

VITAL RATES AND THE EFFORTS AT FAMILY PLANNING IN THE VARIOUS STATES OF INDIA

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It is proposed to analyse in this article, the inter-state differences in vital rates and the recent efforts at promotion of family planning. The idea in putting these two together is to examine possibly the present and the future association between the two. If the fertility rates in the various states are different, the efforts at family planning may have more urgency in those states that have higher fertility than in others. If they are not, the differences in the efforts at family planning may produce differences in future in the fertility rates of the states.

The vital rates available for the states are those for the decade 1951-1961. The rates for the individual years during this decade are not reliable as they are estimated from the registration data and are not corrected for under-registration. Those available from sample surveys, as for instance from the National Sample Surveys, are based on small samples and the standard errors of these are not known. Inter-state comparisons with such rates are therefore not feasible. Hence the average rates for the decade corrected for the defects in the data are used in the following analysis. These are also the rates that were used by the expert committee for the future projections of populations for individual states and can be taken to be sufficiently refined.

The efforts at family planning on the other hand were not spread over the whole decade. They were made in most of the states only in the latter half of the decade. There seemed therefore little possibility of the family planning effort affecting the fertility in the states during 1951-1961 except marginally if at all.

The estimated birth rates for the various states for the decade 1951-1960 are presented in Table 1. The states are ranked according to an ascending order of birth rates so that the list begins with Madras, Kerala, Andhra Pradesh, in that order. These are followed by the states of Orissa, Maharashtra, Uttar Pradesh and Mysore, some of which belong to the eastern complex of states and some to the western. Then follow the states of northern and eastern India. Broadly the states in the peninsular India i.e. the southern states, have low birth rates. The birth rates in the various states vary from 34.9 in Madras to 49.3 in Assam. The birth rates being estimates,