

PROBLEMS OF FAMILY PLANNING IN INDIA

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INTRODUCTION

Family planning is the planning of when to have children and the use of birth control and other techniques to implement such plans. Other techniques commonly used include sexuality education, prevention and management of sexually transmitted infections, preconception counseling and management, and infertility management.

BACKGROUND

Family planning in India is based on efforts largely sponsored by the Indian government. In the 1965-2009 period, contraceptive usage has more than tripled (from 13% of married women in 1970 to 48% in 2009) and the fertility rate has more than halved (from 5.7 in 1966 to 2.4 in 2012), but the national fertility rate is still high enough to cause long-term population growth. India adds up to 1,000,000 people to its population every 20 days.

CONTRACEPTIVE USAGE

Low female literacy levels and the lack of widespread availability of birth-control methods is hampering the use of contraception in India. Awareness of contraception is near-universal among married women in India. However, the vast majority of married Indians (76% in a 2009 study) reported significant problems in accessing a choice of contraceptive methods. In 2009, 48.4% of married women were estimated to use a contraceptive method, i.e. more than half of all married women did not. About three-fourths of these were using female sterilisation, which is by far the most prevalent birth-control method in India. Condoms, at a mere 3% were the next most prevalent method. Meghalaya, at 20%, had the lowest usage of contraception among all Indian states. Bihar and Uttar Pradesh were the other two states that reported usage below 30%. Comparative studies have indicated that increased female literacy is correlated strongly with a decline in fertility. Studies have indicated that female literacy levels are an independent strong predictor of the use of contraception, even when women do not otherwise have economic independence. Female literacy levels in India may be the primary factor that help in population stabilisation, but they are improving relatively slowly: a 1990 study estimated that it would take until 2060 for India to achieve universal literacy at the current rate of progress.

CONCLUSION

The Ministry of Health and Family Welfare is the government unit responsible for formulating and executing family planning related government plans in India. An inverted Red Triangle is the symbol for family planning health and contraception services in India. In my opinion, the local government should focus on increasing educational level.