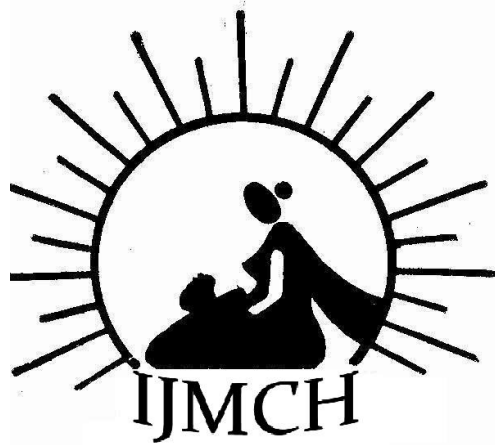


Knowledge and practice of family planning methods among the Bhatra women of Bastar, Chhattisgarh

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ABSTRACT

A survey of 337 married women aged between 15-45 years was carried out in Bastar district of Chhattisgarh, India to examine the contraceptive use and the factors associated with ever using family planning method. The cross-sectional descriptive study was conducted in various tribal villages of Bastar district and 337 married women and their husbands were interviewed with pretested schedule. Knowledge of different family planning methods was almost universal (80.12%), although knowledge of three methods was more than 40% only. About 35.31% married Bhatra women ever used different family planning method and female sterilizations found to be 20.77% among them. However traditional method prevalence was only 3.26% among Bhatra women. Oral contraceptive pill and condom were found to be more popular method of family planning among literate, service-class women and the women having two surviving children. Contraceptive prevalence is found to be in lower rate as compared to national and State level survey (NFHS-III).

Keywords: Bhatra, Tribe, Contraceptive knowledge, contraceptive use.

INTRODUCTION

The national population policy (2000) advocated a holistic multisectoral approach towards population stabilization with no targets for specific contraceptive method except for achieving a national average of total fertility rate (TFR) of 2.1 by the year 2010.⁽⁹⁾ Contraceptive methods are preventive methods to help women avoid unwanted pregnancies. Attitude survey have shown that awareness of family planning is very widespread and over 60% people have attitudes favorable to restricting or spacing births.⁽²⁾ The rate of contraceptive use by couple in India is 43.5%. Several studies have shown that population problem is complicated by deep rooted religious and other beliefs attitude and practices favouring larger families and militating against contraception. General awareness of contraception is universal but only 71% of currently married women were aware of condom (IIPS and ORG Macro, 2000).⁽⁵⁾ Inadequate knowledge of contraceptive methods and incomplete information about its availability and using methods are the main reasons for not accepting family planning.⁽⁷⁾ Different socio-economic factors play an important role in acceptance of family planning methods. Patnaik and Kaur, 1999 suggested that the improvement of economic and educational status may strengthen the overall performance of the family planning programme.⁽⁵⁾ The Bhatra is one of the major tribal groups of Bastar region of Chhattisgarh state. Chhattisgarh is a tribal dominated state with about 33% of the state population belonging to the tribal groups. According to Census 2001, the total population of the Bhatra tribe in Chhattisgarh state is 185514., which constituted about 2.80% of the total tribal population of the state. The word 'Bhatra' is said to mean servant.⁽¹¹⁾ Their livelihood mainly depends upon cultivation, daily wages labor and collection of minor forest produces. According to Census 2001, the literacy rate among the tribe is 38.05% (Male: 52.64%; Female: 23.55%) and they may be classified under socio-economic backward group. The Bhatra tribe mostly live in multiethnic villages with other tribal groups like Muria, Gadaba, Halba and Dhurwa and backward class groups like Teli, Mahar, Sundi Dhakar etc. The aim of the present study is to identify community awareness about contraception and to examine the factors influencing the contraceptive practices among the Bhatra tribe of Bastar and also to examine the rate of contraceptive use as compared to rates observed by national and state survey.

MATERIALS AND METHODS

Data for the present study were collected in 2009-2010 in the Bastar predominantly tribal district situated about 300km from Raipur, capital city of Chhattisgarh State. A door to door survey was conducted by using pretested structured schedule in various tribal villages of Bastar district. A total of 337 randomly selected married women of age groups 15 – 45 years were interviewed with their husbands. Data on socio-demographic profile of married couples were collected with their awareness and utilization of family planning methods and practices of contraceptives. All the collected data were analysed as per their socio-economic status and findings were compared with data provided by NFHS survey (2005-2006) and DLHS survey, 2002-2004.

RESULTS

A total of 337 married Bhatra women were included in the current study. Most of them (56.08%) were between ages 20 to 29 Years. Fewer than 10.00% of the women included in the sample were below ages 20 years. Majority of women (73.29%) were illiterate and

about 56.68% of them were found to be house-wife., while 38.87% women were observed as labourer and working outside their home. In present study more than 56.00% women were married before 18 years and about 59.35% women had three and more children. Among Bhatra tribe nuclear family (55.00%) is found to be more frequent than the joint family (45.00%) and the average size of the family in tribe is observed to be 5.54. Modern contraceptive methods are available through the Public health system in tribal areas. Respondents, who expressed awareness about contraceptive methods were almost universal(80.12%). About 48.96% women indicated knowledge of oral contraceptive pills, while about 43.62% women were aware of condom. 20.77% of total sampled women had knowledge of traditional methods of contraception, which is relatively more than the women (10.38%), who were aware of use of IUD. Knowledge of female sterilization (59.05%) was found to be more prevalent than the male sterilization among the Bhatra tribe of Bastar.

Table I: Knowledge of different contraceptive method among Bhatra women of Bastar (N=337).

Methods	Number	Percentage
Any methods	270	80.12
Permanent method		
Female sterilisation	199	59.05
Male sterilisation	71	21.07
Modern temporary method		
Oral contraceptive pills	165	48.96
Condom	147	43.62
IUD	35	10.38
Any traditional method	70	20.77

Table II reveals the use of contraceptive methods among Bhatra women according to their socio-economic status. In current study 35.31% women reported ever use of any family planning method as indicated in table II. Prevalence of any modern method was very low (less than 10%) among the Bhatra women. No women had used intrauterine injectable contraceptives or emergency contraceptive pills. Traditional method of contraception was found to be prevalent among 3.26% tribal women. Among 337 women, the proportion of female sterilisation was observed to be 20.77% as compared to 4.45% of male sterilisation.

Table II: Contraceptive use among the Bhatra women of Bastar (N=337).

Methods	No of women used	Percentage
Any method	118	35.31
Female sterilisation	70	20.77
Male sterilization	15	4.45
Oral contraceptive pills	07	2.08
Condom	14	4.15
IUD	01	0.29
Any traditional method	11	3.26

Among Bhatra women, contraceptive prevalence was found to be more in age group 20-29 years (20.18%), literate group (21.96%), House-wife (23.74%) and the women, who got

married after 18 years (28.19%) and having more than three surviving children (32.94%) as compared to all the sampled women for present study. However as per their socio-economic status the result of present study indicate that the contraceptive use was found to be more prevalent among the women, who crossed the age of 35 years(68.25%), literate (82.22%), in service (86.67%) and the women who got married after 18 years (64.63%) and having more than three children (55.55%). Contraceptive use was found to be statistically significant in relation to their age ($p > 0.001$), literacy ($p > 0.001$) and occupation ($p > 0.001$).

It is evident from table III that use of oral contraceptive pills was more prevalent among women of all age groups as compared to condom and traditional method, while female sterilization is almost equally prevalent among the women of age group 30-34 years (41.54%) and 35+ years (41.27%). About 26.67% women accepted female sterilization as compared to 11.74% of illiterate women. Whereas different methods of contraception is found to be more prevalent among literate women and the same trend was noticed among service class and the women who married after 18 years and having more than three children. Use of different contraceptives was found to be statistically significant in relation to age group of women ($.05 < p < .01$), their occupational status ($p > .001$) and age of marriage ($.05 < p < .01$).

Table III: Contraceptive use among the Bhatra women of Bastar according to their background characteristics (N=337).

Characteristics	No. of women observed	Percentage	Contraceptive use		X ² - test
			Yes	No	
Age of women					
15-19	20	5.94	3(15.00)	17(85.00)	X ² =24.14, p>.001
20-29	189	56.08	50(26.46)	139(73.54)	
30-34	65	19.29	31(47.69)	34(52.31)	
35+	63	18.69	34(53.97)	29(46.03)	
Total	337	100.00	118(35.01)	219(64.99)	
Educational status					
Literate	90	26.71	44(48.89)	46(51.00)	X ² =10.39, p>.001
Illiterate	247	73.29	74(29.96)	173(70.04)	
Total	337	100.00	118(35.01)	219(64.99)	
Occupational status					
House-wife	191	56.68	65(34.03)	126(65.97)	X ² =14.24, p>.001
Laborer	131	38.87	41(31.30)	90(68.70)	
Service class	15	4.45	12(80.00)	3(20.00)	
Total	337	100.00	118(35.01)	219(64.99)	

Age at marriage					
<18	190	56.38	75(39.47)	115(60.53)	$\chi^2=3.8, p<0.05$
≥ 18	147	43.62	43(29.25)	104(70.75)	
Total	337	100.00	118(35.01)	219(64.99)	
No. of surviving child					
≤ 2	165	48.96	51(30.91)	114(69.09)	$\chi^2=2.38, .20 < p < .10$
≥ 3	172	51.04	67(38.95)	105(61.05)	
Total	337	100.00	118(35.01)	219(64.99)	

Percentage are shown in parenthesis.

Table IV: Contraceptive use among the Bhatra women of Bastar by their background characteristics (N=337).

Background characteristics	No. of women	Different contraceptive methods					X2 -test
		OCP	CO	IUD	TM	FS	
Age of women							
15-19	20	1 (5.00)	2 (10.00)	-	-	-	$\chi^2=23.73^{**}$.05 < p < .02
20-29	189	4 (2.12)	7 (3.70)	1 (0.53)	2 (1.06)	22 (11.64)	
30-34	65	2 (3.08)	4 (6.15)	-	4 (6.15)	20 (30.77)	
35+	63	-	1 (1.59)	-	5 (7.94)	28 (44.44)	
Total	337	7 (2.08)	14 (4.15)	1 (0.30)	11 (3.26)	70 (20.77)	
Educational status of women							
Literate	90	4 (4.44)	9 (10.00)	1 (1.11)	5 (5.56)	25 (27.78)	$\chi^2=6.01$.20 < p < .10
Illiterate	247	3 (1.21)	5 (2.02)	-	6 (2.43)	45 (18.22)	
Total	337	7 (2.08)	14 (4.15)	1 (0.30)	11 (3.26)	70 (20.77)	
Occupational status of women							
House-wife	191	3 (1.57)	7 (3.66)	-	6 (3.14)	44 (23.04)	$\chi^2=30.38^{****}$ p > .001
Laborer	131	1 (0.76)	3 (2.29)	-	4 (3.05)	25 (19.08)	
Service	15	3	4	1	1	1	

Total	337	(20.00) 7 (2.08)	(26.67) 14 (4.15)	(6.67) 1 (0.30)	(6.67) 11 (3.26)	(6.67) 70 (20.77)	
Age at marriage							
<18	190	5 (2.63)	6 (3.16)	1 (0.53)	4 (2.11)	50 (26.32)	$\chi^2=11.18^*$.05<p<.01
≥18	147	2 (1.36)	8 (5.44)	-	7 (4.76)	20 13.61	
Total	337	7 (2.08)	14 (4.15)	1 (0.30)	11 (3.26)	70 (20.77)	
No of surviving children							
≤2	165	5 (3.03)	9 (5.45)	-	8 (4.85)	48 (29.09)	$\chi^2=2.384$.70<p<.50
≥3	172	2 (1.16)	5 (2.91)	1 (0.58)	3 (1.74)	22 (12.79)	
Total	337	7 (2.08)	14 (4.15)	1 (0.30)	11 (3.26)	70 (20.77)	

DISCUSSION

Bhatra economy is based on traditional cultivation and money earned by labor in which women have to engage for livelihood for their family members and household management. On the basis of this condition it can be said that low socio-economic is one of the reasons behind low contraceptive use. Femalesterilisation is observed to be 20.77%, which is less than the rate observed by different survey as presented in table V. However more than 30% Bhatra women belonging to age group 30-45 years have accepted female sterilization. In current study, majority of Bhatra women(73.29%)were observed to be illiterate and about 30.00% of them have accepted different method of contraception which is less than literate women (49.00%) practice different method of contraception. However contraceptive use was prevalence among 80.00% of service class women as compared to 31.00% laborer women.

With the current low rate of utilization of family planning methods in Bhatra tribe, understanding the characteristics of women with unmet need for family planning will be an essential part of a abroad strategy to improve utilization at the community level. Contraceptive use among Bhatra women of Chhattisgarh was less than other population groups and also less than other tribal population of Bastar except male sterlisation (Table V). Patilet. al. in their study have shown 59.20% contraceptive prevalence among the tribal population of Maharashtra,India⁽¹⁰⁾, while Susuman has reported much less contraceptive use among tribal population of south India.⁽¹³⁾ Basu and Basu in their study among tribal population of West Bengal have shown 25.30% contraceptive prevalence in Santhal and 56.00% in Lodhas.⁽¹⁾ However Ravindra K. Sharma and Manju Rani have also reported much less contraceptive use among tribal population of Bastar, which is somewhat closer to present findings.⁽¹²⁾ Nation- wide survey has shown relatively more contraceptive prevalence among rural women and tribal women except male sterilization and condom among Bhatra tribe of Bastar.⁽⁵⁾ In present study about 65 percent women were not using

different method of contraception and the reason behind this is women illiteracy, unavailability of contraceptive in tribal villages and their low socio-economic condition.

Table V: Percentile distribution of women according to contraceptive use.

Contraceptive methods	Bhatra women	Tribal women of Bastar	NFHS- III Report (2005-06)		
			Population of Chhattisgarh	ST women of India	Rural women of India
Any method	35.31	37.30	49.90	47.90	53.00
Female sterilization	20.77	21.71	39.80	35.30	37.10
Male sterilization	6.10	4.45	3.80	2.50	1.00
Oral contraceptive pills	2.08	4.00	1.00	2.20	2.80
Condom	4.15	1.50	1.60	1.70	3.20
IUD	0.30	0.70	0.30	0.80	1.10
Any traditional method	3.26	3.40	3.50	5.20	7.60

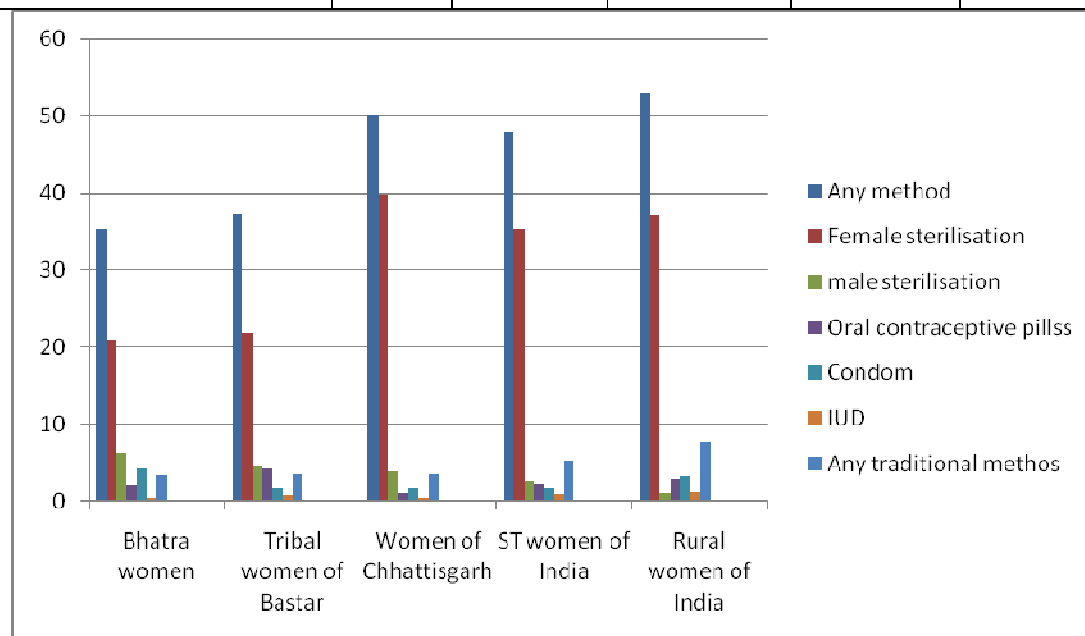


Figure 1. Distribution of women according to contraceptive use among Bhatra tribe and other reported population.

CONCLUSION

In the light of present study it can be said that the knowledge of contraceptive is nearly universal among Bhatra women. Female sterilisation is the most popular method than other method among them like other reported population, but its prevalence rate is less than the rate reported by national and state survey. Contraceptive use like male sterilization and condom is relatively more prevalent among Bhatra tribe than the rate reported for rural and other tribal women. Traditional method of family planning is found to be less than 4 percent closer to the rate reported for tribal women of Bastar and Chhattisgarh state.⁽³⁻¹²⁾ On the basis of present finding it can be said that low socio-economic condition is responsible for low prevalence of contraceptive use and it can be improved by effective communication and

increasing health service facilities in tribal areas. Beside this, there is need to increase literacy rate and to develop women empowerment to achieve the target.

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