.
3. Reduce maternal mortality ratio of below 100 per 1, 00,000 live births.
4. Reduce birth rate to 21 per 1000 by 2010.
5. Reduce total fertility rate (TFR) to 2.1 by 2010.

To fulfill these objectives and targets, National **Socio-Demographic goals** have been formulated which in each case were to be achieved by the year 2010. These are:

1. Make school education free and compulsory up to the age of 14 and reduce dropouts at primary and secondary school levels to below 20 per cent for both boys and girls.
2. Address the unmet needs for basic reproductive and child health services, supplies and infrastructure.
3. Achieve universal immunization of children against all vaccine preventable diseases.
4. Promote delayed marriage for girls, not before 18 and preferably after the age of 20 years.
5. Prevent and control communicable diseases.
6. Achieve universal access to information/counselling and services for fertility regulation and contraception with a wide basket of choices.
7. Achieve 80 per cent institutional deliveries and 100 per cent deliveries by trained persons.
8. Achieve 100 per cent registration of births, marriage and pregnancy.
9. Integrate Indian Systems of Medicine (ISM) in the provision of reproductive and child health services and in reaching out to households.

10. Contain the spread of Acquired Immuno-Deficiency Syndrome (AIDS) and promote greater integration between the management of Reproductive Tract Infections (RTI) and Sexually Transmitted Infections (STI) and the National AIDS Control Organisation.

11. Bring about convergence in implementation of related social sector programmes so that family welfare becomes a people centered programme.

12. Promote vigorously the small family norm to achieve replacement levels of TFR.

To implement and achieve the various objectives, targets and socio demographic goals, the following organizational structure has been proposed by the National Population Policy:

1. The appointment of a National Commission on Population to be presided over by the Prime Minister. The chief ministers of all States and related ministers will be its members.
2. There will be a State Commission on Population in every State headed by its chief minister.
3. The new policy will be implemented by the Panchayats and municipalities at the grassroots levels.

Implementation of NPP, 2000

National Commission on Population

- In pursuance of NPP, 2000, the Central Government has set up a National Commission on Population (NCP) on 11 May, 2000.
- It is presided over by the Prime Minister, with the Chief Ministers of all States and UTs and the Central Minister-in-charge of concerned Central Ministries and Departments, reputed demographers, public health professionals and non-government organizations as members.

- State Level Commissions on Population is presided over by the Chief Minister have been set up with the objective of ensuring implementation of the NPP.

The functions of the Commission are:

- (i) To review, monitor and give direction for the implementation of the NPP with a view to achieve the goals set by it;
- (ii) To promote synergy between health, educational, environmental and developmental programmes so as to hasten population stabilization;
- (iii) To promote inter-sectoral co-ordination in planning and implementation of the programmes through different agencies at the Centre and in the States; and
- (iv) To develop a vigorous people's programme to support this national effort.

Evaluation

This is a broad-based policy which relies more on persuasive and positive measures rather than on coercive methods. It demonstrates the Government's concern for the rapid growth of population and its stabilisation from the long-term perspective. At the same time, it lays emphasis on both the qualitative and quantitative aspects of population.

Criticisms

1. The Swaminathan Committee (1993) had recommended the year 2015 as the target for population stabilisation which the NPP has pushed to the year 2045.
 2. The Swaminathan Committee was against providing cash incentives to couples undergoing sterilisation because these are misused. But the NPP has proposed the same.
 3. Critics point out that the NPP is soft towards the male participants.
- The various motivational and promotional measures for adoption of small family norms appear to convey that the women will bear the burden of population control rather than men.

- This is borne out by the fact that there has been a steady decline in vasectomies over the last two decades and presently over 97 per cent of sterilizations are tubectomies of women.

4. The NPP commits the same mistake which had been made by the earlier population policies. It depends upon its implementation on the bureaucracy rather than on NGOs (non-governmental organisations).

5. The proposal that the National Commission on Population (NCP) should be chaired by the Prime Minister has been criticised because being a very busy person, the Prime Minister would not be able to attend it. This would delay the taking of important decisions on population control.

Summary

- The Government announced the National Population Policy on 15 February, 2000.
- The NPP is based on three objectives -the Immediate Objective, the Medium Term Objective and the Long Term Objective.
- In pursuance of NPP, 2000, the Central Government has set up a National Commission on Population (NCP) on 11 May, 2000.