

Family Planning Practices in Women of Reproductive Age Group

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Abstract: The need for studies to understand the factors determining the fertility rates and family planning practices & barriers of contraceptives in particular Communities is essential to gather more specific knowledge about factors determining family planning acceptance for making necessary modifications in Reproductive & Child Health (RCH) programmer to suit their needs. Objective of the study were (1) to assess the Knowledge, Attitude & Practice on family planning among women of reproductive age group in east Sikkim. (2) to determine the barriers of contraceptive use among them. This is a hospital-based cross-sectional study. 443 women of reproductive age group (15-44) years, who gave informed verbal consent to participate in this study. Data collected were tabulated and analyzed using the statistical package of SPSS (Statistical Majority of women in study population had adequate knowledge regarding family planning (98%) and contraceptives (94.2%). Majority (54.4%) had gained information from media, Majority (98%) believed that contraceptive use was beneficial but only 55.2% had used contraceptives in past and 84% of them were satisfied with the use. 62% were currently using contraceptives. Among the users of contraceptives 37.9% were using oral contraceptive pills and 31% were using condoms.

Key words: Family Planning, Contraception, Reproductive

INTRODUCTION

India is the second most populous country of the world. The Govt. of India Launched a family welfare programmed in 1950' to accelerate and social development by reducing the population growth. But this programmed has met with only marginal success This is because people of India being multi-linguistic, multi-religious and multiethnic, have different levels of awareness and acceptance of methods of family paining acceptance and particular communities has bees felt, so then more specific knowledge can be gained about factors determining family planning acceptance, which can be then be used for developing suitable programmers for them^{1,2}. This study aimed to know the reasons for these unmet needs and factors affecting the outcome of family planning program and to have a better understanding of the situation in order help government in formulation of polices and modify its approach in east sikkim.

MATERIALS AND METHODS

A cross sectional descriptive study was done in 443 woman of reproductive age group (15-14) years, attending two hospitals, during the month of January 2004 to march 2005.

Inclusion criteria: All women in the reproductive age group of (15-44) years, visiting STNM and Central Referral Hospital, who were willing to participate in this study. Were exclusion Purposive Sampling with snowball technique and attitude regarding family planning methods, and contraceptives, after obtaining informed verbal consent from the participants, data ware collected through the interview technique?

Statistical analysis: Data collected were tabulated and analyzed using the statistical package of SPSS (Statistical package for Social Sciences) version 7.5 the results were expressed in terms of proportions

RESULTS

Among the 443 women in the study group more then 80% were in the age group of 15 to 34 majority them were Hindus (76.7%) followed by Buddhist (14%) Muslim and Christian formed a minority.

80% of respondents were liteated, 95.7% were married and 80% were housewives. Majority of the respondents had adequate knowledge about family planning methods and only 2% were unaware about these. Over fifty percent of women got information about contraceptives from mass media. According to most of the women, family planning meant having small and happy family and few of them said it was for birth spacing and avoiding unwanted pregnancy. Almost all (95%) of them had heard about oral contraceptive pills, 74% of the them had heard about condoms and 72% were aware about Copper T, and over half (67%) of them had heard about tubectomy and nearly one third (34%) were aware vasectomy. Most of them knew that contraceptives were available in Government Hospital (62%) and medical shops (52.55%) Though 83% of respondents believed that contraceptives were used only for preventing unwanted pregnancies, but 30% knew they were also used for birth spacing and less than 10% knew that condoms could prevent sexually diseases.

In this study, 44.6% women were not using contraception, but were willing to any one of the family planning methods in future and over 90% of women believed that family planning was beneficial and would like to encourage their friends and relatives to family planning. In this study, 215 women had used contraceptives in the past and 85% among them were satisfied with contraceptive that had used 62% were still using contraceptives and were satisfied with the contraceptives they were presently using. Among the user of contraceptives, 37.9% had used oral pills 31% the barrier method (condom), 27% undergone Tubectomy and 24% had used Copper T. Though 59% women and had chosen their own preferred contraceptive method themselves because they found it comfortable and to use, but the remaining 41% had used the contraceptive as their husband had recommended and preferred the method.

Though they had adequate knowledge, 30% women did not use any contraceptive method as they were planning pregnancy, 15% were apprehensive of side effects of contraceptives and 10% were currently pregnant.

DISCUSSION

In the present study more 80% were in age group of 15 and 34 years and were literate. The age group characters were similar to the study conducted by Reema Shrivastava et al in Ghorakhpur¹, but in their study nearly half of the women were illiterate and from rural background. According to another study conducted by Padma Monahan et al³, on fertility Pattern and family planning practices in a rural area in Dakshina Kannada in 2003 concluded that majority (52.4%) of the women using contraception were in the age group of (15-34) years.

A survey conducted in Manipur about family planning knowledge, Attitude and practice by Donati Serena et al in 2003 concluded that the use of modern family planning methods increase with female sterilization prevalence declines sharply with women's education, level. Muslims had lower rates of contraceptive use (17%) than Hindus (62%) even after controlling for the education. This is also corroborated by this study wherein majority of user were Hindu 76% compared to Muslims.

Here 95.8% of the subjects knew about the oral contraceptive pills 74.2% about condoms, and 72% about copper T and, 67% had knowledge about tubectomy, 34% about vasectomy. Compared to 82% women in Gorakhpur who were aware about female sterilization, while only half were aware about vasectomy. IUCD (61%) was the most know temporary method followed by OC pill (60%) and condoms (50%). 17% were not aware of any form of contraception as against in Sikkim. In present study done at Gorakhpur 55% had never used contraception.

In a survey conducted in Manipur state by Donati Serena et al, permanent method of contraception was accepted by 70.7 of the women with 3 or more children and only 29.3% accepted this method with 1 or 2 living children. The study done in fisherman in Tamil Nadu by Rao G. et al revealed that almost two-fifth of the respondents had ever used some type of contraception during their married life. Among the method, sterilization was the most accepted method. This was in conformity with the statements that this is an irreversible and

permanent method; couples prefer to adopt it after they have reached the desired family size.

Another study on acceptability of contraception method urban eligible conducted in Imphal, Manipur by Singh RKN et al conducted that more number of couple had adopted permanent family planning method (Vasectomy and tubectomy) in 7.75% comparison to temporary method (5.89%) and compared to vasectomy (1.19%). Percentage of tubectomy was greater (12.37). Among the temporary method maximum numbers of couples had adopted IUCD as spacing method (15.20) followed by CC (1.56) and OP (0.95%)

CONCLUSION

This study highlights that knowledge and awareness does not always to the use of contraception. Also one need to understand the level of awareness and practices in the community before implementing the family planning programmed. These is a need to educate and reduce the couple along with improvement. In family planning service to promote the contraceptives and reduce the increase in population. Sustained efforts on dissemination o information through mass are required since is more easily accessible. Providing education to the teenagers and increasing communication with couple in reproductive ages and improved family welfare service along with regular availability of contraceptive level would also help in improving adoption and use of family planning measures.

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