CHAPTER II

SOCIAL CHANGE AND POPULATION CONTROL
Population explosion has caused a number of problems which have created the need for social change. In this chapter it is attempted to discuss social change in relation to family planning in the theoretical framework. The process of change involved in diffusion and group approach including role of change agent and the strategy are discussed in this section. Looking to the need for development, change requires to be planned and based on the prevailing socio-economic conditions. Therefore, development, social change, and motivation are also discussed in this chapter in this context. We shall discuss population problem mainly from the point of view of planned change.

We are living in a fast changing world and social change is the order of the day. Due to technological advancement and modernisation, man has on the one hand conquered the outer space along-with the other glorious achievements in many different spheres of life. On the other hand, modernisation has created multifarious problems which have made human life more complex and sometimes painful.
What is social change?

Social change is an integrated process in society. Social change is a phenomenon as old as civilization itself. In every age of recorded history people have had to adjust to new tools and practices. The ways of life and behaviour patterns of people have been affected by the introduction of innovations and discoveries. Changes in attitudes and belief systems have always been taking place, but the speed of change and the intensity of the impact was never greater.

Social change, rapid in some cases, slow in others, has characterized all societies, whether prehistoric or modern. Increase in the size of the group, alteration or diversification of economy, shift from nomadic to settled mode of life, modification of the social structure, new emphasis in religious beliefs and practices, growth of science, new philosophies, war and famine are among the phenomena associated with such changes. Frequently the political structure of a society has altered the course of history.
The definitions of social change vary as some confine its scope only to changes in social relationship, while others extend it also to change in the material as well as non-material culture. Mac Iver and Page (1952:511) have mentioned: "Our direct concern as sociologists is with social relationships. It is the change in these which alone we shall regard as social change.... Social change is therefore, a distinct thing from cultural or civilizational change."

Though the process of social change faces resistance and social conflict in its initial stage, change is a fundamental feature of any society.

The observers in every walk of life are in agreement upon a fact that modern world is a world of rapid change. Individuals and groups have to remain actively engaged in change efforts, directed towards themselves and towards their material and social environment.

Social change, no doubt is a continuous process as it is the nature of the society to change.
but the speed of change varies from society to society, and from time to time.

Social change is more likely to occur in heterogeneous societies than in homogeneous ones simply because there are more different points of view available in the former, more ideas, more conflicts in interest, more groups and organisations of different values and beliefs. Social change is easier if it is gradual. Foster (1962:29) states "Cities are focal points of change, Most social and economic change begins among the upper classes and then spreads downward to the traditionally inarticulate lower classes and outward to the countryside. The cultural innovations of urban areas have prestige attached to them." It comes more readily to human relations on a continuous scale. It may be emphasised, however, that along with the directed change in the economic structure brought about by industrialisation and national planning, the human aspects are being bypassed. No planning devoid of human perspective can bring about real development of the country. The Government can legislate a certain pattern of economic development and growth but unless people or the beneficiaries accept the change, it will remain an imposition.
In view of the ever changing nature of society, social change is explained in context of the process of development by Deshmukh (1971) as follows:

"Both words constituting 'social change' have wide but by no means precise connotations. 'Social' may include everything that pertains to a given community; or, it may be intended to denote phenomena not measurable in terms of money but of value systems, in contrast to 'economic' and 'change', again may mean the perpetual and spontaneous mutation that characterises human societies over time; or it may be intended to imply a conscious and deliberately induced transformation of a society or community of peoples. For the purposes of the development effort in a developing country like India 'Social Change' is frequently thought of in context of the process of development".

Social Scientists observe both material and non-material cultures involved in social change. It is obvious that material culture undergoes 'change' more quickly, more rapidly than the non-material culture. Technical advances are often cause of involuntary social change.
However, most of the sociologists take a wider view of social change and include in it changes in all the three spheres, i.e., cultural, civilizational and social. Gillin and Gillin (1954:561-562) have defined "Social changes as variation from the accepted modes of life, whether due to alteration in geographical conditions, in cultural equipment, composition of the population or ideologies, and whether brought about by diffusion or invention within the group."

MacIver and Page have mentioned the three important factors of change, i.e., the bio-physical, technological and cultural. However, we can divide these factors into five broad categories, i.e., physical, psychological, biological, technological and cultural. Among these, the technological factor is the most important in the modern era, although at times other factors particularly ideological may bring about vast changes. The biological factors may bring about changes through intermixture of races and increase or decrease of population; the psychological factors through limitation of customs and mores which may not be the exact copy of the previous generation or through competition, conflict, etc.; the physical factors through natural calamities or exhaustion of soil, technological factors through innovations and new techniques and cultural factors through change in ideas, beliefs, and attitudes.
What is planned change?

The need for planned change is motivated more by the socio-economic conditions prevailing in a country than by any ideology that a particular section of people hold. Bennis et. al. (1961:10) write in this connection:

"Men must try to plan their changing futures and this necessarily is seem to be determined by cultural conditions, not primarily by the ideology men happen to hold. "Democratic," "Communist," and "Fascist" people must alike try to plan social changes."

Planned change is a deliberative and collaborative process, which involves change agent on the one hand and client systems on the other. Commitment on the part of both the change agent and the client system is required for building such a relationship between successful implementation of planned change.

Planned change also calls for certain changes in the habits, institutions, customs and beliefs of like men. For example, social institutions/caste-system in India must undergo the process of change. Similar is the case of attitude towards family planning.
Education in a means in this direction, for the success of family planning, improvement in agriculture, and industrialization depend upon education.

Increasing inter-dependence among people has paved the way to more collaborative efforts for change. This has resulted in change from the traditional, normative and institutional basis of natural community through bureaucratization and urbanisation and adoption of scientific attitude. (McGregor, 1960). This new method or system is possible by small organised groups availing its freedom on all its members. An organised group acts collectively and the individual members obey the prescribed rules.

The role of change in small groups:

The word 'change' produces emotional reactions. It is not static or neutral. To many people it sounds a threat. It has been found that much of our work has been devoted to gain a better understanding of the ways in which people change their behaviour or resist efforts by others to have them do so. We may examine more specifically how groups enter into the process of change. In the first instance, the group is seen
as a source of influence over its members. Efforts to change behaviour can be supported or blocked through pressures on members of the groups. These pressures will serve as a medium of change. In the second case, the group itself become the target of change. To change the behaviour of individuals it may be necessary to change the standards of the group, its style of leadership, and its emotional atmosphere. Even though the goal may be to change the behaviour of individuals, the target of change becomes the group. The group under study can be utilised as a medium for changing the persons who seek and find membership within it. In such a process, the group operates as a learning or training group. The group can also be used as an instrument in planning and effecting changes in the social structures in which it is set.

Horwitz (1953) while discussing conceptual status of Group clarifies systems of group. In other words, the personalities of group members represent "Systems" that overlap the "Social System" of the small group. These inter-system relationships may be examined. Horwitz identifies the principal "Small group variables" that have been discarded and isolated up to this time.
In small groups the higher the degree of tension, the smaller the fraction of total energy directly invested in the pursuit of objectives of groups or of those of whole enterprise. In such cases the energy of the group is largely used for avoiding of solving conflicts. In such a situation change can be described as the passage from a quasi-stationary equilibrium to a different one. It can, therefore, be said that the amount of energy available inside a group is constant as long as the environment remains unchanged. This energy can, however, be redistributed into various combinations of forces leading to a higher or lower level of internal tension. The redistribution depends on the nature of communication within the group.

Obviously the greatest single obstacle to the economic and social advancement of the majority of the people in the underdeveloped world is the high population growth. However, one point in this connection need to be made clear: the solution of the population problem is in no way a substitute for the more traditional forms of developmental assistance—aid for development of economic infrastructure; aid for development of agriculture; aid for education; aid for
technological advancement; and aid for a whole gamut of other productive projects. But nothing would be more unwise than to allow these projects to fail because of the population explosion.

No Government can, ultimately succeed in convincing its own population to undertake family planning, if parents themselves do not really want it. But the almost universal fact is that parents do want it.

**Development, social change, and motivation:**

There is a growing consensus that most developing nations would benefit from a lower rate of population growth with the ultimate goal of a stable population level. How can this best be achieved? Family Planning services, although essential, are not enough. What is needed is a combination of such services with economic growth and with a more equitable distribution of the benefits of economic and social progress. Recent findings clearly indicate that such programmes are not only desirable but probably essential, each serving to reinforce for all those concerned with the need for controlling the population explosion and for achieving population stabilization at the earliest possible date. In many developing countries it means that effective land
for reform programmes are/bringing about a reduction in rural birth rate. Several research studies have indicated the adverse effects of rapid population growth on human well-being.

Development strategy:

There are many reasons why birth rate is affected by improved welfare. The spread of education motivates for smaller family size. Education makes information about birth control techniques more accessible to the people. More important are the changes which occur in the values of educated persons, as they learn to question traditional practices of their parents which in turn affect their attitudes toward family size. The crucial question, therefore, is how the great majority of families can break out of this vicious circle. Recognising the fact that their social and economic difficulties worsen as population growth continues uncontrolled, many developing countries have begun family planning programmes to improve the means of limiting family size. But a troublesome problem is that these programmes have mainly been accepted by families which are relatively affluent or already have too many children, or by women in ill health. Unless there is greater acceptance of the need for fewer children by the majority of families, efforts to
stabilize population growth will fail. Therefore, if developing countries are to escape the threats posed by rapid population growth, more families must not only be provided with means to limit births but also the motivation to do so.

The experience of Europe and other developing countries like North America during the past century is worth noting: A general reduction in birth rate was found with an increase in the income levels, without any well-organised family planning programme. Other developed countries have a similar experience.

Social change and fertility:

The experience of recent years indicates that the more equitable approaches to development which are so beneficial in increasing the motivation for smaller families, need not be at the expense of economic growth. In fact, those development strategies which provide social change through making it possible for a farmer or a labourer to work more effectively for his own advancement can actually accelerate growth. If the developing countries are to escape the threat posed by rapid population growth within an acceptable time period, more families must acquire the motivation to limit births.
It is not enough for them simply to be provided with the improved method to do so. This means that the development planners must give far more attention to the effect of alternative development strategies on birth rate. Equally important, those concerned with alleviating population problems need to think of remedies for the population crises which go beyond the exclusive reliance on family planning programmes. Policies that bring health, education and meaningful employment to lower income groups can at the same time contribute toward reducing population growth and accelerating economic growth. These can also provide a solid base on which to build future development policies. The policies, when combined with largescale, well executed family planning programmes, should make it possible to stabilize a country's population much more rapidly than reliance on either approach alone.

Social change in reference to India:

If one studies the cultural heritage of India, he will find that several social reforms have been introduced by great personalities like Raja Ram Mohan Roy, Dhondo Keshav Kurve, in traditional Indian social framework during earlier 20th century also. Influence of National Leaders, Social Workers, Philosophers and
Religious leaders has always remained as a tremendous force for social change in India. Rapid social change ultimately depends on the quality and effectiveness of the instruments used for the purpose.

Change is a normal feature of any society except those societies which are completely isolated. Even in such isolated societies, change does take place though its pace is slow. Today in the atomic era, question of isolated society does not stand as world has become very small due to the swift communication and transportation. Particularly in the developed countries, technical advancement leads to better economic and educational levels which ultimately hasten the speed of social change. Thus, the degree of social change in the developed societies is higher than that in underdeveloped societies. Moreover, the developed and complex societies have included a practice of adoption of new traits quickly through several opportunities and experiences; hence such societies are prone to change rapidly.

In an underdeveloped country like India, the process of social change is very slow. There are several factors responsible for this. India is a country whose people are poor beyond compare, short lived and incapable of resisting diseases and epidemics with
rampant illiteracy and vast areas devoid of sanitary or health provision and unemployment on a wide scale (Nehru). Illiteracy, ignorance, superstitions, fatalism, low income standard, poverty, unemployment, and age-long inertia are the major factors causing poor response to social change. For such traditional society, it is very difficult to initiate and accelerate social change.

Pandit Nehru has often described the diversities of India, that even in these days of Jet Planes, automobiles with the latest mechanical gadgets, ultra-modern atomic energy plants on one hand, it is even more common to see on other hand, as one passes through the country side, bullock driven carts, mud roads and thatched huts. It indicates that Indian rural communities can initiate social change but at the speed of a tortoises. Hence, an enormous gap is apparent between Indian rural communities and the modern world.

Our national leaders, social agencies and Government have jointly made strenous efforts for the uplift of rural life by raising level of literacy and economy of our country. Great efforts have been made by the Government to induce a planned social change by launching the National Development Programme in vital fields such as Irrigation and Agriculture, Education, Community Development, Industrialisation and Health.
Government has enacted a number of laws to curb social problems like child-marriage and untouchability, but the social value system is so deeply rooted in India that the degree of change in these areas is far from the expectations. It is a matter of great anxiety for the planners of the community development as the desired change in the rural life has not been achieved.

In this new era, no society can afford to keep itself isolated from the rest of the world specifically in the field of science and technology. Some traditional practices in our society are required to be checked and changed for better living. Such undesired practices might have considerably retarded the pace of development of people in India.

In addition to this, technological advancement and industrial development are being accelerated day by day and societies generating very slow social change may not be able to keep pace with modern world. Consequently, the state of imbalance among social, economic and educational change may lead our society to a state of schism which may ultimately hamper the progress of our nation.
Some efforts for inducing planned social change:

Extensive and intensive utilization of wide-spread modern and indigenous media like radio, T.V., Newspapers, films, literature, Dramas, Bhavai, Folk Songs, Puppets etc., for effective mass communication does help considerably to hasten the process of planned change. In recent years, this has been found fruitful to a great extent in popularising welfare schemes like family planning, small savings etc., in India. Along with due emphasis on the mass education component, the popular, prospective and powerful government can be an instrument in heightening the momentum of social change, by launching community welfare programmes. The process of desired change may be further swiftened through the strict enforcement of laws along with the intensive social education as a supportive force, that is an integrated approach of education cum legal measures aimed at the development of the nation.

Preparing a nation as huge and as ancient as ours and to help her to adopt itself to the new social values, patterns and new norms of the modern society is not an ordinary task as it involves the process of planned behavioural change in the people. The change in human behaviour is a very complex process and requires proper extension education. Therefore, the Government has
employed a large number of Extension Educators and other staff for the success of Development Programmes like Agriculture, Community Development, Health and Family Planning. This army of Government staff and the community leaders were utilised as change agents in order to bring the desired social change. To achieve the objectives of the development programme it was necessary to create awareness through mass media among the people so they could be easily approached and involved for the planned change with the help of change agents.

**Planned social change in context of family planning:**

A small family norm was an "alien" element to Indian society. Hence family planning programme faced severe resistance in its infancy stage in India. Though the degree of adoption of small family norm is increasing day by day, yet looking to the acuteness, gravity and complexity of the problem of the population explosion, the degree of receptivity of family planning today in India may not meet with forthcoming alarming and disastrous situation. Moreover, family planning is a time bound and target oriented programme. Key to its success is that this Government sponsored programme should become people's programme.
This is essential because the family planning programme envisages to popularise the small family norm. This norm cannot be established until the urban and rural people change their old norm of big family by accepting new ideas and attaching new social values.

In order to achieve the objectives of the family planning programme in a stipulated time, planned social change is inevitable to be brought about through mass education and intensive use of extension approach and by providing prompt and effective family planning services to the targeted eligible couples.

**Family planning as an instrument of social change:**

According to Chandrasekhar, the then Union Minister of State for Health and Family Planning, Government of India, India's family planning programme is unique and historic in the fields of international demography, public health and medical services. It sought to consciously bring about a change in the thinking attitudes and behaviour of the people in relation to the size of the family, thereby ensuring a better and more equitable distribution of resources, also hastening the transformation of our society into a modern and industrialised nation.
Enormous planned efforts under family planning programme have indicated the signs of change in family norm, values, attitudes and social patterns. Thus, the family planning to some extent has already become and is continuously becoming as an "Instrument of social change." Of course, considering the gravity and urgency of the problem, this instrument of social change should be sharpened and made more effective of the national family planning programme. Planned efforts for popularising the small family norm through mass media and huge number of health and family planning personnel have induced the attitudinal change which is a part of the process of transformation. As the literacy rate, especially female education and standard of living of Indian population are raised, the population control will gain rapid momentum by the active support and participation of the people themselves. At present our educationists and the Government have already decided, planned and are almost ready to include the programme popularly known as 'POPULATION EDUCATION' in the school and college curricula. The purpose is to create sensetisation and to help the students at the formative age to know the consequences of large families and the galloping growth of population.
Population education:

Education is the prerequisite for accelerating the acceptance of family planning methods voluntarily. Therefore, the need for population education is recognised in recent years in India. In fact, 'population education' is one of the most urgently needed and badly neglected task of our society. It is a challenge of the seventies.

"Population education is an attempt to create a deep, universal, action-guiding perception of the consequences of demographic change. It seeks to bring about a realization of the individual, family, social and environment effects of the explosive increase in human population, the rapid shifts in the concentration and distribution of people, the implication of changing age and other demographic patterns and the conceivable options that may be open to mankind to cope with the consequent problems "(Population Reference Bureau, INC. 1970:1).

Population education aims at creating among the people an awareness and understanding of population and involves the study of population trends and their impact on various aspects of human life, social and cultural, economic, and in particular the close inter-
action with the whole process of human growth and development. Population education, for example, seeks to explain how developments in medical and social sciences enable people to achieve increasing control over famine, disease and untimely death, and over unplanned births. The significance of population to the individual family and society is also a part of population education, e.g., it will help to show that, for preserving the health of the mother, the health and welfare of the children and social and economic stability of the family and society, it is desirable to have responsible family life.

Population education does not consist merely in conveying information, but must lead to the development of certain insights and attitudes about the place of man in the modern world. It is a strategy to build up a new ethic of responsible behaviour in human reproduction and family living. In this way, population education becomes one of the most significant and innovative measures towards preparing the people in realistic and meaningful terms to face one of the major problems of our times.
Early efforts:

In India, in the late fifties, the social agencies like All India Women's Association, Red Cross Society etc., planned and initiated family welfare activities voluntarily. Right from the commencement of the birth control propaganda, it was resisted in the beginning not only by the illiterate people but by the intellectuals, eminent leaders of society, social workers, writers, journalists, critics and particularly religious heads who opined that birth control was not in consonance with the Indian culture and modern contraception may not be entered into and adopted by the traditional Indian society where the deep-rooted fatalism and social prestige clinged to the big size of family.

To-day, in India the situation is different in the field of family planning. The acceptance rate of family planning methods proves that the programme has become popular in the urban areas. The message of family planning has reached and created awareness even in the most interior and remote villages. When the National Family Planning Programme was started on large scale, the heads of majority of religious organizations did not oppose it. Later on, some of them
even extended their support to the family welfare activities. Some journalists, writers and critics also made efforts in creating awareness of the problem of population explosion. The planners, thinkers and leaders of various categories have expressed their anxiety about the alarming and catastrophic situation the nation will have to face if population was allowed to increase at enormous speed. In addition to this, in the history of mankind the first Government sponsored family planning programme was launched in India.

Resistance to change:

Introduction of National Family Planning Programme in the traditional society like India is the effort to have planned social change but as usual/new effort faces resistance from the society in the beginning. Introduction of small family norm through the family planning programme in India was not an exception to this. The question is why people resist the change.

Rudramurthy (1964:162) has assigned reasons for resistance to change as follows:
1. Our people have been neglected for so long that they are urgently in need of the basic necessities of life such as roads, schools, etc. rather than the development programmes with remote benefits.

2. Many people especially, in rural communities have been used to follow the order of their landlords, officials and powerful people. It is difficult for them now to think and take initiative in their own development programme.

3. It is difficult to shake the traditional and habitual behaviours deeply rooted in the Indian society.

4. Some organizers believe and go with the preconceived idea that our people resist change per se.

5. A change causes disruption in social system.

6. Sense of insecurity and instability is attached with the resistance to change.

In addition to the reasons assigned by Rudramurthy, fear complex towards new things, lack of group approval or social sanction for the changed behaviour of some individuals (potential early adopters) and old pattern of traditional behaviour might also be the contributing forces for resistance to change.
Hoffer (1964:1) explains:

"In case of change, the uneasiness is of course deeper and more lasting. We can never be really prepared for that which is wholly new. We have to adjust ourselves, every radical adjustment is a crisis in self-esteem: We undergo a test we have to prove ourselves. It needs inordinate self-confidence to face change without inner trembling."

As explained by Hoffer change is not easily accepted by the people. This is particularly so in our Indian situation. People by and large seem to be more dependent on others especially leaders and elders and therefore, until leaders and elders endorse or accept the change most of the people may not accept it in their behaviour. Due to dependency (and absence of individualism) most of our people likely to remain less responsive to change until the change becomes the socially accepted behaviour.

Relationship between social heritage and social change, importance of social conformity have been well explained by Kuppuswami (1967:192) as follows:

"There is a continuous action and reaction between social heritage and social change. In some
societies, in some ages social heritage may be strong while in some others social change may be more strong. The change itself may be progressive or degenerative. The individual starts with social conformity with more or less resistance and later may bring about social change with more or less success."

The chief reasons responsible for resistance to change and some suggestions may be enumerated as follows:

1. Deep rooted habits and customs have become a way of life. They are difficult to change suddenly, until ignorance, illiteracy and fatalistic attitudes are changed.

2. Strong tie with leaders helps the people to follow the leaders traditionally. Hence change has to be first accepted and advocated by the influential and opinion leaders and then to be followed by their followers. Otherwise resistance to change will continue.

3. Social group norms have embedded so rigidly and tightly that a few individuals will not dare to accept innovations. New norms are required to be approved by the group and society at large. Hence,
"social sanction" is very necessary. Usually, individuals are afraid of accepting new ways of life or changing the old pattern of behaviour in absence of social sanction.

4. Lack of proper extension approach by the workers also creates resistance among people to change their habits and traditional way of living.

5. Change, as such brings uneasiness and disturbance in the beginning in any existing social system. Rural people are more dependent by virtue of their deep rooted norm and values in comparison to urban population. Therefore, naturally change is resisted in rural communities.

The above mentioned quotations and discussion indicate that social change is a natural phenomenon; yet people accept it with resistance. The process of change is very slow. It depends on the adaptibility of people in a given society and a given time span. It may also be seen that the adaptibility of people in modern times is far more higher compared to past; and consequently especially people of the developed country resist least to the process of social change. Resistance is found more among the people of developing counties than that of developed counties. We live in an age wherein
the material changes come at an accelerated speed and in order to avert the unavoidable adverse social consequences of social disorganisation, the social change is to be induced through deliberate efforts to keep pace with other changing factors. Such efforts, are made in the field of family planning. The National Family Planning Programme was given due importance in our Five year plan periods. Inspite of these efforts family planning has yet not become the way of life of the people in our country and so far we are not able to check the galloping population growth rate. Due to very slow acceptance of change (family planning) the task of family planning education has become difficult.

A difficult task:

Results of a sufficient number of field trials undertaken in less developed countries have shown that when technical and organizational problems are tackled, remarkable reduction in the birth rate can be possible. We have no alternative except to check population growth by reducing birth rate as death rate is not to be increased but to be decreased.

It is observed that in most areas people do not want large family sizes. However, large family sizes
were not the results of desires of the couples involved but rather it stems from their inability to limit their families (Rainwater, 1962). Several Knowledge, Attitude and Practice (KAP) studies carried out in India have also shown a big gap between desire and practice in family planning. As the practice level is low the impact on lowering population growth is also little. The solution has been well summarised as follows:

"There must be a total committal to the use of simple contraceptives, an honesty and realism about sterilization and compassion about abortion." (Potts, 1972:6). These three things could bring no doubt better results as mentioned by Potts but still there is one more important reason for low acceptance of birth control and that is the most urgent demand for research to find out an ideal method (contraceptive) which could be simple, cheap, effective and easy to use by even the most illiterate and poor people. Population problem is in a way 'man made' (by reducing natural death rate due to intensive public health and medical services and controlling epidemics) and, therefore, men must find a solution to control the population.

Population policy:

For achieving success in population control high involvement of people in general and specialists such as
demographers, sociologists, economists, health personnel and social workers in particular is seen to be inevitable. It can be better assured by the formation of a national population policy as an integral part of the development plan, and by the involvement of the whole Governmental apparatus in support of a national family planning programme, (Report of National Policy Panel established by the United Nations Association of U.S.A., 1969).

Broadly speaking population policy of a nation involves welfare of the people of the nation but from the point of view of population control, we are concerned with policies related to changes in the quantity and quality of population in respect to their standard of living, equality in distribution of resources, and opportunities for education and employment etc. We need population control for achieving better quality of life of the people. Our interest is in the human well-being, social justice and equal opportunities to all for their personal and social development. In this context, family planning is for the welfare of the people and not because somebody is against children. On the contrary, family planning can help in ensuring that every child and every human being has the maximum possible opportunities for living a better
life. In fact, effective population policy could help in solving our greatest problem of poverty.

Philosophy and guiding principles of the programme:

As per the new population policy of the Government of India, only the educational approach is to be employed for lowering the birth rate. Highest importance to the dignity of individual and to his right to decide the size of his family has been given. This is envisaged in the very philosophy and guiding principles of Indian Family Planning Programme. It has further envisaged that "The community must be prepared to feel the need for the services in order that these may be accepted when provided; (b) The people should be approached through media they respect and through their recognized and trusted leaders and without offending their religious and moral values and susceptibilities; (c) The services should be made available to the people as near to their doorsteps as possible; (d) The services will have greater relevance and effectiveness if made an integral part of medical and public health services and especially of mother and child health programmes" (Population Council, 1968:1). Therefore, our family planning programme depends
for its success on voluntary acceptance by people, through a process of motivation and education and enlightened realization of the goal that accrues to individuals from acceptance and practice of a small family norm.

It is inevitable to increase the present rate of voluntary acceptance of family planning if at all we aim to achieve the success of the programme especially in the present circumstances. This is most difficult without increasing peoples' participation in the programme.

*Peoples' participation:*

Centrally sponsored present family planning programme has so far been largely managed and controlled by the Government. The programme needs to be more and more people oriented. It should become the programme of the people as it aims the welfare of the people themselves. To do so we need to increase participation of the people in general and community leaders and voluntary organisations in particular. In order to help people to accept family planning methods first the people have to realize the need for family planning and change their attitudes favourably towards
family planning. This can be possible only by involving majority of the eligible couples through a method of group discussions and individual contacts by community leaders and social workers in addition to the Government machinery. It has to be done continuously on a mass scale. The process of organising proper discussions, taking decisions, and actions by the people themselves with the help of change agents need to be stimulated at all levels. In this way if peoples' participation in the programme is ensured and continued, the voluntary acceptance of family planning can be increased.

The task of motivating over 100 million eligible couples is a gigantic one. Mere provision of services for family planning by themselves cannot increase the acceptance. Therefore, peoples' participation in the programme is inevitable in order to foster planned change (in respect of family planning) in the thinking, attitudes and behaviour of the people. All the community leaders, social workers and especially women's representatives need to work as change agents for popularising small family norm/family planning methods. All the educated and professional women and men, the leaders of voluntary agencies and women organisations have to be made realize that they are
an integral part of social change. If they are made aware of this and opportunities are created in which they actively participate, the desired results can be achieved.

Apart from people's participation the success of family planning depends upon proper planning and implementation of the educational programme and effective strategies to bring about the rapid change in the behaviour of the people. Therefore, it will be appropriate to discuss on adoption process, role of change agent and use of beneficiaries for accelerating the change in respect of family planning.

Adoption process - stages of social change:

Social change in human behaviour is generally brought about by activating the process of acceptance of innovation. Rogers (1962) has identified five stages of adoption process of innovation. Hage and Aiken (1970) have described that the Roger's work was based on individual's acceptance of innovation and stages of innovation given by Rogers were considered as stages of social change. These five stages are (i) awareness, (ii) interest, (iii) evaluation, (iv) trial and (v) adoption. Adoption is the mental process. Generally
the innovation passes through the first stage of awareness to the last stage of adoption.

All individuals do not pass through these stages at the same time as it depends upon so many factors such as individual's need, interest and attitude, his age, education, social values, family and social environment, availability of proper opportunities for learning about and accepting the innovation.

In reality, the process of adoption is not so simple as it looks. In some cases individual passes through two or even three stages simultaneously. Anyhow, the five stages given by Rogers, based on studies in the field of agriculture seem to be appropriate to some extent in understanding the adoption process of health innovations such as family planning.

Rogers' stages of social change reflects the adoption of innovative practices or activities by individuals. As such, Rogers' is a social-psychological approach to the problem of social change. In this 'awareness' stage, the individual first becomes aware of the innovation, in the 'interest' stage, the individual seeks additional information, and in the 'evaluation' stage, the individual mentally applies
the innovation to his present and anticipated future situation (Hage and Aiken, 1970:112-114).

Different individuals take different times to pass through the process of adoption of an innovation. Many of them do not pass through all the stages and are not able to reach the final stage of adoption ever a period of time, while some pass through all stages earlier than others. Thus, depending upon their pattern Rogers (1962:169-171) has categorised them as innovators, early adopters, early majority, late majority and laggards.

**Diffusion of Innovation - Significance in Public Health**

Research in the process of diffusion of innovation conducted by Rogers (1958) provide three significant implications for public health programme. First, people of a community react differently towards a new practice. Depending upon their patterns of response they are classified as: Innovators, early adopters, early majority, majority, and non-adopters. It is also observed that the experience of the innovators and early adopters are the chief determinants of the adoption among the rest of the population and that these experiences are diffused through the
informal network of communication rather than through formal mass media.

The second implication of the model of diffusion of innovation for a public health programme is that within each individual a change occurs in certain stages. These are (i) awareness about health need and of a new health practice for resolving this need; (ii) active interest in the new measure which may lead them to seek more information; (iii) mental evaluation of its pros and cons; (iv) trial-adoption of a new practice which may lead either to a satisfaction of a new practice which may lead either to satisfaction of or dissatisfaction and (v) lastly, final adoption depending upon the experiences of initial adoption. This implies that a public health worker needs different types of educational appeals depending upon at what stage of adoption certain section of community members are. Such understanding will help the public health worker to evolve effective educational appeals and contents in order to accelerate the process of individual's adoption of a health measure.
The third implication of the model diffusion of innovation indicates that for different categories of people different types of communication media are effective. The relatively more change-prone members of the community (innovators and early acceptors) are easily reached by mass communication and individual contacts by extension agents, whereas the less change-prone members of the community depend more frequently in informal and inter-personal network of communication through which the experiences of the innovators and early adopters are diffused. Mostly the same seems to be true for the vasectomy acceptors. Here, acceptance of vasectomy method (New health behaviour) is the INNOVATION and the persons who undergo vasectomy operations are the INNOVATORS (Dhillon, 1969).

The role of change agent:

The extension educator is the change agent who is instrumental to induce the change and help people to help themselves with the help of leaders. This is explained as follows:

"A change agent is a professional person who attempts to influence adoption decisions in: a
direction that he feels is desirable. The change agent serves as communication link between a professional system and his client system. The extent of promotional efforts by change agents is directly related to the rate of adoption of an innovation (Rogers, 1962:283).

Though, the beneficiaries (acceptors) are not the professional persons they can be used as change agents because they are very influential in accelerating the adoption rate of new methods. For the Health Education purpose we may define the terms as follows: Change agent is a person who could bring the desired behavioural change in his clients (peers, friends, relatives, community members) by sharing his knowledge and his own experiences about the adoption of a new method in an influential manner.

A person who tells or discusses after his own experience will be more effective to the listeners or participants. It is aptly said that one must practice before he preaches. Thus the beneficiaries can work as change agents through interpersonal communication, exerting their influence on selected group members which in turn will bring desirable behavioural change rapidly. The role of change agent for bringing planned
social change is very important. His effectiveness will depend upon his ability to apply techniques of change through strategic planning.

Suggested general strategy of change has been summarised as follows:

1. "A programme of change should be tailored to fit the cultural values and past experience;"

2. A change agent's clients must perceive a need for an innovation before it can be successfully introduced;

3. Change agents should be more concerned with improving their clients competence in evaluating new ideas, and less with simply promoting innovations;

4. Change agents should concentrate their efforts upon opinion leaders in the early stages of diffusion of an innovation; and

5. The social consequences of innovations should be anticipated and prevented if undesirable" (Rogers, 1962:284).

In public health programmes it is imperative that effort should be made to accelerate the diffusion of favourable experiences of the early adoptors to the rest of the community. It may also be necessary to
identify the innovators, personally approach them and to encourage them to share their experiences with rest of the community. In a pilot study of the effectiveness of CARD SYSTEM the same methodology was followed by utilizing a medium of special service cards which helped the family planning workers to identify and contact adopters of vasectomy operations without fail. The objective of an appealing card and personal approach and follow up by the family planning worker was to encourage the adopters to share their experiences with other males who need the same kind of family planning services. As a result of this card system the number of vasectomy acceptors increased by 20 per cent which proves that beneficiaries (change agents) can be effective motivators (Patel, 1971:2-6).

It is observed that sterilized persons i.e., beneficiaries (satisfied users) could help in accelerating the adoption process of family planning methods especially in the most difficult and crucial stage of evaluation.

The satisfied users (beneficiaries) could work as "change agents" through a medium of interpersonal communication. So far as the sterilization programme is concerned, there will be no trial stage
as vasectomy and tubectomy operations which are permanent methods for limiting the family size. Of course, during this stage the eligible couples are likely to find out the experiences of the sterilization acceptors.

Before studying any problem it is necessary to know in details about the subject as well as existing programme. Therefore, in the next chapter we shall review the Family Planning Programme in India.