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Original Research Article

Contraceptive awareness and practices in women of urban India

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ABSTRACT

Background: With the efforts from government and increase in the literacy of women, awareness about contraceptive methods is increased. The objective of the study was to analyse contraceptive awareness and practices in women and to find out the source of information and reason for non-use of contraception.

Methods: In a cross-sectional study 400 women were interviewed from July to December 2016.

Results: In our study, majority (43.5 %) of women were between 26-30 years of age followed by women between 22-25 years of age (26.5 %). 92.5% of women were aware of one or other method of contraception. But only 42.5% were practicing contraception. Maximum awareness was about tubectomy (90.5%) followed by CuT (87.5%), Condom 50%, O.C. pills 12.5%, Safe period 5% and injectables 2.5%. Most common method used in our study group was condom (20%) followed by tubectomy 12.5%, CuT 7.5%, O.C. Pills 1.5%, Injectable contraceptive and safe period 0.5% each. 37.5 % woman got information from radio or newspaper, 30 % from hospital doctor, 25 % from friends or relatives, 7.5 % had no information. 100% women were literate, 70% had education till high school, 30% were graduate or postgraduate. In our study, 52.5% had no reason for non-use of contraception. 25% were not using due to myths or fears while 22.5% were not using due to family pressure.

Conclusions: We concluded that awareness about contraceptive methods is quite high but acceptance is quite low. Condom is the most common method used.

Keywords: Acceptance, Awareness, Contraceptive method, Practices

INTRODUCTION

In this modern era, on one hand, women are highly educated and working equally with men in all fields including space and politics. Every woman has right to protect her own health.¹ Contraception is major component of reproductive health.² For that she should be economically independent.¹ On the other hand in India, a large percentage of women are illiterate or less educated and resides in rural India.⁴ They are not economically independent.

It is seen from various studies in our country and outside that knowledge about contraception is very good.¹ but

actual percentage of women using any contraceptive is very low.^{1,4} Awareness is not matched by commensurate contraceptive prevalence but prospects for improvement exist.² In many cases, women want to use birth control measures but are stopped by their male partners.⁶ Every woman has right to protect her own health.¹ For that she should be economically independent.¹ People in developing countries, poorer ones, and the less educated are more likely to have many children.⁷ It is immensely important that women at any physical, social or economical status decide on their family planning choices.⁷ The use of contraceptives has been recognized as a key element in reducing fertility for all age groups in many developing countries.⁹

Objectives of this study was to analyze awareness about various contraceptive methods, and to find the source of information, to assess the actual practices, and to search for the reasons of non-use.

METHODS

This cross-sectional study was carried out at Tertiary Centre located in urban part of India from July 2016 to December 2016 over a period of 6 months. It is a Pediatric hospital catering pediatric & neonatal services to all strata. Mothers having babies from birth to one year visit more frequently to pediatrician for vaccination & feeding problems in this period. Also this is the best time to assess awareness about contraceptive practices. They are more receptive for the contraceptive advice given to them. 400 women were interviewed. Information about age, occupation, education of both parents, parity, about various contraceptive methods, source of information, type of contraception used, and reason for not using any contraceptive was collected in a proforma.

RESULTS

Table 1: Age group pattern.

Age (yrs)	No. of women	Percentage of women
18-21	20	5%
22-25	106	26.5%
26-30	174	43.5%
31-35	62	15.5%
35	10	2.5%

Majority (43.5 %) of women was between 26-30 years of age followed by women between 22-25 years of age (26.5 %).

Table 2: Relation of parity with acceptance of contraception.

No. of children	No. of woman	No. of women using contraception	Percentage of woman
1	256	100	25%
2	138	70	17.5%
3	6	4	1%

Maximum use of contraception was after one delivery (25%) followed after two children (17.5%).

Table 3: Literacy of parents.

Literacy	No. of mothers	No. of fathers
Illiterate	0	0
Primary and Middle school	0	10 (2.5%)
High school and 12 th	280 (70%)	190 (47.5%)
Graduate or more	120 (30%)	200 (50%)

In our study, 100% women were literate, 70% had education till high school, 30% were graduate or postgraduate. 50% of fathers had education graduation or more, 47.5 % fathers had education till high school, 2.5% had education till middle school. None were illiterate.

Table 4: Source of information about contraceptive methods.

Source of information	No. of women	Percentage of women
TV, radio or newspaper	150	37.5%
Hospital doctor	120	30%
Friends or relatives	100	25%
No information	30	7.5%

In our study, 37.5% woman got information from radio or newspaper, 30 % from hospital doctor, 25% from friends or relatives, 7.5 % had no information.

Table 5 Awareness and acceptance of contraceptive method they are using.

Type of contraception	Awareness	Practice
Tubectomy	380 (90.5%)	50 (12.5%)
Copper T	350 (87.5%)	30 (7.5%)
O.C. Pills	50 (12.5%)	6 (1.5%)
Condom	200 (50%)	80 (20%)
Safe period	20 (5%)	2 (0.5%)
Injectables	10 (2.5%)	2 (0.5%)

92.5% of women were aware of one or other method of contraception. But only 42.5% were practicing contraception. Most common method used in our study group was condom (20%) followed by tubectomy 12.5%, CuT 7.5%, O.C. Pills 1.5%, Injectable contraceptive and safe period 0.5% each.

Table 6: Reasons for non-use of contraception.

Reasons	No. of women	Percentage
Family pressure	90	22.5%
Fear or myths	100	25%
No reason	210	52.5%

In our study, 52.5% had no reason for non-use of contraception. 25% were not using due to myths or fears while 22.5% were not using due to family pressure.

DISCUSSION

In India, government is providing facilities for temporary as well as permanent methods of contraception free of cost. Literacy is improved specially in urban areas. Through various media and after hospital delivery,

contraceptive awareness has increased. But still acceptance for contraception is quite less.

Present study included 400 mothers with babies from birth to one year of age irrespective of parity. In our study, majority (43.5 %) of women were between 26-30 years of age followed by women between 22-25 years of age (26.5 %). Sunita Ghike et al found maximum (46.9%) women in 22-25 years age group.¹

In present study, 92.5% of women were aware of one or other method of contraception. But only 42.5% were practicing contraception. Sunita Ghike et al found that 100% of women in their study had knowledge about contraception.¹ But only 22% were using CuT, 5.41% were practicing condom, 2.1% were using O.C. Pills.¹ Augustine Umph found 92.5% awareness about contraception.² Augustine Umph found 60.3 % awareness of condom, 49.9 % awareness of pills.² N. Khwaja and R. Tayyab found 68.5% contraceptive awareness in Pakistani women.³

Alka Verma and Suneeta Mittal found 96% women had knowledge about but only 28 of 122 women were using contraception.⁴ Takkar N et al reported that 81.1% practiced contraception.⁵ Kelly K reported 46.8% usage of contraception.⁶ Berihun Megabiaw found 90.7% awareness about contraceptive methods and 34.3% were currently using contraception.⁷

In our study, maximum awareness was about tubectomy (90.5%) followed by CuT (87.5%), Condom 50%, O.C. pills 12.5%, Safe period 5% and injectables 2.5%. S. Ghike reported maximum awareness about CuT (67.5%) followed by condom (57.9%), O.C. Pills 34%, Injectable contraceptive 14.9%.¹ Sarah Johnson, Christine Pion found 98% contraceptive awareness.⁸ Its usage varied from 35% in Spain to 63% in Germany.⁸

Most common method used in our study group was condom (20%) followed by tubectomy 12.5%, CuT 7.5%, O.C. Pills 1.5%, Injectable contraceptive and safe period 0.5% each. Augustine Umph found 60.3 % use of condom, 49.9 % use of pills.² Augustine Umph noted that the condom (46.7%), withdrawal method (14.1%) and the pills (13.3%) were the most commonly used forms of contraception.² Berihun Megabiaw found that 74.3% were using injectables while 10% were on long acting or permanent methods.⁷ Sunita Ghike et al found CuT as most commonly (22.7%) used method followed by injectables 6.5%, condom 5.4%, oral pills 2.1%.¹

In our study, 37.5% woman got information from radio or newspaper, 30% from hospital doctor, 25% from friends or relatives, 7.5% had no information. Augustine Umph found that 36.9% got information from doctor, 33.8 % from radio and nurse 28.5%.² Sunita Ghike et al found TV and radio as main (70%) source of information followed by neighbor 35% and 29% through ANM and

relatives.¹ N. Khwaja, R. Tayyab noted TV, radio and relatives as common sources of information.³

In our study, 100% women were literate, 70% had education till high school, 30% were graduate or postgraduate. Mounira Sheeba found that 89.7%) had received education, 17.1 % had university degree while 10.3 % were non-educated.⁹ Sunita Ghike et al found that 44% women were literate.¹

In present study, 50% of fathers had education graduation or more, 47.5 % fathers had education till high school, 2.5% had education till middle school. None were illiterate.

In our study, 52.5% had no reason for non-use of contraception. 25% were not using due to myths or fears while 22.5% were not using due to family pressure. Sunita Ghike et al found family pressure from husband and in laws in 59% women for non-use of contraception.¹

CONCLUSION

From our study, it is concluded that:

- Awareness about contraceptive methods is quite high (92.5%).
- Acceptance about all contraceptive methods is quite low (42.5%) though all couples were literate.
- Women are not ready to think about contraception without any reason.
- Condom is the most common method (20%) used.
- Women think of tubectomy as contraception after two or three children.

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Conflict of interest: None declared

Ethical approval: The study was approved by the Institutional Ethics Committee

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