

ASSESSMENT OF THE ROLE OF MALES IN FAMILY PLANNING PRACTICES IN RURAL AREA OF WARDHA DISTRICT

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ABSTRACT

Introduction: Family planning is associated with numerous misconceptions - one of them is its strong association in the minds of people with sterilization. One of the most serious problem in developing countries still have to solve is their rapid and uncontrolled increase in population. **Objectives:** To study the extent of awareness of various family planning methods and to assess the practice of contraceptive usage among the males **Observations and Results:** 73% respondents were aware that family planning should be done after 2 child, 79.4% respondent shown positive response between consecutive children, family planning was important. 73.7% respondent heard about contraception. 80.3% respondent used contraceptives and 75.7% respondent were currently used contraceptives **Conclusion:** Male perception of family planning is an important factor when trying to influence the usage pattern of reversible methods in family planning.

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INTRODUCTION

Reproduction is a dual commitment but, so often in many parts of the world it is seen as wholly women's responsibility¹. The role of men has always been considered to dominate in the decision making process pertaining to women's fertility and birth spacing². Family planning is associated with numerous misconception-one of them is strong association in the minds of people with sterilization. Others equate it with birth control. The recognition of its welfare concept came only a decade and half after its inspection.

India is the second most popular country in world with 1.21 billion people, comprising 624 millions males and 587 million females. Maharashtra is the second most populous state with 112,374,333 people in 35 districts. Growth rate of population in Maharashtra is 15.99% where country's population growth rate is 17.64% and it stands at 21st position in the country³. India became the first country to formulate a National Family Planning Programme in 1952 and was the world's first governmental population stabilization programme⁴.

One of the most serious problem in developing countries still have to solve is their rapid and uncontrolled increase in population⁴. It is well documented that men's general knowledge and attitude concerning the ideal family size, gender preference of children, ideal spacing between child births, and contraceptive method use greatly influence women's preferences and opinions^{5,6}.

In India the total fertility rate is 2.4 and in Maharashtra the total fertility rate is 1.9, female sterilization rate is 53.6 and male sterilization rate is 1.4. In

wardha district female sterilization rate is 63.6 and male sterilization rate is 1.4⁷, so the role of male in family planning is very low in this study is therefore significant because, for any population control activity to be effective there is a need to address the family life and sexual behavior of men. These are very important because their issues that have impact on fertility directly. Here issues such as the knowledge and practice of family planning, men's approval of family planning and other fertility issues deserve serious consideration. Again, there is a dire need to investigate the gender power relations in reproductive health decision-making processes. For instance, who decides when or when not to have additional children? Who decides when to adopt family planning and which family planning method to use? All these questions are important for major challenging and direction of action programmed.

Keeping in mind this entire thing I conduct this study with the objectives to study the extent of awareness of various family planning methods and assess the practice of contraceptive usage among the males. Also to find out attitude of males towards contraceptive usages.

METHODOLOGY

It is a Community based cross sectional study, along with qualitative component of focus group discussions, conducted in the Seloo Block which is the field practice area of Jawaharlal Nehru Medical College, Sawangi (Meghe), Wardha. Simple Random sampling method was used. For Quantitative part of the study, data was collected in the form of pre design and pre tested, pre coded

questionnaire by house to house visit and for Qualitative part the focused group discussion were carried. The study participants were all the eligible married males of the ages of 25 to 45 years, residing in the Seloo block. The study duration was from July 2014 to Jan 2015. The sample size was calculated as quantitative data.

- a) **For Quantitative data:** The prevalence of previous studies about knowledge of one or more methods of contraception, particularly modern contraceptive methods was found to be 95 % among males , using this prevalence the sample size was calculated as **304**.
- b) **For Qualitative data :** For focused group discussions, the process of data collection was continue , till the saturation point .i.e. where no new information is added after the additional interviews or focused group discussion.

After explaining the purpose of study, written information consent was obtain from each participant prior to data collection. The ethical permission was obtained from Institutional Ethics Committee of Jawaharlal Nehru Medical College, Wardha.

OBSERVATION AND RESULTS

When awareness of the study participant regarding modern contraceptives was assessed it was found that 87.3% respondents were aware that family planning should be done after 2 child, 79.4% respondent shown positive response between consecutive children family planning was important, 55.6% respondent thought between two consecutive children best interval was of 3 years, 59.5% respondent had the awareness of natural method of contraceptives, 72.6% respondent knows the terminal method of family planning was female sterilization, 60.5% respondent favors of the contraceptives side effects.(Table no. 1)

Table no 1: awareness of the study respondent about contraceptive methods.

Variables		No. of respondent	Percent
After how many children family planning done	1	16	5.3
	2	266	87.3
	>3	22	7.2
Between two consecutive children family planning is important	Yes	243	79.4
	No	61	20.1
Between two consecutive children intervals is	1(yrs)	4	1.3
	2	28	9.2
	3	169	55.6
	4	24	7.9
	5	79	26.0
Awareness about natural method of contraceptive	Yes	181	59.5
	No	123	40.5
What is terminal method of contraception	Male sterilization	214	70.3
	Female sterilization	221	72.6
Contraceptives side effect	Yes	184	60.5
	No	120	39.5

Table no 2 Practice of family planning among respondent.

Variables	Frequency	Percent	
Ever heard about Contraception	Yes	224	73.7
	No	80	26.3
Ever used contraceptives	yes	244	80.3
	no	60	19.7
Current use of contraceptive	Yes	230	75.7
	no	74	24.3

In Table no. 2, it has been observed that in practice of family planning methods, 73.7% respondent heard about

contraception's. 80.3% respondent ever used contraceptives and 75.7% respondent were currently used contraceptives.

The importance of family planning from the sight of participant that mostly participants were known for the health of mother family planning was important 56.57%, but some participant were thinking that lack of money may not allow rearing many children 42.10%, 25.65% participant were think for the health of child family planning was important, 4.60% participant don't know why the family planning was important and 4.27% participants were know the other reasons.

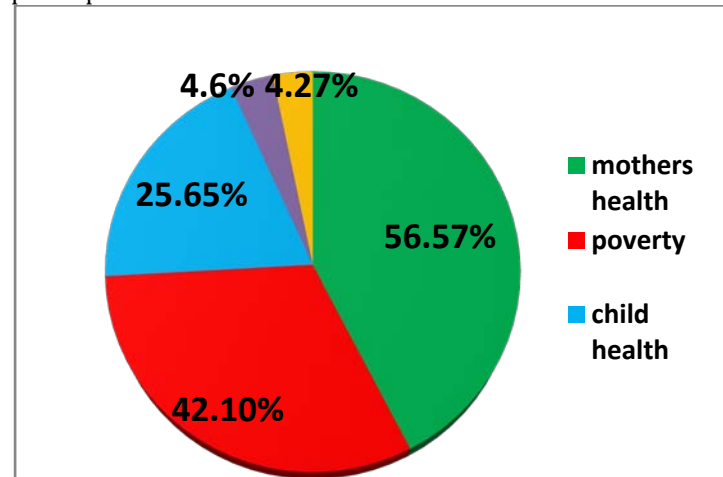


Figure.1. Attitude of males towards use of family planning

In the table.3. it was observed that, participants regularly used contraceptive was condom 61.84% and others were pills 14.80%, tubal ligation/tubectomy 11.18%, vasectomy /male sterilization 7.56%, intrauterine device 5.59%, prolonged breast feeding1.31%, injectable 0.65% and others were 0.98%.

Table No.3: Practices of family planning methods regular use of male respondent

Family planning methods(n=304)	No. of respondent	Percent (%)
1. Pills	45	14.80
2. Intrauterine device(IUCD)	17	5.59
3. Inject able (Depo-Provera)	2	0.65
4. Condom	188	61.84
5. Spermicidal	1	0.32
6. Tubal ligation/female sterilization	34	11.18
7. Vasectomy/male sterilization	23	7.56
8. Prolonged breast feeding	4	1.31
9. Others [specify]	3	0.98

FOCUSED GROUP DISCUSSIONS

Focused group discussions were scheduled with married male participants between the age groups of 25-45 years, to elicit information of family planning as perceived by them. The males were selected purposively, from different socio-economic strata, for the study. All the focused group discussions were facilitated by investigator and note taker in local language (Marathi). FGD's were conducted till the saturation point was achieved for the responses. Total of three focused group discussions were carried out. First group consisted of 8 participants, second and third group of 11 participants each. Each group had participants of nearly same age group. One day prior to the day of focused group discussion, the participants were informed about the topic, place and time of focused group discussion. Each focused group discussion lasted for about 30 to 45 min. Also there has been suggestion given that family planning operation should preferably do by males. More percentage of male should be added to that

programme it is essential that this knowledge should be more and more discussed between their friends, family members and their partners

DISCUSSION

Total of 304 participants were included for the study. All participants were married, and belong to 25-45 age groups. Study participant were included for the study, by house to house survey, by random selection. When awareness of the study participant about modern contraceptives was asked 87.3% respondents thought that after 2 child, family planning can be done, whereas 79.4% respondent showed positive response between consecutive children, 55.6% respondent thought between two consecutive children best interval is of 3 years, Similar results were found in the study by Priya Nanda(2010)⁸ et al, where a higher proportion of men 80% considered condoms to be an effective contraceptive method. In 62% of the men reported two as their ideal number of children, while 28% preferred more than two children. 59.5% respondent had the knowledge of natural method of contraceptives, 72.6% respondent knew the terminal method of family planning was female sterilization, 60.5% respondent were in favors of the contraceptives side effects. LawoyinTO(2002)⁹et al in their study found that, 55.7% participants had ever used contraceptives, while 26.7% were current users of one or the other method. The condom was the most utilized method of their study. In these study contraceptives users' rate was very high 75.7% and similarly most utilized method was condom 61.84%

It is observed in this study that 73.7 % participant heard about the family planning methods, 80.3% participants were ever used contraceptives, 75.7% participants were currently used contraceptives. Participants were mostly used contraceptive in their routine life was condom 61.84% and secondary choice was pills 14.80% than other methods like tubal ligation / tubectomy 11.18%, vasectomy /male sterilization 7.56%, intrauterine device 5.59%, prolonged breast feeding1.31%, injectable 0.65% and others were 0.98%. Similarly, in a study by Dr.Kabwigu Samuel et al (2000)¹⁰ found that Knowledge about modern FP methods by adult males was 71.1%. The condom and pill were most known methods.

In Our study most of the participants were knew the importance of family planning for the health of mother 56.57%, but some participant were thought that lack of money may not allow rearing many children 42.10%, 25.65% participant were thought for the health of child family planning was important, 4.60% participant don't know the importance of family planning and 4.27% participants knew the other reasons. Similarly in another study conducted by R.Reddy(2003)¹¹ et al, they found that all of them were aware of the permanent methods of sterilization (both vasectomy and tubectomy). Among the temporary methods, 86% of the subjects were aware of condoms, 50% Oral Contraceptive Pills, 32% abstinence and 6% Intra-Uterine Contraceptive Devices.

CONCLUSION

Men are decision-makers in the communities. Male perception of family planning is an important factor when trying to influence the usage pattern of reversible methods in family planning. Moreover, men strongly believe that they are more aware and knowledgeable about these issues than their wives. Male participants were in favour of using Condoms as contraceptive device and obtain mainly from health institutions and medical shops. Mother's health and unable to bear more children due to lack of money were important reasons going for family planning.

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