

**Original article**

**A cross sectional study on knowledge, attitude and practice regarding spacing methods among married women of the reproductive age group in the field practice area of UHTC in surendranagar district**

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**Abstract:**

**Background:** India was the first country in the world to launch a National Family Planning Programme with aim to reduce the birth rate to stabilize population. To improve effectiveness of programme, various segments of our population need to have the apt awareness regarding the various spacing methods. This study is aimed at finding out the awareness among the women of the same.

**Aims and objectives:** To find out the knowledge, attitude and practice regarding the use of various family planning methods among the married women and to associate the findings with their socio-demographic profile.

**Materials and Methods:** Sample selection was by simple random technique and size of the sample was 329 in UHTC area (Ratanpar). A cross sectional, house to house survey was carried out. The obtained data was analyzed using SPSS for windows.

**Results:** The couple protection rate in study population was about 51%. About 25.5% of the women were protected by terminal methods, 25.6 % of the women were using spacing methods and 48.9% of women did not use any method of contraception. The number of users of spacing methods increased as the level of education increased. Maximum (31.00%) users of spacing methods were in the age group of 26-30 yrs followed by 15.80% in 31-35 yrs age group.

**Conclusion:** Almost half of the study subjects were not using any form of spacing methods, showing the lack of awareness and inadequate knowledge of the importance of contraception. Thus IEC activities need to be strengthened in educating the women of reproductive age group regarding the various spacing methods.

**Keywords:** KAP, spacing methods, IEC, reproductive age, education

**Introduction:**

Single greatest threat to India's health, political, economic, and social development is uncontrolled population growth. With its population already exceeding 1 billion, it is all set to overtake China and become the most populous country in the world by 2045.<sup>1</sup>

India was the first country in the world to launch a National Family Planning Programme with aim to reduce the birth rate to stabilize population.<sup>1</sup> To improve the effectiveness of the programme, there is need to know awareness, practice & various other factors affecting the use of spacing methods in the different segments of our population because of the vast socio-cultural variation. Spacing methods not only decrease total fertility but also improve the health of mother by the delaying next child birth.<sup>2</sup>

The aim of the study was to find out the knowledge, attitude and practice regarding the use of various family planning methods among the married women and to associate the findings with their socio-demographic profile.

**Materials & methods:**

A Cross sectional study of 329 married women of the reproductive age group was carried out in the field practice area of Ratanpar(U.H.T.C.) Surendranagar District, selection of sample was through simple random technique

Data was collected through a pre-designed and pre-tested questionnaire by house-to-house visit. The consent of all the subjects were taken prior to the study. Permission from the ethical committee was sought before the starting of the study.

Data analysis was done using SPSS 12.0 (Statistical Package for Social Science), Z test & X<sup>2</sup> test was used to associate various findings.

**Results:**

Maximum women in the study were of age between 21-30 years. Most of women were Hindu (85.10%). Out of 329 women 88.4% were housewives

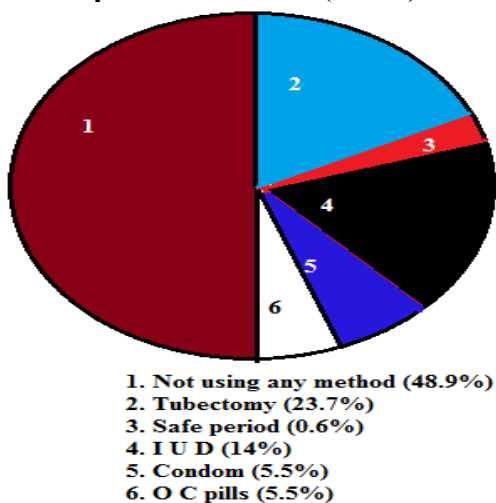
**Table-1: Socio-demographic profile of women**

SR. NO	SOCIO-DEMOGRAPHIC VARIABLE (n=329)	NO.	%
1	AGE GROUP (YEARS)		
	15-20	5	1.5
	21-25	94	28.6
	26-30	102	31
	31-35	52	15.8
	36-40	40	12.2
	41-45	36	10.9
2	RELIGION		
	Hindu	280	85.1
	Muslim	33	10.3
	Others	16	4.86
3	OCCUPATION		
	Housewives	291	88.4
	Laborers	26	7.9
	Service	12	3.64

**Table-2: Reasons for not using any spacing methods (n=161)**

SR. No.	REASONS	FREQUENCY NO.	(%)
1	Not having sex	3	0.9
2	Infrequent sex	8	2.4
3	Husband away	9	2.7
4	Breast feeding	20	6.1
5	Infertility	6	1.8
6	Husband opposed	4	1.2
7	Other opposed	1	0.3
8	Lack of Knowledge	4	1.2
9	Health concern	21	6.4
10	Fear of side effects	14	4.3
11	Pregnant	4	1.2
12	Menopause	9	2.7
13	Hysterectomy	10	3
14	Husband expired	5	1.5
15	Divorce	1	0.3
16	Left to God's will	48	14.6
	TOTAL	161	48.9

**Figure-1: Distribution of women by the type of contraceptive method used(n=329)**



Couple protection rate in the study population is 51%.

25.5% of the women were protected by terminal methods. 25.6% of the women were protected by spacing methods.

48.9% of the women were not using any methods

Most common reason for not using contraceptives was left up to God's will(14.6%) followed by health concern (6.4%), breast feeding their child (6.1%), fear of side effect (4.3%) and many reasons.

**Table- 3: Distribution as per awareness about contraception (N=329)**

SPACING METHODS	AWARE		NOT AWARE	
	No.	%	No	%
OC Pills	279	84.80	50	15.19
IUD	242	73.15	87	26.44
Condom	290	11.85	39	11.85
Safe period	2	0.2	327	99.39

Only 0.6% of women had knowledge of safe period as a spacing method; and source of information was Doctor. Maximum awareness i.e. 33.7% and 33.1% was of OC pills and IUD respectively, and source was relatives and friends. Condom was known to 45.6% from husbands.

All the women had knowledge regarding at least one spacing method. The maximum users of spacing method were in age group of 26-30 yrs (31%) followed by 31-35 yrs (15.80%). The proportion of users increased up to 35 yrs & then decreased.

**Table 4: Information regarding the source of knowledge regarding contraception.**

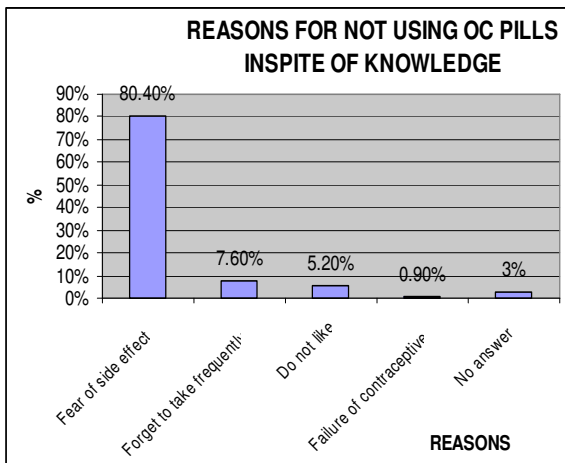
SOURCE OF KNOWLEDGE		OC pills	IUD	Condom	Safe period
		No. (%)	No. (%)	No. (%)	No. (%)
1. Health care professional	Doctor	83(25.2)	81(24.6)	25(7.6)	2(0.6)
	Nurse	17(5.2)	12(3.6)	51(15.5)	0(0.0)
	HWs	3(0.9)	7(2.1)	2(0.6)	0(0.0)
2. Relatives	Husband	13(4.0)	12(3.6)	150(45.6)	0(0.0)
	Mother	2(0.6)	0(0.0)	0(0.0)	0(0.0)
	Friends/ Relatives	111(33.7)	109(33.1)	21(6.4)	0(0.0)
3. Others	AWWs	8(2.4)	17(5.2)	9(2.7)	0(0.0)
4. IEC	Advertisements	42(12.8)	41(12.5)	32(9.7)	2(0.6)

**Table-5: Association between literacy and use of contraception**

EDUCATION	USAGE OF CONTRACEPTIVE METHODS			
	STERILIZATION	SPACING METHODS	NOT USING ANY METHODS	TOTAL
ILLITERATE	13	6	38	57
PRIMARY	33	29	99	161
SECONDARY	23	17	13	53
HSC, GRADUATE AND ABOVE	15	32	11	58
TOTAL	84	84	161	329

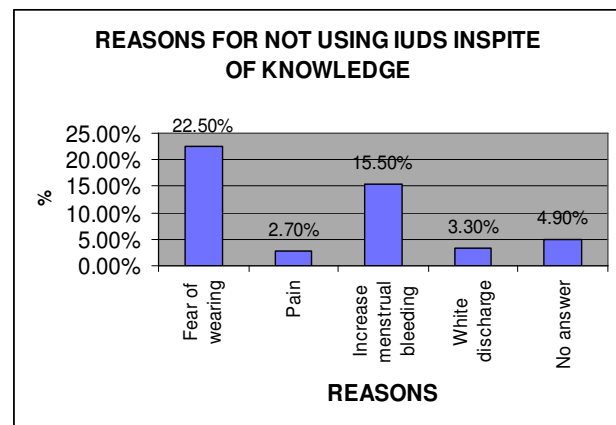
The association proved statistically highly significant.  $X^2=49.834$ ,  $DF=6$ ,  $p=0.0001$   
 The no. of users was significantly more among literates as compared to illiterates women. The spacing contraceptive users increased as the level of education increased.

**Figure-2: Reasons for not using OC pills inspite of knowledge:**



Most common reason for not using OC pills inspite of awareness was fear of side effects(80.4%) followed by “forget to take” (7.6%) and “do not like” (5.2%), while the “failure of contraception” was answered by only 3 women.  
 Most common reasons for not using IUDs are fear of wearing (22.5%) & increased menstrual bleeding (15.5%)

**Figure-3: Reasons for not using IUDs inspite of awareness**



Most common reasons for not using IUDs were fear of wearing (22.5%) and increased menstrual bleeding (15.5%)

**Discussion :**

In the present study, the couple protection rate was 51%, which is less as compared to NFHS-III data for Gujarat is 66.6%<sup>3</sup> and 53% in another study conducted by N.K.Saini Et al<sup>2</sup>. However the users of spacing methods are more in present study. Availability of spacing methods is better in the area under supervision of UHTC. Cu T (14%) was most popular spacing method being used followed by OC pills & condom. The possible explanation for popularity of Copper T could be that it is a one

time procedure & gives protection for longer time. The most important reason for not using spacing methods was that those who were not using any contraceptive methods perceived risk of pregnancy more. Desire for more children is a significant factor, also found in another study conducted by Alagh Et al<sup>5</sup>. Maximum users of spacing methods were women with age 25-35 years. Use was low in younger age groups. Studies conducted by Singh Et al<sup>4</sup> and Alagh Et al<sup>5</sup> also showed low incidence of use of spacing methods in younger couples. This shows that intensive effort are needed to popularize spacing methods among younger couples, as this is a more fertile group. Maximum users were among those who knew all three approved methods of contraception. Non users were more in the group who were having knowledge of only one method. The present study indicates a need to motivate the non-user women who desire more children to adopt a small family norm. The lactating mothers (6.1%) should also be educated about the fact that breast feeding alone cannot prevent conception. Knowledge regarding spacing methods was universal. User rate was significantly more in those having knowledge of all three approved spacing methods of contraception showing that the value of literacy is increasing the acceptance of spacing methods.

**Conclusion & recommendations:**

Almost half of the study subjects were not using any form of spacing methods, showing the lack of awareness and inadequate knowledge of the importance of contraception.

Improve access to family planning to ensure effective implementation. To strengthen the IEC activities by educating the women of reproductive age group regarding the various spacing methods. Good quality services in the vicinity of their residence. Meet the unmet needs for spacing methods on the priority basis.

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