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Q8(b)

What were the salient features of the India's Population Policy (2000)? How far its goals have been achieved?

UPSC Civil Services Mains 2020 · Sociology GS 2 · 15 marks · Population Dynamics

Population Dynamics: Population size, growth, composition and distribution; Components of population growth: birth, death, migration; Population policy and family planning; Emerging issues: ageing, sex ratios, child and infant mortality, reproductive health.

Core demand of the question

- What were the salient features of the **India's Population Policy (2000)**? How far its goals have been achieved?

Revision summary

NPP 2000 stressed choice, maternal-child health and replacement fertility by 2010.

It linked population to women's education and decentralised planning.

The 2010 uniform fertility goal was not met across states.

National fertility later fell, still skewed by class and region.

Malnutrition and **son preference** show social goals unfinished.

Introduction

The National Population Policy 2000 treated population as a development and reproductive-health issue, not only as a sterilisation target. Goals of replacement fertility by 2010 were only partly met, and they were met unevenly across class, caste, and state.

Body

Salient features

- **Immediate:** contraception, maternal health, child survival, and information, a TFR-oriented package.
- **Medium:** replacement-level fertility by 2010; longer: a stable population by 2045 in the policy's horizon.
- Free and informed choice, against the Emergency's coercive memory.
- Convergence with education, women's empowerment, and child marriage delay, a social not only a clinic frame.
- Decentralised planning with states, fitting democratic federalism on paper.

How far achieved

- Many southern and western states crossed replacement earlier; large Hindi-belt tracts lagged, so the 2010 national goal was missed as a uniform fact.
- Fertility has since fallen much further nationally, closer to or below replacement in recent NFHS rounds, but this is also middle-class and urban-led.

- Maternal and child health improved, yet chronic malnutrition and anaemia show unmet social goals.
- Coercion is no longer official doctrine; local target cultures and **son preference** still distort 'choice'.
- Women's schooling and work, not the document alone, did much of the fertility work.

Sociological reading

- Population policy succeeds where Beteille's equality of office and girls' education thicken. It lags where Seed-and-Earth **son preference** rules the household.

Flow diagram

NPP 2000 choice health 2000 choice health -> Replacement goal

Girls education -> Replacement goal

Son preference malnutrition -> Unmet social goals

Conclusion

NPP 2000's features were reproductive choice, health, and a timed path to replacement fertility. Goals of 2010 were not uniformly achieved; later fertility decline is real and still socially skewed. Health and gender goals remain the harder unfinished population policy.

Facts & figures

Replacement TFR

About 2.1 children, the 2010 medium-term marker.

Emergency memory

The coercive backdrop the 2000 policy tried to leave.

NFHS fertility fall

Later evidence of decline beyond the original timetable, unevenly.

Son preference

Household goal that clinic policy does not automatically end.

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