



EPIDEMIOLOGICAL STUDY TO ASSESS THE DETERMINANTS OF UNMET NEED FOR CONTRACEPTION AMONG WOMEN OF REPRODUCTIVE AGE IN RURAL MEERUT

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ABSTRACT Family planning promotion has the potential to reduce poverty, maternal and child mortality, high risk pregnancy and abortion. The present study was conducted to find out the prevalence and determinants of unmet need among the women of reproductive age group in the rural population. A community based cross-sectional study was conducted in rural setting of Parikshitgarh block of Meerut in Uttar Pradesh. 285 women of reproductive age group (15-49 years) were selected by multistage random sampling. Information regarding the unmet need and its determinants was obtained by door-to-door survey. In this study, contraceptive use was seen in 52.6% women, unmet need for contraception was found in 22.8% women and important determinants identified were age of the women (56% women of <30 years didn't use contraception), religion (Muslim women had higher unmet need (26.5%) compared to Hindu women (16.7%)), level of husband's education (83% women with unmet need had husbands with ≤ high school education), number of living children (less the number of living children, less was the unmet need), role of male partner and source of information.

KEYWORDS : Contraceptive, unmet need, determinants, family planning

INTRODUCTION

India is supporting about 16% of world's population, with only 2.4 percent of world's land area and is placed as the second most populous country in the world, next to China. The last decade has seen India's population growth by 21.34 percent which means 180 million persons were added to the population.^[1] The large momentum for continued growth of population is because at the national level,

27 percent of 15-19 year old women are currently married (15 percent of urban women and 33 percent of rural women).^[2] The increasing number of births has a deleterious effect on the health along with nutritional problems of both mother and child. India was the first country in the world to initiate the National Family Planning Programme in 1952 with the objective of "reducing the birth rate to the extent necessary to stabilize the population at a level consistent with requirement of national economy".^[3]

The family welfare programme has travelled a long way, but still total fertility rate has not reached the desired target of 2.1%.^[4] The low contraceptive prevalence rate (47.4) and high level of fertility in Uttar Pradesh are of considerable concern to the Indian Government.^[5]

An important dimension of non-use of family planning methods is the unmet need for family planning.^[6] The sum of the unmet need for limiting and the unmet need for spacing is the unmet need for family planning. Current contraceptive users are said to have a met need for contraception. The total demand for family planning is the sum of unmet need and met need.^[2]

Despite so much efforts by the government, the unmet need is still a major issue to be taken care of and in this light to the best of my knowledge there was no published community based study which had assessed the unmet need for family planning in the rural areas of Meerut district in Uttar Pradesh; therefore in order to explore these areas, this community based cross-sectional study was conducted in the rural area of Meerut with the objective of determining the prevalence of unmet need for FP and its determinants among married women of reproductive age in rural Meerut.

MATERIALS AND METHODS

The present study was carried on married women of reproductive age group (15-49 years) in rural setting of Parikshitgarh block of Meerut in Uttar Pradesh. This block was purposively selected because the field practice area of the Rural Health and Training Center (Khajoori) of Department Of Community Medicine; Subharti Medical College is located in this block. Total number of study participants was 285 and these women were interviewed through house to house survey after

obtaining informed consent. A pre-structured, pretested, pre validated schedule was used to collect the information. The data was collected regarding socio-demographic factors, namely age of the respondent, religion, education of the respondent and her husband, occupation of the respondent and her husband and number of living children. The subjects were also interviewed about their knowledge of contraceptive methods, role of male partner in decision making regarding contraception and source of information regarding contraception. The data collected was analyzed by using SPSS 19.0 software to test the association between the determinants and unmet need for family planning of married women.

RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

In the present study, total unmet need for family planning was found in 65 (22.8%) women out of 285 study participants.

Table 1. Association of current contraceptive use with Age Group of women

Age (in years)	Methods Of Contraception						Currently not using any method	Total
	Sterilization	Condoms	IUCD	OCs	Withdrawal Method	Others		
	No. (%)	No. (%)	No. (%)	No. (%)	No. (%)	No. (%)		
15-19	0 (0)	0 (0)	0 (0)	0 (0)	0 (0)	0 (0)	1 (100)	1 (0.3)
20-24	0 (0)	14 (30.5)	3 (6.5)	0 (0)	0 (0)	0 (0)	29 (63)	46 (16.1)
25-29	1 (1.3)	25 (31.3)	2 (2.4)	8 (10)	1 (1.3)	2 (2.4)	41 (51.3)	80 (28)
30-34	9 (12.5)	25 (34.7)	3 (4.2)	3 (4.2)	0 (0)	2 (2.7)	30 (41.7)	72 (25.3)
35-39	9 (16.7)	14 (25.8)	5 (9.3)	2 (3.7)	1 (1.9)	0 (0)	23 (42.6)	54 (19)
40-44	9 (33.3)	8 (29.6)	2 (7.4)	1 (3.7)	0 (0)	0 (0)	7 (25.9)	27 (9.5)
45-49	1 (20)	0 (0)	0 (0)	0 (0)	0 (0)	0 (0)	4 (80)	5 (1.8)
Total	29 (10.2)	86 (30.1)	15 (5.3)	14 (4.9)	2 (0.7)	4 (1.4)	135 (47.4)	285 (100)

Table 1. shows 56% women of <30 years didn't use contraception and also majority of the women (252 (88.4%)), in the present study belonged to 20-40 years age group among which 123 (48.8%) women in this age group didn't use any contraceptive method. The association between current contraceptive use among the women with their age group was found to be statistically significant.

Figure1. Association of Unmet Need for contraception with Number of Living Children

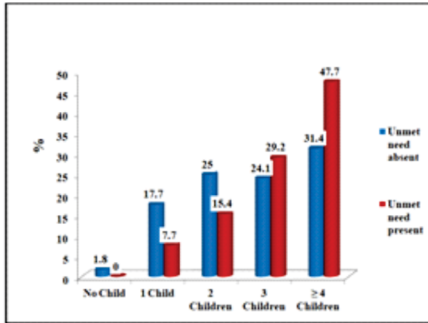


Figure1. shows that there was increase in the percentage of women with unmet need for family planning with the increase in number of living children. The association between unmet need for contraception with number of living children was found to be statistically significant.

Table2. Association between Unmet need for contraception with Religion of the women

Religion	Unmet need		Total
	No	Yes	
	No. (%)	No. (%)	
Muslim	119(73.5)	43(26.5)	162(56.8)
Hindu	100(83.3)	20(16.7)	120(42.1)
Sikh	1(33.3)	2(66.7)	3(1.1)
Total	220(77.2)	65(22.8)	285(100)
Pearson's Chi Square = 7.132			df = 2
			P Value = 0.028

Table2. shows that in the present study it was found that out of total Muslim population unmet need was found in 26.5% women compared to only 16.7% among the total Hindu population. The association between unmet need for contraception and Religion of the women was found to be statistically significant.

Figure2. Association of Unmet Need for contraception with Discussion on Family Planning with Husband

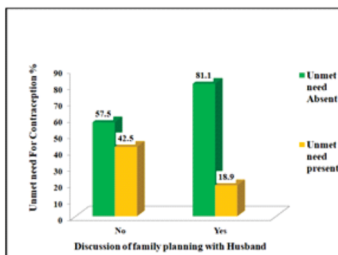


Figure2. shows that among 238 women who discussed about family planning with their husband unmet need was seen in only 45(18.9%) women whereas in the 47 women who did not have a discussion about family planning with their husband, 20(42.5%) women had unmet need for contraception. The association between unmet need for contraception with discussion about family planning with the husband was found to be statistically significant.

Table3. Association between Unmet need for contraception with Education level of the husband

Education Level	Unmet need		Total
	No	Yes	
	No. (%)	No. (%)	
Illiterate	32(64)	18(36)	50(17.5)
Primary	37(78.7)	10(21.3)	47(16.5)
Middle	40(75.5)	13(24.5)	53(18.6)
High School	36(73.5)	13(26.5)	49(17.2)
Senior Secondary	36(92.3)	3(7.7)	39(13.7)
Graduate	29(78.4)	8(21.6)	37(13)
Post Graduate	10(100)	0(0)	10(3.5)
Total	220(77.2)	65(22.8)	285(100)
Pearson's Chi Square = 13.526			df = 6
			P Value = 0.035

Table3. shows that in the present study it was found that women whose husband had education level of high school and below had more unmet need for family planning (illiterates 36%, primary level 21.3%, middle

school level 24.5%, and high school level 26.5%) as compared to women with husbands having higher education level (senior secondary level 7.7%, graduate level 21.6%, post graduate level 0%). The association between unmet need for family planning and education level of the husband was found to be statistically significant.

CONCLUSIONS

This study found that the factors determining contraceptive use which in turn affects the unmet need for contraception can be taken care with proper information about the correct age of marriage, increasing the literacy status, making the husbands aware about their important role in family planning.

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