

ORIGINAL ARTICLE

Contraceptive Practice Among The Eligible Couples In A Selected Rural Area Of Bangladesh

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Abstract

A cross sectional descriptive type of study was conducted in a selected rural community to know about the contraceptive practices among the eligible couples. A total number of 340 female respondents were interviewed with the help of a preformed questionnaire. Among the respondents, 77.4% used various methods of contraceptives. Majority (30%) were in the age group of 25-29 years; 25.9% were between 20-24 years of age. 34.1% respondents have 4 family members followed by 24.4% having 5 members. Among the respondents, 38.5% have 2 children; 22.4% have 1 child. Among the contraceptive methods, 61.6% preferred oral pill that is the highest. 1.5% use both condom and oral pill. The most common cause of not using contraceptive is found to be desire for more children (32.5%) followed by religious belief and lack of family planning knowledge (19.5% each). 48% respondents received information from television and 14.7% from their neighbours. Among the respondents, 46.5% were found to have completed primary level of education and 26% completed secondary level. Out of 340 respondents, 132 practiced to breast feeding to their children. Of them, 33.3% breast fed for 2 years followed by 20.5% for 1 year. Most of the respondents' (31.5%) husband's occupation is agriculture. Significant relationship was found between mother's education, family members, number of children and the length of breast feeding with contraceptive practice.

Key words

Eligible couple: An "eligible couple" refers to a currently married couple wherein the wife is in the reproductive age, which is generally assumed to lie between the ages of 15 and 49.

Contraceptive methods: Contraceptive methods are preventive methods to help women avoid unwanted pregnancies.

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Introduction

Population problem is one of the biggest problems that our country is facing with its inevitable consequences in all aspects of national development. World population was 6054 million in the year 2000 with average annual growth rate of 1.4%^{1,2}. Approximately 95% of this growth is occurring in the

developing countries. Three countries of SEAR, i.e. India (16.87%), Indonesia (3.49%) and Bangladesh (2.13%) are among the most populous ten countries of the world. The projected population of Bangladesh in 2005 is 139911 thousands³. The rampant population growth has been viewed as the greatest obstacle to the economic and social advancement in the developing world. Thus contraception plays a crucial role in combating this obstacle. Family Planning (FP) efforts started in early fifties in Bangladesh. A national population policy was initiated in the immediate post-liberation period. Since then several strategies have been adopted to strengthen the FP activities. Development of definite administrative infrastructures, adequate resource allocation, high policy commitment, recruitment training and development of large fleet of outreach workers and nationwide awareness about FP program method and message of small family norm are some of the important steps adopted in this regard. The 5th five years plan commenced in July 1997. The main objective of the fifth plan is to create a greater degree of public awareness of the population problem through social movement and nationwide approach and thereby to ensure people's participation fully in order to achieve the demographic goal of Net Reproductive Rate (NRR) of 1 by the year 2005. The overall goals of MCH-FP program during the plan period are-

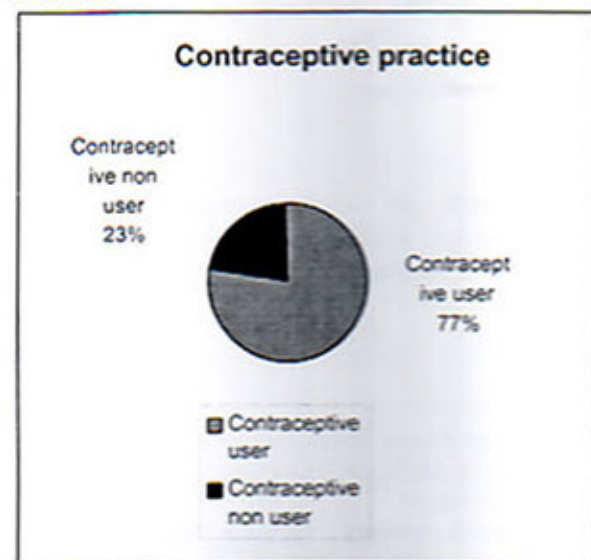
1. To reduce maternal mortality rate from 4.5 in 1995 to 3.0 in 2002, infant mortality rate from 78 in 1995 to 55 in 2002.
2. To reduce growth rate from 1.85 in 1995 to 1.32 in 2002.

3. The target for Couple Protection Rate (CPR) by the end of the plan period has been set at 60%.
4. To reach the ultimate goal of NPR of 1 by the year 2005.

Study design

A cross-sectional community based descriptive study was conducted in the villages of Sripur thana under Gazipur district in August, 2003. 340 eligible couples were selected at random. Preformed questionnaire was used for interviewing only the female respondents of the couples. Data were collected by interviewing the respondents individually. Collected data were compiled and analyzed by using spss software. Chi-square was used to find the statistical relationship between the factors.

Results



Among the respondents, 263(77.4%) were contraceptive user and 77(22.6%) were not using any contraceptive method.

Table I: Distribution of the respondents by age

Age group	Number of respondents	Percentage
15-19 years	14	4.1
20-24 years	88	25.9
25-29 years	102	30
30-34 years	76	22.4
35-39 years	37	10.9
40-44 years	14	4.1
45-49 years	9	2.6
Total	340	100

Respondents interviewed were in the age group of 15-49 years. Most of them (30%) were in the 25-29 years age group. 25.9% were between 20-24 years of age. Relationship between the age of the respondent and contraceptive practice was found non significant ($P>.05$).

Table II: Distribution of the respondents by number of family members.

Number of family member	Frequency	Percentage
2	11	3.2
3	69	20.3
4	116	34.1
5	76	22.4
6	33	9.7
7	25	7.4
8	8	2.4
10	2	0.5
Total	340	100

Most of the respondents (34.1%) had 4 members in the family, 22.4% had 5 members in the family, followed by 20.3% having 3 family members. Significant relationship was found between number of family members and contraceptive practice ($P<.05$).

Table III: Distribution of the respondents by the number of children.

Number of children	Number of respondents	Percentage
0	31	9.1
1	76	22.4
2	131	38.5
3	66	19.4
4	17	5
5	9	2.6
6	6	1.8
8	3	0.9
9	1	0.3
Total	340	100

Among the respondents, 131(38.5%) had 2 children and 76 (22.4%) had 1 child followed by 66(19.4%) having 3 children. There was significant relationship between the number of children and contraceptive practice ($P<0.0005$).

Table IV: Methods of contraceptives used.

Method used	Number of eligible couples	Percentage
Condom	64	24.3
Oral pill	162	61.6
Injectable preparations	20	7.6
IUD	1	0.4
Vasectomy	1	0.4
Tubectomy	11	4.2
Condom and oral pill	4	1.5
Total	263	100

Among 263 respondents practicing contraception, 162 (61.6%) were using oral pills while 64(24.3%) using condom, 7.6% using injectable contraceptives and 4.2% had undergone tubectomy.

Table V: Reasons for not using contraceptives.

Reasons	Number	Percentage
Religious belief	15	19.5
Socio-cultural behavior	9	11.7
Desire more child	25	32.5
Don't know about FP	15	19.5
Head of the family doesn't like contraception	6	7.8
Fear of complications	7	9
Total	77	100

Among the non-practicing respondents, 32.5% didn't practice any method, as they wanted more children. Out of the remaining causes 19.5%, 19.5%, 11.7%, 9% and 7.8% were for lack of knowledge about FP, religious beliefs, socio-cultural behavior, fear of complications and head of the family unwilling to practice any method respectively.

Table VI: Sources of information regarding contraception.

Source of information	Number of respondent	Percentage
Radio	47	13.8
Television	163	48
Family planning or health worker	32	9.4
Neighbour	50	14.7
Doctors	11	3.2
Paramedics	22	6.5
Never heard about FP	15	4.4
Total	340	100

163 (48%) respondents received information from television. 14.7% received information from their neighbours and 14.5% got information from radio. 15(4.4%) respondents never heard of family planning.

Table VII: Distribution of the respondents according to educational status.

Educational status	Number of respondent	Percentage
Illiterate	75	22.5
Primary	159	46.5
Secondary	88	26
Graduate	18	5
Total	340	100

Among the respondents, 22.5% were illiterate, 46.5%, 26% and 5% received primary education, secondary education and graduation respectively. Significant relationship was found between respondents' educational level and use of contraceptives ($P < .0005$).

Table VIII: Distribution of respondents according to the length of breast feeding.

Duration of breast feeding	Number of respondents	Percentage
1 month	3	2.3
2 months	4	3
3 months	9	6.8
4 months	16	12.1
5 months	10	7.6
6 months	15	11.4
1 year	27	20.5
2 years	44	33.3
Didn't remember length of breast feeding	4	3
Total	132	100

Out of 340 respondents, 132 Practiced breast feeding to their children. Among them, 33(33.3%) was breast fed for 2 years, 27(20.5%) for 1 year, 16(12.1%) for 4 months, 15(11.4%) for 6 months. 4(3%) couldn't remember the duration. There was significant relationship between the length of breast feeding and the contraceptive practice ($P < .05$)

Table IX: Distribution of respondents according to husband's occupation.

Husband's occupation	Number	Percentage
Agriculture	107	31.5
Day labour	49	14.4
Industrial worker	32	9.4
Salary Tk.<5000	30	8.8
Salary Tk.>6000	21	6.2
Businessman	101	29.7
Total	340	100

Most of the respondent's 107(31.5%) husband's occupation was agriculture. Next common occupation was businessman (29.7%) followed by day labour (14.4%) and industrial worker (9.4%).

Discussion

In our study we have found that most of the respondents use contraceptive methods (77.4%) compared to only 45.2% use in the rural areas of India⁴.

Only 19% use contraceptive in Rajasthan, India⁵. Among the contraceptive users, 34.2% use permanent method in India⁴. In contrast, in our study vasectomy and tubectomy have been done in 0.4% and 4.2% respectively.

Oral pill has been found to be the most accepted contraceptive method among the respondents in our study but condom is the commonest method in Port Harcourt⁶.

Only 7.6% of the respondents in our study use the injectable contraceptive in comparison to South African black and colored women⁷.

Mother's education has been found to have significant relationship in using contraceptive which is similar to the study done in Peru and Ethiopia but different from the study done in Port Harcourt^{8,9,6}.

Age is not significantly related to the use of contraceptive, which differ from the study carried in Port Harcourt⁶.

In our study television has been found to be the major source (50.2%) of information about contraceptives compared to 40% of the rural population reached by radio found by Manjoor-ul-Karim¹⁰.

Among those with fewer than 2 children, more than 93% were found to be nonuser of contraceptive in a study by Santpur SS et al¹¹. In our study most of the users were found to have two children followed by having one child.

Desire for male child reduced the likelihood of contraceptive acceptance in a study conducted in Ethiopia where religious or ethnic differentials were not accountable⁹. The study finding partially matches our finding.

Only 4.4% of our respondents do not know about contraceptive which differ from the study in South Africa where majority lacked knowledge about contraceptive¹².

Most of the respondents in our study (33.3%) practiced breastfeeding up to 2 years that is similar to findings in a study carried in India⁵.

Recommendations

1. The population should be made more familiar with the population problem along with its consequences on various aspects of national development with the help of mass media.
2. Social intervention model of health education can help to change people's attitude towards family planning methods.
3. Incentives may be given to the couples to encourage adoption of small family norms.

4. Availability of family planning materials should be ensured specially to the ones who need most.
5. Family planning programs are to be more decentralized with maximum rural coverage.

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