

ABSTRACT

Introduction : Short birth interval is one of the causes of adverse maternal and perinatal outcomes.

Objective: To estimate the proportion of short, birth to conception interval and to determine the socio demographic and family planning related factors (knowledge and practices) associated with short birth interval among currently pregnant multi-parous mothers in the MOH area, Passara.

Methods: The study consisted of two components. Component I was a cross sectional descriptive study to estimate the proportion of short birth interval (SBI) mothers. Component II was a case control study to determine the association between socio demographic and family planning related factors (knowledge and practices) with SBI.

Study population was multiparous mothers who were attending the antenatal clinics of the MOH area, Passara. Sample size computed for Component I was 850 and for Component II, 83 SBI and 249 adequate birth interval (ABI) mothers. However, the final sample size included was 104 SBI and 746 ABI mothers. Convenience sampling technique was adopted where all the antenatal clinics, of the MOH area were included. The number of mothers recruited from each clinic was carried out using probability proportionate to size of the population covered by the Public Health Midwife (PHM) areas. The study instrument used was an interviewer administered questionnaire. Data was statistically analyzed using SPSS and the results were expressed as P value and odds ratios (OR) with the respective 95% confidence intervals (95% CI).

Results: The proportion of SBI antenatal mothers (ANMs) was 12.2% (95% CI: 10.0-14.4), The determinants of SBI: Tamils and Moors (OR 2.6, 95% CI 1.6 – 4.6, P < 0.001), non Buddhists (OR 2.6, 95% CI 1.6 – 4.6, P < 0.001), employed mothers (OR 3.2, 95% CI 2.1 – 4.9, P < 0.001), estate sector mothers (OR 1.8, 95% CI 1.2 – 2.7, P = 0.008), parity ≥ 3 (OR 3.2, 95% CI 1.9 – 5.4, P < 0.001), having >2 children (OR 2.9, 95% CI: 1.7 – 5.1, P < 0.001), un planned pregnancy by mother (OR 5.1, 95% CI 3.2– 8.1, P <0.001), unplanned pregnancy by husband (OR 10.4, 95% CI 6.4 – 16.8, P < 0.001), need to complete family

soon (OR 2.7, 95% CI 1.4 – 5.5, P = 0.003), breast fed ≤ 2 years for the index child (OR 3.9, 95% CI 2.6 – 6.0, P < 0.001), exclusive breast fed < 6 months for the index child (OR 2.4, 95% CI 1.6 – 3.7, P < 0.001), poor knowledge on family planning (OR infinity,), not practicing family planning before the current pregnancy (OR 0.3, 95% CI 0.2 – 0.4, P < 0.001).

Conclusions and Recommendations: The proportion of mothers with SBI was 12.2%, 95%CI 10.0-14.4 and the modifiable factors associated were in relation to family planning knowledge and practice, Recommend intensification of awareness programs on family planning with special emphasis on adverse effects of short birth interval especially targeting the estate sector women.

Key words: short birth interval, family planning, estate sector