Education, Electronic Media and Family Planning: Pakistan Demographic and Health Survey 2012-13

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ABSTRACT

Background: Pakistan is 6th populous country in the world and has 2.63% of the total world population. The fertility rate is 3.65 and there is need to educate population about family planning in minimum time.

Objective: To discover education and frequency of electronic media, radio and television effects on family planning electronic media messages delivery to both men and women.

Material & Methods: Data from Pakistan Demographic and Health Survey 2012-13 was used for the study. From selected 12,943 occupied households, 13,558 ever-married women and 3,134 ever married men of age 1549 were interviewed for the survey. Family planning electronic media messages conveyed, by radio or television, to both men and women were analysed with formal education and electronic media frequencies. SPSS version 21 was used to analyse the data and SPSS logistic regression analyses were done for statistical significance and association of dependant and independent variables. A p-value of <0.05 had statistically significance.

Results: Family planning messages were conveyed extremely high to men and women who watched TV daily. Occasionally radio listeners had received remarkably higher family planning (FP) messages than daily radio listeners. Both men and women, who did not listen radio at all, received the highest FP messages. Remarkably high FP messages were conveyed to women who had no education, while men without education received the lowest messages.

Conclusion: Electronic media has more important role than formal education in family planning education. Electronic media can alter attitudes, change behaviours, abolish fears and misconceptions about family planning.

***Key Words**: Family Planning, Pakistan, contraceptives, Electronic Media*

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INTRODUCTION

Family planning (FP) is an information, means and methods which educate individuals to think and decide when and how to become pregnant, as well as about treatment of infertility. It includes contraceptives pills, condoms, implants, intrauterine devices, surgical procedures to control fertility, and other methods such as calendar method, and abstinence. It saves lives, prevents unwanted pregnancies, decreases the number of abortions and reduces the incidence of complications of pregnancies and childbirths like deaths and preventable disabilities. It is an estimation that in developing countries, by use of modern contraceptives methods about 35 million abortions and 76,000 maternal deaths can be prevented every year [1].

High birth rate is generally related to desire of larger families especially in rural areas, lack of understanding and knowledge of family planning, No access to high-quality family planning services and fears of complications of contraceptive methods [2].

According to provisional results of 2017 census of Pakistan, average annual growth rate (1998 to 2017) is 2.40 and population is 207,774,520 which has been increased by 146.6% since 1981 census[3]. The National Program for Family Planning and Primary Healthcare in Pakistan was launched in 1994[4]. Pakistan has very low contraceptive prevalence rate and to increase it is a challenge [5]. Its population and growth rate show that contraceptive prevalence rate has declined [6].

Media can be very useful to educate people about family planning. It can affect health behaviours and change family planning fears, misconcepts and wrong beliefs[7]. A study advised capacity building in media for effective family planning behaviour change communication (BCC). In the study the barriers, to effective BCC, were found; insufficient BCC skills, conflict of interest of journalists, media houses interests, lack of sources of family planning information and editorial ideologies[8].

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In Pakistan, along with lack of information, perception that family planning is against Islam also played an important role in high birth rate and increase in population [9].

For better results, there is need to educate and change behaviour of both partners [10]. Media messages by television and radio in the form of campaigns are usually used for large populations to educate and create awareness. The media messages can produce constructive changes, minimise effects of negative beliefs, eliminate misconceptions, change attitude and behaviour [11].

Radio and TV exposure is effective for family planning [12]. The Government of Pakistan recognises that all citizens are entitled to get high quality family planning (FP) information and services and has made commitment, in a summit, to make FP a priority [13].

Main objective of the study was to discover education and frequency of electronic media, radio and television effects on family planning electronic media messages delivery to both men and women.

MATERIAL AND METHODS

This study is secondary analysis of third country wide Pakistan Demographic and Health Survey (PDHS) 2012-13. The survey was conducted in all provinces and Islamabad Capital Territory (ICT) except Azad Jammu and Kashmir and Federally Administered Tribal Area. The Technical Advisory Committee of 30 national experts, professionals, researchers and representatives from the provinces in Pakistan gave an input at different stages of the survey. For the survey 14,000 households from all regions were selected. From selected 12,943 occupied households, 13,558 ever-married women and 3,134 ever married men age 1549 were interviewed. The response rate of women was 93 per cent while of men it was 79 per cent.

IBM Software Package for Social Sciences (SPSS) version 21 was used to analyse the data. The statistical significance and association between the dependent and independent variables was tested by SPSS logistic regression analyses. A p-value of <0.05 was considered statistically significant.

Dependant variables

For awareness about family planning messages conveyed through radio or television, there were following categories: (1) message conveyed: Limiting the family (2) message conveyed: Spacing of children (3) message conveyed: Use of contraceptives (4) message conveyed: Less children prosperous life (5) message conveyed: Higher age at marriage.

Independent variables Education

Highest education level was categorised into: (1) No Education (2) primary (3) secondary (4) Higher.

No education means never got education in any school. Primary indicates school education up to class 5, Secondary is school classes from 9-10 and Higher denotes college classes 11-16. Every class means study year.

Electronic media exposure

There were two groups of electronic media exposure (1) Frequency of listening to radio (2) Frequency of watching television (TV). Three questions from each group included: (1) Not at all (2) Occasionally (3) Daily. The answers of these three questions were: (1) No, (2) Yes.

RESULTS

Education levels and electronic media family planning messages

Table 1 is about family planning electronic media messages conveyed, by radio or tv, to men and women of different education levels. It demonstrates that men without education received the least and women with no education received the highest family planning electronic media messages. Increase in education level did not increase the messages reception in men and women.

Table 1: Family planning message conveyed by electronic media and education levels

Education levels	Family planning message conveyed by electronic media Yes responses in %				
In Men (N=1581)	Limiting the family	Spacing of children	Use of contraceptives	Less children prosperous life	Higher age at marriage
No education	14.9	13.7	14.5	9.7	10.2
Primary	14.7	15.4	10.2	21.2	12.0
Secondary	36.7	38.9	34.9	40.3	39.8
Higher	33.6	32.0	40.4	28.8	38.0
In Women (N=3676)					
No education	26.0	33.2	32.9	28.1	32.3
Primary	13.6	15.5	16.8	14.7	11.4
Secondary	29.8	28.4	26.4	28.5	29.2
Higher	30.6	22.9	24.0	28.7	27.1

Table 2. Family planning messages conveyed and frequency of electronic media

Dependant variables	Independent variables and statistical significance					
	Frequency of listening to radio		**Frequency of watching TV**		**Education attainment**	
Message conveyed to men	**Chi-chart**	**p-value**	**Chi-chart**	**p-value**	**Chi-chart**	**p-value**
Limiting the family	4.024	0.259	1.873	0.599	1.019	0.797
Spacing of children	14.797	0.002*	8.958	0.030*	4.161	0.245
Use of contraceptives	11.410	0.010*	17.271	0.001*	6.459	0.091
Less children prosperous life	1.605	0.658	3.280	0.350	16.986	0.001*
Higher age at marriage	5.087	0.166	4.690	0.196	3.425	0.331
Message conveyed to women						
Limiting the family	11.492	0.009*	8.980	0.030*	42.679	0.000*
Spacing of children	13.545	0.004*	9.010	0.029*	7.736	0.052
Use of contraceptives	7.548	0.026*	19.830	0.000*	3.937	0.268
Less children prosperous life	1.436	0.697	2.577	0.462	38.767	0.000*
Higher age at marriage	57.980	0.000*	16.310	0.001*	5.062	0.167

Electronic media frequency and family planning messages

Table 2 is about conveyed family planning electronic media, radio or TV, messages and frequencies of listening to radio and watching television. It shows that in relation to frequency of listening to radio, the highest family planning media messages were conveyed to men and women who did not listen radio at all. While men and women who watched TV daily had received markedly high family planning media messages. Men and women who watched TV, received higher family planning messages than those who did not watch TV at all.

Statistical significance, independent and dependant variables association

Table 3 is about statistical significance and relationship between independent and dependant variables. It shows that frequencies of listening to radio and watching television have more statistical significance and association than education levels, among men and women, with family planning messages.

In men, electronic media frequencies have association with spacing of children and use of contraceptives, while less children prosperous life has relationship with highest education level.

In women, only less children prosperous life has no association with electronic media frequencies, while it has along with limiting the family has relationship with highest education level.

DISCUSSION

Findings of this study show that electronic media has a relationship with family planning education. Men of each education level received more family planning media messages than men who had no education. Maximum family planning media messages were conveyed to women who had no education. Increase in education levels was not directly related with increase in FP messages. Men and women who did not listen to radio at all received the highest family planning messages. While, men and women who watched TV daily, received the highest FP media messages. The messages were conveyed more to men and women who watched TV than those who did not watch TV at all. Electronic media frequencies are more statistically significant than highest education level.

In Pakistan there is feudal society which has an impact on high birth rate. In rural areas, 63.62 per cent [3], more children especially male children are considered an asset, force and power. A study revealed that rural areas residents and people who witnessed their child death did not like modern contraceptive methods [14].

Awareness and knowledge about family planning are important to decrease or control population. A study in Pakistan discovered poor knowledge of family planning and its methods among almost half of the study participants [15]. Knowledge can be increased by media. Communities access to mass media messages, increases the probability of the use of family planning methods [16].

Table 3: Statistical significance and relationship of dependant and ndependent variables

Dependant variables	Independent variables and statistical significance					
	Frequency of listening to radio		Frequency of watching TV		Education attainment	
Message conveyed to men	**Chi-chart**	**p-value**	**Chi-chart**	**p-value**	**Chi-chart**	**p-value**
Limiting the family	4.024	0.259	1.873	0.599	1.019	0.797
Spacing of children	14.797	0.002*	8.958	0.030*	4.161	0.245
Use of contraceptives	11.410	0.010*	17.271	0.001*	6.459	0.091
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*p<0.05

In this study, there is an interesting finding that the highest family planning electronic media messages were conveyed to women who had no education. Increase in education level was also not directly related with increase in FP message transfer. This shows that formal education in school/college/university is not the only way of learning. Other innovative ways or by electronic media, FP messages can be conveyed to communities. A study in Sialkot supports the finding.

In Sialkot village of Punjab province, community based and community managed Information and Communication Centre (ICC) was established to provide information, by CDs, TV etc, to women about family planning and other issues. This innovative project had vast participation and interest from local women who wanted to receive an information on a wide range of issues like family planning, antenatal care, and childcare etc. The project proved that such information sources can cross the barriers of illiteracy and can educate disadvantaged women who live in a conservative society and culture [17].

This study shows that men and women who did not listen to radio at all received the highest family planning messages. In rural culture of Pakistan, opinion leaders have their role and they transfer information and knowledge. People live very closely and discuss almost all things during sitting sessions in fields at daytime and in evening, at common place, for gossip, taking tea and hukka smoking. They have plenty of time, so information is shared. Radio is main source of information. Elders and opinion leaders after listening to radio convey news and information, in these sittings, to others, which in turn is shared in families. Community radio is an effective device for raising awareness and knowledge [18].

Our study shows that more FP media messages were conveyed to men and women who watched TV than those who did not watch TV at all. Daily TV watchers had received remarkably higher FP media messages than occasionally TV watchers. Family planning messages on TV increase the probabilities of using modern contraception [19]. A study in Pakistan showed that the most important source of awareness about contraceptives was television [20].

In Pakistan, besides national programme, non-governmental organisations are working for family planning. In 1950, Pakistan's population was 37 million and was the world's 13th most populous country. To control birth rate, Family Planning Association of Pakistan was founded in 1953. Recently, it has been renamed RAHNUMA which means a guide [21]. Green star in Pakistan is also working to control birth rate and decrease population. It has over 7,000 franchised clinics, 70,000 retail outlets, and providing approximately 53% of all contraceptives in the country [22].

Pakistan committed, in summit to work for FP2020 goals, that after planning for effective family planning programme, efforts will be made to increase FP messages to control family size, enhance mobilization activities to reach people, and provide services for vasectomy and condom distribution [13]. To achieve targets, there is more need to work for family planning in the country.

There is significance of family planning programmes because they can control high-risk births and associated maternal and child mortalities [23]. All health promotion programmes should be designed according to cultural norms. culturally pertinent approach to educate communities for family planning is supported by the population which can reduce maternal and infant mortality rates also [24]. Health centers play an important role in delivering family planning services [25]. Basic and rural health centers can be used properly for family planning.

A study in Pakistan found that quality of antenatal care and discussion of family planning in the centers had strong effects on contraceptive use. So, there is need to improve antenatal care. It was observed that women who delivered a child at a health facility and got information of family planning from a doctor or health professional used more contraceptives than those who gave births at homes and did not get any information. Community health workers are required to talk about birth spacing and give information about family planning [26].

A study in Pakistan suggested for high quality family planning services closer to women's homes. At services places, behaviour change strategies and programmes can increase awareness, acceptability, and use of family planning methods [27]. Another study in Pakistan advised to design programmes which could develop counselling techniques, demystify myths and misinformation in the communities for birth spacing, smaller family size, contraceptive use, health of mother and child [28].

Our study shows that electronic media had an effect on communities, especially TV conveyed more FP media message. Studies supported our finding. A study showed that television watching is related with increased contraceptive use in both in men and women [7]. Television watching is important and there is strong connection of media exposure with the use of contraception [29] and increase in antenatal visits [30].

It is estimated that Pakistan's population will be 244,248,371 in 2030, would increase to 277,494,590 with 2.54 fertility rate in 2040 and maintain its 6th rank globally [31]. According to The World Bank, in 2016 the birth rate was 28 (per 1000 people). So, there is need to control its population by proper planning and efforts.

In Pakistan, education levels and electronic media, radio and TV, have an impact on birth rate and awareness about family planning ways and methods. The findings of this study show more importance of electronic media than education for FP awareness. Family planning education can be given in very short time by use of electronic media while increase in education level involves planning, approval, budget allocation etc and takes years.

The family planning messages, for radio and TV, should be interesting. The visuals, for TV, must be culturally appropriate and meaningful, logical, should clearly illustrate the messages' focus, convincing and have an emotional appeal. They will motivate and as a result bring change in behaviour, beliefs and attitudes [32]. This study may be helpful to design FP programmes on electronic media.

In PDHS 2012-13, countrywide survey, although sample size was small, but the data provided information to assess role of electronic media for family planning messages.

CONCLUSION

Electronic media has more important role than formal education in family planning education. Electronic media can alter attitudes, change behaviours, abolish fears and misconceptions about family planning.

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CONFLICT OF INTEREST

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