

Maternal and Child Health Care: A Study among the Rongmeis of Manipur, India

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Abstract : Background: Maternal and child health (MCH) cares are the health services provided to mothers and children. It includes the health promotion, preventive, curative and rehabilitation health care for mothers and children. Materials and method: The present study sample comprises of 208 women within the age range 15-69 years from two remote villages of Tamenglong District in Manipur. They were randomly chosen for assessing their health as well as the child's health adopting an interview schedule method. Results: The findings of the study revealed that majority (80%) of the women have their first conception in their first year of married life. A decadal change has been observed with regard to the last pregnancy i.e., antenatal check-up, place of delivery as well as the service provider. However, irrespective of age of the women, home delivery is still preferred though very few are locally trained. Pre- and post-delivery resting period vary depending on the busy schedule of the agricultural works as the population under study is basically agriculturist. Postnatal care remains to be traditional as they are strongly associated with cultural beliefs and practices that continue to prevail in the studied community. Breast feeding practices such as colostrums given, initiation of breastfeeding, weaning was all taken into account. Immunization of children has not reached the expected target owing to a variety of reasons. Maternal health care also includes use of birth control measures. The health status of women would invariably improve if family planning is meaningfully adopted. Only 10.1% of the women adopted the modern birth control implying its deep-rooted value attached to the children. Based on the self-assessment report on their health treatment a good number of the respondents resorted to self-medication even to the extent of buying allopathic medicine without a doctor's prescription. One important finding from the study is the importance attributed to the traditional health care system which is easily affordable and accessible to the villagers. Conclusion: The overall condition of maternal and child care is way behind till now as no adequate/proper health services are available.

Keywords : antenatal, breastfeeding, child health, maternal, Tamenglong District

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