

CHAPTER III

REASONS FOR ADOPTING FAMILY PLANNING

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#### 3.1 Introduction

The present chapter is designed to find out the reasons for which the sample persons had adopted family planning during the period 1973-1978. Basing on the field information, the reasons have been grouped under the following heads, viz. (1) Economic ; (2) Medical ; (3) Psychological ; and (4) Educational. On the basis of the findings, the following hypotheses have been tested :

(i) Hypothesis I : Reasons for adopting family planning among sample persons in Jalpaiguri district during the period of the study are many and economic reason assumes decisive role in determining the decision for going for family planning in comparison to other reasons identified ; and

(ii) Hypothesis II : In the matter of family planning, the use of force as a tool to enhance the number of cases of family planning among sample persons during the period of the study gets upperhand than the use of voluntary approach through which sample persons may be wilfully encouraged in going for family planning.

### 3.2 Different Reasons

Explanations of the terms used in making classifications among the different reasons which appeared to be responsible for the adoption of family planning by sample persons during the period are given below.

#### 3.2.1 Economic

By economic factor it is meant that due to the difficulties experienced by the sample persons to run the family for want of requisite finance when they decide to adopt family planning, it is grouped under economic factor. The main factor identified under this group is that the willingness or otherwise of the persons may be directly related to the capacity to run the family with the requisite finance and the capacity is related to the availability of finance (including wealth, assets, other belongings which have monetary value, etc.) of the persons and if the finance is more, it is assumed that they have greater capacity to run the family better and or with less hardship. The willingness to adopt family planning by those persons belonging to this group is directly related to the incapacity to run the family with the available finance at their disposal. Such persons also appear to have the belief that if they go on for family planning, the same will increase their capacity to run the family better economically and they will feel relatively easier to run their family. Therefore, what is perhaps, interesting to note is that one is to consider clearly of their understanding of the possibility of the

increase of economic capacity due to the adoption of family planning. Before grouping under this factor one should clearly identify this crucial indicator which is useful in grouping a factor under this head.

### 3.2.2 Medical

Some persons have been found who appear to consider that adoption of family planning is desirable for improving their health. The basic idea to be noted in this connection is to identify the awareness on the part of those persons who have adopted family planning under this head for their concern for their health. The following types of persons have been identified who may be grouped under following heads :

- (1) Those who consider that such adoption is desirable for maintaining and or improving their existing health ; and
- (2) Those who suffer from some diseases either acute or less acute but the nature of such illness has tempted them to go for family planning.

### 3.2.3 Psychological

Apart from economic and medical reasons, some cases have been found where family planning has been adopted due to some reasons, the origin of which appears to lie on such person's psychological factor, i.e. these persons have identified some special factors from their psychic set-up which have motivated them to go for family planning. For instance, a case was observed in which a father adopted family planning because

it appeared to him that it was not desirable to have son any more because his elder son had already been married who was expected to be a father very soon. His reaction to such a possibility was that he felt a bit embarrassed considering the possibility of another son along with the expected son of his elder son. The origin of his decision for going for family planning was his reaction to such a possibility and its possible embarrassment to him and in order to maintain his image in the family, he had decided to go for family planning. Therefore, this is a decision which depends on psychological reaction. Some other cases may be given but the same would be cited in the latter part of this chapter and hence, they are not referred to here.

#### 3.2.4 Educational

By this factor it is meant that, some persons had reported that they were finding it difficult to provide the necessary education to their wards and any possible increase in the number of the member of family would increase the burden and may create lots of difficulties for them to provide education to their existing wards. These persons were aware of that any further increase in the number of members of family would reduce their capacity to provide education to their existing members as well as to those who may come. So, this factor indicates that some families are conscious of the utility of family planning in the context of providing education to their wards.

### 3.3 Methodology

The sample families who had adopted family planning\* (all the married persons in these families adopted family planning), had been interviewed and the findings were noted and arranged according to the group of reasons stated above and further classification has been made among those who have adopted family planning in the following way :

(1) Wilful persons; and (2) Persons who have been forced to adopt family planning. By wilful persons it is meant that these persons have voluntarily adopted family planning and there is no compulsion from any source to influence their decisions. But coming to the forceful factor it may be pointed out that some cases have been found out who directly or indirectly, have been compelled to go for family planning. The nature of such compulsion is that such persons' decisions for family planning have been influenced by various sources like Government, semi-Government and other sources. But at the outset, one likes to point out that here those influences which have motivated sample persons for going for family planning through propaganda, newspaper, radios, meeting, debate, etc., have been excluded from identifying persons who have been forced for adopting family planning. Here, force is related to direct influence on the will of the persons to go for family planning and such persons have been compelled ( or almost compelled) to do the same. The factor whether they have

\* Total sample was 180 families. These sample families had the married persons (50 per cent male + 50 per cent female = total number of married persons in these families were in the following orders :  $V_1 = 94$ ,  $V_2 = 90$ ,  $V_3 = 96$ ,  $V_4 = 92$ ,  $V_5 = 94$  and  $V_6 = 94 = 560$  persons). Total number of men adopted family planning = 331 and total number of women adopted family

willingness or not for going for family planning has been totally ignored in this regard and for reasons which will be explained later on such persons' decisions have been influenced through compulsion.

### 3.4 Field Results

The following Table is presented to give a precise version on the findings in this regard.

Table 3.1

| Villages       | Total persons<br>(married) | Forceful | Wilful | Reasons for wilful grounds |         |               |           |
|----------------|----------------------------|----------|--------|----------------------------|---------|---------------|-----------|
|                |                            |          |        | Economic                   | Medical | Psychological | Education |
| V <sub>1</sub> | 94                         | 52       | 30     | 26                         | N11     | 4             | N11       |
| V <sub>2</sub> | 90                         | 54       | 26     | 26                         | N11     | N11           | N11       |
| V <sub>3</sub> | 96                         | 49       | 34     | 30                         | 1       | N11           | 3         |
| V <sub>4</sub> | 92                         | 30       | 44     | 34                         | 2       | 1             | 7         |
| V <sub>5</sub> | 94                         | 24       | 50     | 37                         | 2       | 1             | 10        |
| V <sub>6</sub> | 94                         | 22       | 50     | 34                         | 2       | 2             | 12        |

#### 3.4.1 Economic reasons

Coming to economic reasons, one interesting fact to be noted is that villages which belong to far from the town namely V<sub>1</sub>, V<sub>2</sub> and V<sub>3</sub> score the higher numbers in this regard than those

of the villages which belong to near to the town namely, V<sub>4</sub>, V<sub>5</sub> and V<sub>6</sub>. Though it was difficult to identify reasons correctly from this variation in the absence of reliable data, yet it appears that the following reasons may be pointed out in this connection ( the difficulty to gather information and data from the respondents was felt. It was further felt that it was difficult for the respondents to distinguish between different reasons for which they had adopted family planning. During field investigations it was found that on different occasions they replied differently in this regard and conflicting information were supplied on certain occasions. Under the circumstances, sufficient tact, intelligence, etc. were adopted to read their minds squarely as far as possible and then, the data and information were arranged systematically which were subjected to further checks through additional notes, etc. taken during such collection to have meaningful information in this regard. Therefore, the reliability of the data depends upon the extent and nature of the present investigator's meaningful interpretation of the data and information gathered during field investigation in this regard):

- 1) Relatively speaking the sample persons in V<sub>1</sub>, V<sub>2</sub> and V<sub>3</sub> are more hard pressed economically than those of the sample persons on average in V<sub>4</sub>, V<sub>5</sub> and V<sub>6</sub>. This may lead them to give top priority to economic reasons than those of the sample persons in V<sub>4</sub>, V<sub>5</sub> and V<sub>6</sub>. A further study may be needed to find a meaningful insights and information in this regard.

2) The villagers in V<sub>4</sub>, V<sub>5</sub> and V<sub>6</sub> relatively get greater opportunity than those of the villagers in V<sub>1</sub>, V<sub>2</sub> and V<sub>3</sub> to earn through subsidiary incomes. It appears that the opportunity for earning subsidiary income in V<sub>4</sub>, V<sub>5</sub> and V<sub>6</sub> is greater than V<sub>1</sub>, V<sub>2</sub> and V<sub>3</sub> which are far from the town and relatively more backward than the former group of villages. Less earning capacity may prove more troublesome to the villagers in V<sub>1</sub>, V<sub>2</sub> and V<sub>3</sub> than those of the villagers in V<sub>4</sub>, V<sub>5</sub> and V<sub>6</sub>. All these may help them to think that they will be economically better off relatively, if they have less number of family members.

#### 3.4.2 Medical reasons

In this regard we find that sample persons in V<sub>4</sub>, V<sub>5</sub> and V<sub>6</sub> scored higher in numbers than those of the sample persons in V<sub>1</sub>, V<sub>2</sub> and V<sub>3</sub>. Here also, the difficulties in collecting reliable data and information were felt and following the same methodology an attempt had been made to overcome the problems for the same. The success of this analysis depends upon the nature and extent of the capability of the present investigator to find a suitable answer to such problems.

The reasons for variations appear to be the following :

1) As the people in V<sub>4</sub>, V<sub>5</sub> and V<sub>6</sub> are relatively more exposed than those of the sample families in V<sub>1</sub>, V<sub>2</sub> and V<sub>3</sub>, to different types of modern communication media and meetings, discussions and seminars, etc. with regard to the family

planning, the persons in the former group of villages get relatively greater opportunity to be more aware of the utility of the family planning on health grounds; and

2) The Sadar Hospital and the Family Planning Bureau are situated in the town and the villagers who are near to the town appear to get more in contact with the doctors connected with family planning who may convince them of the utility of family planning on health grounds.

### 3.4.3 Psychological reasons

Here, we find that more numbers are coming from  $V_4$ ,  $V_5$  and  $V_6$  than those of  $V_1$ ,  $V_2$  and  $V_3$ . Here, the difficulty in collecting reliable data and information was more felt as it was difficult to read the mind of the villagers in this regard particularly so because, these are related to the psychological factors. The same methodology was followed and accuracy of the conclusion has not, however, been claimed for obvious reasons. The reasons for variation between the findings of  $V_4, V_5$  &  $V_6$ , and  $V_1, V_2$  and  $V_3$  appear mainly to be the following :

1) The people in the former group of villages are getting touch with the higher officials, intellectuals, etc. more than those of the second group of villages. This gives them more possibilities for interchange of ideas with such officials, intellectuals, etc. than those of  $V_1$ ,  $V_2$  and  $V_3$  and as a result, they appear to react more psychologically to such expositions than those of the villagers of  $V_1$ ,  $V_2$  and  $V_3$ .

2) Though it is very difficult to assume that nearness to the town may make one's mind more complex psychologically speaking than the one who is residing to the interior villages and is less exposed relatively speaking to different types of outside reactions than that of a person who lives near to the town. If one assumes the above possibility, it may be said that the villagers in V<sub>4</sub>, V<sub>5</sub> and V<sub>6</sub> appear to be mentally more complex than those of the villages in V<sub>1</sub>, V<sub>2</sub> and V<sub>3</sub>. Such complexity of the former group may have an effect on their minds which has been revealed in the findings stated in Table 3.1 (the present investigator has not gone in-depth to test the soundness or otherwise of the above assumption).

#### 3.4.4 Educational reasons

Coming to this factor we find that, sample persons in V<sub>4</sub>, V<sub>5</sub> and V<sub>6</sub> score greater numbers than those of the sample persons in V<sub>1</sub>, V<sub>2</sub> and V<sub>3</sub>. Here, the difficulty in finding data and information was felt but it was not too much compared to other factors particularly coming to V<sub>4</sub>, V<sub>5</sub> and V<sub>6</sub>. The methodology adopted to overcome problems remain the same. No accuracy of conclusion has, however, been claimed. The reasons for variation between the findings of V<sub>4</sub>, V<sub>5</sub> and V<sub>6</sub> and V<sub>1</sub>, V<sub>2</sub> and V<sub>3</sub> appear mainly to be the following :

- 1) The villagers in V<sub>4</sub>, V<sub>5</sub> and V<sub>6</sub> get more opportunities of having greater number of educational institutions than those

of the villages in  $V_1$ ,  $V_2$  and  $V_3$ . This difference of the number of educational institutions may have some effect on the minds of the villagers in  $V_4$ ,  $V_5$  and  $V_6$  to understand the utility of education more than those of  $V_1$ ,  $V_2$  and  $V_3$  though, sufficient study has not been taken to reach such a conclusion.

2) From the discussions with the respondents during field investigations, it was gathered that,  $V_4$ ,  $V_5$  and  $V_6$  appear to point out more than the villagers in  $V_1$ ,  $V_2$  and  $V_3$  about their observations of the families which have attained prosperity for having higher education. Such difference in observations, may have more favourable impact on the minds of villagers in  $V_4$ ,  $V_5$  and  $V_6$  than  $V_1$ ,  $V_2$  and  $V_3$  though sufficient study has not been taken before reaching such a conclusion.

### 3.5 Results

The above information from 3.4 to 3.4.4 indicate that, Hypothesis I is found to be true.

### 3.6 Forceful Cases

From the Table 3.1 it is found that in  $V_1$ , 52 persons have been forced for adopting family planning and 30 persons have adopted the same wilfully.

It was reported that in forceful cases, the adopters were taken by family planning field-workers and other members of the staff of the Government connected with the same to hospital for fulfilling their allotted quota. It had also been reported that field-workers and members of the staff for the same appeared to have been instructed by the then Government to accelerate family planning programme by any means. It appeared that for the sake of the security of their service, they took the villagers to the hospital and it had been reported that adopters got some amount of money in lieu of it. It appeared that in forceful cases adopters did not get sufficient time to think whether they would adopt vasectomy operation.

In village 2, the Table\* reveals that 54 forceful cases had been identified. It had been reported that the field-workers of the family planning office had gone door to door and in some cases, they had gone beyond their legitimate procedure to compel the villagers to go for family planning.

For instance, it had been gathered that when the villagers had come to the nearby "Bat" for purchasing commodities, etc. they had been encircled by the field-workers and almost had been forced to go to the Health Centre Office to adopt operation, etc. for family planning.

Moreover, in this village the villagers were more illiterate and most of them appeared to be ignorant of the utility of family planning programme. Some of the people of this village were taken to hospital to adopt vasectomy

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\*  
Table 3.1

operation by the field-workers of the family planning office and it had been gathered that these field-workers got some amount of money in lieu of it. It had been reported that firstly, they were afraid of adopting operation because of their apprehension of some troubles i.e. health troubles, etc. They were made to convince that if they performed vasectomy operation, they would be benefited financially. Firstly, they appeared to be forced to adopt operation and in order to get some money to be given to them in case of such an operation, they were operated. But it was feared that in some cases random operation by unskilled doctors led to unsuccessful results which had produced an adverse effect on the villagers who complained of various troubles out of such a wrong procedure. It appeared that some people reacted adversely towards the programme due to these types of undesirable operations by unskilled doctors.

Moreover, the villagers who were forced to go to the health centre to adopt family planning had appeared to develop a fear complex about the very sight of the field-workers connected with the programme and it was also alleged that they used to run away seeing the field-workers in their localities in some cases.

It had also been gathered that some of the villagers were told that they would get money if they went for operation and they had been tempted to do the same through the medium of money. Without going to create necessary will for the programme, the use of money had been employed to motivate them for it. So, one has to decide, however, whether money had been used as a medium through which indirect compulsion was ensured as most of the villagers were poor and would generally be tempted for money. This was one side of the story but the other part was that they had not been convinced of its utility and other complications, particularly on health side appeared to create an adverse attitude for the programme and they were found to point out this to their friends and relatives during their discussions which in turn might create an undesirable atmosphere for the programme. All this led to lots of misunderstanding and the overall attitude towards the programme had appeared to suffer in the process.

In village 3, 49 forceful cases had been identified. The cases narrated earlier had also been found in this village. Moreover, in this village some of the villagers were reported to be taken to the hospital by some other people\* (Non-official workers) who came from outside the village. These people were reported to get a significant amount of money from field-workers. It was also gathered that some people used to make a contract with official authority to give a stipulated number of cases.

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\* Touts

But such contracts were verbal and no other documents could be traced excepting some instructions etc. which might be interpreted differently by different people. It was gathered that those people perhaps, for their own material interest took the villagers forcefully to the nearby health centre. They made these villagers convinced that they would get money, if they adopted operation and also gave them hope that if they performed operation they would be financially benefited.

In each case, the adopters were given some amount of money and these people also got money through the field-workers. In most of the cases the adopters would be given less amount of money and they would be deprived of their legitimate amount of money. Due to such types of verbal contracts between non-officials and field-workers, an adverse atmosphere was created in the village. The villagers came to know such types of contracts between the outside people and official workers. Seeing outside people, the villagers started doubting that such outsiders<sup>\*</sup> came for the programme and they appeared to have a distrust regarding this scheme.

It was also gathered from the villagers that in some cases the use of police, N.V.F. (National Volunteer Force), etc. had been made to take them to the Health-Centre for operation but this contention of the villagers was not accepted by the field-workers, field-officers etc. who informed that the above wrong information had been pointed out wilfully by

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Touts

vested interests\* to undermine the image of these field-workers, field-officers etc. but from their statement it was not quite clear what was the motivating force of the vested interests to do the same and what really constituted by the term vested interests. One interpretation may be made that there were lots of misunderstanding between the two and one has to decide however, whether the contention of the villagers had any base or this might not be given adequate weightage. From field observation it was, however, felt that some amount of force, the nature of which was uncertain and difficult to identify had, however, been made by the officials in certain cases.

The villages 4, 5 and 6 were near to the town area of Jalpaiguri district. It had been found that in these 3 villages forceful operations were less than those of the other villages viz., V<sub>1</sub>, V<sub>2</sub> and V<sub>3</sub>, which were far from the town. For instance, viz., V<sub>4</sub>, V<sub>5</sub> and V<sub>6</sub>, the numbers were 30, 24 and 22 whereas, the same were 52, 54 and 49 in V<sub>1</sub>, V<sub>2</sub> and V<sub>3</sub> respectively. So, one may find that as we move from the town area, the number of forceful operations has been increased. The reasons for these variation between the two types of villages i.e., near to the town ( V<sub>4</sub>, V<sub>5</sub> and V<sub>6</sub> ) and far from the town ( V<sub>1</sub>, V<sub>2</sub> and V<sub>3</sub> ) appeared to be the following :

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\* Vested interests reacted unfavourably to the programme for various reasons — some were personal, others were related to socio-political factors. One of the reasons appeared to be that they wanted to thrive at the poor economic condition of the villagers. So, any positive attempt to improve the condition of the villagers were generally opposed by these groups of people.

Though a systematic study in this regard has not been made but a close observation revealed that people in V4, V5 and V6 appeared to be conscious of their right and privileges due to higher literacy. More contact to the outside world and more assessability to various institutions and organisations found in this area were greater than those of the V1, V2 and V3 etc., the people of this area appeared to be more conscious and it appeared that they were relatively in a better position to build up a strong public opinion if they found that field-workers etc. had been trying to force them for the programme. It appeared that field-workers were very much conscious and careful before using compulsion as a method to enhance the pace of the programme in the sense that they appeared to apprehend that too much use of the method would be opposed vehemently by the people of this area and the same would be easily circulated and would have the possibility to reach the ears of the influential persons in different strata of the society who ultimately might cause problems for them. A cautious approach in this regard was followed by field-workers before adopting compulsion as a method to increase the pace of the programme. But even then, one may note that some cases of forceful operation would be identified in these villages too ( V4, V5 and V6 ). The reasons appeared to be that at a particular phase of the programme ( 1976 ), some forces were used for the programme perhaps with the idea that the same would be supported by the authority and any possible opposition would be counteracted by various weapons of the authority.

### 3.6.1 Wilful Cases

It is found from the Table\* that in V<sub>1</sub>, V<sub>2</sub> and V<sub>3</sub> wilful cases were 30, 26 and 34 whereas, in V<sub>4</sub>, V<sub>5</sub> and V<sub>6</sub> the numbers were 41, 50 and 50 respectively i.e. the villages which were near to the town had registered more wilful cases than those villages which were far from the town. The reasons for this variation may be summed-up in the following way :

(1) The people in the town area were more exposed to outside world than those of the villages in V<sub>1</sub>, V<sub>2</sub> and V<sub>3</sub>. Such exposition might have made them more aware of the necessity of family planning to make married life better, but one likes to point out that these were largely based on the present investigator's constant observations of the different actions and reactions of the sample families over the period on the aforesaid issue and his ability to interpret the same for reaching a logical conclusion on the aforesaid issue. The success of the method depends on his ability to interpret the issue correctly by taking relevant factors in this connection but it was believed that a further study might be undertaken to examine the impact of such factors in the programme.

(2) The villagers in V<sub>4</sub>, V<sub>5</sub> and V<sub>6</sub> appeared to have greater opportunities for being involved in different types of organisations and institutions than their counterparts in

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\* Table 3.1

V1, V2 and V3 perhaps because, most of the organisations and institutions belonged to the town area or near to the town area. Such involvement might increase their capacity to understand the utility of the programme because they were more exposed to different types of discussions and various interchange of ideas might make them more alert and conscious of interpreting the events of life correctly to tune their life to enrich prosperity and the programme was considered as one of the methods of doing the same. Here also, the present investigator was not quite sure as to what extent such an exposition had helped the programme and a study in this regard might be undertaken to identify the aforesaid factors and their overall impact in the programme.

(3) The data and information supplied in chapter II may indicate that the villagers in V4, V5 and V6 were more literate and such a factor may be considered as favourable for understanding the utility of the programme better than the villagers in V1, V2 and V3 who were relatively less backward with regard to literary standard. No attempt had been made to isolate the variable literacy and to study its impact on the programme but different discussions during field investigation appeared to convince the present investigator that those who were literate could perhaps, understand the utility of the programme better than those who were not literate.

(4) It also appeared that the government institutions

and organisations were mostly situated in town or near to the town areas and the staff in these institutions and organisations might get greater opportunities to come in contact with the people in V<sub>4</sub>, V<sub>5</sub> and V<sub>6</sub> than those of V<sub>1</sub>, V<sub>2</sub> and V<sub>3</sub>. Such a possibility might have a more favourable impact in shaping the willingness of the people in V<sub>4</sub>, V<sub>5</sub> and V<sub>6</sub> greater than V<sub>1</sub>, V<sub>2</sub> and V<sub>3</sub> for the programme. It also appeared that the field-workers generally did not favour the idea of visiting the interior villages particularly in certain months of the year namely, rainy season which generally extends from May to September. Moreover, the lack of adequate motivating force on the part of the field-workers and field-officers to visit rural areas particularly in interior rural areas had been noticed and such an attitude might have reduced their numbers of visits in such areas which could be undertaken otherwise. One also had observed that these officers appeared to be hasty and had not developed a mental set-up to understand adequately the actions and reactions on the different types of rural people and to interpret the same correctly so that they would be in a position to deliver the goods squarely to these types of people. What was further observed that when some enquiries had been made over some of the methods of the programme, these were largely ignored on the plea that to argue with these types of people perhaps, would not cut the ice and it would perhaps, be prudent on the part of them to dictate the terms to these villagers. But here, perhaps,

they had committed mistake. These field-officers and field-workers did not adequately realise that unless they had sufficient tact, intelligence and foresight to answer to their questions in their favour so that they were sufficiently convinced, they would not be able to do any tangible results because these rural people might not speak openly of their reaction for such a neglect but when they would assemble together they would not ventilate favourable opinion about these officers and as a result, misunderstanding might start in the process and once it started in village life, there might be chain reactions in adverse directions yielding unfavourable impact on the willingness of the rural people for the programme. Whether chain reactions would start or not, depend upon circumstances.

### 3.7 Results

The above information from 3.6 to 3.6.1 indicate that Hypothesis II was found to be true.