

Decision making process related to planning the family and in the usage of contraceptives among muslim couples in the Matala Municipal Council area.

MSc. (Community Medicine) - 2006

D 1503

A pretested structured questionnaire was used to interview the 445 subjects from the study area selected on random sampling basis in this community based descriptive cross sectional study. The study revealed a high educational level within this Muslim community. The majority of the respondents had heard of family planning, and the modern methods awareness such as the Pill (98.9), the Injectables (98.7), LRT (96.9), IUCD (93.7), and Condom (89.9) was high. On the other hand, Male sterilization (63.1) and Norplant (16.6) and Norplant (16.6) were less known methods. Although the study documents the high awareness and moderate use of family planning in this community, it also points to serious insufficiencies and misconceptions in couples knowledge of family planning methods those who disapproved the use of permanent methods, nearly one third (30.2) of them was mainly due to fear of procedure, side effects, health concerns, method related misconceptions. However, religious reasons accounted for nearly half of those who disapproved sterilization. More than half (58.9) of the study population were currently practicing some form of family planning. Male participation in family planning is favourable. However spouse communication regarding family planning is poor, and nearly a quarter (24.3) of the husbands have opposed the family planning use by their wives. Although nearly half of them have opposed due to health concerns, over a quarter (27.9) of them opposed due to religious reasons. Health workers played a major role in the couple's family planning decision making by dissemination of information and supply of contraceptives Family planning use among Muslims in Matala Municipal Council is low, most of them practice unsafe, less effective family planning methods mainly due to fear of side effects, health concerns, and misconceptions. Posting of midwives well versed in counselling and with a good knowledge in family planning and who are conversant in Tamil to areas such as this where a high proportion of Muslims live may improve family planning use.