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Awareness and practice of family planning services among married women of reproductive age in a rural municipality of Saptari district, Nepal

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Abstract

Introductions: Unwanted pregnancies and maternal deaths can be avoided by use of family planning (FP) services. Use of modern methods of contraceptive among married women age 15-49 years in Nepal is 43%. Generally, fertility is higher among women in rural areas than in urban. This study aims to assess the awareness and practice of FP services among married women of reproductive age in a Rural Municipality of Saptari district, Nepal.

Methods: Cross-sectional study with two stage sampling technique through face-to-face interview using structured questionnaire interview schedule in local language, Maithili, was done to find out awareness and practice regarding FP services in married women of 15-49 years in a Municipality of Saptari district, province 2, Nepal, from April 2018 to March 2019. Descriptive and inferential data analysis done using SPSS version 16.0 software.

Results: Out of 280 respondents, 257 (91.78%) had adequate awareness regarding FP services, 167 (59.64%) were current FP users, 125 (74.85%) practiced female sterilization and 39 (23.35%) used temporary methods. Common reason for not using temporary FP methods included side effects 103 (90%). Level of awareness regarding FP services was not significantly associated with their practices.

Conclusions: Majority of respondents had adequate awareness regarding family planning services but FP practice was low.

Keywords: awareness, contraception, family planning services, married women, practice

Introductions

Family planning (FP) has been accepted as a basic human right of an individual and couple. A woman's ability to space and limit her pregnancies has a direct impact on her health and well-being as well as on the outcome of pregnancy.¹ Total fertility rate (TFR) in Nepal is 2.3 children per woman.² On average, fertility is higher among women in rural areas than among women in urban areas (2.9 versus 2.0 children). In Nepal, the TFR ranges from a low of 1.8 children per woman in Province 3 to a high of 3.0 children per woman in Province 2.² Women with no education have 3.3 children on average, as compared with 1.8 children among women with an SLC or more.² Most of reproductive aged women have inadequate information regarding access and use of modern contraceptives.³ Though FP services are available free by government, still the unmet need is high up to 24% for spacing and limit the pregnancies.²

The objective of the study is to assess the awareness and practice of FP services among married reproductive age women in a rural municipality of Saptari district, Nepal.

Methods

This cross-sectional study was conducted in married women of reproductive age group 15-49 years in ward number 1, 5, 6 and 7 of Bishnupur Municipality of Saptari district, province 2, Nepal, from April 2018 to March 2019. Exclusion criteria included widowed women, women whose husband were outside since last 6 months and women who were separated from husband but not divorced.

Data was collected through face-to-face interview technique by using structured interview schedule in Maithili version by researcher herself. Informed written consent was taken from each respondent by describing the objective of the study. On an average, 10-15 respondents were interviewed per day and the average time required to complete the interview was 10-15 minutes.

Ethical approval was obtained from Institutional Review Committee (IRC) Patan Academy Health Sciences (PAHS). Written permission was obtained from the chairperson from Bishnupur Rural Municipality and its selected wards. The confidentiality of obtained information was maintained.

Data collected were edited, coded and entered into excel then exported to SPSS version 16.0. Descriptive analysis (frequency, percentage, mean, standard deviation) was done and inferential statistics (chi-square test) was used for the association.

Results

Out of 280 respondents, 139 (49.64%) were between age group 25-34 years (27.93±5.576), 257 (91.79%) married before the age of 20 years, 249 (89%) were literate with secondary level education 87 (34.94%), 243 (86.79%) women house maker.

The 273 (97.51%) of respondent's husbands were literate, 97 (34.64%) laborer followed by 67 (23.93%) farmer, 30 (10.71%) were service holder 27 (9.65%) went abroad for work. Half, 142 (50.72%) of respondents had family's income NPR 20,000 - 30,000/month, and from extended family, 132 (47.14%) had 1-2 children, 130 (46.4%) 3-4 children. The 257 (91.78%) had adequate level of awareness regarding FP services, Figure 1. The FP service was used by 181 (64.64%); 167 (59.64%) were current users, 128 (76.65%) preferred permanent method of FP and 103 (90.35%) non-users feared the side effect, Table 1.

Source of information regarding FP was relatives for 161 (96.4%), health workers 112 (67.06%), school/institutions 34 (20.35%), media 13 (7.78%) and pharmacy 5 (2.99%). Source of FP were: hospital 125 (74.85%), health post 22 (13.17%), family planning center 16 (9.58%) and rest 4 (2.4%) from private clinic, health worker and pharmacy. Walking duration to the place for receiving PF was more than 30 minutes for 133 (82.63%).

There was significant association between age and FP practice, Table 2. There was no

significant association between awareness level and practice of FP services, Table 3.

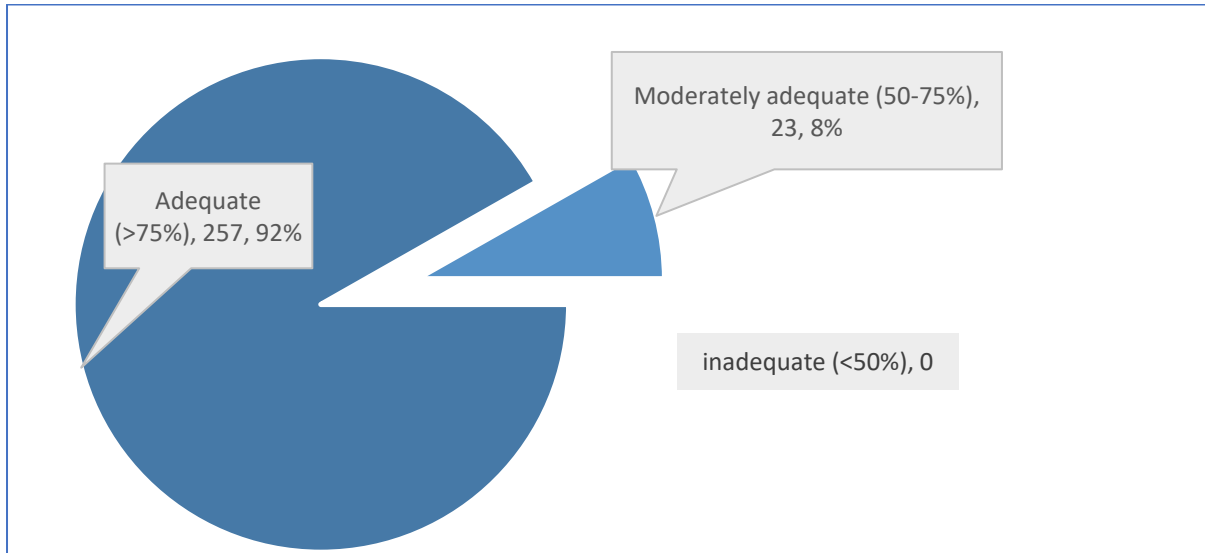


Figure 1. Level of Awareness of family planning (FP) services among married women in a rural municipality of Saptari in Province 2 of Nepal, n=280

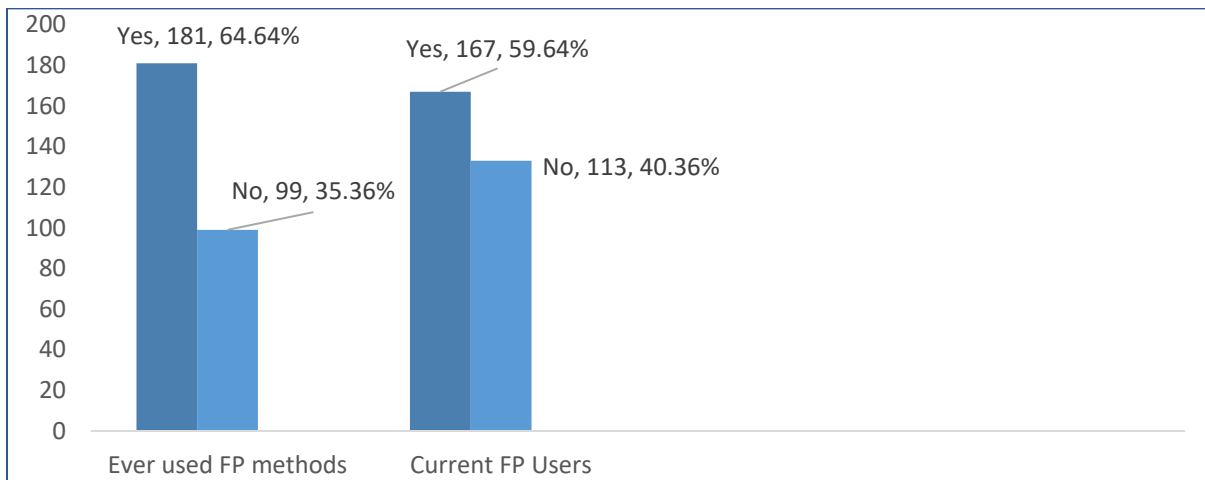


Figure 2. Practice of FP Services among married women in a rural municipality of Saptari in Province 2 of Nepal, n=280

Table 1. Preferred FP methods Services among married women in a rural municipality of Saptari in Province 2 of Nepal, n=167

Variables	Frequency	Percentage
Temporary methods	39	23.35
Permanent method/sterilization	128	76.65
If temporary methods(n=39), chosen method		
Depo povera	20	51.28
Implant	11	28.22
Oral pills	4	10.25
Copper-T	4	10.25
If Permanent method(n=128), chosen method		
Female sterilization	125	97.66
Male sterilization	03	2.34

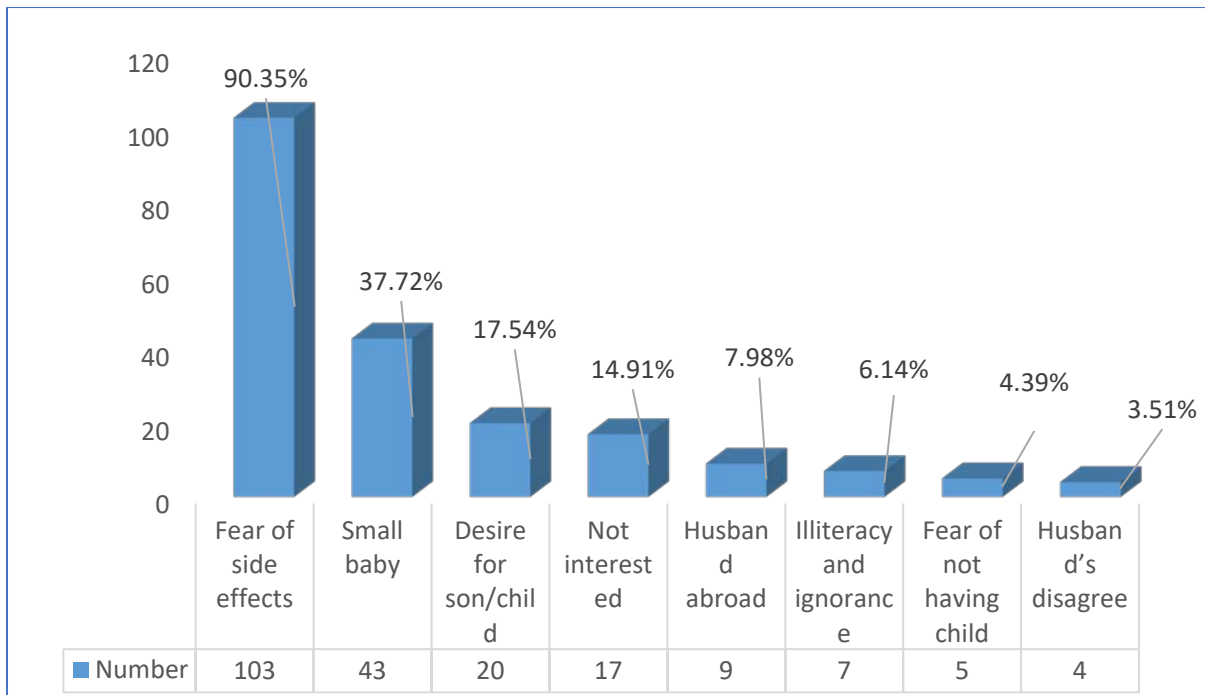


Figure 3. Reasons for non-use of FP Services among married women in a rural municipality of Saptari in Province 2 of Nepal methods, n=113

Table 2. Association of Socio-Demographic Data with Practice of Family Planning Services among married women in a rural municipality of Saptari in Province 2 of Nepal, n=280

Variables	Currently FP users		Chi-square Value	p-value
	Use N=167	Non-use N=113		
Age (in years)				
15-24	26(15.56)	65(57.52)	56.567	0.000*
25-34	99(59.28)	40(35.39)		
35-44	42(25.16)	8(7.09)		
Age at Marriage (in years)				
<20 years	152(91.01)	105(92.92)	0.324	0.570
>20 years	15(8.99)	8(7.08)		
Educational Status of Respondents				
Illiterate	19(11.37)	12(10.61)	6.658	0.155
Simple literate	37(22.15)	16(14.15)		
Primary level	51(30.53)	29(25.66)		
Secondary level	43(25.74)	44(38.97)		
Higher level	17(10.21)	12(10.61)		
Occupational Status of Respondents				
Agriculture	3(1.81)	3(2.65)	7.755	0.051 (likelihood ratio)
Business/Shop	17(10.17)	3(2.65)		
Service	8(4.79)	3(2.65)		
Housemaker	139(83.23)	104(92.05)		

Table 3. Association of level of awareness and practice of respondents regarding family planning services among married women in a rural municipality of Saptari in Province 2 of Nepal, n=280

Awareness	Current FP users		Chi-square value	p-value
	Non-use n=113	Use n=167		
Adequate (>75%)	100 (88.49)	157 (94.01)	2.720	0.099
Moderately Adequate (50-75%)	13 (11.51)	10 (5.99)		

Discussions

Present study findings showed that majority of respondents 257 (91.78%) had adequate awareness regarding FP services, consistent with Nepal Demographic and Health Survey (NDHS) 2016 report of 99.9% awareness of any contraceptive method. Similarly, a cross-sectional study done in a village development committee (VDC) of Eastern Nepal in 300 married women of reproductive age showed that majority of respondents (98%) had heard about family planning method. This shows the awareness of FP is satisfactory in rural districts of Nepal.

This study indicates less than 2/3rd respondents had used some form of FP method at least once at some point of time and only 167 (59.64%) were currently using FP methods. Similarly, report from Sunsari district of Nepal shows 64% of the women were currently adopting any kind of modern FP and 53.1% were on injectable, the commonly used measure of FP. These findings indicate that even with high coverage of awareness (91.78%) regarding FP, its practice is still low (59.64%) in rural districts of Nepal. Also, female sterilization over temporary methods, indicating limited use of FP for birth spacing. This may be due to respondents were influenced by relatives and FP users in their community. Fear of side effects was the main reason for not using FP, which requires proper counseling from reliable sources (health service providers) and FP counselors in the community.

Some of the limitations of this study may be inclusion of only one rural Municipality of a district and may not be generalized. Even with this limitation, it provides information that FP service counselling is required to clear misconceptions regarding side effects and more options should be offered for birth spacing. Also, information from male partners can be obtained to make more clear understanding on contraceptives use.

Conclusions

The study found that majority (91.78%) of married women of Bishnupur Rural Municipality of Saptari district of Nepal were aware of family planning services, but only 59.64% were currently using it. Fear of side effects was the reason for not using FP services.

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Conflict of Interests

None.

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