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## Knowledge and Attitude on Family Planning Practices among Antenatal Mothers Attending Teaching Hospital, Mahamodara, Sri Lanka

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**Background:** Family planning (FP) practices are common in Sri Lanka. Even though the practices are common, the knowledge and attitudes of antenatal mothers regarding FP practices have not studied well. Considering the wellbeing of their families after childbirth, it is an important area to be explored.

**Objectives:** To evaluate the knowledge and attitudes on FP practices among antenatal mothers attending Teaching Hospital, Mahamodara (THM)

**Methods:** A clinic-based, descriptive, cross-sectional study was carried out with 500 conveniently selected antenatal mothers attending THM during September to November 2019. A pre-tested self-administered questionnaire was administered. Knowledge was evaluated with 20 questions while attitude was evaluated with 10 statements. Level of knowledge was categorized as low (0-18), moderate (19-22) and high (23-40). The type of attitude was categorized in to two types as negative (0-25) and positive (26-40). Data were analyzed with descriptive statistics and Chi square test using SPSS version 25.

**Results:** Majority (57.8%) of antenatal mothers were in 20-30 years age group, Sinhalese (92.6%) and Buddhists (91.2%). Most of them were educated up to G.C.E. (O/L) (48.2%), had a monthly income between LKR 20,000-50,000 (43.8%) and were in primi-parity (41.2%). Mean ( $\pm$ SD) knowledge and attitude scores were 19.54 ( $\pm$ 5.43) and 26.20 ( $\pm$ 4.18) respectively. Fairly, a high proportion (40.6%) had moderate level of knowledge and 32.0% had low level of knowledge while ethnicity, religion and parity ( $p < 0.001$ ) were significantly associated with the level of knowledge. Sinhalese, Buddhist women with higher parity had significantly higher level of knowledge. Over half of the participants, (58.4%) had positive attitude on FP practices and ethnicity ( $p = 0.04$ ), religion ( $p = 0.03$ ) and educational status ( $p = 0.02$ ) were significantly associated with the type of attitude.

**Conclusions:** Considerable proportion of antenatal mothers had moderate level of knowledge while nearly one third had low level of knowledge on FP practices. Eventhough comparatively greater proportion of women had positive attitude on FP practices; reasonable proportion had negative attitude as well. Both knowledge and attitude were associated with ethnicity and religion. Further strengthening of the awareness programmes regarding FP practices during antenatal clinic sessions is recommended.

**Keywords:** Antenatal mothers, Attitude, Family planning practices, Knowledge