

Family planning knowledge, attitude, and practice among postnatal women in a Medical College Hospital



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ABSTRACT

Background: Family planning methods prevent pregnancy-related health risks for women.

Aims and Objectives: This study was undertaken to assess knowledge, attitude, and practice of various family planning methods among postnatal women in a Medical College Hospital.

Materials and Methods: A standard predesigned questionnaire was asked to randomly selected 300 postnatal women who delivered at F.M. Medical College and Hospital, Balasore, Odisha, India over a period of 1 year. Data on sociodemographic variables, knowledge regarding various family planning methods, source of information, utilization, and reason for its non-use were analyzed. **Results:** Majority were between the age group of 20–30 years (81%). About 91% were aware of its use. About 82% were aware of its need. About 75% of the women gave history of prior use of birth spacing methods. Withdrawal, oral contraceptive pills (OCP) and barrier were mostly used methods in the past (i.e., 31%, 19%, and 9%, respectively). Child spacing was most common reason for use of family planning methods. Majority were aware of OCPs (79%) followed by sterilization (72%), barrier methods (71%), intrauterine contraceptive device (53%), withdrawal (31%), and injectable (23%). Social circle (54%) and health-care provider (35%) were major source of knowledge. Main reason for non-utilization of family planning methods was desire of child (42%), fear of side effects (17%), and husband and in-law opposition (16%). **Conclusion:** In spite of high contraceptive knowledge and awareness, the actual use of modern family planning method is not satisfactory in our study which suggests proper counseling and education are required to increase its usage.

Key words: Attitude; Family planning; Knowledge; Postnatal women

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INTRODUCTION

Family planning allows individuals and couples to anticipate and attain their desired number of children and the spacing and timing of their births. By the use of family planning methods, more people can obtain maximum benefit at a lower cost than any other single technology available at present. Prevention of unwanted and closely spaced pregnancies substantially reduces maternal, infant, and child mortality.¹ India became the first country in the world to formulate National Family Planning Program in 1952, with the objective of “reducing birth rate to the extent necessary to stabilize the population at a level consistent with requirement of national economy.” In many

developing countries, a number of women not wanting to become pregnant are not using safe and effective family planning methods. Ability of a woman to start a successful, continuous and appropriate contraceptive method is influenced by many different factors; for example, access to the health care, community, cultural attitudes, and personal attitude can all be considered as obstacles to apply correct use and effective method of the women to family planning objectives.²

Aims and objectives

The study aims to describe the socio demographic profile, knowledge, awareness, source of information, and utilization of various family planning methods among

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postnatal women who delivered in a Medical College Hospital.

MATERIALS AND METHODS

It was a cross-sectional study conducted in the Department of Obstetrics and Gynaecology, F.M Medical College and Hospital, Balasore, Odisha over a period of 1 year from July 2020 to June 2021. This study was approved by Institutional Ethics Committee. After obtaining informed verbal consent, a predesigned standardized questionnaire was asked to 300 numbers of randomly selected postnatal women who delivered in the institution either by vaginally or by caesarean section. Data on socio demographic profile, knowledge, awareness of various family planning methods, source of information, utilization, and reasons for non-use were collected and statistical analysis was done using MS Excel. Results were expressed in terms of numbers and percentage.

RESULTS

Majority of women, that is, 46% belongs to 26–30 years of age group. About 58% were from rural area. About 49% were primipara. About 61% had only schooling and majority (68%) belonged to low socio economic group (Table 1).

About 91% (273/300) were aware of family planning method and 82% (246/300) were aware of its need.

Among the family planning methods, the majority of postnatal women were aware of oral contraceptive pills (OCPs) (79%), followed by sterilization (72%), barrier method (71%), intrauterine contraceptive device (IUCD) (53%), withdrawal (31%), injectable (23%), LAM (19%), natural (9%), emergency contraception (6%), and progestin-only pills (5%) (Table 2).

Source of knowledge regarding family planning methods was from social circle 54% (162/300), by health-care provider 35% (105/300), from mass media 26% (78/300), by interaction 7% (21/300) and husband advice 5% (15/300).

Two hundred and twenty-six women out of 300, that is, 75% used family planning methods in the past and among the users maximum, that is, 31% adopted withdrawal method followed by OCPs (19%) (Table 3).

The most common reason for non-utilization of available methods was want of child 42% (126/300) followed by

Table 1: Socio demographic profile (n=300)

Characteristics	No of postnatal women	Percentage
Age		
<20 years	24	8
20–25 years	105	35
26–30 years	138	46
31–35 years	21	7
>35 years	12	4
Area		
Rural	174	58
Sub urban	54	18
Urban	72	24
Parity		
P1	147	49
P2	90	30
P3 and above	63	21
Education		
No formal education	12	4
Schooling	183	61
Intermediate	48	16
Graduate	57	19
Socio economic status		
Low	204	68
Middle	78	26
High	18	6

Table 2: Knowledge regarding types of family planning methods

Family planning methods	Number	Percentage
Natural	27	9
Withdrawal	93	31
Barrier	213	71
OCPs	237	79
POPs	15	5
Injectable	69	23
Implants	0	0
LAM (breast feeding)	57	19
IUCD	159	53
Sterilization	216	72
Emergency contraception	18	6
No knowledge	21	7

IUCD: Intrauterine contraceptive device, OCPs: Oral contraceptive pills, POPs: Progestin-only pills

Table 3: Family planning methods used in the past (n=300)

Method	Number	Percentage (%)
Natural	10	3
Withdrawal	92	31
Barrier	26	9
OCPs	58	19
IUCD	22	7
Emergency	18	6
Not used	74	25

IUCD: Intrauterine contraceptive device, OCPs: Oral contraceptive pills

side effects 17% (51/300), husband and in-law opposition 16% (48/300), lack of awareness 10% (30/300), husband staying away 7% (21/300), and 8% (24/300) could not give opinion.

DISCUSSION

In our study, the majority (46%) of the study participants were between the age group of 26 and 30 years which is considered to be the peak age group of reproduction which is comparable to study done by Rao et al.³

We observed 61% of women had schooling up to 12th standard. According to Jaiswal et al., 183 women out of 440, that is, 41.59% were educated up to 12th standard.⁴

We found that 49% of the postnatal women were primipara which is almost comparable to the study finding by Jaiswal et al., who reported 49.09% (216/440) were primipara.⁴

Our study revealed, though 91% were aware of family planning methods, only 82% were aware of its need. Wodaynewand Bekele in their study reported that 92.5% of the respondents had heard about family planning which is similar to our study finding.⁵

Our study revealed that OCPs were most commonly known family planning method, that is, (79%) among postnatal women which is higher compared to observation by Alakananda et al., (66.6%).⁶ According to Patel et al., maximum respondents knew about barrier contraceptives- male condoms (91.3%) followed by hormonal pills (72.2%), IUCDs (64.3%), and DMPA (11.3%).⁷

About 75% of our study participant revealed use of some form of family planning methods in the past either traditional or modern method. Among 75% of women who had previously used family planning methods, withdrawal (31%) was the most common one followed by OCPs (19%) and barrier method (9%). According to Bajracharya among 60.5% of women who had previously used contraception, OCPs were the most common one and maximum number of participants (60.35%) had used modern contraceptives in the past.⁸ Manasi et al., in their study observed that among the aware women, 76% opted for barrier method, 53% for IUCD, and 63% for OCPs.⁹

We observed that main reason of non-utilization of family planning services was want of child (42%). Sahu et al., in their study reported that the main reasons for non-acceptance were fear of side effect (30.4%) and lack of knowledge (24%).¹⁰

In our study, the most common source of information regarding family planning methods among postnatal women was social circle (54%) and health-care provider (35%). According to Sahu et al., health professionals were their major source of information regarding family planning methods.¹⁰ Whereas, Hayat et al., in 2013 in their

study reported that media was the most common source of information.¹¹

Limitations of the study

In our study, since the data were obtained by using a self-administered predesigned standardized questionnaires, some of the study participants would have been unable to understand the asked questionnaires completely, hence the family planning Knowledge, Attitude, and Practice (KAP) among the postnatal women might be overestimated or underestimated.

CONCLUSION

We observed that utilization of family planning services was not satisfactory among beneficiaries. Major determinant for not using modern family planning methods was inadequate knowledge. Postnatal period is the right time for family planning counseling to increase the acceptance rate. Cafeteria approach with dissemination of knowledge regarding various family planning methods with its advantages, disadvantages, and repeated proper counseling needs to be emphasized to increase the utilization rate.

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Authors Contribution:

AKN- Concept and design of the study, prepared final draft of manuscript, interpreted the results, reviewed the literature, and manuscript preparation.
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