

PERCEPTION OF RELIGIOUS LEADERS ABOUT FAMILY PLANNING IN RURAL AREAS OF PAKISTAN

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ABSTRACT

The Population of Pakistan is increasing swiftly and the infants and mortality rate is very high. There is dire need to control high birth rate to reduce the population to manageable level. About 65% population of Pakistan is still living in rural areas. The Religious Leaders-Mosques' Imams can play key role in reducing the high birth rate by preaching to their followers about Family Planning methods. The study in hand was envisaged to ascertain the views of the Religious leaders about Family Planning. The main objective was to explore the socio-economic attributes, the level of awareness, the perception and reflection of Religious Leaders about different aspects of Family Planning. Five villages in Tehsile Chiniot which has presently declared by the Government as District were selected and 50 respondents were selected randomly. The analysis of data revealed that the level of general education as well as religious education of the religious leaders is very low. They understand the bad impacts of large population but they did not use the contraceptives. Moreover, they did not agree for counseling to their followers about family planning. It is concluded that it is very difficult to succeed for Family Planning Programme in rural areas of Pakistan. It is suggested that the religious leaders must be brought into the main stream of life and some mobilization programmes should be arranged for them to acquaint them with the concept of creating balance between the number and economic resources of the family in order to bring prosperity and happiness in Pakistani society.

KEYWORDS: Contraceptives, Infants' Mortality Rate, Withdrawal, Islamic Jurists, Theologians, Childbearing, and Pregnancy