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OBJECTIVES

HYPOTHESES

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RESULTS & DISCUSSION

FINDINGS

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FAMILY PLANNING PRACTICES IN ETHIOPIA WITH SPECIAL REFERENCE TO MEKELLE CITY

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ABSTRACT

The world population is increasing from time to time with rapid growth rate. Most of this rapid population growth rate is seen in the less developed countries, especially in Sub Sahara Africa. According to the world population reference bureau (PRB) 1997, report the world population is currently growing by 100 million per year. This rapid population growth is predicted by high fertility rates, low mortality rates and net migrations. Hence, when fertility rate increases the population growth rate becomes high. When the fertility rate will less the population growth rate will be less, while, fertility and mortality rates equal the population rate is stagnate. Presently the world population is 7 billion. The unintended population growth has a great impact on the society's living standard as well as on natural and environment. This intended population growth rate is now one of the major worldwide problems, especially for the developing countries like Ethiopia. The problem includes lack of infrastructure, high maternal mortality, infant mortality, depletion of natural resources and so-on. According to world population Reference bureau report (1997), every minute of every day it is estimated that at least one woman dies per day due to health problem. This shows that rapid population growth has great impact on the society in general and the mothers and children's in particular. In developing countries high population growth is not compatible with their economic is one of the long range development problems.

KEYWORDS

Population growth, family planning methods, economic development, socio-economic problems and Ethiopia.

INTRODUCTION

In Ethiopian country rapid population growth rate is serious problem in the country. The population growth rate is extremely increasing from time to time. But economic development and resources are not growing in the same way. To minimize the gap between the population growth rate and the economic development, infant mortality, maternal death and other socio-economic problems, several international conferences on population and development were held under the auspices of the United Nations(in 1954 in Rome, in 1965 in Belgrade, in 1974 in bar chariest, in 1984, in Mexico and in1994, in cairo). However, views on the inter relationship between population and development as the best contraceptive while others considered population control as solution to the socio-economic development problems. As a result of the change attitude a number of developing countries have introduced population policy (family planning) .for instance China and India.

In the early 20th century, the population of Ethiopia was probably estimated between 11 and 13 millions and also increasing at the rate of 2 percent annually, but now this number has reached at high level. The number of the population increases by a large number and the rate growth too. It is indicated in the population development of Ethiopia 2004. The population of the Ethiopia is raised from 59.9 in 1998 and 67.2 millions in 2002. Hence, this rapid population growth is serious block of economic development in the country. And also increases infant mortality rates, maternal death and other socio-economic problems.

To reduce the over population growth and its consequences problems family planning program has a great role in solving these problems. Family planning enables women to prevent unwanted pregnancy, from unsafe abortion, protect them transmitted diseases and other related problems. In addition family planning is essential to reduce the socio economic problems such as lack of adequate nutrition, lack of education, lack health service, and to improve infant mortality, maternal death and decent standard living of the society. However, there are different factors that affect the family planning practice in the society. Therefore, the researcher attempted to investigate some of the major problems that affect family planning practice in the Mekelle town.

STATEMENT OF THE PROBLEM

According to the symposium of Ethiopia (2004) on population and development and the United Nations fund report (2005), the Ethiopian population is estimated to have reached 70 and 77.2 million respectively and the growth rate is estimated between 2.4 and 2.73 percent per year. Which make the doubling time of the population is less than 26 years, thus the total fertility rate is high even some measures are taken, according to the central statistics of authority (1990), as cited by family guidance association of Ethiopia

OBJECTIVES OF THE STUDY

The general objective of the study is to investigate whether attitude, religion, educational level including women status and demographic characteristics are affected family planning practice or not.

- To identify the religion, educational level includes women status affect the family planning practice,
- To evaluate the demographic characteristics that has affected the family planning practice.
- To suggest the attitude of people towards using family planning programme

SIGNIFICANCE OF THE STUDY

- The significance of the study is to serve as reference material for other researcher
- To help as base line to assess and find out factors that affected family planning
- To give suggestions and recommendations on the factors that affects the family planning practice.

REVIEW OF THE LITERATURE

According to the Encyclopaedia America (1995), family is the basic and must important institution which may be defined as a group of persons related by birth or marriage who reside in the same house hold and also , Jummy.B (1980), defined as family can be viewed as a system composed of a number of sub system interaction with each other.

The structure of the family can vary from traditional nuclear family to single parents. Some families are a large in size and other families are small. The size of the family has its own effect in the family itself and in the environment as UN (1977), and other studies indicated that families with a large size usually faces socio-economic problems than families with small size such as the problems are lack of adequate nutrition, lack of health service, lack of educational status and etc.

THE CONCEPTS OF CONTRACEPTIVE USE AND FAMILY PLANNING

According to world population report the term family planning encompasses two distinct concepts: These are contraceptive use and family planning.

CONTRACEPTIVE USE: it is used by an individual or couple as a means of avoiding pregnancy. It helps women to control when and how many children to have. Family planning service: these are organized sources of contraceptive methods. Such service includes family planning programmes of various types.

FAMILY PLANNING: According to the Foegle (1983:170), there are two types of family planning methods i.e Modern methods of family planning and Natural methods of family planning or contraceptive techniques. Natural contraceptive method: in this method of family planning includes breast feeding abstinence, and soon. Modern contraceptive method: this of family planning includes tablets or pills, injectable, nor plants, intra uterine Device (IUD), Condom, loop and soon.

BENEFIT OF FAMILY PLANNING

Worldwide policy makes recognize the importance of family planning service to women's health. The draft programme of action of international conference on population and development states countries should seek reduction in maternal mortality through measure to avoid or reduce high risk in births including births to adolescents, eliminated all unwanted births and unsafe abortion. (for eg-1983). From the above statement one can easily understand that family planning plays a great role in maternal and children health in particular and in the society in general.

Similarly FAGE (1991), states that women can improve their living standards by using family planning services that is by avoiding unwanted pregnancy, unsafe abortion and from General transmitted diseases such as HIV/AIDS. Hence, family planning can help as primary health centre for maternal or mothers and children. It is also an essential and basic way of development.

According to UNO (1997), family planning is a tool in population control and an expedient which is inseparable from the realm of population dynamics, population control either national, international or purely voluntary and private organizational scale to enable couple to have the number of children they want, to regulate arrival to decrease their number all voluntary basis. Thus, family planning is perceived as health service and welfare expedient, as internal part of maternal and child health service and also family planning gives more emphasis to the rights of people to determine the number and spacing of children as well as the need for family planning.

Similarly For example (1983) states that, there are four specific ways in which couples benefits from family planning. To begin with both man and woman can have more relaxed General relations when they are confident that inter course will not to unwanted or ill timed pregnancy in addition they can post pone having their first child or subsequent children to complete their education or vocational training. This shows that the health benefit of family planning is associated with child spacing.

According to Yamane (1994) the attention of family planning is regulated the birth of children in order to make economically manageable to the family which has commutative effect at large on the economy of the society. This can be true when all eligible couples practice family planning.

FACTORS THAT AFFECT FAMILY PLANNING

Even though family planning is important in the living standard of the society, especially for maternal and health, the practice of family planning is hindered by different factors, some of the major factors are:

- Traditional culture or attitude of the society
- Demographic characteristics
- Religious
- Educational and status of the women

ATTITUDE OF THE SOCIETY

The attitude of the society more or less impacts the practice of family planning program, since people want to have a large number of children. Thus, people may see children as a wealth or asset and sources of power. As a result they give birth frequency without consider what children need. Supporting this idea Daniel stated that the attitude of the traditional society is having more children means a great respect for the women. It would be quite strange if for the women. It would be quite strange if someone founds ideas such as family planning and fertility regulation flourishing it. Hence, the attitude of the society has a great effect on family planning practice

DEMOGRAPHIC CHARACTERISTICS

The demographic factors are also determined the practice of family planning in developing countries like Ethiopia. Such as demographic characteristics are Gender preferences, age and parity or number of living children women that have. Gender preference is one the demographic factors that impede the practice of family planning in the developing countries like Ethiopia. The parents mostly preferred for sons than daughters. Some parents show more interest / care on sons such as medical care, education and other necessity than daughters. Similarly, as study on Gender preference in south Asia and North Africa, son preferred people to be strongest and to exist to some degree in other regions of the world as well. And also the reasons for the preference were both economic and culture factors. Hence, Gender preference affected the rate of family planning practice because parents continue their births until they get the expected Gender.

AGE AND NUMBER OF LIVING CHILDRENS (PARITY)

The rate of family planning practice to some extent is determined by age of the women and the number of living children. As survey made on the parity women or the number of living children, a survey states that a women with no children or with one child is less likely to use contraceptive method than a women with two or above children.

RELIGIOUS FACTORS

Religious factors are some extent is determined family planning practice or any contraceptive method. But it does not mean all religious against contraceptive method or family planning use. People may hinder from exercise family planning program due to their religious. As a result the intended program may not attain at the desire time. According to Yohannes (2001), women's fertilities behaviour could be determined or dominated by religion doctrines pertaining to child birth. Some of the religious that against or oppose family planning or any method of contraceptive that is modern contraceptive methods are Hinduism, orthodox, Rome catholic, Muslim etc.

EDUCATIONAL LEVEL

Educational status plays a great role in changing behavioural and personal attitude of society. The levels of education may determine the practice of family planning programme. Uneducated women may marry earlier than educated women and also educated women more likely to use contraceptive method than uneducated women. Adding to this idea as survey made (1990) on contraceptive use rate of 50% for married women or reproductive age who have at least secondary school education only. 15% accounts with no formal education used contraceptive method. Hence, educated women can understand more and they are open to accept family planning method than other counter parts.

A BRIEF DISCRPTION OF THE STUDY AREA

Mekelle city is the capital city of Tigray national state, its located 750 kms away from the national capital Addis Ababa. It is well connected with road and plane transportation to all the cities in the Ethiopian country. It is located between 13' to 32' north latitudes and 39' to 46 East longitudes and the elevation of the area is 2000 to 2200 mts. It is located in the northern highlands of Ethiopian country, covering an area of 130 sq. Kms. The eastern side of the city is covered with the endaesyes ridges are the higher peaks of the city. The major land forms of the city territory can be classified in to four categories namely: flat to gently sloping, gently sloping to rolling sloping go moderately steep and steeply to very steeply sloping type.

DATA ANALYSIS AND INTERPRETATION

In this regard the researcher tried to assess the factors that affect the family planning practice in the study area, through open and close ended questionnaire. The researcher selected 30 numbers of respondents as frequency from the total and analysed. The findings are as follows:

TABLE- 1: THE AGE GROUP OF THE RESPONDENTS

Age	Respondents		Contraceptive		Non-Contraceptive	
	Frequency	%	Frequency	%	Frequency	%
15-22	6	20	4	13.34	2	6.66
23-29	8	26.67	6	20	2	6.66
30-37	10	33.33	8	26.67	2	6.66
38-45	3	10	2	6.67	1	3.33
46-49	3	10	0	0	3	10
Total	30	100	20	66.69	10	33.31

Source: The survey report, 2011.

The above table shows that the highest users of contraceptive methods are 30-37 years aged women, i.e 26.67%, the lowest users of contraceptive methods are with the age group of 46-49 years (0%). Hence, the age of the respondents can be affected on family planning practice. Supporting this An Dag (1995) states that women's age is strong and significant predictor for contraceptive method. As women's age increase or younger, they are less interested on practice of contraceptive method. Similarly the aged between 25-29 women's are more practiced on contraceptive method than the age of 15-19 years old women's. Hence, the age of the women is playing a vital role on the practice of family planning methods.

TABLE – 2: RELIGIOUS FACTORS AFFECTING THE FAMILY PLANNING PRACTICES

Religion	Respondents		Contraceptive users		Non-Users	
	Freq.	%	Freq.	%	Freq.	%
Orthodox	16	23.33	10	33.33	6	20
Muslims	7	13.33	4	13.33	3	10
Protestants	3	10	1	3.33	2	6.66
Catholics	4	13.34	1	3.33	3	10
Total	30	100	16	13.32	14	46.68

Source: Survey report, 2011.

The above table shows that major percentage of the respondents are Orthodox, and also these people are using more contraceptive practice (33.33%), followed by Muslims (13.33%), and other religious communities (3.33%) are practicing the contraceptive method. Some respondents expressed that the reason for un – using of family planning is to control the fertility is against the rule of God. Some people are giving less importance to the family planning practice; with this their family size will be increased with large number of children, especially in the Muslim communities. On the other hand, the protestant peoples are following these programmes in better manner than other religions. Generally in the conservative people do not worry about their children's lives. They believe that their children grow up by a chance and God provides them all things what they want, as a result they continue birth until they reach at the menopause stage.

TABLE – 3: EDUCATION LEVEL OF THE RESPONDENTS WHICH AFFECTS THE FAMILY PLANNING PRACTICE

Educational level	Respondents		Contraceptive user		Non-Users	
	Frequency	%	Frequency	%	Frequency	%
Illiterates	6	20	2	6.67	4	13.33
Primary	16	13.33	10	33.33	6	20
Secondary & above	8	26.67	8	26.67	0	0
Total	30	100	20	66.67	10	33.33

Source: Survey report, 2011

The above table shows that 20 percent of the respondents are illiterates, 13.33 percent of the respondents are primary level of education and 26.67 percent are secondary level education level. Among these 26.67 percent of the respondents are practicing the contraceptive method, and 33.33 percent of the people are primary and illiterates. And 33.33 percent of the respondents are non- user of contraceptive method, in this most of the percentage is illiterates. According to this most of the illiterates are non-practice of contraceptive method.

TABLE – 4: RESPONDENTS HAVING THE CHILDREN WHICH AFFECT THE FAMILY PLANNING PRACTICE

Having children	Respondents		Contraceptive user		Non- users	
	Frequency	%	Frequency	%	Frequency	%
No Children	7	23.33	2	6.66	5	16.67
01-2 children	8	26.66	4	13.33	4	13.33
03-4 children	10	33.33	8	26.67	3	6.67
Above 5	5	16.66	2	6.67	4	6.67
Total	30	100	16	53.33	14	46.67

Source: Survey report, 2011

The above table shows that, about 33.33 percent of the respondents replied that they have from three to four children, about 26.66 percent of the respondents have from one to two (1-2) children. 16.66 percent of them have five and above children. And 23.33 percent of the respondents have no children. According to this 53.33 percent users of family planning, 26.67 percent of the respondents are women who has the three to four children's followed by children who has one to two children. While the respondents who have no child do not use contraceptive method. As some of the respondents indicated the reason for not using contraceptive method. They do not like to use contraceptive since they have no child. And also other respondent replies that, they want to have a large number of children, so they do not like to use any contraceptive method.

From the above idea one can easily understand that the number of children in family could affect family planning practice. Thus, as the number of children increase, the demand to use contraceptive method may increase and vice-versa. Supporting this idea, Anh Dag (1995) stated that couples with three or more children are more likely to use contraceptive method than those with fewer children. Hence, contraceptive method usually increases with the woman that has number of children. Based on the respondent's information it is possible to conclude that woman with a few children or no children are less likely to practice family planning. As a result, they give birth or born children until they reach the desired number of children. So the number of children determined the practice of family planning.

TABLE – 5 RESPONDENTS DESIRE ON THE CHILDREN AND HOW ITS AFFECT THE FAMILY PLANNING PROGRAMME

Desired no. of children's	Respondents		Contraceptive users		Non- Users	
	Frequency	%	Frequency	%	Frequency	%
01-2	6	20	2	6.66	3	10
03-4	16	53.34	8	26.67	8	26.66
05-6	5	16.66	2	6.67	3	10
Above 7	3	10	0	0	4	13.31
Total	30	100	12	43.33	18	56.67

Source: Survey report, 2011

The above table shows that the total respondents (30), 53.34 percent of them replied that they want to have additional children from three to four (3-4), and the rest 20 percent, 16.66 percent and 10 percent they want to have from five to seven and from one to two children. According to respondents, those who desire a large number of children are less likely to use contraceptive method than those who desire small number of children. As the above table indicates that the respondents who desire from five to six and above of children. Almost they do not use family planning programme. Only 3.67 percent of the respondents are users of the method. Whereas those who desire from three to four children, they are better use of family planning that is 26.67 percent of the respondents are users of the method. As the respondents replied that most of them they do not want limit or decide their children. Since they believed that a large number of children are asset or wealth and sources of power. And also they believed that a mother who has a large number of children is respected by the society. Supporting this idea Abebe (1990) stated that traditional society, children seen as a source of labour and social prestige. The Ethiopian society also puts much value on the children. Due to this desire an infertile women, usually face a chance of divorce. Hence, the number of children desire is one of the key factor that affect the rates if family planning practice in the society.

TABLE – 6 GENDER PREFERENCES OF THE RESPONDENTS WITH THEIR ATTITUDE

Gender Preference	Respondents		Contraceptive users		Non- Users	
	Frequency	%	Frequency	%	Frequency	%
Sons	14	46.66	8	26.67	6	20
Daughters	8	26.67	3	10	5	16.67
Both Gender	8	26.67	4	13.33	4	13.33
Total	30	100	15	50	15	50

Source: Survey report, 2011

The above table revealed that 46.66 percent of the respondents replied that preferred to have sons to daughters. 26.67 percent of them preferred daughters to sons and the rest 26.67 percent preferred both Genders. They expressed that the reason for the preferred sons to daughters that is (46.66) percent of the respondents daughters are considered as unable to do what the boys are do the outside home. Rather daughters depend on their families and also they believe that daughters are weak naturally. On the other hand sons are considered to be superior and respected by the society. And also they had seen as a source of power. Hence, the absence of sons in family is feeling shame. And the respondents who preferred daughters to sons replied that they want to get birth daughters because they have sons and they said. Daughters can help us in the home due to this reason they preferred girls.

Supporting this idea Blaikie (1983), stated that sons are regarded to perform all activities for their parents. Sons are sources of power to protect from only dangerous and they attracted and respected themselves as well as their parents up on marriage. Because of these reasons, daughters are not wanted. And also the respondents who preferred sons to daughters, because they desired sons they try until they get their needs, while those who have enough sons are more likely to use contraceptive methods, and the reverse is true when the respondents enough daughters, they are more likely to use contraceptive method. Hence, prefer Gender or expectation of Gender can reduce women's motivation to practice family planning. In addition most of the respondents expressed that they produce their children after two years.

TABLE -7: THE OCCUPATIONAL STATUS OF THE RESPONDENTS AFFECT THE FAMILY PLANNING PRACTICE

Occupation	Respondents		Contraceptive user		Non- Users	
	Frequency	%	Frequency	%	Frequency	%
House wives	4	13.33	1	3.33	3	10
Govt. Employees	10	33.33	4	13.33	6	20
Un employees	2	6.66	0	0	2	6.66
Traders	6	20	1	3.33	5	16.6
Private employees	5	16.66	2	6.66	3	10
Others	3	10	2	6.66	1	3.33
Total	30	100	10	33.31	20	66.6

Source: Survey report, 2011

The above table indicates that 13.33 percent of the respondents are house wives. 33.33 percent of them government employees, 6.66 percent of them unemployed and the rest 46.6 percent of the respondents are traders, private employees and others. As the respondents remarked that most of the family planning users are those who worked out their home while those who work at home and the unemployed women are less in using family planning. Supporting this Yohannes (2002) stated that employed women will have little time to look after their children. One to this they use contraceptive methods. Thus, job opportunities for women have a great role in family planning and in other introducing technology. Most of the respondents stated that they have no capacity to educate their children, but their participation of the family planning is low due to mention all factors and some respondents expressed that they have capacity to educate their children. In addition other respondents replied that they have enough capacity to educated their children but they do not give birth (additional children) as a result they use treatise method to limit their children.

RECOMMENDATIONS

The researcher recommended the following recommendations i.e Family planning have a great role in improving the society living standard general and in the family particular living standard , the rapid population growth so family planning education should be given in the form of formality or non formality system. Family planning should be popularized in the society, it should be disseminated to couple from the higher level to kebele (small ward) through the different mass media. Even though most of the respondents know the importance of the family planning, they do not use in practice because the governmental changes and their policies. The government and non –governmental organizations should be encouraged women to engage in different family planning activities. As a result they can understand or decide their children's numbering. Heather they have more or less children's. Family planning guidance association of Ethiopia (FGAE), governmental and non-governmental organizations should encouraging and supplying enough material in this regard.

CONCLUSION

Most of the respondents they do not use contraceptive method, due to religious factors including cultural and other backwards. Low level of education is affected the respondent from using family planning programme. The age of the women and the number of living children are affected family planning. The expectation of Gender or Gender prefers is affected the family planning practice. And also the desire large number of children said that the effect of side by adapting these practice and a few respondents were feared about the sturdily. Generally all the above mentioned factors affected the practice of family planning especially level of education have significant effect in family planning practice.

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