Women's Roles in Population

Jennifer Smith

Dr. Paul Roberts

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Women play many roles from day to day; she is a mother, sister, friend, employee, boss, caregiver, cancer survivor, cook, servant, traditionalist, financial keeper, educator, and the giver of life. As you can see women’s roles are not limited, they are important, one of the roles that we will being looking at is the roles women play in population. How does this role affect them, how does population control affect women, and how are others helping women play these important roles. These will be what we explore.

The roles women play on population in the United States is far different then the role these same women play in Africa, Bangladesh, and Brazil. “We see a mother in Utah giving birth to seven babies, and we marvel and rejoice. On the same day a women in Nigeria give birth to her seventh child in a row; we are distressed and appalled” (Zwingle, 1998). The population seems to be rising in these developing countries that have no means to take care of these new generations. There are many reasons the birth rates in these developing countries are high. The reason behind the birth rates has to do with the infant mortality rate, and birth mortality rates. “More than half a million women die each year from causes related to pregnancy, often the result of poor health, lack of medical care, and having babies too close together” (Zwingle, 1998). This plague’s women of developing countries, as well as them producing a son to take care of their home, and land when they get old. Most families in developing countries need sons to take care of the families, and when a women isn’t able to produce a son for he husband things are looking good for her to stay his wife.

The place that researchers keep coming back to in solving this problem of population is women, and education. Much data shows that education gives women of
these developing countries the power and the confidence to take decision making into their own hands. When the women have the power to control how many children they want, how to take care of them, and financially make decisions for the family, you see a reduction in birth rates and a higher level of health and education in the those children. In Bangladesh, BRAC (Bangladesh Rural Advancement Committee) has taken steps to reduce population by putting women in power; they find that many of the women want contraceptives, “they see that if a mother has fewer children, she can give them better care. And her health will be better.” (Zwingle, 1998) In Brazil, they found that giving loans to women instead of men, which the welfare of the children goes up, by 20 percent. They find that the women use the money more accurately; they improve the way of living for their families.

Today Bangladesh has decreased their rise in population through different women organizations. In 1990, their birthrate was 4.9 children per women, now is 3.3 per women. Bangladesh hasn’t overcome poverty and illiteracy to get these results, they turned to the role of the women to solve the problem, and the women of Bangladesh were happy to take the leading role in their nation. The same story can be told in Kenya, they use to have one of the highest birthrates in the world, until they brought women’s health programs to Kenya. They have shown one of the deepest declines in 20 years in Africa, programs in Kenya have been working very hard to get through to the women, and families. Many originally thought that these programs for the women would give the information and contraceptive and the wives would discuss these issues with the husbands, but they soon found out more needed to be done.
The roles of women in Kenya are much the same in Bangladesh; they are to bare children for the family and work on the land. The only difference is that their seems to be much more women independence in Bangladesh than Kenya, because as program organizers found out that the women had no real contact with their husbands as far as decision making. The needs to adjust from think of just the roles of women, into the roles of men in Kenya. They stressed to the men the importance of the role of women, the sacrifice they give, and the toll on their bodies as they have so many children. One man’s states “My wife was taking the pill, but she has high blood pressure. Who am I to my wife? I’m her partner. I’m here to help her. That’s what the bible says. So I read about vasectomy. The only side effects that you can’t have children anymore” (Zwingle, 1998). Once, they educated the man about the importance of their women’s health, many man rethought about the roles they wanted their wife to play, in which, they decided to use a method of contraceptive.

We find that women in these developing countries play a much bigger role in population control then we ever thought. We give them enough support and they gladly take the right steps in population. They do it for themselves and their children; many women do not want to die to have a son that might not even make it to adulthood to rule the families land. The role women play in population is crucial, they are the ones who are the givers of life, they control the births, and when we give then the power and confidence they will take control of the population, with its best interests at heart.
Cited Resources

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