

'Fertility rate falls further, obesity rises'

Stunting among children marginally dipped, number of women with bank accounts surged: NFHS

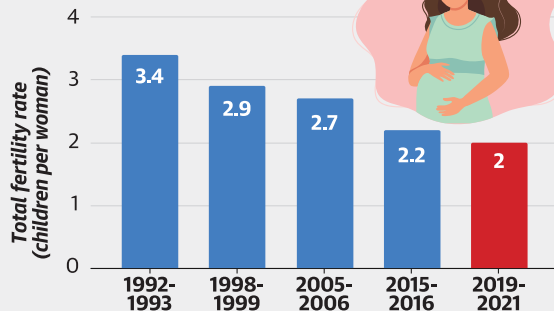
BINDU SHAJAN PERAPPADAN
NEW DELHI

The Total Fertility Rate (TFR), an average number of children per woman, has further declined from 2.2 to 2.0 at the national level between National Family Health Survey (NFHS) 4 and 5.

There are only five States – Bihar (2.98), Meghalaya (2.91), Uttar Pradesh (2.35), Jharkhand (2.26) Manipur (2.17) – in India which are above replacement level of fertility of 2.1 as per the national report of the NFHS-5, released by the Union Health Ministry.

The main objective of successive rounds of the NFHS has been to provide reliable and comparable data relating to health and family welfare and other emerging areas in India. The NFHS-5 national report lists progress from NFHS-4 (2015-16) to NFHS-5 (2019-21).

Fewer children | A look at the total fertility rate at national level in three decades



SOURCE: NATIONAL FAMILY HEALTH SURVEY

The other key highlights of the survey include institutional births increased from 79% to 89% across India and in rural areas around 87% births being delivered in institutions and the same is 94% in urban areas.

As per results of the NFHS-5, more than three-fourths (77%) children aged

between 12 and 23 months were fully immunised, compared with 62% in NFHS-4.

The level of stunting among children under five years has marginally declined from 38% to 36% in the country since the last four years. Stunting is higher among children in rural areas (37%) than urban areas

(30%) in 2019-21.

Additionally, NFHS-5 shows an overall improvement in Sustainable Development Goals indicators in all States/Union Territories (UTs). The extent to which married women usually participate in three household decisions (about health care for herself; making major household purchases; visit to her family or relatives) indicates that their participation in decision-making is high, ranging from 80% in Ladakh to 99% in Nagaland and Mizoram. Rural (77%) and urban (81%) differences are found to be marginal. The prevalence of women having a bank or savings account has increased from 53% to 79% in the last four years.

Rise in obesity

Compared with NFHS-4, the prevalence of overweight or obesity has increased in

most States/UTs in NFHS-5. At the national level, it increased from 21% to 24% among women and 19% to 23% among men. More than a third of women in Kerala, Andaman and Nicobar Islands, Andhra Pradesh, Goa, Sikkim, Manipur, Delhi, Tamil Nadu, Puducherry, Punjab, Chandigarh and Lakshadweep (34-46 %) are overweight or obese.

The NFHS-5 survey work has been conducted in and around 6.37 lakh sample households from 707 districts (as on March, 2017) of the country from 28 States and eight UTs, covering 7,24,115 women and 1,01,839 men to provide disaggregated estimates up to district level. The report also provides data by socio-economic and other background characteristics; useful for policy formulation and effective programme implementation.