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AWARENESS AND PREVALENCE OF UTILIZING FAMILY PLANNING SERVICES AMONG WOMEN ATTENDING AT AGA KHAN MATERNAL & CHILD CARE CENTER HYDERABAD (AKMCCC)

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ABSTRACT

Objective: To assess the level of awareness, effectiveness and utilization of contraceptive services and to determine the relationship / level of significance of education of women with other parameters.

Material and Method : This cross sectional descriptive study was conducted in the department of Obstetrics and Gynaecology, Aga Khan University Hospital Hyderabad, Sindh Pakistan from October to December 2010. The data was collected on a structured questionnaire based on inclusion and exclusion criteria. Total 250 married women of reproductive age (15-49 yrs) attending gynecology out patient department (OPD) irrespective of parity, presenting complaints and diagnosis were interviewed. The questionnaire consisted of informations about the respondent's age, education, occupation, parity, knowledge about family planning methods, adverse effects, non-contraceptive benefits, previous and current use of family planning methods and source of information.

Results: Total 250 women were enrolled, 233(93.2%) women heard about the contraceptives and 223 (89.2%) had knowledge about natural methods rest were unaware, 238(95.0%) knew about combined oral contraceptives (COC's). 48(19.2%) were literate about Implanon, 55(22.0%) women knew about the injection (bi monthly hormonal). About 145(58.0%) subjects used contraceptive methods, 79(31.6%) were users of condom and natural methods stands at 58(23.2%) , 34(13.6%) were using natural + condom, 16(6.4%) were intrauterine contraceptive device (IUCD) placed, 13(5.2%) were on tablets, 9(3.6%) subjects had knowledge about injectable methods. 202(80.0%) were not using contraception due to husband's disapproval, due to family influences in 23(9.2%) while 25(10.0%) had religious issues. 225(90.0%) knew through Agha Khan Maternity & Child Care Centre (AKMCCC) counseling tools including media and other resources. 15(6.0%) never received any education and 25% stopped, for another baby. 11% complained of usage failure.

Conclusion: Utilization of family planning services is low mainly due to husband's disapproval, and socio-cultural family norms.

KEYWORDS: Family planning, contraception, awareness, practice, education,

INTRODUCTION

Family planning services have the potential to improve the quality of the lives of people and also their economic welfare. Increasing population growth is a world wide problem today. A variety of different methods of contraception are available, which are generally extremely safe compared with the risks associated with pregnancy and childbirth. Not all methods are suitable for everyone. Expanding the number of family planning options available to women is a critical part of increasing contraceptive coverage, decreasing unintended pregnancies and reducing maternal morbidity and mortality around

TABLE NO. 1:

Personal characteristics of women (n = 250)

Parameters	Frequency	Percentage
Age (in groups):		
16 - 25 years	90	36.0%
26 - 35 years	154	61.6%
36 - 45 years	06	2.4%
Educational level:		
Metric	114	45.6%
Intermediate	58	23.2%
Graduate	58	23.2%
Postgraduate	20	8.0%
Socio-economic status:		
Low	84	33.6%
Middle	136	54.4%
Upper	30	12.0%
Parity:		
1 - 3	184	73.6%
4 - 6	48	19.2%
7 - 10	18	7.2%
Mode of delivery:		
Normal	166	66.4%
LSCS	84	33.6%
Medical problem with contraception		
Experienced complications	20	8.0%
No problem	230	92.0%

TABLE NO. 2:

Knowledge of contraceptive methods and level of education (n = 250)

Knowledge of contraceptive methods	Metric n = 114(%)	Intermediate n = 58(%)	Graduate n = 58 (%)	Postgraduate n = 20(%)	Total
COCS	114(100%)	52(89.7%)	58(100.0%)	14(70.0%)	238(95.2%)
Contraceptives	112(98.2%)	51(87.9%)	58(100.0%)	12(60.0%)	233(93.2%)
Natural Methods	107(93.9%)	50(86.2%)	54(93.1%)	12(60.0%)	223(89.2%)
Permanent Methods	62(54.4%)	45(77.6%)	29(50.0%)	12(60.0%)	148(59.2%)
Bi monthly harmonal Inject.	27(23.7%)	9(15.5%)	13(22.4%)	6(30.0%)	55(22.0%)
Low dose COCS	10(8.8%)	3(5.2%)	8(13.8%)	4(20.0%)	25(10.0%)
Knowledge about implenon	19(16.7%)	15(25.9%)	2(3.4%)	12(60.0%)	48(19.2%)
Monthly harmonal injectables	7(6.1%)	6(10.3%)	2(3.4%)	10(50.0%)	25(10.0%)

the globe.[1]

Pakistan is the 6th most populous country of world[2], still grapples with the control of the fast growing population. According to the Population reference Bureau 2005[3], the estimated population of Pakistan is 162.4 million and is expected to be 295 million in the year 2050.

Annually around 80 million unwanted pregnancies occur worldwide[4], and most of them were due to the non-use or the inconsistent use of contraceptive methods.[5] In most of the developing countries, unwanted pregnancies are mainly consequence of restricted access to family planning services.[6]

Family planning is a way of living that is adopted voluntarily upon the basis of knowledge attitude and responsible decision making by individuals or couples in order to pin the number, timing and spacing of the children that they want, so as to promote the health and welfare of the family group, and contribute to the advancement of the society.

Contraception and family planning are integral components of reproductive health and have positive effect on the health of women. Family planning promotion has potential benefits of reducing poverty and maternal and child mortality.[7]

Family planning protects women from unwanted pregnancy thereby

TABLE NO. 3:

Usage of different methods & level of education (n = 250)

Usage of different methods	Metric n = 114(%)	Intermediate n = 58(%)	Graduate n = 58 (%)	Postgraduate n = 20(%)	Total
Used Contraception	68(59.6%)	44(75.9%)	33(56.9%)	0	145(58.0%)
Condom	40(35.1%)	4(6.9%)	23(39.7%)	12(60.0%)	79(31.6%)
Natural methods	34(29.8%)	08(13.8%)	14(24.1%)	2(10.0%)	58(23.2%)
Condom + Natural	16(14.0%)	01(1.7%)	17(29.3%)	0	34(13.6%)
IUCD	11(9.6%)	03(5.2%)	2(3.4%)	0	16(6.4%)
Tablets	4(3.5%)	03(5.2%)	0	6(30.0%)	13(5.2%)
Injectables	6(5.3%)	03(5.2%)	0	0	9(3.6%)

saving them from high risk pregnancies or unsafe abortion. Other benefits from family planning methods include prevention from cancers, sexually transmitted infection and Human Immune Deficiency Virus(HIV). In spite of these benefits the unmet need for family planning services remains very high. This is estimated to be about 100 million in the developing world among married women[8] and very high among young women[9] because as young people enter their reproductive years, the demand for family planning services will increase.

A lack of knowledge of contraceptive methods or a source of supply, cost and poor accessibility are the barriers that exist in developing countries. Side effects perceived or real are major factors for the abandoning of modern methods. Mass media also plays an important role in promotion and acceptability of contraception.[10] Maternal mortality ratio for Nepal is high as 281 deaths per 100,000 live births.[1]

Low use of family planning methods may be the byproduct of, the fear of side effects, weak motivation for fertility control and societal/familial disapproval of family planning. The ideal contraceptive would be 100.0% effective, with no health risks or side effects, independent of intercourse, easily and completely reversible, easily administered and used independently of the medical profession. However such a method does not yet and may never exist. This could be the reason for the gap between knowledge and practice. The non-contraceptive health benefits of different methods (such as prevention of sexually transmitted diseases and HIV with use of condom, the reduction in menstrual dysfunction and ovarian, colorectal and endometrial cancer associated with the combined pill) have potentially enormous consequences for public health.

This study was undertaken with the objective to assess the level of awareness about different types of family planning (FP) methods and also to find out the current practice of family planning methods by the women of reproductive age group. In recent years, the need for such kind of studies is very important. More specific knowledge can be acquired from these studies about the factor that determines the fertility and family acceptance. This in turn can be used to develop suitable program for people. Family planning promotion is the priority for the government of Pakistan in order to keep space between socioeconomic growth and population expansion. [12,13]

There has been little or no research in the area of contraceptive use among the women at our setup. In view of this, the rationale of this study was carried out to assess the level of awareness effectiveness and utilization of contraceptive about different types of family planning (FP) methods services and also to find out the relationship / level of significance of education of women with other parameters.

MATERIAL AND METHOD

This cross sectional descriptive study was conducted in the department of Obstetrics and Gynaecology, Aga Khan University Hospital Hyderabad, Sindh Pakistan. The duration of the study was from October to December 2010. The data was collected on a structured questionnaire including sexually active women. Total 250 women interviewed attending gynecology out patient department (OPD) irrespective of parity, presenting complaints and diagnosis were interviewed. The questionnaire consisted of information's about the respondent's age, education, occupation, parity, knowledge about family planning methods, adverse effects, non-contraceptive benefits, previous and current use of family planning methods, mode of delivery and any problem with contraception. The data were evaluated in statistical program SPSS version 16.0.

RESULTS

We obtained results of 250 women, all were educated and majority of women 154(61.6%) were in the age group of 26 to 35 years and 90(36.0%)women were in the younger age group (16 to25 years) while 06(2.4%, n=250) women were in the age group 36 to 45 years.

Demographic data of the study participants showed that most of the women were educated, 114(45.6%) were metric pass, 58(23.2%) were intermediate, 58(23.2%) were graduates and 20(8.0%) were postgraduates, A higher proportion of the women 184(73.6%) had the parity between 1 to 3 whereas 66(26.4%) had the parity more than 3. (Table-1)

By assessing the socioeconomic status majority 136(54.4%) of the women were from middle class whereas 84(33.6%) had low socio-economic status while 30(12%) women belongs to upper class. 166(66.4%) women had normal vaginal delivery and 84(33.6%) were delivered by LSCS. Out of 250 study participants, 20(8.0%) had experienced complications with use of contraception. Knowledge about the contraceptive and their usage were assessed by a structured questionnaire and higher proportion of study participants, 233(93.2%) heard about the contraceptives and 223

(89.2%) had knowledge about natural methods rest were unaware, 238(95.0%) knew about COC's. 48(19.2%) were literate about Implenon, 55(22.0%) women knew about the injection (bi monthly hormonal) (Table- 2).

About 145(58.0%) study participants used contraceptive methods, 79(31.6%) were users of condom and natural methods stands at 58(23.2%) , 34(13.6%) were using natural plus condom, 16(6.4%) were IUCD placed, 13(5.2%) were on tablets, 9(3.6%) women used injectable methods(Table-3).

A higher proportion of women 202(80.0%) were not using contraception due to husband's disapproval and family influences in 23(9.2%) while 25(10.0%) had religious issues.

225(90.0%) knew through AKMCCC counseling tools including media and other resources.15(6.0%) never received any education and 25% stopped, for another baby. 11% complained of usage failure.

DISCUSSION

Family Planning has been considered as an effective way to improve health of the mother and child and enables to decide freely and responsibly the number and spacing of their children. Various studies have been carried out till date in different parts of the world exploring the knowledge, attitude and practices of family planning methods with different results. Although contraceptive prevalence rates have increased dramatically in the last thirty years, an estimated 26-53 million abortions are still performed annually worldwide.[14]

According to Pakistan fertility and family planning survey, the Contraception Prevalence Rate (CPR) in the country is only 24% in spite of the fact that 94 per cent have heard of at-least one method of Family Planning. [15]

In the present study, the 94% women had the knowledge about contraceptive methods. This percentage correlates well with the study of Tuladhar H et al.[16] conducted in Nepal whereas another study conducted by Renjhen P et al. [17] showed the percentage of awareness was 94.2%.

Our study concluded that more than 90% were in the age group of 16 - 35 years and were literate. The age group characteristics were similar to the study conducted by Prachi R.[18], Shrivastava et al in Ghorakhpur[19] but in their study nearly half of the women were illiterate and from rural background. Mohanan et al[20] in a study from Dakshina Canada concluded that majority (52.4%) of the women using contraception were in the age group of 15-34 years

Our results showed 238(95.2%) women had the knowledge of combined oral pills and 25(10.0%) also had the knowledge of progesterone only pills as well. Whereas Tuladhar H et al.[16] showed that 74% had knowledge of oral pill among the women. In a cross sectional study conducted in district Khairpur showed that 90% of respondent knew about oral pills followed by 88.3% about female sterilization and 87.6% for inject able contraceptive.[21]

Our study showed that the majority of the women i.e. 93.2% had knowledge about the contraceptives, Prachi R et al[18], Tilahun D et al[22] Omo-Aghoja LO et al[23] reported similar results that were 94.2%, 95.2%,92.3% respectively.

In this study, 237(95.0%) women had knowledge of condom while it was 71% in study done by Tuladhar H et al.[16] Whereas in the local study conducted by Shah NA et al[24] in Lahore reported that 10% knowledge of condom in his study. This difference seems to be due to difference in education level as particularly women belonging to middle to upper socio economic class and health education given in our institution.

Knowledge of sterilization in our study was observed in 48(59.2%) women similar results were found in study of Shah NA et al[24],while it were higher in study done by and Tuladhar H et al[16] and Renjhen P et al[17] that showed 81% and 67% results respectively. Knowledge about injectable method (bi monthly hormone & monthly inject able) in this series was in 80(32.0%) women. Shah NA et al[24] reported 84% knowledge about injectable methods and 78.0% was seen in the study of Tuladhar H et al.[16]

In our study among the users of contraceptives were 58.0% and 31.6% had used condoms and 23.2% used natural methods. Prachi R et al [18] reported 37.9% had used contraception while in Srivastav et al's [19] study shows 34% had used condoms and 26% practices natural methods of contraception.

CONCLUSION

This study concluded that need for developing service promotion strategies and protocols. Utilization of family planning services is low mainly due to husband's disapproval, and socio-cultural family norms.

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