

Original Investigation

Assessing Knowledge, Attitude and Practice among Married Men towards Family Planning in Sarlahi District, Madhesh Province

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ABSTRACT

INTRODUCTION: Acknowledging a man's perspective on family planning methods and service is vital for the overall health of the family. A holistic approach involving both partners is key to effective family planning and healthier family life. Therefore, the study aims to find the knowledge, attitude and practice among married men towards family planning at Kabilasa municipality of Sarlahi district. **MATERIALS AND METHODS:** A cross-sectional descriptive study was carried out Multistage random sampling technique was used for the selection of wards as well as the participants. The total of 164 participants whose wife was in age group (15-49 years) was interviewed. The data was analysis was done by using SPSS 23 version software. **RESULTS:** Total of 164 participants was interviewed. Higher percent (67.7%) of participants were in age group 30-44 years. almost all (98.2 %) of participant heard about family planning method where meaning of family planning revealed as limiting number of child with higher percentage (88.3%) followed by birth spacing were (81.8 %).96.4% supported the concept of family planning About 98.8% of the participants expressed that the Spousal communication and decision making are essential for family planning, 84.1% of them stated that family planning is women's business. Only 27% male had ever used family planning methods though, about 56.7% wives were using Depo as contraceptive. **CONCLUSIONS:** It can be inferred that a majority of participant possessed knowledge regarding family planning method, highlighting the pervasiveness of information on reproductive health within the surveyed population. However, it perceived as a women's responsibility, with men often neglecting their role.

Keywords: Attitude, family planning, knowledge, men, practice



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INTRODUCTION

Family planning is a critical aspect of ensuring the well-being and prosperity of a society. Traditionally, the responsibility of family planning has often been placed on women. However, in recent times, there has been a paradigm shift, acknowledging the significant role that men play in the family planning process [1]. Understating the promotion of men's involvement in family planning is essential for several reasons, including gender equality, shared responsibility, and the overall health and stability of families. Historically, family planning initiatives primarily targeted women, assuming they bear the sole responsibility for contraception and family size decisions. However, societal norms and attitudes have evolved, recognizing the importance of involving men in family planning discussions. Modern married men increasingly understand the significance of Planned Parenthood, not only for the well-being of their partners but also for the holistic development of their families [1]. The global perspective on reproductive health underwent a paradigm shift following the 1994 International

Conference on Population and Development (ICPD) and the 1995 UN World Conference on Women. In these pivotal moments, the discourse expanded to include the active involvement of men in reproductive health [2,3]. The objectives of male participation broadened beyond merely increasing contraceptive use and achieving demographic goals. Instead, there emerged recognition of the importance of men's engagement in the pursuit of gender equality and the fulfilment of various reproductive responsibilities within relationships and families [2, 3]. This shift in focus represents a progressive understanding of reproductive health as a shared responsibility. Men's active involvement in family planning not only promotes gender equality but also fosters healthier relationships and empowered decision-making within households. By recognizing men as equal stakeholders in reproductive health, societies can strive towards more equitable, inclusive, and supportive environments for individuals and families. Therefore, the objective of the study was to find out knowledge, attitude

and practice among married men towards family planning so the reproductive responsibility will be shared and contraception will take collaboratively which will be leading for betterment of society [2,3,4].

MATERIALS AND METHODS

Study design and setting:

Descriptive cross sectional study was carried out among married men at Kabilasa municipality of Sarlahi district. The study was conducted from June to November 2021.

Participants, sample size and sampling technique:

Married men whose wife was in age group of 15-49 years were enrolled. Multistage random sampling technique was used selection of wards of Kabilasa municipality as well as participants. The size of sample for study was 164.

Data collection procedure and study variables:

The data was collected using interview technique with questionnaire which included questions about socio-economic, demographic; knowledge, attitude, practices towards family planning spousal communication. The validity of the study tools were maintained by consulting the research supervisor, statistician, and literature review. The questionnaire were prepared in English and given to the experts for checking. Reliability was maintained by pre testing the instrument in 10% of study of population and necessary modification in the instrument was done accordingly.

Statistical analysis and data management:

The collected data was checked for completeness and correctness. Rechecked and coded at the time of data entry into IBM SPSS version 23. The data was analyzed in descriptive statistics using characteristics frequency and percentages

Ethical consideration:

The approval for the study was taken from Janaki medical college and teaching hospital (26//IRC/2078-079) before the commencement of the study. Informed written consent was taken from the participant and participation in the study was voluntary.

RESULTS

The distributions of respondent's socio-demographic variables are as shown in table 1. Higher percent (67.7%) of participants were in age group 30-44 years whereas low percent were in 15-29 age groups. Majorities (93.3%) of the respondents were literate and Majority (50.6%) of the respondents was engaged in agriculture followed by services (22%). Higher percent (57.9%) of the respondents were from joint family. At age of marriage found higher in age group of >20 along with Higher percent (63.4%) of were found having ≤ 2 number of sons. About enquiring the knowledge about family planning (table 2) showed that almost all (98.2 %) of participant heard about family

Table 1 Socio-demographic characteristic of participants

Variables	Frequency	Percentage
Age (in years)		
15-29	25	15.2
30-44	111	67.7
≥ 45	28	17.1
Education		
Literate	153	93.3
Illiterate	11	6.7
Occupation		
Agriculture	83	50.6
Business	23	14.0
Services	36	22.0
Labor	22	13.4
Types of family		
Nuclear	51	31.1
Joint	95	57.9
Extended	18	11.0
Age at marriage		
15-20	34	20.7
>20	130	79.3
Number of children		
≤ 2	104	63.4
>2	57	34.8
None	3	1.8
Number of son		
≤ 2	138	84.1
>2	7	4.3
No son	19	11.6

planning method where meaning of family planning revealed as limiting number of child with higher percentage (88.3%) followed by birth spacing were (81.8%). the main source of information was health worker (40.9%) others such as social media was found in 25 % of participants. Higher percentage (98.2%) of participant were known about types of family planning and most know family planning method was injection depo (40.3%) and majorities (40.9%) of the participant were get their family planning service from health post followed by hospital (32.9%) and medical shops (26.2%). Regarding the attitude and practice of the male participants (Table 3), 96.4% supported the concept of family planning. About 98.8% of the participants expressed that the Spousal communication and decision making are essential for family planning, 84.1% of them stated that family planning is women's business. Eighty percentage of participants recommended family planning methods to other people. Majority (75.6%) of participants together (husband and wife) took decision of family planning method. On the practice side the respondents, only about 27% had ever used family planning methods. When we asked about the methods used by their couples, about 56.7% answered most of their couple had Depo.

Table 2| Knowledge of family planning among respondents (n= 164)

Variables	Frequency (%)
Heard about Family Planning	
Yes	161(98.2)
No	3(1.8)
Meaning of family planning	
Limiting no. of children	144 (88.3)
Spacing	133 (81.8)
To bring about wanted birth	31 (19)
Avoid pregnancy	68 (41.7)
Others	9 (5.5)
Source of information	
Health workers	67(40.9)
Friends	14(8.5)
Radio	12 (7.3)
Television	27 (16.5)
Family members	3 (1.8)
Others	41 (25)
Do you know type of family planning	
Yes	161 (98.2)
No	3 (1.8)
If yes which type you know	
Condom	37 (22.6)
Permanent methods	27(16.4)
Pills	29 (17.7)
Injection depo	71 (43.3)
Where you get family planning service	
Hospital	54 (32.9)
Medical shop	43 (26.2)
Health post	67(40.9)

DISCUSSION

Family planning is an integral aspect of a couple's lifestyle, encompassing the deliberate decision-making processes related to their family size, the timing and frequency of childbirth and the prevention of unintended pregnancies. It involves a thoughtful considering of various factor including financial stability, emotional readiness and personal goals. There was an active involvement of the health workers in these areas such that 40.9% respondents came to know about family planning through health workers. About 98.2% of the total respondents interviewed knew about family planning out of which only 22.6% of the respondent knew how to use a male condom, study from Ethiopia [5] and Zimbabwe [6], showed similar finding to our studies. In context to Burkin Faso [7], 79% of the respondents knew about family planning and used these methods mostly for birth spacing purpose rather than birth control, 90% recognized at least one method of family planning and two third have heard about condom out of which half the men did know enough about how to use contraceptive. Also in Agra [8], less than 50% knew how to use male contraceptives. This

Table 3| Attitude and practices of family planning among respondent

Variables	Frequency (%)
Support concepts of family planning	
Yes	158 (96.4)
No	6(3.6)
Spousal communication and decision making are essential for family planning	
Yes	162(98.8)
No	2 (1.2)
Family planning is women's business	
Yes	138 (84.1)
No	26 (15.9)
Do you recommend your friends to use family planning methods?	
Yes	132 (80.4)
No	32 (19.5)
Decision of family planning methods	
Husband	21 (12.8)
Wife	19 (11.6)
Both	124 (75.6)
Ever used family planning	
Yes	27 (16.5)
No	137 (83.5)
Current using family planning methods	
Yes	5 (3)
No	159 (97)
Wife is using family planning	
Yes	117 (71.3)
No	47 (28.7)
Which method she is using	
Oral contraception pills	14 (26.8)
Depo	93 (56.7)
IUCD	38 (23)
MINI Lap	19 (11.5)

revealed that majority of the population interviewed had knowledge of family planning despite the high levels of illiteracy thus supporting the fact that midwives , doctor etc. have a major role in spreading the message of family planning even in low socioeconomic strata of Sarlahi district. Majority of the people interviewed in this study who knew about family planning methods, they expressed that it is used for limiting the number of child and birth spacing. Similar studies in male adolescents [9], revealed that most of them used male contraceptives to prevent unwanted pregnancies and very few knew about venereal diseases. This study found that, 96.4% of the participants supported the concept of family planning where as in Zimbabwe [6] it was found to be 83.5% and 99% in Gaza [10]. Also 98.8% of participant expressed Spousal communication and decision making are essential for family planning which is more than that in Zimbabwe [6], where 57% of the respondents discussed with their partners reflecting better relations and understanding

among the couples on the concerns of family planning in our study area. Out of 164 of the participants 138 participants think that family planning methods are women's business however 75.6 % of participants suggested that both husband and wife should decide about family planning. Similar study in Zimbabwe [6] revealed 48.3% of the respondents said that male must decide about family planning methods to be used. Furthermore the study found that only 16.5% of participants have used male contraceptives in their till life which is still lower than that in Zimbabwe [6] 80.6% and in Burkina Faso [7], which is 19%. Likewise study found that about 3% of the male are currently using male contraceptive methods which are quite low as compared to study done in Agra [8], Makwanpur [11] and Ethiopia [5]. As well 71.3% of the wives of the participants using family planning methods in which the most using

CONCLUSIONS

It can be inferred that a majority of participant possessed knowledge regarding family planning method, highlighting the pervasiveness of information on reproductive health within the surveyed population. However, it perceived as a women's responsibility, with men often neglecting their role. This study served as a vital benchmark, highlighting the area requiring improvement. It underscores the need for shared responsibility between couples in family planning

ADDITIONAL INFORMATION AND DECLARATIONS

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contraceptive was Depo (56.7%). Our findings strongly reflect that despite the presence of adequate knowledge and positive attitude towards male contraception there is minimal use of male contraception. Reason for non-accepting family planning method by male population might be due to feeling of weakness, hesitation etc. Even though the family planning methods are free from government of Nepal still only 22.6% of the participant knows about condom which is most easy way to use. In similar studies in Pakistan [12], the reasons for lesser use of male contraceptives were fear of side effects like causation of impotence, backache, headache and infection by condoms and vasectomy. Having male gender child was 84.1% in this study which was similar findings from a study done in Nepal, showed that a strong propensity to have at least 1 or 2 sons among Nepalese men although they express not wanting to have more children.

decision, emphasizing men's active participation in practicing alongside women. Therefore, Government and non-government agencies must focus on male participation in practicing family planning method. Involving community leader as advocate is essential. This collaborative effort will encourage men to actively engage in family planning decisions, practice, ensuring balanced responsibility within families.

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