



## STATUS OF AWARENESS ABOUT USING CONTRACEPTIVE METHODS AMONG TRIBAL WOMEN IN INDIA –A SOCIOLOGICAL ANALYSIS

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### **Abstract**

*The population of India is quite increasing compare with the developed countries. Being a large people society we cannot make cent percentage of health access to all the people. Despite of having all health and government personnel to fulfill the need of the health services, in some places the access and availability of health services are not provided in the maximum level. The marginalized and vulnerable groups of people are severely affected due to the unavailability of the health services also due to the ignorance about availability of health access too. The reduce the health biased condition among the communities of our society, the governments have been introduced many schemes like National Rural Health Mission and the National Urban Health Mission. With the assistance of these schemes at present the under developed people are moving towards the health oriented development on par with developed. Compare with the past decades in contemporary days the health oriented progress in the aspect of reproductive health among tribes are obvious one. With the above said views the researcher involved a research to know the awareness about the usage of contraceptive methods among the tribal women with the support of secondary data's.*

### **Objectives**

- ✓ To bring out the role of cultural factors in the utilization of contraceptive methods
- ✓ To study the sociological factors that influencing the family planning methods
- ✓ To suggest the remedies to enhance the awareness about reproductive health of tribes.

### **Materials and Methods**

*Descriptive method has been used to elucidate the present research study. Various numbers of secondary sources which are related with the reproductive health knowledge among tribes has been collected and analyzed to bring out the information about the utilization of contraceptive methods among tribal women.*

### **Results**

*Through various secondary sources, the researcher found that there are many factors influencing the attitude of utilization of contraceptive methods. Cultural norms and mores, Societal pressure and unaware about reproductive health are the key issues that ruling the ideology of the contraceptive methods in this research. Backwardness in education, social isolation from other community, binding with their unique culture are the supporting factors that are working as external factors that demote condition of reproductive knowledge of tribal women.*

### **Conclusion**

*Effective health mechanism from government health personnel, tie-up with the non-governmental partners and frequent counseling regarding reproductive health may have the chance to bring the aware and well equipped status about the usage of contraceptive methods among tribal women.*

**Keywords: Tribes, Illiteracy, Cultural norms, Contraceptive methods**



## **Introduction**

Having healthy life is one of the important rights which are being offered through our constitutional provisions. But the rights of accessing equal health facilities are in the hands of the community or group through their awareness or pressure. In India there is more number of tribal groups living in a scattered manner. The tribal people they used to live in the forests as well as away from the other community people. The unique characteristics of the tribes are still purely based on their orthodox ideologies and also binded with their norms and mores. There is more number of positive ways of living utilized by the tribes like having forest food, using herbals and following traditional ways of healing methods. Despite of having these benefits, there are some health risks existing in the part of chronic diseases as well as reproductive health care of tribes. The condition of illiteracy, deviance from mainstream of the society, poor and black magic related practices have led them to the vulnerable health condition too. When we compare the level of receiving prenatal and postnatal reproductive facilities among tribes, it is very less level compare with the other community people.

Due to the unique methods of culture, they are self limited themselves in the aspect of getting reproductive health service from the government mechanisms. Though the government health machineries are functioning for the welfare of the tribal health, the support from the tribal community is minimum level. Apart from that the practical difficulty is that to reach the interior place of tribal habitat. The offering health oriented facilities towards the tribal community is not easy task, due to the interior settings of the habitats, lack of road and transport facilities, poor climate conditions and attitude of deviance from plain people leads to promote the risky factors regarding health issues.

## **Reproductive health**

Apart from biological issues, Reproductive health also encompasses the awareness of becoming pregnant, freedom of having baby, having right time to involve the family planning methods and the number of children. But most of the society, the women members they are not allowed to take the decision regarding the reproductive health, their autonomy of reproductive health is in the hands of the male as well as their cultural condition. Due to that, the risk of reproductive health are being faced by the female only, sometimes they may have to face the condition of life risk. The spread of HIV/AIDS, STD's, sexual violence and gynecologic cancer are mainly depends on the lack of reproductive health knowledge. In some places of our country due to the ideology of preferring male child, there are remarkable numbers of incidents related with aborting of fetus and female infanticide.

## **Status of tribal reproductive Health**

In any country the health condition of its women determines the even development of its people. If there is any lapse or imbalance in the part of reproductive health of women, it will be given an uneven development which affects the future generation too. Having more number of unhealthy child and unhealthy mother are not a good symbol to any community or group. The gap between the have or have not groups regarding the reproductive health creates more imbalanced condition. Especially in the part of vulnerable, like nomadic, schedule caste, economically weaker sections and eventually tribes their reproductive health condition and knowledge is very backward than the others.

Pregnancy beliefs and practices of tribal culture are one among the important factor that gives obstacles to the access of the modern reproductive health care services. The child is the gift from god, this belief make sense among the tribal community. Through generation to generation the subject matter of reproductive health has been passed among the tribal women. The effort taken by the government to promote the health of tribal people partially brings the positive results. The gap of accessing medical



needs from the side of tribal have been well noted by the government, they are working hard to bring the tribal people in the streamline of better health. Frequent visit of health personnel, continuous propaganda, getting support of tribal village headman or local leaders, offering drugs and health needy items are the things utilized by the government mechanisms to reduce the gap between the health accesses versus tribal communities in modern days.

### **Factors influencing reproductive health of Tribal women**

The factors of the immediate marriage after attaining puberty, continuous pregnancy, unaware about menstrual hygiene, usage of cloths during menstrual, lack of understanding about sexual diseases, not disclosing menstrual related issues, less aware about contraceptive methods, usage of healing methods during maternal period and the minimum usage of government health access are influencing the tribal women reproductive health. The condition of poor nutrition, poverty, less visit of hospitals, social isolation and less knowledge about the issues of reproductive stage are the associated factors which enhances the difficult condition among the tribal women reproductive health.

### **Usage of contraceptive methods among tribes**

The level of contraceptive usage among Indian tribes is very low level. In tribal community there are more young female mothers which show clear condition of the awareness of contraceptive knowledge. The condition of illiteracy, earlier marriage and low access to health services are the main reasons that influencing the practice of contraceptive methods among the tribal people. National Family Health Survey (NFHS-3) indicates that there was less usage of contraceptive methods among the tribal couples in India.

**Saha et.al., (2007)** has conducted a research entitled “Men’s involvement in reproductive Health: A study among the khairwar tribe of Central India”, the study was conducted among 260 males of Khairwar tribes. In this study it was noted that only 17 per cent of the respondents were having aware about HIV/AIDS and its transmission. 59 per cent of the respondents were aware about the methods of family planning. Interestingly only 29 per cent of the respondents have had aware about the antenatal care and others had insufficient knowledge of those things. The findings of this study reveals that the education about reproductive knowledge both tribal men and women may have enhanced by the government health personnel to enrich the tribal people health condition.

**Ravishankar (2012)**involved a study related early pregnancy of tribal women on the basis of NHFH (III). From all over India 2527 tribal married women in the age group of 15-24 were selected. Awareness about ovulatory cycle among tribal women was very poor, before having knowledge about the reproductive knowledge they were entered the earlier marriage life. In most of the tribal communities if a women attaining the stage of puberty, it seems to be considered that she is ready for the marriage life. Within a year or sooner the girl child may have the chance to getting married. Anomic and excess fatigues are the most common issues during the pregnancy among the younger tribal women. As far as concerned the knowledge about contraceptive methods, they do not have any idea about it and the belief of tribal culture was purely related with the early pregnancy. Tribal male or women after getting married, within a year or sooner they shall have a baby, otherwise they will be given shameful condition in their society. The researcher mentioned that the beliefs, norms, mores and traditional expectations of tribal culture used to forcethe younger couples to have immediate pregnancy after marriage. In this place not only education, socio-economic background, health awareness and accessibility of having health needs are influencing the tribal women’s reproductive knowledge, but also the severe ethos of tribal cultural system too.



**Ranjan kumar (2014)** in his study he analyzed about the usage of contraceptive methods among the tribal women among the states of Jharkhand, Chattisgarh and Madhya Pradesh. Regarding the knowledge about the usage of temporary contraceptive method by tribal women were very poor compare with the non-tribal women in India. It is also mentioned that in the study area 60 per cent of the tribal women were aware of condom compared to 78 per cent of the other community women in India. But in the aspect of current usage of family planning methods, it is very worse condition in the state of Jharkhand tribes. Only 17 per cent of tribal women used the modern contraceptive methods where as among the non-tribes in the rate were 39 per cent. There were only 2 per cent of condom usages among tribal couples against 5 per cent of non-tribal couples. There were huge gap between the knowledge about the reproductive health among the tribal people and non-tribal people. As far as concerned about the non-utilization of the contraceptive methods among tribal women were having plenty of socio-cultural factors. Due to the fear of side effects, scared of being sterilized, and thinking that they cannot work after sterilization as important factors for the non-utilization of contraceptive methods among tribal women in the study area. For the sake of not having infrequent sex and involving breastfeeding of children, most of the respondents did not utilize the contraceptive methods. Some of them they were believed the child birth is the gift from the god, so we do not try to stop or postpone with the assistance of contraception.

**Missiriya, et.al., (2017)** have conducted a research on the awareness about the family planning methods among the tribal women in Jawadhu Hills, Tamilnadu. The results of the study shows that majority of the respondents i.e., 94 per cent did not utilize any of the family welfare methods whether permanent or temporary. Only 6 per cent of the respondents had delivered that they were utilized the permanent family planning methods. The main reason of that situation may be linked with the educational attainment. Nearly 85 per cent of the tribal women and 91 per cent of their partners were in the category of illiterate. Away from mainstream life of society due to their unique culture, deviation from plain people, unaware about availability of schemes, non-availability of medical facilities or health personnel in their habitations were the factors that to be considered with the association of the non-utilization of the contraceptive methods in the particular area.

**Khanna et.al., (2018)** conducted a research related with the fertility knowledge among the young couples in rural India including tribes. The one among the objectives of that study was to explore fertility intention among tribal and non-tribal young married couples. The research findings say that, tribal women should conceive within one year to avoid shame as stated by the tribal women. Interestingly most of the tribal couples they had married before the age of 18. Being a younger tribal couple they did not have any thing about the contraceptive methods as well as usages. 59.3 per cent of the tribal couples they had mentioned that it is women's responsibility to avoid getting pregnant. Among tribal populations nearly 75 per cent of the couples they lacked about the knowledge of pregnancy. Some of the respondents told that they thought that there would be no pregnancy in one time sexual contact. It shows that they did not have any idea about getting pregnancy. The findings of the research clearly show that there were social pressures for early child bearing among tribal couples. Not only this, the idea of having baby was in the hands of the husband. Lack of educational knowledge, earlier age and community expectations were one among the main reasons that determines the utilization of the contraceptive methods in this study. Due to the poor geographical isolated condition of tribal there was less level of health services by the health personnel as mentioned by the researcher.

**Mukherjee, A., et.al., (2021)** in their research related with the knowledge of contraceptive behaviour among tribal women in West Bengal, it stated that out of 530 respondents, 41.1 per cent currently using



contraceptive methods, 14.5 per cent of the respondents told that they were used in previous days and 44.4 per cent of the respondents had delivered that they did not use any type of contraceptive methods in their reproductive life. The decision of having contraceptive methods was taken by 61.9 per cent of both husband and wife, 24.3 per cent of respondents told that it was taken by them only. The factors responsible for the non-use of contraceptives methods among tribal women were unaware about availability, no accessibility, partner dislike and discourage of the family members.

## Conclusion

The condition of the utilization of the contraceptive mechanism among the tribal women is differing from one to another geographical condition. But it does not have much of variation, most of the situation is very poor. As far as concerned the utilization of the contraceptive methods, it is the right of the tribal women. But in reality the contraceptive rights are lying on the hands of the partner as well as cultural norms and mores. The reasons the cultural norms, social pressure, proving as a mother to their society and immediate marriage after attaining puberty are mainly associated with the less level of usage of contraceptive methods among the tribal women. The attitude of child is a gift of god also rules the sense of the tribal people. Apart from that the initiatives of enhancing the awareness about reproductive education, strictly enacting the age of marriage, and offering counseling about cultural roles and earlier marriage consequences and partnering with the Non-governmental organizations in the field of tribal areas may have the chance to bring the remarkable changes in the reproductive life of the tribal women.

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