

A Descriptive Study to Assess the Knowledge and Attitude of Married Women in Reproductive Age Group Regarding Emergency Contraception in Selected Urban Area, Bathinda

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Abstract: ***Background:** The investigator has come across women who have been using contraceptives but have very minimal knowledge of its use, effects and risks and this has motivated the investigator to investigate on the knowledge and attitude of women on contraceptives. **Objective:** The purpose of this study was to assess the knowledge and attitude of married women in reproductive age group regarding emergency contraception in selected urban area, bathinda. **Design:** A descriptive study design was used. **Sample:** Study included 55 married women in reproductive age group, at Bhucho Mandi, Bathinda. Among 55 eligible subjects, 55 completed and returned the survey (response rate was 100%). **Methods:** A self-administrative survey including demographics, likert scale, and knowledge based questionnaire was used to collect the data. **Results:** The findings revealed the majority of the women were between 26-35 years of age. On the whole, out of 55 women, 06 (10.90%) women have moderate knowledge (mean=6.54, SD=2.46), 49 (89.09%) women have inadequate knowledge and no women have adequate knowledge. Among 55 respondents, 24 (43.63%) of them had positive attitude towards EC. Based on the findings, it is concluded that on an average majority of women (89.09 %) have inadequate knowledge on emergency contraception as a whole. Majority of them are likely to have negative attitude towards EC. **Interpretation & Conclusion:** The results provided valuable information for Community Health Workers, Health educators. The improvement of womens' knowledge about specific details of the method and timely utilization of emergency contraception is still required.*

Keywords: Emergency contraception, Knowledge, Attitude, Reproductive Age, Women

1. Introduction

Emergency contraception is indicated after unprotected sexual intercourse, following sexual abuse, misuse or non-use of contraception. Emergency contraception plays a vital role in preventing unintended pregnancy if applied correctly, it helps to reduce unintended childbearing and unsafe abortion, which are the major problems affecting maternal health. [1]

Unintended pregnancy poses a major challenge to the reproductive health of young women in developing countries. Some young women with unintended pregnancies undergo abortions, many of which are performed in unsafe conditions while others carry their pregnancies to term, incurring risks of morbidity and mortality higher than those for adult women. These facts warrant an investigation into the knowledge and attitude of this age-group regarding fertility control and contraception.²

Unintended pregnancies contribute to the rapid population growth that impairs desperately needed social and economic progress. If family planning programs are not strengthened and nor successful, and if current fertility were to remain unchanged, world population would increase in size.

India is the first country to launch a family planning programme across the country in 1952; however records show that birth control clinics have been functioning in the country since 1930. Unfortunately, it has lagged behind

many countries in family planning because of its vast population with various castes, religions, illiteracy, poverty, ignorance, strong cultural beliefs.

Despite the wide availability of a number of contraceptives methods, unplanned and unwanted pregnancies persist. In India, 21% pregnancies and 6.5 million induced abortions are carried out every year. Situations such as unprotected sex, improper use of regular contraceptives, and failure of barrier methods, sexual violence and miscalculation of fertile period often lead to an unwanted pregnancy.

Recent data from 2004 California Women's Health Study, a study of 6000 randomly selected women in California showed that 51% of women knew that there was something a woman could do after intercourse to prevent pregnancy. Even when women have heard of contraceptives, almost all studies show that they do not have sufficient knowledge, to be able to use contraceptives effectively. [3]

Each year there are about 250 million pregnancies globally and one third of these are unintended and 20% of these undergo induced abortion. In low income countries, more than one third of the 182 million pregnancies are unintended; the fate of 19% of unintended pregnancy in low income countries is induced abortion, and 11% of this is unsafe. Unsafe abortion has much ill effects in women's health, each year about 68,000 women die because of unsafe abortion, and millions of women end up with many

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complications of unsafe abortion, such as severe infection and bleeding.

This could have been immensely reduced by using Emergency Contraceptive (EC) in the defined time period. EC is a type of modern contraception that is indicated after unprotected sexual intercourse, following sexual abuse, misuse of regular contraception or non use of contraception. EC can reduce the risk of an unintended pregnancy after unprotected sexual intercourse or contraceptive failure by 75% to 99%, if it is taken within 72 hours of sexual intercourse. ECs are cost effective, medically safe, and highly effective to be used for prevention of unplanned pregnancy, unsafe abortion and other consequences

The investigator has come across women who have been using contraceptives but have very minimal knowledge of its use, effects and risks and this has motivated the investigator to investigate on the knowledge and attitude of women on contraceptives. Keeping in view the above points the study was undertaken to assess the knowledge & attitude regarding emergency contraceptives among married women of reproductive age group & to study the influence of educational status on the awareness & willingness to use emergency contraceptives

2. Review of Literature

A household survey was conducted in different rural communities in the outskirts of Bangalore city. Purposive sampling was adopted to collect information from 132 newly wedded women regarding use of contraceptives. Following the interview, a general discussion with the sample women on various issues related to family planning and their impact on general health and family welfare was held. The study revealed that the women had no good attitude towards the use of contraceptives. The most common reason for not using contraceptives was the want of a child was cited by 92 respondents followed by lack of information by 13 respondents. [4]

A descriptive cross sectional study to investigate the awareness and use of EC (Emergency Contraception) methods among women of childbearing age at the family health care centre in Alexandria, Egypt was carried out on 151 women of child-bearing age (19-49 years) attending two family health centre who were randomly selected. Most of the study subjects (75.5%) did not know EC, approximately an equal proportion (78.8% and 79.4%) stated that EC could be used after unprotected intercourse and in case of failed regular methods respectively. Only 21.5% ever used EC. The current study revealed that the majority of women in reproductive age, had a lack of awareness about EC methods and also did not use it before. [5]

Community based cross-sectional study was conducted to assess the knowledge, attitude & practice regarding emergency contraceptives among married women of reproductive age group and to study the influence of educational status on the awareness & willingness to use emergency contraceptives, from 1st May 2011- 30th Jan 2012 in 286 married women in age group 15-45 yrs residing

in the field practice area of Urban Health Centre attached to Department of Community Medicine, Bagalkot, Karnataka. Data was collected by personal interview method with house-to-house visit by administering structured, pre-tested questionnaire to elicit information. Study concluded that more emphasis should be given to female education and empowerment in order to make them capable of taking decisions regarding their own reproductive health. [1]

An institution based cross sectional study design was conducted to assess the level and factors associated with knowledge, attitude and practice of emergency contraception among 416 female clients of Ethiopian immigration and nationality affair office in Addis Ababa in 2013. Study participants were selected by systematic random sampling technique. Face to face interviewer administered structured questionnaire was employed to collect data on their socio-demographic and reproductive health issues. Lack of knowledge about the method was major barrier for not using emergency contraceptive. Age 20 and above years, being married and ever used emergency contraceptive were significant predictors to knowledge of emergency contraceptive. Hence, awareness creations accompanied by availing necessary supplies are needed to raise knowledge and practice of emergency contraceptive among female adolescents departing to different nations. [6]

The descriptive cross-sectional survey was carried out to investigate the knowledge, attitude and practices of contraception in women in reproductive age from January to June 2011, at Gynae/Obs Unit, Women & Children Hospital, Kohat. A convenient sample of 900 was selected from reproductive age group (15-49 years), attending the outdoor. Data was collected on a questionnaire, Likert 3 point and 5 point scale was used about the knowledge and attitude of contraceptive respectively. SPSS version 16 and Statistic 9 were used to analyze the data. The mean age of respondents was 30.76 ± 7.641 years. While enquiring their own attitude, 589 (65.4%) gave positive response regarding the use of contraceptives. This study concluded that frequency of contraceptive use is comparatively low in our set-up despite high level of awareness. Desire for larger family, pressure from husband, religious concerns and fear of side effects are the main factors responsible. [7]

A descriptive survey of 136 females between 18-45 years of age was done to assess the knowledge, attitude, practice and preferences on contraceptive methods, using a structured knowledge questionnaire, structured attitude scale and opinions on practice and preference during month of January 2012 to February 2012 at Moodu Alevoor village, udupi district, Karnataka. Simple random sampling was used to select the village and purposive sampling technique was used to select the sample. Majority (55.9%) had one living child and 98.5% got information through health personnel. Majority (67.60%) had moderate knowledge on contraceptive method and 17.60% had high knowledge. Majority had favorable attitude and 12.50% had unfavorable attitude towards contraceptive methods. The study showed that majority of the female had moderate knowledge and favorable attitude. [8]

A cross-sectional study was conducted to study the level of knowledge, attitude and practice towards emergency contraception in women attending PHC's, by questionnaires based survey. Ethical requirements of informed consent were ensured. Chi square test was used. The participants had limited information about EC, the most common source of their knowledge about EC is obstetrics and gynae/obs seniors and the most common attitude among the participants was neutral. Only 12 % used EC to prevent unwanted pregnancy. There was an association between knowledge of participants and age, number of children and socio-economic status. There was a significant association between unintended pregnancy and the education level of women. [9]

A cross-sectional quantitative study aimed to assess the knowledge, attitude and practice of Emergency Contraception and to further elucidate the relationship between these factors and some socio-economic and demographic characteristics among female undergraduate students of Addis ababa university (AAU) was conducted using administered questionnaire. Study participants were selected by stratified random sampling. Data was entered and analysed. Results were presented using descriptive statistics, cross-tabulation and logistic regression. The study showed high emergency contraceptive awareness and usage in contrast to other studies in the city which could be due to the fact that university students are relatively in a better educational level. [10]

3. Statement of Problem

“A Descriptive study to assess the knowledge and attitude of married women in reproductive age group regarding Emergency Contraception in selected urban area, Bathinda District”

3.1 Objectives

- 1) To assess the knowledge regarding emergency contraception among the married women in reproductive age in selected urban area of Bathinda.
- 2) To assess the attitude regarding contraception among the married women in reproductive age in selected urban area of Bathinda.

3.2 Assumptions

- Married women in reproductive age may have inadequate knowledge regarding emergency contraception.
- Married women in reproductive age may have negative attitude regarding emergency contraception.

3.3 Operational Definitions

- 1) **Assess:** It refers to the statistical measurement of level of knowledge and attitude among married women in reproductive age group regarding emergency contraception as observed from the scores based on knowledge questionnaire and attitude scale.
- 2) **Knowledge:** In this study, it refers to the awareness and understanding regarding emergency contraception

among women at reproductive age group as evaluated by structured questionnaire.

- 3) **Attitude:** Hypothetical construct that represents an individual's degree of like or dislike for something positive or negative views of a person, place, thing or event regarding emergency contraception.
- 4) **Reproductive age:** Women of reproductive age refer to all women age between 15-49 years.
- 5) **Emergency Contraceptives:** It is the form of contraception, especially contraceptive pills, which are effective if administered within a specified period of time after sexual intercourse.

4. Methodology

Research Approach:

In the present study the research approach is Descriptive research approach.

Research Design:

The research design used for the study is Descriptive research design.

Research Setting:

The study was conducted at Bhucho mandi, bathinda

Research Variables:

Independent Variable:

In this study, knowledge and attitude of married women in reproductive age regarding EC is the independent variable.

Dependent Variable:

Married women at reproductive age group, Socio demographic variable is the dependent variable in this study.

Population:

Target Population: Target Population of the present study includes married women at reproductive age at Bathinda.

Accessible Population: Accessible Population of the present study includes the eligible married women, Bathinda, who fulfill the inclusive criteria.

Sample and Sampling Technique:

Sample:

In this study married women's at reproductive age are samples.

Sampling Technique

In this study Non probability convenient sampling is used for the selection of subject.

Sample Size:

The sample size of the study constitutes 55 married women at reproductive age (n=55).

Method of Data Collection

The self-report survey consisted of three parts:

- Part 1. Women's demographic information
- Part 2. Structured knowledge questionnaire on EC
- Part 3. Attitude scale on emergency contraception

5. Results and Discussion

Table 1: Distribution of Respondents by socio demographic variables of married women at reproductive age (N=55)

Socio Demographic Variables		N	%
1	Age in years		
a	15-25	18	33.72
b	26-35	35	63.63
c	36-45	2	3.63
2	Education		
a	Post Graduate	4	7.27
b	PUC	2	3.63
c	SSLC	17	30.9
d	Primary School	22	40
e	No formal education	10	18.18
3	Occupation		
a	Government	1	1.81
b	Private	13	23.63
c	Self employee	28	50.9
d	Unemployee	13	23.63
4	Religion		
a	Hindu	21	38.18
b	Muslim	0	0
c	Christian	0	0
d	Sikh	34	61.81
5	Number of children		
a	1	32	58.18
b	2	18	32.72
c	3	4	7.27
6	Ever heard of contraceptives		
a	Yes	54	98.18
b	No	1	1.81
7	Ever heard of emergency contraceptives		
a	Yes	34	61.81
b	No	21	38.18
8	Source of information of ecp's		
a	Friends	10	18.18
b	T.V.	28	50.9
c	Newspaper	5	9.09
d	Health Education	7	12.72
e	Others	5	9.09
9	Types of emergency contraceptives used by you		
a	Oral pills	25	45.45
b	IUCD	9	16.36
c	Both	9	16.36
d	Not used	12	21.81
10	Reason for not used emergency contraceptives		
a	EC'S not accessible	2	3.63
b	Had not desire to use it	20	36.36
c	Lack of knowledge about EC's	10	18.18
d	Partner oppose	4	7.27
e	Religious reasons	3	5.45
f	Fear and side effects	8	14.54
g	Wanted to be pregnant	8	14.54

Table 1 shows Distribution of socio demographic variables of married women at reproductive age. With regard to their age, majority of the married women were between 26-35 (63.63 %) years of age. Considering their educational qualification majority of women were studied upto primary school (40 %). Considering their occupation majority of women are self employed (50.9 %). Considering their religion, majority of women were Sikh (61.81%), Out of 55 women, 54 (98.18 %) women heard of contraceptives and

34 women (61.81 %) heard of emergency contraceptives. With regard to type of contraceptives used by women, majority are using oral pills (45.45 %).

The four major reasons for not using emergency contraceptives were:

- 1) Had not desire to use it (36.36%)
- 2) Lack of knowledge about EC's (18.18%)
- 3) Fear and side effects (14.54%)
- 4) Wanted to be pregnant (14.54%)

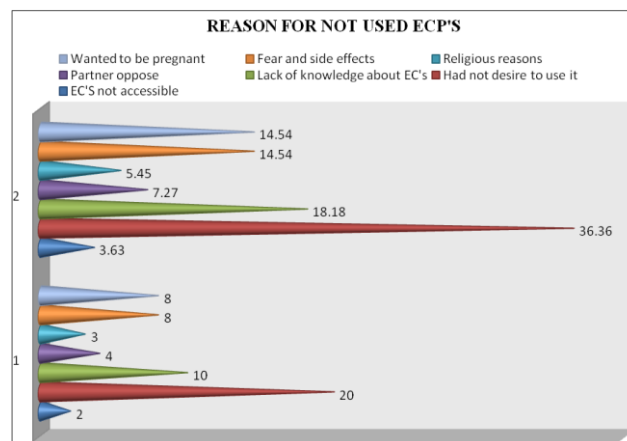


Figure 1: Distribution of respondents by reasons for not used ECP's

Table 2: Distribution of respondents by level of knowledge among women in reproductive age (N=55)

S.No.	Level of knowledge	N	%
1	Inadequate Knowledge	49	89.09
2	Moderate Knowledge	6	10.90
3	Adequate Knowledge	0	0

Out of 55 women, 49 (89.09%) women have inadequate knowledge, 06 (10.90%) women have moderate knowledge and none of the women have adequate knowledge

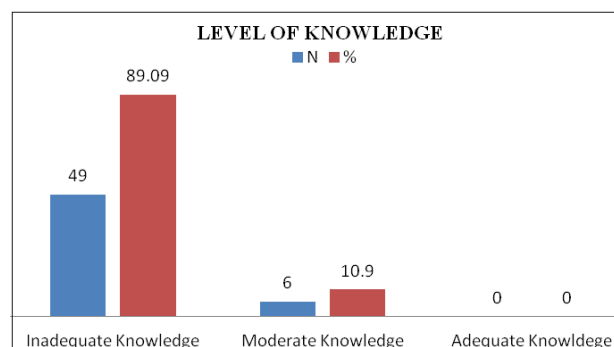


Figure 2: Distribution of respondents by level of knowledge among women in reproductive age

Table 3: Distribution of respondents by attitude towards ECP's among women in reproductive age (N=55)

S. No	Attitude	N	%
1	Positive	24	43.63
2	Negative	31	56.37

Out of 55 women, 24 (43.63%) women have positive attitude, 31 (56.37%) women have negative attitude towards ECP's

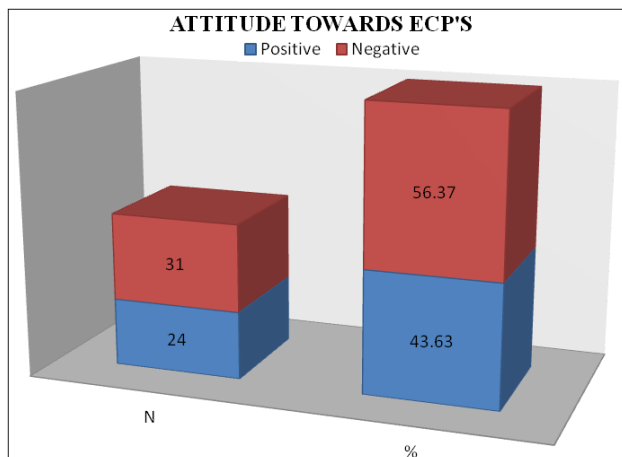


Figure 3: Distribution of respondents by attitude towards ECP's among women in reproductive age

6. Conclusion

Based on the findings, it is concluded that on an average majority of women (89.09 %) have inadequate knowledge on emergency contraception as a whole. Majority of them are likely to have negative attitude towards EC. The results provided valuable information for Community Health Workers, Health educators. The improvement of women's knowledge about specific details of the method and timely utilization of emergency contraception is still required.

7. Implications of the Study

The findings of the study have implications for Nursing Education, Nursing Practice, Nursing Research and Nursing administration.

The findings of this study have scope in the following areas:

Nursing Education:

- To increase knowledge about EC and to bring attitudinal change among women there should be a continuous open health education on specific information about EC.
- In order to increase women's knowledge and positive attitude, community health educators should order the material from simple to complex,
- Guidance and support should be provided to women at reproductive age, where positive reinforcement might encourage women to ask questions.
- Reproductive health education should be taught in secondary and post-secondary school institutions where human reproductive biology and contraception should be discussed. This will sensitize the youth to their own health needs.
- Training in emergency contraception should be included in curricular of all medical and non-medical personnel who will be involved in health care delivery. Training should include counselling as well as methods-specific service requirements, including treatment regimens of side effects and proper follow up.

Nursing Practice:

- Advocacy and information/education/communication (IEC) activities about emergency contraception should be strengthened and materials provided.
- Emergency contraception should be made available to all women who seek it provided no contraindications are present.

Nursing Administration:

- Emergency contraception should be popularized among potential users. This can be done through the media, seminars, and video shows etc. Its increase can lead to a reduction in the rate of unintended pregnancies and hence abortions among the women.

Nursing Research:

- The study helps the investigators to develop insight regarding emergency contraception used by married women
- Research studies can be conducted including three domains i.e. knowledge, attitude and practice.
- Large scale studies can be conducted.
- The research study can be conducted including different methods of teaching.
- This study will serve as a valuable reference material for future investigators.

8. Recommendations

- 1) There is need to improve knowledge and positive attitude. This can be achieved by providing educational and motivational activities and improvement in family planning services which are needed to promote the use of emergency contraceptives and reduce the high rate of unwanted pregnancies and its consequences.
- 2) There is a need to empower female learners, to discuss sexually and contraception issues in order to increase awareness, knowledge and use of EC among the younger people.
- 3) There is need to increase the learners access to various sources of contraceptives particularly EC.
- 4) A similar study can be under taken, which comprise of quantitative and qualitative design
- 5) A similar study can be under taken on large scale.
- 6) A comparative study may be conducted between urban and rural women at reproductive age.

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