

Study of knowledge, attitude and practice of family planning in an urban area of Bharatpur

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Background: A cross-sectional study was conducted during September-October, 2004 among 255 purposively selected woman of reproductive age group (15-44 years) in Bharatpur Municipality, Chitwan district.

Material and Methods: Door to door survey was conducted and informations were collected on a structured and pre-tested proforma from 255 married women.

Result: It was found that 100% of the respondents had heard about any one or the other method of family planning. All respondents had knowledge about Condom. The majority of them had knowledge about Oral Contraceptive Pills (92.9%), injectable (89.4%) and Intra Uterine Device (89.4%). The currently married women (45.8%) were using injectable (Depo-Provera). The OCP & IUD were being used by 18.8% each.

Conclusion: Knowledge regarding family planning method was far from satisfactory. They had positive attitude towards family planning.

Key words: Reproductive age, Contraceptive, Fertility, Woman.

Introduction

Family planning emerged as a major component of Nepal's planned development activities only in its Third Five-Year Development Plan (1965-1970). Before 1965, family planning program mostly aimed to raise awareness of the need for family planning. The Fifth Five-Year Development Plan (1975-1980) extended family planning services through a system of outreach workers.

The population of Nepal is growing very rapidly. Current natural growth rate of Nepal is 2.2%⁶ and population will be double in next 28 - 35 years². To reduce the growth rate, fertility decline has been considered a priority in the country and many projects have been conducted to increase knowledge and use of family planning methods. High levels of unmet needs for family planning were identified which led to the development of radio communication projects. Total fertility continues to be high 4.1 per woman in 2001.

Fertility has gradually decreased over the years in Nepal. Moreover, current status of maternal mortality is very high (4.15 per 1000 live births) in Nepal, which is an indication for the need of family planning. Now 39.3 % of currently married women were using one or the other contraceptive methods¹. The present study was under taken in an urban area of Bharatpur and designed to assess knowledge, attitude and practices of women of reproductive age group regarding various methods of family planning and the health benefits of modern contraceptives group.

Material and methods

The present study was carried out in an urban area, Bharatpur Municipality ward No-12 of Chitwan district. The survey was conducted once only in each household during September-October, 2004. A total of 255 married women were purposively selected from 1060 households who were available at home during the time of survey. Door to door

Table 1: Knowledge about contraceptives according to literacy status

LITERACY	OCP (%)	CONDOM (%)	INJECTABLES (%)	I.U.D. (%)
Illiterate	12 (50)	24 (100)	12 (50)	18 (75)
Primary	48 (88.9)	54 (100)	40 (74)	41 (75.9)
Secondary	132 (100)	132 (100)	131 (99.2)	124 (93.9)
Higher XII std.	18 (100)	18 (100)	18 (100)	
Graduate	27 (100)	27 (100)	27 (100)	27 (100)
Total	237 (92.9)	255 (100)	228 (89.4)	228 (89.4)

$\chi^2 = 4.9$ df=4, P value > 0.05

survey was conducted and information were collected on a structured and pre-tested proforma and the data was compiled and analyzed with application of statistical tests wherever necessary.

Observation

The respondents knowledge about temporary methods of family planning e.g. Condom, OCP, Injectable and IUDs was found to be 100%, 92.9%, 92.9% and 89.4% respectively. Literate women

above the level of primary were more aware about these contraceptives than the illiterates and literates up to primary level. (Table I)

While analyzing the benefits of family planning, almost all the woman (100%) knew that by using contraceptives unwanted pregnancies can be avoided and helps in regulating the interval between pregnancies. However, only 7.05% knew that anaemia can be reduced by using OCP and about 168 women (65.88%) knew that STDs can be prevented by using contraceptives like condoms. (Table II)

Table 2: Knowledge regarding benefits of family planning

Knowledge about the benefits	No	%
Avoid unwanted pregnancies	255	100
Regulating intervals between pregnancies	255	100
Prevention of STDs	168	65.88
Prevention of Anaemia	18	7.05

Radio (75.2%) is very popular among the different sources of information about the contraceptives as quoted by the respondents. Friends and neighbours, Health center, Health

worker and Hospital were also contributed a lot and were the source of the information to 66.67%, 57.6%, 28.2% and 25.88% respectively. Acquiring knowledge from the members of family has always been an old tradition which is still very common (41.1%) in the study population (Table III).

Table 3: Knowledge regarding source of Information

Source of Information	No	%
Family member	105	41.1
Neighbours / Friends	170	66.67
Media		
T.V.	135	52.94
News Paper	111	43.5
Radio	192	75.2
Others		
Health workers	66	25.88
Health center	147	57.6
Hospital	72	28.2

It is gratifying to note that majority of the respondents had positive attitude towards family planning. Cent percent of the women opined that family planning is a valuable asset and 94.12% of the spouse considered family planning as useful. 76.47% of the women were in favour of two children norms and 50.98% of the respondents had strong attitude for at least one male child in the family. 82.35% of the respondents were viewed that abortion was necessary for unplanned birth and 92.15% of the women urged in favour of institutional abortion which is a safe practice. Majority (81.56%) of the women strongly feel that sterilization should be done after two children (Table IV).

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Table 4: Attitude regarding family planning

Sl. No	Characteristics	Agree%		Disagree%		Unsagree	
1	Family planning is a valid asset	255	100	-	-	-	-
2	Your husband considers family planning useful.	240	94.12	3	1.18	12	4.70
3	You should have only two children	195	76.47	58	22.74	2	0.78
4	At least one male child is necessary in the family.	130	50.98	120	47.06	5	1.96
5	Abortion is necessary for unplanned birth.	210	82.35	12	4.7	33	12.94
6	Abortion should be done only in the hospital.	235	92.15	12	4.7	8	3.13
7	After two children sterilization should be done.	208	81.56	42	16.47	5	1.96

Table 5: Current practice of different contraceptives

Contraceptives Number(90)	OCP	IUD	Depot.	Condom	Norplant	Sterilization	No user	Total
	48(18.8)	48(18.8)	117(45.9)	18(7)	3(1.17)	9(3.5)	12(4.7)	255(100)

In current practice of different contraceptives, Depo Provera (45.9%) was the most popular used method of family planning among the married women. OCP and IUD were used by 18.8% each. 3.53% respondents of the women had undergone the sterilization operation and Norplant (1.17%) was the least preferred contraceptive among the married women. Only 4.70% married women were not used any method of family planning (Table V).

Discussion

Family planning is one of the priority programme of HMG's national health policy getting maximum attention. To achieve the desired goal of net reproduction rate of 1.0, it is necessary to increase the contraceptive user rate. It is only possible when married women of reproductive age are aware about the advantages of a small family. At the same time availability of family planning methods and services is also essential.

It was observed that the knowledge of respondents about temporary family planning methods i.e. condom, OCP, injectables and IUD was 100%, 92.9%, 89.4% and 89.4% respectively. It is almost in conformity with the Annual Report of Ministry of Health, HMG, Nepal.¹ The literacy status of women in present study was very high (93%) as compared to national figure (42.4%)⁵

The role of different forms of media like Radio, T.V. and news papers in IEC activities can not be ignored. Since the FM radio is very popular in Nepal, Radio is the main source

of information of family planning method as revealed by 75.2% of the respondents.

Majority of women have the definite attitude of family planning as a necessary tool for Planned Parenthood and any unplanned pregnancy may be terminated in the hospital to avoid complication of abortion. Most of them used inquisitive for permanent sterilization after completion of the family. However, the women have gender bias preferring the male child. Majority of women knew other benefits of family planning apart from contraception.

The overall contraceptive user rate in the study population was found to be very high (95.30%) as compared to national figure (39.30%)³. It may be assigned to the fact that the area chosen for the study was having high literacy rate in women and being an urban area the women are exposed to many modes of IEC. The most popular contraceptive, used by 45.90% of the women was the Depo provera followed by OCPs and IUDs (18.80% each), which is similar to the findings of Sharma A⁴ where 18.5% of the respondents used Depo, 10% OCP and 2.58% IUD. The Norplant was the least preferred contraceptive amongst the respondents. This may be due to its availability in selected HPs, PHCs and Hospitals and surgical procedures involved in its insertion. Declining fertility in Nepal is associated with increase in female literacy rate and contraceptive use. Knowledge of family planning method is almost universal and contraceptive use has almost double over past decade³.

Conclusion

Sexual and reproductive health is at the core of the people's lives and wellbeing. In this regards family planning services are designed to provide a constellation of contraceptive methods / services to reduce fertility and increase maternal and child survival to bring about a balance in population growth and sound economic development improving the life of people of Nepal. To accept and utilize any such services people should have access to knowledge there by affecting their attitude and practice. With the objective of assessing the knowledge, attitude and practice regarding family planning in women of reproductive age group, the present study has been undertaken in Bharatpur Municipal area. Knowledge regarding family planning method, its benefits and its use was far from satisfactory. A positive attitude towards family planning and its benefits was noted by the majority of women of reproductive age group. Our study revealed the increasing prevalence of contraceptive use which is in the line with W.H.O. and N.F.H.S. findings. Knowledge in certain areas like prevention of anemia by OCP, legalization of abortion and use of Norplant was lacking. Though a lot of progress in the field of family planning has been achieved, yet a lot has to be done in this direction.

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