

CHANGING TRENDS IN FEMALE STERILIZATION ACCEPTORS AT ALLAHABAD

By

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SUMMARY

A retrospective study analysing the changing trends in acceptors of female sterilization procedures during a six year period from 1981-87 at S.R.N. Hospital, Allahabad was done.

An increase in percentage of acceptors opting for female sterilization measures with fewer children was seen in the latter half of the study. Another trend seen was the shift in acceptors of sterilization by females in the younger age groups. Initially, a higher percentage of rural women opted for permanent sterilization but later both rural and urban women equally opted for sterilization.

The necessity of female sterilization procedures as a means for achieving population control cannot be undermined. Since the year 1966-67, with the Family Planning Programme becoming result oriented and the introduction of All India Post Partum Programme in 1970 and implementation of MTP Act in 1973, a spurt in cases of female sterilization was seen.

Since more than a decade has passed, the pattern of acceptors of sterilization procedures are changing (Dutta and Chakravorty, 1978; Pati *et al*, 1980; Jain *et al* 1985a, b). Therefore it becomes imperative to modify and adapt these programmes accordingly so as to get maximum benefit in achieving population stabilization in our country.

This study was, therefore, undertaken

to analyse the statistics of six years (1981-87) and see the changing trends at S.R.N. Hospital, Allahabad.

Material and Methods

This study was based on the observations of patients undergoing tubectomy (either laparoscopic or abdominal) during a six year period from 1981-87. The data of 11,789 tubectomy cases was analysed to highlight the changing trends.

Observations

During the period 1981-87, 11,789 cases of tubectomy were done at S.R.N. Hospital, Allahabad.

Table I shows the yearly breakup of cases during this period. An overall decrease in the number of cases is being seen.

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the six year period while in 78.26% tubectomy was not in combination with MTP. The percentage of cases in combination with MTP increased from 9.97% and 5.57% in 1981-82, 1982-83 to 23.37% in 1983-84; 35.25% in 1984-85; 32.73% in 1985-86 and 34.97% in 1986-87.

Discussion

A gradual decrease of tubectomy cases seen at our centre in the six year period is possibly due to the training of more laparoscopic teams in the region and the frequent organisation of rural tubectomy camps. Similar trends have been observed by Dutta and Chakravorty, 1978 and Pati *et al* (1980) at Calcutta. Suitable counter measures to check this downward trend should be undertaken on priority basis.

In the present study, only 5-14% acceptors were having two children. The present publicity measures and incentives offered by the Government does help in motivating people to accept permanent sterilization after two children. A welcome trend seen in the present study is a decline in acceptors with five children from 35.76% to 19.6%. Simultaneously the percentage of acceptors with three issues increased from an initial 28.6% to 42.34%. Similar observations have been reported by Pati *et al* (1980) while other workers have not made such observations.

In the present study, in 1981-82, 32.61% of sterilization acceptors were in the age group of 35-39 years and 23.71% of acceptors were in the age group of 40-44 years. Thus in 1981-82 more than 50% of cases were those whose active reproductive life was almost over. The corres-

ponding figures, however, decreased to 22.24% in 1986-87. Sterilization procedures in this elderly age group does not significantly contribute to population control. Similar trends have been observed by Pati *et al* (1980). Initially, 14.3% of acceptors were in the age group of 25-29 years but it later increased to 36.33% in 1986-87. An overall increase to 49% of acceptors in the age group of 21-29 years in 1986-87 signifies a very important change since these women are in the prime of reproductive period and have more childbearing potential. Similar trends have been observed by Pati *et al* (1980).

In the beginning of this study, most of the cases (90.03%) accepted sterilization procedures without simultaneous MTP while only 9.97% accepted sterilization with MTP. In the later part, in 1986-87 there was a statistically significant increase in the percentage of acceptors after MTP (21.74%) though interval sterilization still predominates (78.26%). Similar rising percentage has been observed in other reported series (Dutta and Chakravorty, 1978; Pati *et al*, 1980 and Jain *et al*, 1985). In the other studies, the percentage of acceptors with MTP have risen greatly and this suggests that motivation of women undergoing MTP in this region will increase the number of acceptors of sterilization.

The increase in percentage of cases of women residing in urban areas in 1984-85 and in 1986-87 belies the fact that urban females opt for spacing methods rather than opting for permanent measures. The incentives and motivation factors have helped in mobilising urban women to opt for permanent sterilization procedures.

Conclusions

- (i) Total number of cases showed an overall decrease.
- (ii) The percentage of cases opting for permanent sterilization procedure after three issues has increased considerably.
- (iii) Percentage of cases opting for tubectomy in the younger age group of 21-29 years has increased indicating effective impact on population control.
- (iv) Only 36% cases opted for sterilization with MTP thereby indicating a vast potential for motivation in this group of patients.

- (v) Target couples residing in urban areas can also be motivated to undergo permanent sterilization procedures as reflected by an increase to 55% in 1985-86.

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